



Agnus Dei – Meditations

3 March 2019

Conductor: Leon Starker

Agnus Dei

Krzysztof Penderecki (b. 1933)

Agnus Dei,
Qui tollis peccata mundi
Dona eis requiem sempiternam

Lamb of God
That takes away the sin of the world
Give us eternal rest

Krzysztof Penderecki wrote Agnus Dei in 1981 after receiving the news of the death of his friend Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, a symbolic figure of the spiritual resistance against the Communist regime of Poland. Later he incorporated it into his Polish Requiem.

Miserere mei, Deus

Gregorio Allegri (1582 - 1652)

Solo group: Lorena Marais, Caitlin MacDonald, Estelle Roux, Miles Boeddinghaus,

Miserere mei, Deus: secundum magnam
misericordiam tuam.

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great
goodness

Et secundum multitudinem miserationum
tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.

according to the multitude of thy mercies do
away mine offences.

Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato
meo munda me.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness: and
cleanse me from my sin.

Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco: et
peccatum meum contra me est semper.

For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever
before me.

Tibi soli peccavi, et malum coram te feci: ut
justificeris in sermonibus tuis, et vincas cum
judicaris.

Against thee only have I sinned, and done this
evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified
in thy saying, and clear when thou art judged.

Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum: et in
peccatis concepit me mater mea.

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin
hath my mother conceived me.

Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti: incerta et occulta
sapientiae tuae manifestasti mihi.

But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts:
and shalt make me to understand wisdom of
the hidden and secret things

Asperges me hysopo, et mundabor: lavabis me,
et super nivem dealabor.

Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be
clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter
than snow.

Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitia: et
exsultabunt ossa humiliata.

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness:
that the bones which thou hast broken may
rejoice.

Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis: et omnes
iniquitates meas dele.

Turn thy face from my sins: and put out all my
misdeeds.

Cor mundum crea in me, Deus: et spiritum
rectum innova in visceribus meis.

Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a
right spirit within me.

Ne proicias me a facie tua: et spiritum sanctum
tuum ne auferas a me.

Cast me not away from thy presence: and take
not thy holy Spirit from me.

Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui: et spiritu
principali confirma me.

Restore to me the joy of thy salvation: and
strengthen me with thy free Spirit.

Docebo iniquos vias tuas: et impii ad te
convertentur.

Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked:
and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Libera me de sanguinibus, Deus, Deus salutis
meae: et exsultabit lingua mea iustitiam tuam.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou
that art the God of my health: and my tongue
shall sing of thy righteousness.

Domine, labia mea aperies: et os meum
annuntiabit laudem tuam.

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord: and my mouth
shall shew thy praise.

Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium, dedissem
utique: holocaustis non delectaberis.

For thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give
it thee: but thou delightest not in burnt-
offerings.

Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus: cor
contritum, et humiliatum, Deus, non despicias.

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a
broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou
not despise.

Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua
Sion: ut aedificentur muri Jerusalem.

O be favourable and gracious unto Sion: build
thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Tunc acceptabis sacrificium iustitiae,
oblaciones, et holocausta:

Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifice of
righteousness, with the burnt-offerings and
oblations:

tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.

then shall they offer young bullocks upon thine
altar.

Gregorio Allegri was an Italian singer and composer. He was born in Rome in 1582, and died there on 17 February 1652. After serving as a boy chorister in the church of San Luigi dei Francesi in Rome he took lessons in composition locally, and subsequently became a priest. On 6 December 1629 he was appointed a singer in the Chapel of Pope Urban VIII, a position which he held until his death.

Allegri is best known for his nine-part setting of the **Miserere mei, Deus**, a setting of Psalm 51, which was sung annually in the Pontifical Chapel during Holy Week. A number of unsupported legends have grown up with this work, including the supposed fact that it was so treasured that excommunication was the punishment for its unauthorised copying. There are known to have been three copies before 1770, one held by the Emperor Leopold I, one by the King of Portugal and one by Padre Martini. Burney got hold of a copy and published it in his **La musica della Settimana Santa** (1790), and Mozart is supposed to have made a copy during an actual performance.

