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Britten

CHANDOS

The World of the Spirit
King Arthur Suite

Premier Recordings

An American Overture



BBC Philharmonic

Britten Singers
BBC Philharmonic
Richard Hickox

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

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Benjamin Britten: An American Overture / King Arthur Suite The World of the Spirit

A very odd history is bound up with the **American Overture**. It was written in America in October 1941, at the invitation of Artur Rodzinski and the Cleveland Orchestra. But for reasons that remain unclear – the composer's return home from the States in 1942, perhaps, or the conductor's departure from the orchestra in 1943 – the overture was never performed. The manuscript remained in America, forgotten and unacknowledged, until it was acquired by the New York Public Library. It was not until the very end of Britten's life that the overture was brought to his attention, whereupon he denied all knowledge of it and was only reluctantly brought to concede its authenticity when he was shown a reproduction of the manuscript and had to admit that it was written in his hand! The first performance was given by Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in the Town Hall, Birmingham, on 8 November 1983.

The model for the *American Overture* was the earlier *Canadian Carnival* of 1939. In each work, a central dance or quasi-dance section is framed by a slow introduction which is recapitulated to form the overture's conclusion. Throughout the overture, but

perhaps especially in the sinewy, spiky and stressedly syncopated *Allegro* and the epic transformation of the slow march theme that brings the work to a conclusion, we are made aware of the work's distinctly American orientation. No less marked is the influence of Aaron Copland, with whom Britten was frequently in touch during the years when he was temporarily resident in the USA.

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King Arthur was an epic radio dramatization by D.G. Bridson (1900–1980) of the life and times of Arthur and his court, involving a large cast of actors, a chorus and symphony orchestra. This was the first of Britten's twenty-eight radio commissions. He sketched the music in March 1937, and completed the full score on 19 April. The first of two live broadcasts took place on St George's Day, 23 April, directed by Val Gielgud. The music was performed by the BBC Chorus and the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted 'very well', according to Britten's diary, by Clarence Raybould. 'The music certainly comes off like hell', the diary continues. However, Britten was less than enthusiastic about Bridson's text,

which he found dull and derivative, and lacking in 'realities and humanities'. However, Britten's music lacks nothing of these qualities, and in adapting it for the concert hall, I have followed his closely worked thematic scheme, rather than Bridson's narrative.

Britten composed thirty music cues, some of which are very short. Other are complete short movements. The music for the Wedding and Holy Grail scenes involves the chorus. I have fashioned about two-thirds of this music into a four-movement orchestral suite, shortening some passages and adapting others to facilitate smooth joins and transitions.

The *Overture* incorporates a 'Fanfare for Tourney' (one of the principal themes), the 'Introduction', the theme for Arthur and his Court, and the 'Wedding Anthem'. Separating these related episodes is a lilting passage featuring woodwind and harp – 'The Lady of the Lake'. In the Scherzo, a doom-laden version of the fanfare leads to a 'Wild Dance', where all the jealousies and intrigues at court erupt 'like every demon in hell'. The end of the 'Galloping theme' drives the music towards a trio, for which I have used Britten's haunting 'Death music'. The *Variations* bring together six cues composed for the scenes involving Galahad, Merlin and the Holy Grail. The theme is an orchestration of an unused sketch entitled 'Galahad'. The final version of the Galahad

music, with its plaintive flute and clarinet arabesques, becomes variation one. Two contrasted passages of 'Grail Music' become variations two and three. A second unused sketch, featuring the flutes, provides a pastoral interlude before the final majestic variation, 'Grail Music III'. The *Finale* begins innocently enough with a cheerful piece of 'harp' music, but the music suddenly becomes brutally transformed in vivid 'Battle music' (from Acts II and IV). The suite ends with an orchestral version of the closing apotheosis 'Down the pathway of th'immortal waters'.

Although Bridson's *King Arthur* was never revived, Britten did not let his substantial contribution go to waste. Two years later, when he came to compose the *Ballad of Heroes*, Op. 14, he returned to the Death and Battle music. He used the Galahad theme again in 1945, as the basis for the new third movement of his *Piano Concerto*, Op. 13.

