

ASTRA 2007

4 pm, Sunday 22 April
Holy Rosary Church
Kensington, Melbourne

THE ASTRA CHOIR IN ASSOCIATION WITH SPEAK PERCUSSION

Luigi Dallapiccola
SONGS OF IMPRISONMENT

Carlo Gesualdo
TENEBRAE RESPONSORIES

Hanns Eisler
AGAINST WAR

James Tenney, Fritz Hauser

Blessed, who could loosen the fetters of the heavy earth

Boethius

They placed me in a solitary desert

Tenebrae liturgy, Good Friday

This war is not our war

Brecht

Mary Anderson *harp* **Delyth Stafford** *harp*
Kim Bastin *piano, organ* **Joan Pollock** *piano*

Speak Percussion:

Eugene Ughetti (Artistic Director), **Peter Neville,**
Steve Fitzgerald, Christopher Lane, Timothy Phillips,
Daniel Richardson, Matthias Schack-Arnott, Greg Sully

The Astra Choir:

soprano

Jessica Aszodi, Irene McGinnigle, Gina McWilliam,
Catrina Seiffert, Yvonne Turner, Louisa Billeter,
Andrea McAdam, Maree Macmillan, Kim Tan

alto

Pen Alexander, Hana Crisp, Anna Gifford, Susannah Provan,
Beverley Bencina, Aviva Endean, Frances McKinnon,
Aline Scott-Maxwell, Lisel Thomas

tenor

Timothy Drylie, Kevin March, William Thompson,
Jon Drews, Greg Deakin, Simon Johnson,
Nicholas Tolhurst, Phillip Villani

bass

Karl Billeter, James Harland, Bradley Posselt,
Andrew Ferguson, Jerzy Kozlowski,
Andrew Rostas, Chris Smith, John Terrell

Solo voices:

Jessica Aszodi, Catrina Seiffert, Louisa Billeter *soprano*
Hana Crisp *mezzo soprano* **Timothy Drylie, Kevin March** *tenor*
Nicholas Tolhurst *baritone* **Jerzy Kozlowski** *bass*

conducted by **John McCaughey**

Production: Wally Gunn
Recording Engineer: Michael Hewes
Astra Manager: Bobbie Hodge

PROGRAMME

13th C Sequence
DIES IRAE male voices

Gregorian hymn
O GLORIOSA DOMINA female voices

Carlo Gesualdo
TENEBRAE RESPONSORIES (1611)
six-part choir
II. Tristis est anima mea

Gregorian Lectio: Lamentation Of Jeremiah
COGITAVIT DOMINUS solo bass

X. Omnes amici mei

Gregorian Psalm 53
ALIENI INSURREXERUNT IN ME

XIV. Tenebrae factus est

Carlo Gesualdo
Motet: AVE DULCISSIMA MARIA

James Tenney
WAKE (1974)
quartet for tenor drums

Lectio: Lamentation Of Jeremiah
MATRIBUS SUIS DIXERUNT solo tenor

XXIII. O vos omnes

13th C Sequence
O MARIA VIRGO PIA
female voices

XXIV. Ecce quomodo moritur

James Tenney
HOCKET (1974)
quartet for bass drums

XXVI. Factus sum sine adjutorio

Hanns Eisler
GEGEN DEN KRIEG – AGAINST WAR (1936)
24 Variations for choir, poems by Bertolt Brecht

I n t e r v a l

Fritz Hauser
ZEICHNUNG – DRAWING (2002)
duo for 2 players and 4 cymbals

Carlo Gesualdo / augmented Igor Stravinsky
DA PACEM, DOMINE
five-part choir

Luigi Dallapiccola
CANTI DI PRIGIONIA – SONGS OF IMPRISONMENT (1938-41)
1. PRAYER of Mary Stuart 2. INVOCATION of Boethius 3. FAREWELL of Savonarola
choir, 2 pianos, 2 harps, 8 percussion

Hanns Eisler
CANON: PEACE ON EARTH (1946)

13th century Sequence
DIES IRAE

Dies irae, dies illa,
solvat saeculum in favilla,
teste David cum Sibylla.

