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CLASSICS

ALEXANDER LEVINE

THE DIVINE LITURGY
OF ST. JOHN
CHRYSOSTOM

T

TENEBRAE

NIGEL SHORT



THE DIVINE LITURGY OF ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

ALEXANDER LEVINE

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TENEBRAE
NIGEL SHORT DIRECTOR

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The Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom The Story

At the end of summer 2005, three years before I composed *Prayers for Mankind*, I went on a pilgrimage to the grave of Fr. Alexander Men: a Russian Orthodox priest who became an influential spiritual leader and the architect of religious renewal in Russia at the end of the Soviet period, as well as a dear family friend.

Novaya Derevnnya near Moscow: I have not been there since 1992 – the year I left Russia. This was the place where Fr. Alexander served in a small country church for around 20 years and where he is now buried. This return journey proved to be a great spiritual experience and determined the course of events that led me to composing the *Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*. When I arrived at Novaya Derevnnya and stood before the altar in the church, where Fr. Alexander served, I felt his vivid presence as if he stood before me alive, his famous smile beaming. It felt almost like a blessing. I didn't know the exact meaning of this blessing, but its power and the miraculous feeling it evoked was so strong, that I felt a life changing force starting to emerge from within my soul. Upon my return to Moscow the following day, I already

knew that I was going to compose the music for the *Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*.

When I returned to London, I had a strong feeling that I should start composing the music for the Liturgy straight away. I felt that if I didn't do this there and then, the magic of the moment would slip away, and doing this at a later stage would result in something too far removed from my current insight.

During these days I had acquired a kind of mental picture: a vision of how the music would evolve throughout the work. It felt like neither a cognitively conceived construction – in the genre of this kind there is a traditional form of structure – nor an indirectly visualised sound image. I deliberately restrained myself from the process of sketching for a while. This particular moment felt as though something or someone – who in substance and power seemed far superior to anything I could possibly imagine – had kindly invited me for the journey on which I was about to embark.

I thought about this journey as the spiritual experience of a person who one day comes to the church to participate in a liturgical service, where prayers and music would cast upon him

the joy of unification in spirit with the divinity of God through Jesus Christ. Hence, this idea of continuous spiritual growth towards the central point of the Liturgy, the Holy Communion – the ritual in remembrance of the Last Supper – was paramount for me.

Whilst working on the text, I consciously sought to refrain myself from the temptation of skilfully setting words to music, which is exercising one's creativity for the sake of the procedure. Instead I was driven to follow that spiritual compass which allowed me to carry out the relentless search for mysterious revelations of the ancient texts.

My thoughts at that time were with the spiritual experience of my great compatriot composers of the past. Tchaikovsky for example, at the time when he was about to write his version of the Divine Liturgy, confessed to his friend of being “very humble” and venturing on this path “quivering with a mixture of uncertainty and hope”. We can safely assume that sacred works such as the Divine Liturgy could only be composed once in a lifetime, if ever. Rachmaninov wrote his version of the Liturgy on his return to Russia from a concert tour. He planned a short stay at his family estate in Ivanovka, and one

day it came to pass that he decided to attend a Liturgy service at a local country church. This led to an extraordinary (and now famous) outcome, as following the attendance Rachmaninov secluded himself in his cabinet-studio, emerging three weeks later with the score of his version of music for the liturgical canon.

The awareness of a granted ability to deliver the substance to this work was with me throughout the two month preparation period. It was a period of spiritual immersion, research and contemplation. Later, after the completion of the score and further reflection on the work, this feeling of deliverance continued to reveal itself and remained an invaluable and profound experience that affected and influenced my life on a deeper level. The score was completed in three months.

In autumn 2007 I showed the score to Valery Gergiev during one of his visits to London. The Maestro's response was immediate: he wanted me to try out the Liturgy with the Mariinsky Opera Choir at one of his forthcoming Easter Festivals in Russia.

And I would like to thank Valery Gergiev for giving me the opportunity to introduce this work to

a Russian audience and to perform the Liturgy with the Mariinsky Opera Choir over the next four years at his Easter Festivals 2008-2011. The Mariinsky Opera Choir under the principal chorus master Andrei Petrenko also premiered this work in St. Petersburg in June 2009 at the Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood, and I would like to extend my gratitude to Andrei Petrenko for his support and expertise.