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In May 1938 Britten took time off from writing his Piano Concerto to compose **The World of the Spirit**, the second of his religious 'cantatas' for the BBC, the sung and spoken texts of which were again assembled by R. Ellis Roberts. The success of Britten's and Roberts's earlier radio collaboration, *The Company of Heaven* (1937), a meditation in

words and music on the subject of angels, had led to a commission for another work of the same genre. *The World of the Spirit* was first broadcast on 5 June 1938, with Sophie Wyss (soprano), who had been the soloist in the first performances of *Our Hunting Fathers* (1936) and *On this Island* (1937), Anne Wood (contralto), Emlyn Bebb (tenor) and Victor Harding (bass), and the BBC Singers and Orchestra conducted by Trevor Harvey. The spoken texts were read by Felix Aylmer, Leo Genn and Robert Speaight. The BBC rebroadcast the feature in 1939, after which *The World of the Spirit* remained unheard until its revival in 1995, as part of a BBC Radio 3 series documenting Britten's music for radio. The artists on that occasion were the same as on the present recording.

There are perhaps two important aspects of *The World of the Spirit* that demand particular attention. First, the exceptional 'mix' of styles, genres and forms that characterizes Britten's response to his texts, both sung and spoken. If for not other reason, we must take account of this music because it reveals the twenty-four-year-old composer's prodigious versatility and his mastery of a wide range of compositional techniques; while every so often there is an inspiration that reveals the unmistakable musical personality with which we are now familiar. (We refer to the glimpses of the composer's future in our commentary below.)

The second aspect, in a significant sense is tied in which the heterogeneous profile of the first. It was surely the very diversity of the texts – chosen from a wide variety of sources – that challenged the young composer to provide a sequence of music that was in itself *anthological* in character, e.g. plainsong, chorale, orchestral song, oratorio, Bach-like *arioso*, a chorus 'number' (the *barcarolle*), etc., etc. However, behind the diversity of texts and music there is a unity of theme and purpose. We do not know precisely how the texts came to be assembled, though they must have been the subject of discussion between Britten and R. Ellis Roberts. But it can certainly have been no accident that so many of them, whether they have their origins in the Bible, Quaker philosophy, English poetry, or *reportage* of and from historico-political events (the 1914–18 war, the Irish 'troubles'), reflect preoccupations that were to remain the composer's throughout his life; abhorrence of war, violence and intolerance, and the affirming of peace, justice and reconciliation.

It goes without saying that *The World of the Spirit* does not find the ultimate music to match up with the great issues of humanity that this BBC feature programme from the 1930s raises, perhaps with some courage. But Britten's settings of the Christian injunctions in Part II ('The Fruits of the Spirit') clearly outline the shape he was to give to *Voices for Today*,

the work he was commissioned to write for the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1965. It should not be forgotten either that in the 1940s there had been at least two unrealized projects that Britten discussed with Ronald Duncan (the librettist of *The Rape of Lucretia*), in which works were contemplated that would have inhabited some

of the areas touched on in *The World of the Spirit*. It is for all of these reasons that this hitherto unknown contribution to BBC between-wars radio must be acknowledged as the first step along the road that was eventually to lead to *War Requiem* in 1962.

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The World of the Spirit – Musical Commentary

No.	Title	Key	Instrumentation
1 6	Prelude (<i>Andante con moto</i>)	C	2fl, 2ob, 2cl, 2bn, 4hn, 2tpt, 3trbn, tuba, perc, timp, harp, organ, strings
2 8	O Thou that movest all (<i>Andante lento</i>)	C	Chorus, 2fl, 2ob, 2cl, harp, va, vc, db
3 10	O The Sun, the Moon, the Stars (<i>Andante</i>)	c	Tenor, chorus (SA), picc, fl, 2ob, 2cl, 2bn, 4hn, 2tpt, 3trbn, tuba, perc, timp, harp, strings
4 _A 12	This is my commandment (<i>Lento</i>)	e	Tenor, semi-chorus, hn, vn I, vn II, va