Day of wrath, that dreaded day,
will dissolve the world in coals,
foreseen by David and the Sibyl.

Quantus tremor est futurus,
quando iudex est venturus,
cuncta stricte discussurus!

How much trembling there will be
when the judge of all comes forth,
sternly sifting every deed!

Tuba mirum spargens sonum
per sepulchra regionum,
coet omnes ante thronum.

A trumpet of astounding sound
calling through the region's graves,
will summon all before the throne.

Mors stupebit et natura,
cum resurget creatura,
iudicanti responsura.

Death will be stunned, nature too,
when all creatures rise again,
answering to the judge of all.

Liber scriptus proferetur,
in quo totum continetur,
unde mundus iudicetur.

The written book will be brought forth,
in which every deed is entered,
whence the world can then be judged.

Iudex ergo cum sedebit,
quidquid latet apparebit,
nil inultum remanebit.

When the judge thus takes his seat
whatever is hidden will be shown,
nothing will stay unavenged.

Qui Mariam absolvisti,
et latronem exaudisti,
mihi quoque spem dedisti.

You who absolved Mary Magdalene,
and heard the thief's prayer,
to me you have also given hope.

Preces meae non sunt dignae,
sed tu, bonus, fac benigne,
ne perenni cremer igne.

My prayers are not worthy,
but you, the good, grant freely
that I do not burn in the eternal fire.

Recordare, Jesu pie,
quod sum causa tuae viae,
ne me perdas illa die.

Call to mind then, gracious Jesus,
that I am your journey's cause,
do not lose me on that day.

Quaerens tue sedisti lassus,
redemisti crucem passus;
tantus labor non sit cassus,

Seeking me, you sat exhausted,
redeemed me taking on the cross,
let such toil not be in vain.

Lacrimosa dies illa,
qua resurget ex favilla
iudicandus homo reus
Huic ergo parce, Deus.

Full of tears will be that day
when from the coals shall rise again
sinful humans to be judged.
Therefore pardon them, o God.

Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem. Amen.

Merciful Lord Jesus, give them rest. Amen.

– attributed to Tomaso of Celano, 13th C.

Gregorian hymn
O GLORIOSA DOMINA

O gloriosa domina,
quem magna cruciamina,
cum Barrabas dimittitur,
et Christi poenas patitur.

O glorious lady,
how great was your anguish,
when Barrabas was released,
and Christ was delivered to suffering.

Pastorem heu percutiunt,
oves disperse fugiunt,
te sola, dilectissimo,
manente cum discipulo.

The shepherd, alas, they slew,
the sheep fled and scattered,
you alone, O dearest one,
remained with the disciple.

Non mirum si sis anxia,
commota tali furia,
te sciens puram virginem,
Christum deum et hominem.

No wonder that you were distressed,
and stirred to such anger,
knowing yourself a pure virgin,
and Christ both God and human.

Sit laus, honor, devotio,
Jhesu Marie filio,
tenso crucis patibulo
pro redimento populo.

Praise, honour and devotion be
to Jesus son of Mary,
who was fastened to the cross
for the redemption of his people.

Carlo Gesualdo
TRISTIS EST ANIMA MEA
Second Responsory for Maundy Thursday

II.

Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem:
sustinete hic, et vigilate mecum:
nunc videbitis turbam,
quae circumdabit me:
Vos fugam capietis,
et ego vadam immolari pro vobis.

Ecce appropinquat hora,
et filius hominis tradetur
in manus peccatorum.

Vos fugam capietis,
et ego vadam immolari pro vobis.

Sorrowful is my spirit, even unto death:
stay here and watch with me:
now you will see the crowd
that will surround me:
you will all flee away,
and I shall go to be offered up for you.

Behold the time draws near,
and the son of man shall be delivered
into the hands of sinners.

You will all flee away,
and I shall go to be offered up for you.

Gregorian Lectio: Lamentations of Jeremiah
COGITAVIT DOMINUS
Good Friday liturgy, solo bass

De Lamentatione Jeremiae Prophetae:

HETH

Cogitavit Dominus dissipare murum filiae Sion:
tetendit funiculum suum,
et non avertit manum suam a perditione:
luxitque antemurale
et murus pariter dissipatus est.

