



Collegium
RECORDS

JOHN RUTTER

VISIONS 2016

REQUIEM 1985 NEW RECORDING

JOHN RUTTER

VISIONS (2016)

Solo violin: Kerson Leong

The Temple Church Boys' Choir (director: Roger Sayer)

Aurora Orchestra (leader: Zoë Beyers)

REQUIEM (1985)

Solo soprano: Alice Halstead

The Cambridge Singers

Aurora Orchestra

conducted by John Rutter

Total playing time: 57' 47"

Words credits are listed with each text (see pp. 6 -11)

All music by John Rutter

1 - 4 **Visions** (20' 23")

Note: movements 1–3 play without a break

1 Processional and prelude: Jerusalem the blessed (2' 46")

2 Arise, shine (4' 34")

3 Lament for Jerusalem (6' 49")

4 Finale: The holy city (6' 10")

5 - 11 **Requiem** (37' 18")

5 1. Requiem aeternam (6' 00")

6 2. Out of the deep (6' 02")

Solo cello: Sebastien van Kuijk

7 3. Pie Jesu (3' 58")

Solo soprano: Alice Halstead

8 4. Sanctus (2' 20")

9 5. Agnus Dei (6' 12")

10 6. The Lord is my shepherd (5' 05")

Solo oboe: Thomas Barber

11 7. Lux aeterna (7' 16")

Solo soprano: Alice Halstead

Visions and *Requiem* are published worldwide by Oxford University Press.

Kerson Leong (www.kersonleong.com) appears by courtesy of Analekta Records (www.analekta.com). For this recording he performed on a c.1728-1730 Guarneri del Gesù violin courtesy of Canimex Inc. of Drummondville, Quebec, Canada.

Aurora Orchestra is at www.auroraorchestra.com

The Temple Church Boys' Choir appears by kind permission of the Rev. Robin Griffith-Jones, Master of the Temple, and was trained by Roger Sayer, Organist and Director of Music at the Temple Church, London.

The Temple Church Boys' Choir

Theo Belton, James Bennett, Lucas Byng, James Cahill, Louis Cahill, Ebube Chiana, Samuel Glatt, Charles Gundy, Osian Guthrie, Tristan Lockett-Green, Alex Rigo McSweeney, Jian Hui Mo, John Morshead, Emerson Murphy (*Head Chorister*), Townsend Murphy, Max Todes, (*Deputy Head Chorister*), Luka Trandafilovski, Henry Tyson, Hieu Wilkinson, Luca Zucchi (*Deputy Head Chorister*)

The Cambridge Singers

Sopranos: Helen Ashby, Kate Ashby, Charlotte Ashley, Rachel Ambrose Evans, Eloise Irving, Rebecca Lea, Marie Macklin, Ruth McElvanney, Philippa Murray, Amy Wood

Altos: Hannah Cooke, Rosanna Goodall, Alice Gribbin, Lara Harvey, Carris Jones, Katie Schofield

Tenors: Ben Alden, William Balkwill, David Condry, Guy Cutting, Thomas Herford, Stefan Kennedy

Basses: Richard Bannan, Timothy Dickinson, Josh Edwards, Richard Latham, Alexander Learmonth, Andrew Mahon, Edmund Saddington

Choir management: Simon Wall

A composer's personal retrospect . . .

During two busy but blissful days in July this year I had the opportunity to record, side by side, my most recent work *Visions* (for the first time) and my 30-year-old *Requiem* (for the second time). The suggestion came from an old friend, Barry Holden – these days a very senior executive for another record label but a supportive and collegial choral music enthusiast – and it was a logistical feat to make the idea a reality. I was determined that the violin soloist in *Visions* should be Kerson Leong from Canada, the young Menuhin Competition prizewinner for whom I had written the work and who had given the first performance at the Temple Church in London in April. The earliest date he could be in London for the recording was 16 July – but the latest date that the Temple Church Boys' Choir, also essential for the recording, could be available was also 16 July, since they were due to leave for a tour of Singapore and Australia on 17 July. Schedules had to be juggled to ensure the availability of Aurora Orchestra (the young award-winning chamber orchestra who were my first choice), our producer Raphaël Mouterde, plus myself and the acoustically lovely All Hallows Church, my preferred venue – but somehow it all came together, and this album is the result.

The reason for recording *Visions* was fairly obvious: to give its original soloist and choir a chance to capture their performance in a more permanent form than the fleeting première – but why re-record *Requiem* when I had already recorded it soon after it was written in 1985? Truth to tell, the original recording, although in its time a valuable ambassador for what was then a new work, was beginning to show its age – as digital technology has advanced over thirty years, new high-resolution formats are expected. I also felt it would be interesting to give a new generation of the Cambridge Singers – most of whom were not born at the time of the original recording – an opportunity to see what they could do with what is

now a familiar choral work. I have not listened to the original recording for many years, so I must leave comparisons to others, but I can say that the pleasure of being able to record the music twice in a lifetime was real, and equal on both occasions.

JOHN RUTTER
August 2016

Visions – composer's note, and texts

Visions was the result of a most unusual invitation: to write a piece combining solo violin, string ensemble (to which I added a harp), and the boy choristers of the Temple Church choir. The occasion was a concert at the Temple Church in London forming part of the 2016 Menuhin Competition, at which two past winners of that renowned violin competition were to perform. My assigned soloist was the dazzling 19-year-old Canadian violinist Kerson Leong. Having immediately decided to accept, my thoughts soon turned to the historic associations of the Temple Church with the Knights Templar – the church takes its name from the Temple at Jerusalem, and the round shape of its most ancient part is a deliberate echo of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. 'Jerusalem' is of course more than the name of a middle-eastern city: it stands as a symbol both of God's people and of a utopian ideal of heavenly peace and seraphic bliss in store for redeemed humanity.