THE MUSIC

The *Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* comprises two major parts: the Liturgy of the Catechumens and the Liturgy of the Faithful. The musical material rigorously follows the liturgical textual canon. However, at some stage I decided that the choir should take upon itself some of the offerings that traditionally come from the deacon or priest during the service. Here the choir performs these lines with short single-vowel pedals intertwining in different voices, e.g. in the litanies, whereas during the traditional church service the choir is normally silent when those text lines are pronounced. Some of the offerings that one would expect to be delivered by the minister are also delegated to the choir, which is yet another detail that deviates from the

traditional service routine, for example in the Great Litany and the Litany of Catechumens.

This objective reflects my view on some ethical aspects of liturgical service. The Greek word *leitourgia* which loosely translates as “public duty”, implicitly means a form of mysterious unification of serving priests and the congregation during the service, united in one universal scope of prayers, addressed to the Lord as well as to each and every human soul ever touched by the Divine Grace - whether they be a saint or sinner. I perceived the ethical values of liturgical prayers as being ecumenical in their essence (Matthew 28:19). They embrace a very basic feeling and aspiration in the soul of anyone, who through his instinct or faith is striving to receive the Divine quality of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, it became my serving motivation to amplify this notion through musical means. That is why the music of this Liturgy highlights different musical approaches found in Christian cultures across history from Greek or Byzantine chant, to medieval polyphony. The pervading influence of renaissance counterpoint and Byzantine chant alongside a poly-chord texture features prominently in this liturgy – however I was keen to avoid any direct quotations of music

from these eras. My aim was to originate the music within the spirit of modern culture so that it would find its justification through the “collective language” of the world we are living in.

The work embraces 22 relatively short movements, and could be described as a sequence of litanies (Greek. Εκτενής) in which the choir responds to the deacon’s prayer offering, antiphons and hymns, as well as some of the core movements – such as ‘Hymn to the Lord’, ‘Hymn to the Virgin’, the ‘Creed’ and the ‘Lord’s Prayer’. Some selected movements reflect the most important sacred mysteries such as ‘Anaphora’ and the ‘Holy Communion’. These movements are also divided into smaller sections (hymns).

The leitmotifs as well as the solos in different voices play an important part in the contextual development of the plot. It imparts certain operatic qualities to the music. The leitmotif of the Mother of God sounds when Her name (‘Bogoroditse’) appears in the text. We can also find the leitmotif of the Holy Trinity at the end of most litanies as well as the leitmotif of Jesus Christ, which is present in selected litanies, including the ‘Great Litany’ and in the ‘Creed’: “He was crucified...”.

One may find certain traces of references in the music though, such as the fragments of the Russian folk song *At the Father’s gate*, which I used in the ‘Creed’. This folk song was conceived in Leo Tolstoy’s imagination as a symbolic archetype of Russian *muzhik* and the symbol of the peasant population in its remarkable resistance to Napoleon’s Army during the occupation of Russia in 1812. Tchaikovsky also quoted this song in his *1812 Overture*.

Having said all of the above, I feel that I have come to the most important part of this story: I would like to give my very special thanks to my close friend Pavel Lisitsin whose relentless support and help made this recording happen.

I also thank Nigel Short and Tenebrae, Adrian Peacock, Nicholas Parker and Mike Hatch for their impeccable professionalism, creativity and support in working on this recording.

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TEXTS

1 Introduction and Great Litany

Blagoslovenno Tsarstvo Ottsá i Sína i
Svĭtáto Dúha níne i prĭsno i
vo věki věkóv. Amĭn.

Góspodi, pomĭluy.

Zastupĭ, spaší, pomĭluy i sohrańi nas, Bózhe,
Tvoyeyu blagodatĭu.

Tebě, Góspodi. Amĭn.

2 First Antiphon

Blagoslovĭ, dushě moyá, Góspoda.

Blagoslověn yeší Góspodi.

Blagoslovĭ, dushě moyá, Góspoda

i fšĭa vnútrĕnnaya moyá, ímĭa svĭtátóye Yégó.

Blagoslovĭ, dushě moyá, Góspoda,

i ňe zabívái fšĕh vozdayáńi Yégó.

Sláva Ottsú i Sínu i Svĭtátómu Dúhu,

i níne i prĭsno i vo věki věkóv. Amĭn.