Basically, it is a simple work. Its unique appeal lies in two factors: first, the particular acoustic of the building in which it was traditionally performed and, second, the *abbellimenti* with which the verses sung by the four-part choir were adorned. There has been a performing edition in which the Latin words are set, but without the *abbellimenti*; and an edition with the *abbellimenti*, but set to English words. This version performed today has the original Latin text, and the *abbellimenti* as well. It is based on the editions of Burney, Alfieri and Atkins.

Raua needmine

Curse upon Iron

Veljo Tormis (1930-2017)

from the Kalevala, adapted and augmented by
August Annist, Paul-Eerik Rummo and Jaan
Kaplinski

Brian Joubert, tenor

Brandon Wesner, baritone

Mikhail Schwartz, drum

Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska,
rauda raiska, rähka kurja.
Liha sööja, luu pureja,
vere süütuma valaja!
Kust said kurja, kangeeksi,
üleliia ülbeeksi?

Ohoy, villain! Wretched iron!
Wretched iron! Cursed bog ore!
You flesh-eater, gnawer of bones,
You spiller of innocent blood!
Scoundrel, how did you get power?
Tell how you became so haughty!

Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!
Tean ma sündi su sõgeda,
arvan algust su õela!

Damn you, bastard! Wretched iron!
I know your birth, you purblind fool,
I know well your source, you villain!

Käisid kolme ilmaneitsit,
taevatütarta tulista,
lüpsid maale rindasida,
soo pääle piimasida.
Üks see lüpsis musta piima,
sest sai rauda pehmeeda;
teine valgeta valasi,
sellest tehtud on teraksed;
kolmas see veripunasta,
sellest malmi ilma tulnud.

Once there walked three nature spirits,
three fiery daughters of the sky.
They milked their swelling breasts to earth,
they squeezed their milk onto the fens.
From the first maid spurted black iron,
this turned into soft wrought iron.
White milk squirted the second maid,
this was the source of tempered steel.
The third maid spouted blood-red milk,
this gave birth to bog iron ore.

Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska,
rauda raiska, rähka kurja.
Ei sa siis veel suuri olnud,
ei veel suuri, ei veel uhke,
kui sind soossa solguteldi,
vedelassa väntsuteldi.

Ohoy, villain! Wretched iron!
Wretched iron! Cursed bog ore!
Then you were not high and mighty,
not yet mighty, not yet haughty,
when you sloshed in swamps and marshes,
when in bogholes you were trampled.

Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!
Tean ma sündi su sõgeda,
arvan algust su õela!

Susi jooksis sooda mööda,
karu kõmberdas rabassa,
soo tõusis soe jalusta,
raba karu käpa alta.
Kasvid raudased orased,
soe jalgade jälile,
karu käppade kohale.

Ohoi rauda, laukalapsi,
rabarooste, pehme piima!
Kes su küll vihale käskis,
kes pani pahalle tööle?

Surma sõitis sooda mööda,
taudi talveteeda mööda,
leidis soost teraksetaime,
raua rooste lauka alta.
Nii kõneles suuri surma,
taudi tappaja tähendas:
Mäe alla männikussa,
põllulla küla päralla,
talude aitade tagana:
siin saab surma sepipada,
siia ahju ma asetan,
siia tõstan lõõtsad laiad,
hakkam rauda keetamaie,
raua roostet lõõtsumaie,
rauda tampima tigidaks.

Rauda, vaene mees, värises,
jo värises, jo võbises,
kuulis kui tule nimedada,
tule kurja kutsumista.

Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska!
Ei sa siis veel suuri olnud,
ei veel suuri, ei veel uhke,
kui sa ääsilla ägasid,
vingusid vasara alla.

Taat see ahjulta ärisest,
halliparda vommi päältä:
Rauda rasvana venikse,
ila kombel valgunekse,
veerdes alla ääsilta,

Damn you, bastard! Wretched iron!
I know your birth, you purblind fool!
I know well your source, you villain!

A wolf then ran across the fen,
a shambling bear walked in the moor.
And the swamp stirred in the wolf tracks,
under the bear's paws moved the moor.
And there sprouted iron seedlings
in the traces of the wolf's claws,
in the hollows of the bear tracks.