Commentary
<p>An orchestral statement of <i>Veni Creator Spiritus</i> ('Come, O Creator Spirit'), the ancient plainsong for Whitsuntide, is played on brass and harp (<i>pp</i> to <i>ff</i>). Britten uses this hymn as a motto theme throughout the work (see also Nos. 6A, 6B, 6C, 6F and 10). The use of plainsong as a musical frame in <i>The World of the Spirit</i> anticipates Britten's <i>A Ceremony of Carols</i> (1942) and the Church Parables of the 1960s.</p> <p>Britten's interest in <i>Veni Creator Spiritus</i> may have been stimulated by Mahler's Eighth Symphony, a performance of which he had heard Henry Wood conduct at the Queen's Hall on 9 February 1938, a few months before commencing work on <i>The World of the Spirit</i>. The symphony made a 'tremendous impression' on Britten, who noted in his diary that he was physically exhausted at the end...'</p>
<p>A setting of lines from the poem <i>Antiphon to the Holy Spirit</i> by A. Mary F. Robinson ('Madame Duclaux') in the manner of a Bach chorale, the only instance of the genre in Britten's works, although as a student chorales in the style of Bach must have been required of him. Divided lower strings double the voices, while woodwind and harp chords, sustaining the texture of the preceding number, punctuate each phrase of the hymn. Britten's setting moves from <i>pp</i> to <i>f</i> ('Thou broadest oer this world of Thine') before closing <i>ppp</i>. The audience hymns in <i>Saint Nicolas</i> (1948) and <i>Noye's Fludde</i> (1957) were to be a further development of this technique.</p>
<p>An unmistakably Brittenesque pattern of rising and falling thirds (arpeggios in woodwind and upper string) form the background to Britten's settings of four lines from Tennyson's <i>The Higher Pantheism</i> (female chorus, then tenor solo). Its unresolved end prepares the way for the spoken text that follows.</p>
<p>High strings provide a halo of sound to the setting of these famous words from the New Testament. The solo tenor's recitative-like introduction prefaces a <i>parlando</i> and <i>sotto voce</i> response in the manner of Anglican chant (with which Britten had been familiar since his youth) from the semi-chorus. This number leads directly into 4b.</p>

No.	Title	Key	Instrumentation
4B 13	With wide-embracing love (<i>Andante con moto</i>)	e–D	Soprano, alto, chorus, 2fl, 2ob, 2cl, 2bn, 2hn, tuba, harp, strings

Commentary
Britten's <i>The Company of Heaven</i> had included a magical setting for tenor and strings of one of Emily Brontë's poems, and in <i>The World of the Spirit</i> we find the composer and his librettist, R. Ellis Roberts, returning to Brontë's verse with this setting of lines from her poem <i>No coward soul is mine</i> . This remarkable number, a barcarolle, foreshadows the profusion of 'innocent', unforgettable melody that characterizes <i>Paul Bunyan</i> , the operetta Britten was to write with W.H. Auden in New York in 1941. A quiet orchestral postlude typically features solos from pairs of flutes, oboes, bassoons and clarinets, before ending in a luminous D major.

Part II – The Fruits of the Spirit

5 15	O Life, O Love, now undivided (<i>Andante lento</i>)	C	Soprano, alto, chorus, 2cl, 2bn, 4hn, 2tpt, 3trbn, tuba, timp, harp, strings
6A 17	A voice within our souls has spoken (<i>Andante</i>)	B flat	Alto, tenor, bass, organ
6B 18	The fruit of the Spirit is love (<i>Andante con moto</i>)	b	Alto, organ
6C 20	The fruit of the Spirit is faith (<i>Allegro</i>)	D	Bass, organ
6D 22	The fruit of the Spirit is goodness (<i>Andante</i>)	↓	Alto, organ

An extended repetition of No. 2 setting further lines from the same poem. Britten further elaborates this second version, which moves from a unison to a four-part harmonization. The final quatrain is capped by descant-like solos from the soprano and alto.
A reworking of the <i>Veni Creator Spiritus</i> motto theme (see No. 1) is the first of a series of settings of the 'Fruits of the Spirit' (from <i>Galatians</i>). Britten's choice of tonality (B flat; see also No. 10) is an early example of his use of this key in the context of salvation and/or reconciliation (cf. for example, the epilogue of <i>Billy Budd</i> (1951) and the 'Peace' aria from <i>Owen Wingrave</i> (1970)). Britten's 'sentences' directly anticipate the technique he was to use in <i>Voices for Today</i> , composed to mark the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations in 1965, where similar humanitarian sentiments are expressed in a similar way.
The opening of the plainsong leads into a Bach-like arioso that prefigures the music of No. 8.
An energetic chordal declaration of the basic plainsong.
A retrospection of the barcarolle-like No. 4b.