Blagoslovĭ, dushě moyá, Góspoda,

i fšĭa vnútrĕnnaya moyá, ímĭa svĭtátóye Yégó.

Blagoslověn yeší Góspodi.

Sláva Ottsú i Sínu i Svĭtátómu Dúhu.

Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever,
and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us and keep us,
O Lord, by Thy grace.

To Thee, O Lord. Amen.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul:
and forget not all his benefits.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
both now and for ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Bless the Lord, O my soul

and all that is within me bless His holy Name.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

3 Second Antiphon

Hvalí, dushé moyá, Góspoda.
Voshvalú Góspoda v zhyvoté moyém.
Poyú Bogu moyemú dónde zhe yésni.

4 Hymn to the Lord

Yédinoródnny Síne i Slóve Bózhny,
bessmérten Síy,
i izvólivyy spašéniya náshego rádi
voplotítisya ot Svátaiya Bogoróditsi i Prísno dévi
Maríi, neprelózhno vochelovéhevyyisya,
raspníysya zhe, Hriste Bózhe,
smértiyu sméřt poprávyy,
Yédin Síy Svátaiya Tróyitsi,
sproslavlayemy Ottsú i Svátómu Dúhu,
spaši nas. Amiin.

5 The Third Antiphon: Beatitudes

Vó Tsárstvíi Tvoým pomíáni nás Góspodi, yégda
priideshi vo Tsárstvíi Tvoým.
Blazhéni níshchii dúhom,
yáko teḥ yést Tsárstvo Nébésnoye.
Blazhéni pláchushchii, yáko tii utéshatsya.
Blazhéni krótsii, yáko tii naslédíat zémítu.
Blazhéni álchushchii i zházhdushchii právdí,
yáko tii nasítitsya.

Praise the Lord, O my soul.
As long as I live I will praise the Lord.
While I have any being I will sing praises unto my God.

Only-begotten Son and Word of God,
Who, being immortal,
didst accept for our salvation to be made flesh
from the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary,
and without change became man;
and was crucified, O Christ our God,
trampling down death by death,
O Thou who art one of the Holy Trinity,
glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit:
Save us. Amen.

In Thy Kingdom remember us, O Lord,
when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.
Blessed are the poor in spirit:
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn: for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blazhéni mílostiivii, yáko tii pomílovani búdut.
Blazhéni chístii šérdtsem, yáko tii Bóga úzriat.
Blazhéni mirotvórtsi,
yáko tii sínóve Bózhii nařekútsya.
Blazhéni izgnañi právdí rádi,
yáko teḥ yést Tsárstvo Nébésnoye.
Blazhéni yesťe, yégda ponóšiat vám
i izhdenút i řekút řřak zol glagól
na vi lzhušcheye Meñe rádi.
Ráduitesya i vešelitesya,
yáko mzdá vásha mnóga na ñebešeh.
Sláva Ottsú i Sínu i Svátómu Dúhu,
i níne i prísno i vo věki věkov. Amiin.

6 Entrance Hymn

Priidite, pok loñimsta i připadem ko Hristú.
Spaši ni, Síne Bózhny, voskřesiy iz mértvih,
poyúshchiya Ti: alliluya.
Góspodi, spaši blagočestvíya i uslíshi ni. Amiin.

7 Trisagion Hymn

Svátii Bózhe, Svátii křepkiy,
Svátii Bessmértny, pomiluy nas.
Sláva Ottsú i Sínu i Svátómu Dúhu,
i níne i prísno i vo věki věkov. Amiin.
Alliluya. I dúhovi tvoyemú.
Sláva Tebé, Góspodi, Sláva Tebé.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers:
for they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are those persecuted for righteousness's sake,
for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute you:
and shall say all manner of evil
against you falsely for my sake.
Rejoice, and be exceeding glad:
for great is your reward in heaven.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
both now and for ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.
O Son of God, risen from the dead,
save us who sing unto Thee: alleluia.
O Lord, save the pious and hear us. Amen.

Holy God, holy and strong,
holy and immortal, have mercy on us.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
both now and for ever. Amen.
Alleluia, and with thy spirit.
Glory to Thee O Lord, glory to Thee.

8 Litany of Feverent Supplication

Góspodi, pomílyu. Amíñ.