Ohoy, iron! Child of boghole!
Swamp's red rust and gentle smooth milk!
Tell me, who made you so baleful!
Who decreed your works of evil?

Death was riding through the marshes,
plague was on a winter journey.
Seedling steel it found in swampland,
rusty iron in a boghole.
The great death then began to talk,
the killer plague then spoke and said:
In a pine grove on a hillside,
in a field behind the village,
far beyond the farmers' granges,
right here will be the forge of death.
Here I'll build the forge's furnace,
here I'll place the widest bellows,
here I'll start to boil the iron,
fan and blast the rust-red bog ore,
hammer anger into iron.

Iron, poor man, shivered, trembled,
shivered, trembled, shuddered, quavered,
when he heard the call for fire,
heard the plea for flaming anger.

Ohoy, villain! Wretched iron!
Then you were not high and mighty,
not yet mighty, not yet haughty,
moaning in the white-hot furnace,
whining under beating hammers.

Droned the old man on the oven,
groaned the greybeard from the furnace:
Iron stretches, spreads like blubber,
Trickles, flows like dripping spittle,
oozing from the blazing furnace,

voolates valutulesta.

Veel sa rauda pehmekene,
mis ka sind karastatakse,
terakseksi tehtanekse.
Toodi ussilta ilada,
musta maolta mürgikesta.
Ei see raud kuri olekski
ilma usside ilata,
mao musta mürkideta.

Taat see ahjulta ärises,
halliparda vommi päältä:
Varja nüüd vägeva Looja,
kaitse kaunike Jumala,
et ei kaoks see mees koguni,
hoopistükkis ema lapsi,
Looja loodusta elusta,
Jumala alustatusta.
Uued ajad. Uued jumalad.
Kahurid, lennukid, kuulipildujad,
tankid, lennukid.
Uus raud ja teras,
uhiuued targad,
täpsed, vägevad tapjad,
automaatsete sihtimiseadmetega,
tuumalaengut kandvad,
tõrjerelvadele kättesaamatud raketid.
Noad, odad,
kirved, taprid, saablid,
lingud, tomahawkid, bumerangid,
ammud, nooled, kivid, kaikad,
küüned, hambad, liiv ja sool,
tuhk ja tõrv, napalm ja süsi.

Uus ja kõige kaasaegsem tehnika,
elektronika viimane sõna,
valmis liikuma igasse punkti, kõrvalekaldumatult
sihti tabama,
peatama, rivist välja lööma, hävitama,
võitlusvõimetuks tegema,
haavama, teadmata kaotama,
tapma, tapma raua, terase,
kroomi, titaani, uraani, plutooniumi
ja paljude teiste elementidega!

Ohoi sinda, rauda kurja,
mõõka sõja sünnitaja,
rauda rähka, kulda kilpi,

flowing from the scorching fire.

Iron, you're still soft and gentle.
How have you yet to be tempered
to make steel from harmless iron?
Get the spittle from an adder!
Bring the venom from a viper!
For iron wouldn't harbor evil
without spittle from a serpent,
without venom from a black snake.

Droned the old man on the oven,
groaned the greybeard from the furnace:
Shelter us, supreme Creator!
Keep us safe now, God Almighty!
So that mankind would not perish,
mother's child vanish without trace
from the face of the earth, from life,
from existence, God's creation.
New eras. New gods and heroes.
And cannons and airplanes
and tanks, and guns.
New steel and iron.
Brand-new, intelligent,
precise, powerful killers,
equipped with automated guiding devices,
armed with nuclear warheads.
Missiles invulnerable to defensive rocketry.
Knives and spears,
axes, halberds, sabers,
and slings and tomahawks and boomerangs,
bows and arrows, rocks and warclubs,
and claws and teeth, sand and salt,
dust and tar, napalm and coal.

Brand-new and up-to-date technology,
the ultimate word in electronics,
ready to fly in any direction,
stay undeflected on its course, hit the target,
paralyze, and knock out of action, obliterate,
render helpless and defenseless,
harm and hurt, cause unknowable loss,
and kill, kill with iron and with steel,
with chromium, titanium, uranium, plutonium,
and with a multitude of other elements.

Ohoy, villain! Evil iron!
Blade of the sword, mother of war!
Boghole ore's the golden guardian,

sina teras, nurja tõugu!

Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!
Oleme ühesta soosta,
ühest seemnest me signud,
sina maasta, mina maasta,
musta mulda me mõlemad,
ühe maa pääl me elame,
ühe maa see kokku saame,
maad meil küllalt siis mõlemal.

but you, steel, are kin to evil!

Damn you, bastard! Wretched iron!
We are kinsmen, of the same breed,
of the same seed we have sprouted.
You are earth-born, I am earth-born,
in the black soil we are brethren.
For we both live on the same earth
and in that earth we two will merge.
There will be land enough for both.

—Translation: Eero Vihman

Easily Tormis' most well-known and often-performed work outside of his native Estonia, *Raua needmine* was written at the height of the Cold War, during a period of severe Soviet oppression of Estonian culture. This makes its treatment of texts from the *Kalevala* - the epic national poetry of Estonia's close geographic and cultural neighbour, Finland - all the more remarkable. The text is extracted from the IX Runo of the *Kalevala*, in which the hero has received a vicious wound from an iron axe, and seeks the help of an old sage. In order to staunch the bleeding and heal the wound, however, the sage must know the origin of iron - to truly vanquish the evil, he must truly know its source. The piece combines many modern compositional techniques with a traditional Estonian form of folk singing known as *regilaul*, in which a short melodic fragment is repeated and passed between two or more voices, the text changing on each repetition. Two such fragments dominate the opening - a stammering short-long tune (tenor solo) cursing the iron, alternating with a stamping monotone (baritone solo) telling of its origins, all accompanied by a menacing drone, and the beating of the shaman's drum. This opening is followed by a rising and falling section evoking the swelling of a great bellows, and leading into a spoken (or rather shouted) section describing the horrors of modern mechanised warfare, culminating with the wailing of air raid sirens. The entire piece has a wave-like structure, repeatedly building in intensity before receding, only to build to an even greater climax, eventually exploding in a blood-curdling scream from the entire choir. Despite its savage soundworld, the piece has a powerfully pacifist message - ultimately, we are all made of the same stuff, and it is only by truly knowing the source of our differences that we can transcend them, recognise what unites us, and live in harmony with our environment.

Nox aurumque
(Golden night)

Eric Whitacre (b.1970)
Charles Anthony Silvestri (b.1965)

aurum,
infuscatum et obscurum,
canens noctis,
canens mortis,
acquiescens canendo...

Gold,
Tarnished and dark,
Singing of night,
Singing of death,
Singing itself to sleep...

et angelum somnit aurorarum et bellorum,
saeculorum aurorum fundit lacrimas,
lacrimas rerum bellorum.

And an angel dreams of dawns, and of war.
She weeps tears of the golden times
Tears of the cost of war.

o arma!
o lamina aurata!
gestu graves nimium,
graves nimium volatu.

O Shield!
O gilded blade!
You are too heavy to carry
Too heavy for flight.

aurum,
infuscatum et torpidum
suscita!
dilabere ex armis in alam!
volemus iterum,
alte supra murum;
angeli renascentes et exultantes ad alas
aurorarum,
aurorum,
somnia.

Gold, tarnished and weary,
Awaken!
Melt from weapon into wing!
Let us soar again,
High above this wall;
Angels reborn and rejoicing
With wings made
Of dawn,
Of gold,
Of dream.

aurum,
canens alarum,
canens umbrarum.

Gold,
Singing of wings,
Singing of shadows...

As the last piece told of the dark, insidious nature of iron, twisted by human hands into weapons, “Nox aurumque” laments the subversive nature of another element - the beguiling radiance of gold has been tarnished by greed and envy, inspiring men to wicked deeds and war. But gold is also the colour of light, of dawn. This dual nature is vividly represented by some of Whitacre’s most characteristic compositional traits - generous use of extended harmonies; sudden shifts between major and minor; dense, richly embellished chords. Perhaps the most distinctive effect though is the use of split-third or mixed third chords. These are regular triads which contain both a minor and major third above the root, producing an ambiguous harmonic effect. Most tellingly, the piece closes with one of these open-ended harmonies, a kind of musical question mark, as golden radiance recedes into shadow.