No.	Title	Key	Instrumentation
6E 24	The fruit of the Spirit is long-suffering (<i>Comodo</i>)	a–e	Alto, organ
6F 26	The fruit of the Spirit is joy	D	Alto, tenor, bass, organ
7 28	The fruit of the Lord (<i>Lento – Allegro vivace</i>)	C	Soprano, alto, tenor, bass, chorus, 2fl, 2ob, 2cl, 2bn, 4hn, 2tpt, 3trbn, tuba, perc, timp, harp, organ, strings

Commentary
This sentence recollects the chorale from Nos 2 and 5.
The trio of singers rounds off the sequence with a further variant of <i>Veni Creator Spiritus</i> .
An unmistakably Waltonese setting of a text derived from the Proper Antiphons for Whit Sunday. The opening brass fanfare in B flat, with chorus and woodwind, evokes – perhaps quite consciously? – the opening bars of Walton's <i>Belshazzar's Feast</i> (1931), as do the cross rhythms (6/8 and 3/4) of the subsequent 'Alleluys'. Walton's oratorio had made a considerable impression on the young Britten when he first heard it in 1931, and almost a year later he wrote in his diary: 'It is amazingly clever & effective music, with some great moments, I feel.' There follows a more characteristically Brittenesque theme ('O send forth Thy Spirit') and passages of ingenious counterpoint, with interventions of a plainsong-like nature from the soloists. The highly expressive writing for unison strings which accompanies the final 'Alleluys' before the <i>Maestoso</i> coda shows how much Britten had learned from the experience of writing the <i>Frank Bridge Variations</i> for string orchestra. The coda ('I will come to you again') once again recalls Walton's oratorio.

Part III – Epilogue

8 30	O knowing, glorious Spirit! (<i>Andante semplice</i>)	a	Soprano, fl, harp, solo vn
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This setting of a text by the seventeenth-century religious poet Henry Vaughan is clearly modelled on Bach's arias in his cantatas and Passions. The 'continuo' of the harp accompanies the intertwining counterpoint of the solo soprano and obbligati of flute and violin, first adumbrated in No. 6b, the second of the sentences.

No.	Title	Key	Instrumentation
9 32	The World is Charged (<i>Allegro alla marcia</i>)	d–D	Sopranos, chorus, picc, fl, 2ob, 2cl, 2bn, 4hn, 2tpt, 3trbn, tuba, perc, timp, organ, strings
10 34	Come, O Creator Spirit, Come (<i>Lento rubato – Allegro vivace lento</i>)	B flat	Soprano, chorus, 2fl, 2ob, 2cl, 2bn, 4hn, 2tpt, 3trbn, tuba, perc, timp, organ, strings

Commentary

An unashamedly dramatic setting of Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem. It was a text to which Britten was to return a year later in *AMDG* (1939), a posthumously published collection of seven *a cappella* Hopkins settings. In the opening bars we hear a pounding, motoric ostinato in the brass (trombone and tuba) which recurs throughout and which obviously has its origins in Prokofiev, with whose film music Britten was thoroughly familiar. The scurrying, piercing, chromatic woodwind writing at 'Why do men then now not reck His rod?' anticipates the high winds of the 'Storm' Interlude from *Peter Grimes*, while the contours of the soprano solo ('And for all this, nature is never spent', an ostinato motif in the strings) bring to mind Ellen Orford's 'Glitter of waves' from *Grimes II/i*.

The coda takes the shape of an extended setting of *Veni Creator Spiritus*, thus completing the frame initiated in No. 1. Britten brings great imagination to the constantly changing harmonization of the plainsong, perhaps especially noticeable in the *Largamente* passage underpinning the spoken word. Three choral verses (SA; TB; then full chorus), each gaining in poetic intensity, lead to a radiant conclusion (the final stanza of the hymn) for soprano and strings.

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The World of the Spirit
for speakers, soloists, chorus and orchestra

Part I – Prologue

1 Prelude

Speaker 1 (female)

I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

(*Joel 2:28*)

2 O Thou that movest all

Chorus

O Thou that movest all, O Power,
That bringest life where'er Thou art,
O Breath of God in star and flower,
Mysterious aim of soul and heart.

O Life, O Love, how undivided,
Thou broodest o'er this world of Thine.
Obscure and strange, yet surely guided
To reach a distant end divine.

(*from Antiphon to the Holy Spirit*
by Mary Duclaux)

Speaker 1

The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid... When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.

(*from John 14 & 15*)

Speaker 2 (male)

I assert, for myself, that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is a hindrance and not a help. 'What?' it will be questioned, 'When the sun rises, do you not see a round disc of fire somewhat like a guinea?' 'Oh, no!, no! I see an unnumerable company of the heavenly host crying, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty', I question, not my corporeal eye any more than I question the window concerning a sight. I look *through* it, not with it.'