9 Litany for the Catechumens

Góspodi, pomílyu.
Spaší, pomílyu, zastupí i sohrañi ĭh Bózh
Tvoyeyu blagodañu. Tebé, Góspodi. Amíñ.
Yelítsi oglashénñi izídite, oglashénñi izídite,
da níktot oglashénñih, yelítsi vérñii,
páki i páki mírom Góspodu pomólims̄a.
Góspodi, pomílyu. Amíñ.

10 Cherubic Hymn

Ízhe Heruvímí táyno obrazúyushche,
i Zhíivotvoñashchey Tróytse
Trisvíatúyu p̄esh̄ñi p̄ipeváyushche,
f̄s̄iákoye níñe zhítéiskoye otlozhím pōpechéñiye.
Amíñ.

11 That We May Receive the King of All

Yáko da Tzará, vs̄éh̄ podím̄em,
ángelskimiñ nevídimo dořinošima chínm̄i. Alleluia.

Lord, have mercy. Amen.

Lord, have mercy.
Save them, have mercy on them, help them and
keep them, O God, by Thy grace. To Thee, O Lord. Amen.
As many as are catechumens, depart; catechumens, depart.
Let none of the catechumens remain,
as many as are the faithful, again and again in peace,
let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy. Amen.

We who in a mystery represent the cherubim,
and sing the thrice-holy hymn
to the life-giving Trinity,
let us now lay aside every care of this life.
Amen.

That we may receive the King of all,
invisibly escorted by the hosts of angels. Alleluia.

12 Litany of Fervent Supplication

Góspodi, pomílyu.
Podái, Góspodi. Tebé, Góspodi. Amíñ.
I dúhovi tvoyemú, Ottsá i Sína i Svátágo Dúha,
Tróitsu Yédinosúshchñuyu i Ñerazd̄elñuyu.

13 The Creed

V̄eruyu vo Yédínago bóga Ottsá F̄sederzhí̄tel̄iã,
Tvortsá ñebu i zemlí,
vídimím zhe f̄s̄em i ñevídimím.
I vo Yédínago Góspoda, Iisúsa Hristá,
Sína Bózhíya, Yédinoródnago,
Ízhe ot Ottsá rozhd̄ennago p̄řzhde f̄s̄éh̄ v̄ék.
Sv̄eta ot Sv̄eta, Bóga ístinná ot Bóga ístinná,
rozhd̄enna, ñesotvořenna,
Yédinosushchna Ottsú,
Ím zhe f̄s̄iã bísha.
Nás rádi chelov̄ék, i náshego rádi spaš̄eniya
sshédshago s Ñebés,
i voplotívshagoš̄iã ot Dúha Sv̄iãta i Mar̄ii Dévi,
i vochelov̄échshas̄iã.
Rasp̄iãtago zhe za ní p̄ri Pontíystem Piláte,
i stradávsha, i pogřeb̄enna.
I voskr̄éshhago f̄ třetiy deñ po Pisáñiyem.
I vosshédshago na Ñebesá,
i šediãshcha odesnúyu Ottsá.
I páki gr̄iãdúshchago so slávoyu

Lord, have mercy.
Grant this O Lord. To Thee, O Lord. Amen.
And with thy spirit, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:
Trinity, one in essence and undivided.

I believe in One God, Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in One Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all ages.
Light from light, true God from true God,
begotten not made,
of one essence with the Father;
through Him all things were made.
Who, for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
He was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate,
and suffered and was buried.
And rose again on the third day, in accordance with the
Scriptures, and Ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
And He shall come again in glory

suđiti zhiivim i mertvym,
Yego zhe Tsarstvuyu ne budet kontsa.
I vDuha Sviatago Gosпода Zhitovoiashchago,
izhche ot Ottsa ishodiaschago,
izhche so Otsem i Sinom
spokloniyema i sslavima,
glagolavshago proroki.
Vo yedinu Sviatuyu Sobornuyu i
Apostolskuyu Tserkov.
Ispovedayu yedino Kreshcheniye
vo ostavlenniye grehov.
Chayu voskresheniia mertvym,
i zhizni budushchago veka.
Amin.