TETH

Defixae sunt in terra portae eius:
perdidit et contrivit vectes eius:
regem eius et principes eius in gentibus:
non est lex et prophetiae eius
non invenerunt visionem a Domino.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum

From the Lamentation of Jeremiah the Prophet:

Heth.

The Lord thought to devastate the wall of the daughter of Sion:
he stretched out his measuring line,
and has not averted his hand from ruin:
the ramparts mourned
and the wall alike was destroyed.

Teth.

Her gates vanish into the ground:
he has destroyed and scattered her bolts and bars:
her king and her princes are among the non-believers:
the law is no more,
and her prophets cannot recognize a vision from the Lord.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
return to the Lord your God.

Carlo Gesualdo
OMNES AMICI MEI
First Responsory for Good Friday

X.

Omnes amici mei dereliquerunt me,
et praevaluerunt insidiantes mihi,
tradidit me quem diligebam,
Et terribilibus oculis
plaga crudeli percutientes,
aceto potabant me.

Inter iniquos projecerunt me,
et non pepercerunt animae meae.

Et terribilibus oculis
plaga crudeli percutientes,
aceto potabant me.

All my friends have abandoned me,
and those who would trap me have prevailed;
I am betrayed by one whom I esteemed.
And with terrible eyes
they struck me with cruel blows,
vinegar they gave me to drink.

They have driven me out among the iniquitous.
and have not spared my soul.

And with terrible eyes
they struck me with cruel blows,
vinegar they gave me to drink.

Gregorian liturgy, Good Friday
PSALM 53

*Alieni insurrexerunt in me
et fortes quaesierunt animam meam.*

1. Deus in nomine tuo salvum me fac
et in virtute tua iudica me.
2. Deus exaudi orationem meam:
auribus percipe verba oris mei.
3. Quoniam alieni insurrexerunt adversum me
et fortes quaesierunt animam meam:
et non proposuerunt Deum ante conspectum suum.
4. Ecce enim Deus adiuvat me
et Dominus susceptor animae meae.
5. Averte mala inimicis meis
et in veritate tua disperde illos.

*Alieni insurrexerunt in me
et fortes quaesierunt animam meam.*

*Strangers have risen up against me
and the powerful seek my soul.*

- O God, grant me salvation by your name,
and judge me by your grace.
- O God, hear my prayer:
give ear to the words of my mouth.
- For strangers have risen up against me:
and the powerful seek my soul:
and they have not set God before their eyes.
- For behold God is my help:
and the Lord is the protector of my soul.
- Turn back the evils from my enemies;
and disperse them with your truth.

*Strangers have risen up against me
and the powerful seek my soul.*

Carlo Gesualdo
TENEBRAE FACTAE SUNT
Fifth Responsory for Good Friday
XIV.

Tenebrae factae sunt
dum crucifixissent Jesum Judaei:
et circa horam nonam exclamavit
Jesus voce magna:
'Deus meus, ut qui me dereliquisti?'
Et inclinato capite emisit spiritum.

Exclamans Jesus voce magna ait:
'Pater, in manus tuas commendo
spiritum meum.'

Et inclinato capite emisit spiritum.

There was darkness
when the Jews crucified Jesus;
and about the ninth hour Jesus cried out
with a loud voice:
'My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?'
And bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.

Crying out with a loud voice, Jesus said:
'Father, into your hands I commend
my spirit.'

And bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.

Carlo Gesualdo
AVE DULCISSIMA MARIA
motet for 5 voices

Ave dulcissima Maria,
vera spes et vita,
dulce refrigerium!
O Maria, flos virginium,
ora pro nobis Jesum.

Hail sweetest Mary,
true hope and life,
sweet relief!
O Mary, flower of virgins
pray for us with Jesus.

James Tenney
WAKE (1974)
quartet for tenor drums

Gregorian Lectio: Lamentations of Jeremiah
MATRIBUS SUIS DIXERUNT solo tenor

De Lamentatione Jeremìae Prophetae:

LAMED

Matribus suis dixerunt: ubi est triticum et vinum
cum deficerent quasi vulnerati in plateis civitatis
cum exhalarent animas suas in sinu matrum suarum.