(*from Life of Blake* by Gilchrist)

Speaker 1

I have learned to look on nature, not as in the hour

Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,

Nor harsh, nor grating, tho' of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt

A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns

And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;

A motion and a spirit, that impels

All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls thro' all things.

(*from Tintern Abbey* by Wordsworth)

3 The Sun, the Moon, the Stars

Chorus

The sun, the moon, the stars, the sea, the hills
and the plains –

Are not these, O soul, the vision of Him who reigns?

Tenor

Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with spirit can meet –
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands or feet.
(*from The Higher Pantheism* by Tennyson)

Speaker 2

And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and string wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake was a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a still small voice.

(*1 Kings 19: 11–12*)

4A This is my commandment

Tenor

This is my commandment, That you love one another, even as I have loved you.

(*John 13:34*)

Semi-chorus

If you love me, keep my commandments.
And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever. Even the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but you know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

(*John 14: 15–17*)

4B With wide-embracing love

Soprano, alto, chorus

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in thee.
(Emily Brontë)

Part II – The Fruits of the Spirit

Speaker 2

Lord make me see thy glory in every place;
If mortal beauty sets my heart aglow,
Shall not that fire beside thy fire burn low,
Extinguished by the flaming of thy grace?

I cry to Thee for help, Dear Lord, O raise
My spirit from this sadness, from this woe:
The Spirit alone can save me; may it go
Through will, thro' senses, purging what is base!
(Michelangelo, trans. R. Ellis Roberts)

5 O Life, O Love, now undivided

Soprano, alto, chorus

O Life, O Love, now undivided,
Thou broodest o'er this world of Thine
Obscure and strange, yet surely guided?
To reach a distant end divine.

We know Thee in the doubt and terror
That reels before the world we see,
We knew Thee in the faiths of error:
We know Thee most who most are free.

This phantom of the world around Thee
Is vast, divine, but not the whole:
We worship Thee and we have found Thee
In all that satisfies the soul!

How shall we serve, how shall we own Thee,
O Breath of Love and Life, and Thought?
How shall we praise, who are not shown Thee?
How shall we serve, who are as nought?

Yet, though thy worlds maintain unbroken
The silence of their awful round.
A voice within our souls hath spoken,
And we who seek have more than found.
(from *Antiphon to the Holy Spirit*
by Mary Duclaux)

16 *Speaker 1*
Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
As many as are led by the spirit of God, they
are the sons of God.

6A *Speaker 2*
17 The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-
suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
meekness, temperance.
(*Galatians 5: 22–23*)

Alto, tenor, bass soli
A voice within our souls hath spoken,
And we who seek have more than found.

Speaker 1
By their fruits shall you know them.

6B *Alto solo*
18 The fruit of the Spirit is love, is peace,
is gentleness.

19 *Speaker 1*
One day in November 1682, William Penn and
his fellows made a treaty of Amity with the
American Indians. Penn and his friends had no
weapons; the Indians were fully armed. This is
what Penn said:

Speaker 2
The Great Spirit who made me and you, who
rules the heavens and the earth, and knows

the innermost thoughts of men, knows that I
and my friends have a hearty desire to live in
peace and friendship with you, and to serve
you to the uttermost of our power. It is not
our custom to use hostile weapons against our
fellow-creatures, for which reason we have
come unarmed. Our object is not to do injury,
and thus provoke the great Spirit, but to do
good. We are met on the broad pathway of
good faith and good will, so that no advantage
is to be taken on either side, but all is to be
openness, brotherhood, love.
(from *The Testament of Man*, ed. A. Stanley)

6C *Bass solo*
20 The fruit of the Spirit is faith.

21 *Speaker 1*
And Jesus went away to the district of Tyre
and Sidon. A woman of Canaan from that
region, came out of the same coasts, and
cried, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, son
of David; my daughter is severely possessed
by a demon.' But he did not answer her a
word. And his disciples came and begged
him, saying, 'Send her away; for she is crying
after us.' And He answered, 'I was sent only
to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But
she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord
help me.' And he answered, 'It is not fair to
take the children's bread and to throw it to
the dogs.' She said 'Yes, Lord; yet even the
dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their
master's table.' Then Jesus answered her,
'O woman, great is your faith. Be it unto you
as you desire.' And her daughter was healed
from that very hour.

(*Matthew 15: 21–28*)

6D *Alto solo*
22 The fruit of the Spirit is goodness, is
meekness.