I chose four biblical texts which express different aspects of this vision – (1) an introductory description of the imagined city in the words and Gregorian melody of a medieval hymn familiar in the English version beginning 'Blessed city, heavenly Salem'; (2) Isaiah's prophetic vision of the coming of Messiah, followed by a lively section which might be a dance of the daughters of Jerusalem; (3) a lament for the desolation of Sion, using a transmuted fragment of both text and melody line from William Byrd's anthem *Bow thine ear, O Lord*; and (4), a beatific vision of the holy city as seen by St John in the Book of Revelation.

1 1. Jerusalem the blessed

Urbs Jerusalem beata
Dicta pacis visio,
Quae construitur in caelis
Vivis ex lapidibus,
Et angelis coronata,
Ut sponsata comite.

Portae nitent margaritis
Adytis patentibus:
Et virtute meritorum
Illuc introducitur
Omnes qui ob Christi nomen
Hic in mundo premitur.

(Medieval hymn, 'Urbs Jerusalem beata')

*(O Jerusalem the blessed,
Vision that can never fade;
Built of living stones in heaven,
There in splendour bright displayed;
Crowned in glory with God's angels,
As a royal bride arrayed.*

*Decked with pearl her gates resplendent
Wide are open evermore;
By God's grace and intercession
Faithful souls may thither soar
All who in Christ's name have suffered,
Those who earthly trials bore.)**

2 2. Arise, shine

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. For behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

(Isaiah, from Chs 60 and 65)

3 3. Lament for Jerusalem

Sion is wasted, is wasted and brought low;
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, desolate and void.

*(from 'Bow thine ear, O Lord',
17th-century translation of 'Civitas sancti tui')*

4 4. The holy city

I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem: alleluia.
And the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.
And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.
And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

(Revelation, from Ch. 21)

*(Verse 1 of the opening hymn is repeated.)**

**English version by John Rutter*

Requiem – composer’s note and texts

Requiem was composed in 1985 and first performed in the United States by the church choir of my musical patron and friend Mel Olson. It was not the result of any commission, but simply something which sprang from studying the manuscript of the Fauré Requiem in Paris (could I too write a Requiem?) – and which was spurred on by a wish to remember in music my late father, who had died in the previous year.

Following the precedent established by Brahms and Fauré, among others, it is not a complete setting of the *Missa pro defunctis* as laid down in Catholic liturgy, but instead is made up of a personal selection of texts, some taken from the Requiem Mass and some from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. The seven sections of the work form an arch-like meditation on themes of life and death: the first and last movements are prayers to God the Father on behalf of all humanity, movements two and six are psalms, movements three and five are personal prayers to Christ, and the central Sanctus is an affirmation of divine glory, accompanied by bells as is customary at this point in the Mass. Gregorian chant is used, in fragmentary or disguised form, at several points in the work. Each of the two psalm settings has an instrumental obbligato, a feature inherited from Bach.

In style and scale, *Requiem* owes more to Fauré and Duruflé than to Berlioz, Verdi or Britten. It is intimate rather than grand, mostly contemplative and lyric rather than dramatic, consolatory rather than grim, approachable rather than exclusive. Would I write the same sort of Requiem today? Perhaps not, but it was what I meant at the time I wrote it, and unlike other genres of composition, a Requiem is something you only write once.

5 1. Requiem aeternam

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine: et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion: et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam, ad te omnis caro veniet.
Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

(from *Missa pro defunctis*)

*Grant them rest eternal, Lord: and may light perpetual shine upon them.
Thou, Lord, art worshipped in Sion: thy praises shall ever be sung in Jerusalem.
Hear, O Lord, hear my prayer; to thee shall all mortal flesh return.
Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.*

6 2. Out of the deep

Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.
O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint.
If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss: O Lord, who may abide it?
For there is mercy with thee: therefore shalt thou be feared.
I look for the Lord: my soul doth wait for him, and in his word is my trust.
My soul fleeth unto the Lord: before the morning watch, I say, before the morning watch.
O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy: and with him is plenteous redemption.
And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.

(*Psalm 130*)

7 3. Pie Jesu

Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem.
Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis sempiternam requiem.

(from *Dies irae, Missa pro defunctis*)

*Blessed Jesu, Lord I pray, in thy mercy grant them rest.
Lord our God, we pray thee, grant them everlasting rest.*

8 4. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

(from Missa pro defunctis)

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and majesty.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord:
Hosanna in the highest.

9 5. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona eis requiem.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world: grant them rest.

Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery.
He cometh up, and is cut down like a flower; he fleeth as it were a shadow.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona eis requiem.
In the midst of life we are in death. Of whom may we seek for succour?
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.
I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord:
he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:
and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

*(Latin text from Missa pro defunctis;
English texts from the Burial Service, 1662 Book of Common Prayer)*

10 6. The Lord is my shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing.
He shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of
comfort.
He shall convert my soul and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his
Name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
For thou art with me: Thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
Thou shalt prepare a table for me against them that trouble me:
Thou hast anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.
But thy loving kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

(Psalm 23)

11 7. Lux aeterna

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me: Blessed are the dead who die in the
Lord,
for they rest from their labours. Even so saith the Spirit.
Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine: Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.
Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*Light eternal shine upon them, Lord, we pray: With thy saints ever dwelling, for thy
mercy's sake,
may they rest in peace.
Grant them rest eternal, Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon them.*

*(English text from the Burial Service
Latin text from Missa pro defunctis)*



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