SAMECH

Plauserunt super te manibus omnes transeuntes
per viam sibilaverunt et moverunt caput suum
super filiam Hierusalem
haecine est urbs dicentes perfecti decoris
gaudium universae terrae.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum

From the Lamentation of Jeremiah the Prophet

Lamed.

They said to their mothers: Where is grain and wine?
Then they collapsed like the wounded in the streets of the city.
Then they breathed out their spirits in their mothers' arms.

Samech.

All who pass by on the way clapped their hands at you
they hiss and shake their heads
over the daughter of Jerusalem
saying: Is this the city of perfect beauty,
the joy of all the world?

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
return to the Lord your God.

Carlo Gesualdo
O VOS OMNES

Fifth Responsory for Holy Saturday

XXIII.

O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam,
attendite, et videte
Si est dolor similis sicut dolor meus.

Attendite universi populi,
et videte dolorem meum,

si est dolor similis sicut dolor meus.

O all you that pass by the way,
attend and see,
if there be sorrow like my sorrow.

Watch, all ye people,
and see my sorrow,

if there be sorrow like my sorrow.

13th Century sequence

O MARIA VIRGO PIA

O Maria virgo pia plena dei gracia
stella maris appellaris dans lucis solatia.

Caro Christi quam tulisti in ventre veraciter,
sic sacratur qua dampnatur serpens efficaciter.

Hec est caro clavis fixa crucis in patibulo,
quae surrexit crucifixus vitam reddit seculo.

Nunc Marie filium laudemus magnificum,
regi regum omnium cantemus hoc canticum.

O Maria virgo pia plena dei gracia
stella maris appellaris dans lucis solatia.

O pious virgin Mary, full of God's grace,
called star of the sea, giving solace with your light.

Christ's flesh, which you truly carried in your womb
is hallowed, such that the serpent is doomed.

This is the flesh fixed with nails to the cross,
which rose crucified and returns life to the world.

Now may we praise Mary's son so splendid,
and sing this song to the king of all kings.

O pious virgin Mary, full of God's grace,
called star of the sea, giving solace with your light.

Carlo Gesualdo
ECCE QUOMODO MORITUR

Sixth Responsory for Holy Saturday

XXIV.

Ecce quomodo moritur iustus,
et nemo percipit corde:
et viri iusti tolluntur,
et nemo considerat:
a facie iniquitatis sublatus est iustus:
Et erit in pace memoria eius.

Tamquam agnus coram
tondente se obmutuit,
et non aperuit os suum:
de angustia et de iudicio sublatus est.

Et erit in pace memoria eius.

Behold how the just one dies,
and no one takes it to heart;
and the just are taken away,
and no one cares about it.
From the face of iniquity the just one is removed,
and his memory shall be in peace.

Like a lamb before the shearer
he was mute
and he opened not his mouth:
from anguish and from judgement he was taken away.

And his memory shall be in peace.

James Tenney
HOCKET (1974)
quartet for bass drums

Carlo Gesualdo
FACTUS SUM
Eighth Responsory for Holy Saturday
XXVI.

Factus sum sicut homo sine adiutorio,
inter mortuos liber.

I have been made like one without help,
only among the dead, free.

Posuerunt me in lacu inferiori,
in tenebrosis, et in umbra mortis.

They have laid me in the deeper pit,
in darkness, and in the shadow of death.

Factus sum sicut homo sine adiutorio,
inter mortuos liber.

I have been made like one without help,
only among the dead, free.

Hanns Eisler
GEGEN DEN KRIEG – AGAINST (THE) WAR (1936)
24 Variations for choir

[Text unavailable for copyright reasons]

– Bertolt Brecht from *German War Primer*

I N T E R V A L

Fritz Hauser
ZEICHNUNG – DRAWING (2002)
duo for 2 players and 4 cymbals

Carlo Gesualdo / additional voice by Igor Stravinsky
DA PACEM, DOMINE
motet for five voices

Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris,
quia non est alius, qui pugnet pro nobis
nisi tu Deus noster.

Give peace, O Lord, in our days,
because there is no one else who will fight for us
if not you, our God.