23 *Speaker 2*
The Chief Rabbi Abraham Bloch, wearing the
ecclesiastical hat common to all Army
Chaplains during the First World War, was
helping to carry in both the wounded and the
dead. He had attached himself to the second
section of the stretcher-bearers, and
accompanied them everywhere they went. The
Rabbi halted beside a mortally wounded
soldier, who (taking him for a Catholic priest)
asked for absolution. 'I'm not a Catholic priest,
my friend, I am a Jewish Rabbi.'

'Can you not, then, get me a crucifix?'

Two stretcher-bearers carrying their usual
burden were passing along not far off. It
happened that one of these was a Catholic
priest. The Rabbi asked him if he had a
crucifix. He had one, under his long coat. The
priest's hands being occupied in holding the
stretcher, the Rabbi opened his coat, took the
crucifix and carried it to the wounded soldier.
As soon as he had done so, a shell burst close
to them, shattering both of the Rabbi's legs.
He died a few moments later.
(Fr Jamin, Roman Catholic Chaplain, French
Army)

6E *Alto solo*
24 The fruit of the Spirit is long-suffering.

25 *Speaker 2*
When James Connolly, the Irish rebel, was
under trial in 1916, he was a sorely wounded
man; and one of the nurses, who worked at
Dublin Castle at that time wrote...

Speaker 1
The arrival of James Connolly caused an
unusual stir... The nurses in charge of him
acknowledged, without exception, that he was
entirely different from their expectations... No
one could have been more considerate, or
have given less trouble. About a week after his
arrival he had an operation on his leg. When
he was coming round after the ether, the
sentry changed, and Connolly turned to the
nurse who was minding him and asked 'Have
they come to take me away? Must I really die
so soon?' All through, his behaviour was that
of an idealist. He was calm and composed
during the court-martial, and said 'You can
shoot me if you like, but I am dying for my
country.' He showed no sign of weakness till
his wife was brought to say goodbye to him
the night he was to be shot. When she had
left, he saw the monks, and about 3 a.m. he
was carried down on a stretcher that was to
bring him to Kilmainham.
(from *The Testament of Man*; A. Stanley)

6F *Alto, tenor, bass soli*
26 The fruit of the Spirit is joy.

27 *Speaker 1*
St Francis of Assisi once gave this wise advice
to a novice:

Speaker 2
'My brother, why that sad face? Have you
committed some sin? that only concerns God
and yourself. Go and pray. But before me and
your brothers light up your face with holy joys,
because it is not fitting to have an air cross
and sullen when one is engaged in the service
of God.'

Speaker 1

No man can make God visible; no hands can hold Him, nor man's mortal fingers touch, in spite of the heart's longing. He is not as man is: He is without body or parts or passions. He is spirit. He the Holy, incomprehensible, flashing in swift thought, a flame of Fire divine in all things burning.

(*Empedocles*, trans. R. Ellis Roberts)

7 The Spirit of the Lord

Chorus, soloists

²⁸ The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole world!

Alleluya!

O send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made:
And thou shalt renew the peace of the earth,

Alleluya!

I will not leave you comfortless.

I will come to you again, and your heart shall be joyful.

Alleluya!

Part III – Epilogue

Speaker 1

²⁹ Spirit to whom my spirit would reply,
Speak to me, Holy Spirit, so that I
May know thy mercy, by thy judgement live;
What is amiss in me, O Lord, forgive!
By Thee alone I know the true, the just:
All that is not of Thee would I distrust
And may I see when falls death's darkening night
The loved fulfilment of thy perfect light!
Take body, mind, and heart, and make them be,
O Lord, a sacramental path for thee.

(Anon)

Speaker 2

I saw myself as a youth, almost a boy, in a low-pitched wooden church. All at once a man came up from behind and stood beside me. I did not turn towards him, but I felt that the man was Christ. Emotion, curiosity, awe overmastered me. I made an effort and looked at my neighbour. A face like every man's, a face like all men's faces.

'What sort of Christ is this?' I wondered.

'Such an ordinary, ordinary man. It cannot be.' I turned away, but I had scarcely turned my eyes from this ordinary man, when I felt again that it was really none other than Christ standing beside me. And then, only then I realized that just such a face is the face of Christ, a face like all men's faces.