De Profundis

John August Pamintuan (b.1972)
Federico García Lorca (1898-1936)

Los cien enamorados
duermen para siempre
bajo la tierra seca.
Andalucía tiene
largos caminos rojos.
Córdoba, olivos verdes
donde poner cien cruces
que los recuerden.
Los cien enamorados

Those hundred lovers
are asleep forever
beneath the dry earth.
Andalusia has
long, red-colored roads.
Córdoba, green olive trees
for placing a hundred crosses
to remember them.
Those hundred lovers

Part of a larger work titled *Poema del cante jondo* (Poem of Deep Song) celebrating Andalusian Gypsy heritage, “De Profundis” is one of Lorca’s most famous poems. Although it was written in 1921, long before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War (at the start of which the poet himself was murdered by Nationalist forces), it is eerily prescient of the horrors of that conflict, with its references to mass burial and blood-stained landscapes. The title, of course, is reminiscent of Psalm 130 - “Out of the depths have I called unto thee” - although it more likely refers to the missive of the same name written by Oscar Wilde during his imprisonment in Reading Gaol. Richly atmospheric, but incredibly economical - reflecting the austerity of the poem - this piece makes use of some very clever but simple effects, from the monorhythmic accompaniment calling as if from beyond the grave, to the microcanonical echoes which cascade through the melodic lines. Throughout this piece, the male and female voices remain steadfastly separated, perhaps representative of “those hundred lovers”, united forever in time, but remote in space, lying as they are “beneath the dry earth”.

When David Heard

Eric Whitacre (b.1970)
II Samu3l 18:33

When David heard that Absalom was slain he went up into his chamber over the gate and wept, my son, my son, O Absalom my son, would God I had died for thee!

“Setting this text was such a lonely experience, and even now just writing these words I am moved to tears. I wrote maybe 200 pages of sketches, trying to find the perfect balance between sound and silence, always simplifying, and by the time I finished a year later I was profoundly changed. Older, I think, and quieted a little. I still have a hard time listening to the recording.”

- Eric Whitacre

The composer added this instruction on the score: “Trust the silences”

Agnus Dei

Gabriel Jackson (b. 1962)

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi
Miserere nobis
Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi
Dona nobis pacem

Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world
Have mercy on us
Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world
Grant us peace

The Edinburgh Mass is a major work by one of Britain's leading choral composers and was commissioned by St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh. The setting is terse and direct, in the manner of the Poulenc Mass, and the textures often unusually pared-down. By turns fiery and exuberant, and inward and numinous, the music includes a huge variety of textures and techniques, including flowing melismas, luminous key changes, and pure homophony. This is a work of great power that will appeal to committed concert and church choirs.

The Agnus Dei is a piercing plea for mercy that eventually resolves into a warm, pacific Dona Nobis Pacem. It stands in strong contrast to Pamintuan's De Profundis.

The Cape Town Youth Choir was formed in 1997 under the name **Pro Cantu** by André van der Merwe. Leon Starker became conductor in 2003.

We aim to provide a moving musical experience to our audiences and to provide an opportunity for young Capetonians to sing in a choir of the highest international standards.

CTYC has performed well in international competitions, winning gold on several occasions at the World Choir Games and e.g. winning the Grand Prix award at the Bratislava International Music Festival and Competition in 2014. **The next competition we'll take part in is in 2019** - watch this space for details!

We love tackling challenging repertoire and singing major choral works. In recent years we have performed Arvo Pärt's St John Passion and Rachmaninov's All-Night Vigil, as well as Händel's Messiah. In 2017 we performed three different repertoire sets: in April we toured the US with concerts in New York (**Carnegie Hall!!**) and Boston, with a programme titled "Songs of loss and hope". In August we performed a concert in honour of composer Hendrik Hofmeyr's 60th birthday and except for two songs, presented an all-Hofmeyr programme. In March 2018 we recorded Handel's Messiah for kykNet. It is scheduled for broadcast in December.

The choir varies between 24 and 36 members. Membership is open for anyone that have passed the audition but more importantly, that is willing to commit the time.

Our motto is "**Pro Cantu**". It means "**for singing**" and it is through singing that we makes new friends and each chorister is empowered to find his or her own voice.



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CTYC – March 2019

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