Luigi Dallapiccola
CANTI DI PRIGIONIA – SONGS OF IMPRISONMENT (1938–41)

1. PRAYER of Mary Stuart (1587)
to Paul Collaer

O Domine Deus! speravi in Te.
O care mi Jesu! nunc libera me.
In dura catena, in misera poena,
desidero Te.
Languendo, gemendo et genu flectendo,
Adoro, imploro,
ut liberes me.

O Lord God, in you have I hoped.
O my dear Jesus, now set me free.
In harsh shackles, in wretched punishment,
I yearn for you.
Languishing, groaning and kneeling before you,
I worship, I implore
that you set me free.

2. INVOCATION of Boethius (525)
to Ernest Ansermet

Felix qui potuit boni
fontem visere lucidum
Felix qui potuit gravis
terrae solvere vincula.

Happy is the one who could look upon
the radiant fountain of goodness.
Happy the one who could loosen
the fetters of the heavy earth.

3. FAREWELL of Girolamo Savonarola (1498)

to Sandro and Luisa Materassi

Premat mundus,	Let the world press hard
insurgeant hostes, nihil timeo	let enemies surge, nothing do I fear
Quoniam in Te Domine speravi,	because in you, Lord, I have hoped,
Quoniam Tu es spes mea,	because you are my hope,
Quoniam Tu altissimum	because you have established
posuisti refugium tuum.	on high your refuge.

Hanns Eisler

CANON: Peace on Earth (1946)

Peace on earth for ever is the hope of humankind,
for that peace on earth forever be is what our peoples had in mind,
Americans and Britishers alike;
the Russians too, and the Chinese, they all hold that
Peace on earth for ever is the hope of humankind...

– *Herman Reichenbach* (written in English)

IN DURA CATENA...

The literary scholar Terry Eagleton in a recent critique of Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* writes of Gethsemane as a key moment of panic in the face of impending arrest and violent death. **Carlo Gesualdo (1566–1613)** paints it as a tableau with the medium of his six-voice choir, the second of his extraordinary cycle of 27 Tenebrae Responsories, written for performance over three days in the Matins liturgy of Holy Week. Like his direct contemporary Caravaggio, Gesualdo casts dramatic light and shadows on his subjects, through rapid textural shifts and chromatic harmony (i.e. movements by half-steps within the modal scale) - whose essence is that the music does not 'progress' in conventional ways but changes in tone and expression. As a prince from the Naples region, Gesualdo had no dependency on a patron; the originality of his music breaks the mould even of the contemporary madrigals, and was regarded as disorganized and eccentric until composers such as Stravinsky championed it in the 20th century. Gesualdo's Tenebrae settings are also strongly linked to his own biography, composed in isolation at the end of his life, in ongoing remorse and penance for his notorious murder of his first wife and her lover, and with all his children from both his marriages having died before him.

The texts of the Tenebrae Responsories were assembled as early as the 4th century, and sung as Gregorian 'responses' to chanted readings from Lamentations, St Augustine and the Epistles during the encroaching darkness as candles are extinguished in the tenebrae liturgy. Their words deal with the events of Passion week in graphic moments from the narrative, but also reach back into ancient Jewish memories to broaden the themes of human suffering and cruelty. In doing so, they resonate unmistakably with more recent places and events - Dafur, Gaza, Baghdad, Guantanamo, Nauru, Maribyrnong...

Two important choral works in the late 1930s formed artistic responses amid the turmoil of fascism and the coming war. Remarkably, **Luigi Dallapiccola (1904-75)** in Italy and **Hanns Eisler (1898-1962)**, in exile from Germany, both continue in these pieces to explore the newest musical boundaries of 12-tone composition, while creating works designed to have the strongest impact on a broad audience. The differences between the works are equally interesting. For Dallapiccola, 12-tone music was as much an atmospheric quality as a technique, and from the first moment onwards we hear in his work three planes of sound combining and interacting - the rising arpeggio of the 12-tone row, the modal melody of the mediaeval chant *Dies irae*, and the 'pure' sound of percussion with all its connotations as the most ancient and most modern form of musical articulation. Hanns Eisler's music, on the other hand, is directly affected by his unique combination of artistic influences - his teacher Arnold Schoenberg through whom he writes in a more classic 12-tone technique - and his close collaborator Bertolt Brecht, taking his work away from the concert hall and into the domains of theatre and political activism.