(from *Dreams* by Ivan Turgenev)

8 O knowing, glorious Spirit

Soprano

³⁰ O knowing, glorious Spirit! When
Thou shalt restore trees, beasts, and men,
When Thou shalt make all new again,
Destroying only death and pain,
Give him amongst Thy works a place
Who in them loved and sought Thy face!
(Henry Vaughan)

Speaker 2

³¹ I went out one afternoon for a walk alone. I was in the empty unthinking state in which one saunters along country lanes, simply yielding oneself to the casual sights around which give a town-bred lad with country yearnings such intense delight. Suddenly I became conscious of the presence of someone else. I cannot describe it, but I felt

that I had as direct a perception of the being of God all round me as I have of you when we are together. It was no longer a matter of inference, it was an immediate act of spiritual apprehension. It came unsought, absolutely unexpectedly. I remember the wonderful transfiguration of the far-off woods and hills as they seemed to blend in the infinite being with which I was thus brought into relation. This experience did not last long. But it sufficed to change all my feeling. I had not found God because I had never looked for him. But He had found me.

(from *I went out* by Joseph Estlin Carpenter)

9 The World is Charged

Chorus, soprano solo

³² The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck His rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared,
smeared with toil;

And bears man's smudges, and shares man's smell, the soil

Is bare now, nor can foot feel being shod.

And for all this, nature never is spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

And though the last lights off the black west went,

Oh, morning at the brown brink eastward,
springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with, ah!
bright wings.

(Gerard Manley Hopkins)

Speaker 1

³³ God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. And it is the spirit that bears witness because the Spirit is truth. The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; but you know him; for he dwells with you, and will be in you. And the Spirit himself bears witness unto our spirit, that we are the Children of God.
(John 4: 24, Romans 8: 5 & 16, John 14: 17)

10 Come, O Creator Spirit, Come

Chorus

³⁴ Come, O Creator Spirit, come,
And make within our hearts thy home;
To us thy grace celestial give,
Who of thy breathing move and live.

Thou dost appear in sevenfold dower
The sign of God's almighty power;
The Father's promise, making rich
With saving truth our earthly speech.

Our senses with thy light inflame,
Our hearts to heavenly love reclaim;
Our bodies' poor infirmity
With strength perpetual fortify.
(*English Hymnal 154*, vv. 1–4; Robert Bridges)

Speaker 2

Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
As many as are led by the spirit of God, they
are the sons of God.

Soprano solo

O Comforter, that name is thine,
Of God most high the gift divine;
The well of life, the fire of love,
Our souls' anointing from above.

Chorus

Amen.

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Susan Chilcott's international successes both on the opera stage and concert platform have established her as one of this country's most sought-after singers. She has sung with Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, English National Opera, Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, Paris Opera and Santa Fe Opera. A very versatile artist, Susan Chilcott has an extensive concert repertoire and has sung with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Mark Elder, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Sir Neville Marriner and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Jukka Pekka Saraste. She has performed at both the Edinburgh Festival and the BBC Promenade Concerts.

Pamela Helen Stephen was born in Warwickshire and studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, at the Opera Theater Center at Aspen, Colorado with Herta Glaz, and in Toronto with Patricia Kern. She has sung with Opera North, Welsh National Opera, DGOS Opera Ireland, Crystal Clear Opera and at the Edinburgh Festival. Foreign operatic engagements include Lisbon, Ludwigsburg, Paris, Amsterdam, Singapore and the Batignano and Wexford Festivals and her concert career has taken her to Berlin, Lisbon, Eisenstadt, Saarbrücken, Hamburg, Kiel, Lübeck and throughout the UK. Her recordings include Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*),

Phoebe (*The Yeoman of the Guard*) and Second Niece (*Peter Grimes*).

Martyn Hill is established as one of the leading tenors of his generation and during his active career he has worked with many of the world's leading conductors. Opera roles include Idomeneo, Belmonte, Ferrando and Aschenbach (*Death in Venice*). His concert repertoire is extensive, ranging from baroque to contemporary music and his well-established career has taken him all over the world performing with international orchestras. Martyn Hill has made over one hundred recordings of repertoire including English songs, French mélodies and German Lieder as well as music ranging from Monteverdi to Maxwell-Davies.

Stephen Varcoe was educated at King's College, Cambridge. He has performed in concert engagements with many distinguished orchestras including BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Nash Ensemble, Orchestra of St Luke's, New York, and the English Concert, with conductors including John Eliot Gardiner, Trevor Pinnock, Sigiswald Kuijken, Neville Marriner and Jean-Claude Malgoire. His extensive discography includes Haydn's *L'infedeltà delusa*, *Dido and Aeneas*, Tavener's *Mary of Egypt* and many recital discs. Recent engagements included Handel's *Apollo and*

Daphne with the St Paul's Chamber Orchestra with Richard Hickox and Alexander Goehr's *Sonata about Jerusalem* with the Schoenberg Ensemble and Oliver Knussen.

Hannah Gordon was born in Edinburgh and trained at the Glasgow College of Music and Dramatic Art. Her television career began with the role of Ralph Richardson's daughter in *Johnson over Jordan* and she was soon playing leading roles in highly successful classic serials for the BBC. West End appearances include *The Killing Game* and *The Country Girl* at the Apollo, and *Light up the Sky* at the Old Vic. Her film work includes the highly acclaimed *Elephant Man* and she has recently filmed *Limited Edition* in Paris. Hannah Gordon is perhaps best known on television for *My Wife Next Door*, but has appeared more recently in *Taggart* and *Joint Account*.

Cormac Rigby was a BBC announcer for twenty years, the last fourteen of them as Presentation Editor, Radio 3. After reading history at St John's College, Oxford, his doctoral thesis was a study of Edward Thring of Uppingham. His first love remains the ballet: he has written and broadcast much and contributes regularly to *Dance Now*. After leaving the BBC in 1985 he was ordained by Cardinal Hume in Westminster Cathedral. His priestly work permits occasional returns to the

microphone, notably as narrator of major organ works by Petr Eben, and presenting such events as the Mozart Bi-centenary Requiem from Vienna.

The **Britten Singers** were originally formed as a broadcasting choir, the BBC Northern Singers. Since the 1950s they have been acknowledged as one of the world's leading professional chamber choirs. As their name suggests, they have a special commitment to British music and they are particularly famous for their highly individual and eloquent performances and for their sensitive response to the texts they sing.

The Singers' extensive repertoire enables them to range very widely in style, period and language, from early times to the present day. Many composers have written works specially for them, including William Walton, Dame Elizabeth Maconchy, Nicholas Maw, John McCabe and John Joubert.

Based in Manchester, the **BBC Philharmonic** has established an international reputation, having travelled extensively to the USA, Far East, South America and all over Europe. Its Principal Conductor is Yan Pascal Tortelier, Sir Edward Downes is Conductor Emeritus and Vassily Sinaisky (Music Director of the Moscow Philharmonic) is Principal Guest Conductor.

The Orchestra records over one hundred

programmes annually for BBC Radio 3 and BBC Television both in the studio and in public concerts all over Britain. Under its exclusive Chandos contract the BBC Philharmonic displays an extensive repertoire featuring artists such as Rozhdestvensky, Bamert and Hickox as well as its own conductors.

One of Britain's leading conductors, **Richard Hickox** is founder and Music Director of the City of London Sinfonia, Associate Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, Principal Conductor of the London Symphony Chorus, and co-founder of Collegium Musicum 90 with Simon Standage. He was Artistic Director of

the Northern Sinfonia from 1982–90 and Principal Guest Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony from 1992–95.

His foreign engagements have included National Symphony (Washington), San Francisco Symphony, Dallas Symphony, New Japan Philharmonic, Orchestre philharmonique de Radio France, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Swedish Radio, Berlin Symphony, Hamburg and Cologne Radio Orchestras. Opera engagements include the Royal Opera House, English National Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Australian Opera and Rome Opera.

He has made over 130 recordings and has won three *Gramophone Awards*.

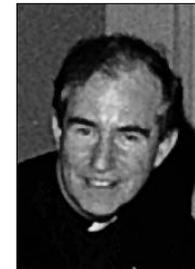


Hannah Gordon



Richard Hickox

Hanya Chhala



Cormac Rigby



Roy Jones

Susan Chilcott



Robert Carpentier Turner

Pamela Helen Stephen



Christina Burton

Martyn Hill



Stephen Varcoe

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6 - 13 Part I: Prologue 11:17

14 - 28 Part II: The Fruits of the Spirit 18:46

29 - 34 Part III: Epilogue 12:06

TT 78:34

Susan Chilcott soprano*
Pamela Helen Stephen mezzo-soprano*
Martyn Hill tenor*
Stephen Varcoe baritone*
Hannah Gordon speaker*
Cormac Rigby speaker*

Britten Singers*
Simon Wright musical director

BBC Philharmonic
Andrew Orton leader

Richard Hickox (DDD)



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