Dallapiccola's three *Songs of Imprisonment* are each dedicated to important musicians of his time, and draw their texts from three historical political prisoners, each of them awaiting a violent execution. The **Prayer** of Mary Queen of Scots (1542-87) was composed in 1938 following Mussolini's promulgation of the Racial Laws - through which Dallapiccola's wife Laura was immediately removed from her post as librarian at the Florence state library. It was first performed on Belgian radio in 1940, weeks before the German invasion. Over some years the other two texts were found and set. The **Invocation** is from Boethius (480-524), the greatest Roman scholar of the period following the fall of the Roman Empire - taken from his prison text *Consolations of Philosophy*. The **Farewell** of Savonarola (1452-98) is from his re-working of the psalms, on which he was still working on the day of his execution. *Songs of Imprisonment* was first performed in Rome in 1941, on the same date as Mussolini's declaration of war.

The sonic element of a large percussion group in Dallapiccola's work leads to this concert's collaboration with Speak Percussion. With a flexible make-up under its artistic director Eugene Ughetti, the group not only supports the work of many Australian composers but also develops projects internationally exploring new styles and modes of performance. Along with electro-acoustic music, percussion remains the most dynamic of modern musical forms, with new instruments still being invented, resulting in new techniques of playing itself, new notions of form and new interactions with other media. These factors have featured in the work of both the percussion composers in the programme. **James Tenney (1934-2006)** was a major figure of American music over the last half-century, who leaves a rich legacy of works and writings proposing new definitions of sound and its forms. His *Three pieces for drum quartet* (1974), of which two are performed, were written for earlier figures of the American experimental tradition in which Tenney was steeped - 'Wake' for Charles Ives with 4 tenor drums and 'Hocket' for Henry Cowell with 4 bass drums. The Swiss composer-percussionist **Fritz Hauser (b.1953)** travels extensively through the world as a performer and collaborator in cross-media work and visited Melbourne last year for the International Festival, when he worked with Eugene Ughetti and the Aphids ensemble. His duo 'drawing' for cymbals is also a kind of quartet, focussing on another of the elemental percussion sounds.

JMcC.

ASTRA COMPACT DISCS

available at this concert

- Astra CD 1: Michael Kieran Harvey, piano: *Threnody*.
Australian piano compositions by James Anderson, Andrew Byrne, Stuart Campbell,
Michael Kieran Harvey, Keith Humble, John McCaughey and Carl Vine.
- Astra CD 2: Keith Humble, piano: *Bagatelles*. Liszt, Bartok and Humble,
from Humble's last recital, at La Trobe University in 1993.
- Astra CD 3: Lawrence Whiffin, *murchitt a daydream*, with book by William Henderson.
Merlyn Quaife (soprano), Tyrone Landau (tenor), William Henderson (reciter),
instrumental ensemble and the Astra Choir, conducted by John McCaughey.
- Astra CD 4: Kim Bastin and Joan Pollock, pianos: *White and Black*.
Schoenberg, *Second Chamber Symphony* and other works for two pianos
by Schumann, Ravel and Debussy.
- Astra CD 5: Astra Concert Archive: "**Achilles falls...**" The Astra Choir with soloists and ensemble
Stefan Wolpe, Webern, Beethoven, Brahms. Choral works with song, melodrama,
instrumental solo and chamber music, with soloists including Miwako Abe (violin),
Tristram Williams (trumpet), and instrumental ensembles, conducted by John McCaughey.
- Astra CD 6: Astra Concert Archive: "**first and last things...**" The Astra Choir with soloists and ensemble
Bach, Busoni, Kagel, Hindemith, Martin Friedel, Wolfgang Hufschmidt, Paul Celan.
from Bach via chant, speech-chorus & poetry to Busoni's 2-piano *Art of Fugue* Fantasia
Kim Bastin & Joan Pollock, piano duo; Margaret Ricketts & William Henderson, speakers.
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