14 Anaphora

Milost mira, zheztvu hvaleniya.
I so duhom Tvoim. Imami ko Gosrodu.
Dostoyno i pravvedno yest pokloniatisia
Otsu i Sinu i Sviatomu Duhu,
Troitse Yedinosushchney i Nerazdelney.
Sviat, Sviat, Sviat Gospod Savaof,
ispoln Nebo i zemlia slavi Tvoyei.
Osanna v vishchnih,
blagosloven Gradiy vo imia Gospodne,
osanna v vishchnih. Amin.

to judge the living and the dead;
His Kingdom shall have no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father, who together with the
Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who spoke through the prophets.
I believe in one Holy, Catholic and
Apostolic Church.
I confess one baptism
for the forgiveness of sins.
I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the age to come.
Amen.

Mercy and peace: a sacrifice of praise.
And with thy spirit. We lift our hearts up to the Lord.
It is meet and right to worship
Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
Trinity, one in essence, and undivided.
Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Sabaoth;
heaven and earth are full of Thy glory;
Hosanna in the highest,
blessed is he that comes in the Name of the Lord,
Hosanna in the highest. Amen.

15 We Hymn Thee

Tebe poyem, Tebe blagoslovim, Tebe blagodarim,
Gospodi, i molim Ti sia, Bozhe nash.

We hymn Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks to Thee,
O Lord, and we pray to Thee, our God.

16 Hymn to the Virgin

Dostoyno yest, yako voistinu
blazhiti Tia, Bogoroditsu,
Prisnoblazhennuyu i Preneporochnuyu
i Mateř Boga nashago.
Chestneyshuyu Heruvim i Slavneyshuyu bez
sравneniya Serafim, bez istleniya
Boga Slova rozhdshuyu,
sushchuyu Bogoroditsu Tia velichayem.

It is truly meet to bless thee
who didst bring forth God,
ever-blessed and most pure
and Mother of our God.
More honourable than the cherubim,
and incomparably more glorious than the seraphim,
Thou who without corruption didst bring forth God the
Word, and art indeed Mother of God, thee do we magnify.

17 Litany before the Lord's Prayer

Gospodi, pomiluy.
Zastupi, spasi, pomiluy i sohrañi
nas Bozhe, Tvoyeyu blagodatyu.
Podai, Gospodi. Tebe, Gospodi.

Lord, have mercy.
Help us, save us, have mercy on us,
and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.
Grant this, O Lord. To Thee, O Lord.

18 The Lord's Prayer and Elevation

Otche nash, Izhe yeshi na Nbelesh!
Da sviatitsia imia Tvoye,
da priidet Tsarstviye Tvoye, da budet votia
Tvoyá, yako na Nbeši i na zemli.

Our Father, Who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

Hlěb náš nasúshchniy dázhď nám dñeš;
i ostávi nám dólgi násha, yáko zhe i mí
ostavlīayem dolzhñikóm náshim;
i ñe vñedí nás vo iskushéñiye,
no izbávi nás ot lukávago.
Amiñ.

I dúhoví tvoyemú. Tebě, Góspodí. Amiñ.
Yeđin Svīat, yeđin Gospód Iisús Hristós,
vo slávu Bóga Ottsá. Amiñ!

[19] The Communion

Hvalíte Góspoda s ñebés,
hvalíte Yeگو v vř shñih. Alliluya.

Blagosloven grīadýy vo imīa Gospódñe.
Bóg Gospód i yavīšīa nam.

Vídehom svét ístinniy,
přiyáhom Dúha Ñebésnago,
obřetóhom věru ístinnuyu, ñerazdělñei Tróitse
poklanīayemšīa: Ta bo nas spaslá yěšt.

[20] The Hymn of Praise

Amiñ. Da ispólñīatsīa ustá násha
hvaléñiia Tvoyegó, Góspodí,
yáko da poyém slávu Tvoyú,
yako spodóbil yeší nás přichastītsīa, svīatím

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

And with thy spirit. To Thee, O Lord. Amen.
One is holy, One is Lord: Jesus Christ,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen!

Praise the Lord from heaven,
praise Him in the highest. Alleluia.

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.
The Lord is God and has appeared unto us.

We have seen the true light,
we have received the heavenly Spirit,
we have found the true faith, worshipping the undivided
Trinity: for the Trinity has saved us.

Amen. Let our mouth be filled
with Thy praise, O Lord,
that we may sing of Thy glory;
for Thou hast counted us worthy

Tvoím, Bozhéstvennim, bessmértnim i
zhivotvořīashchim Táynam:
sobluđí nás vo Tvoyéi svīatūñi,
vēš deñ pouchátītsīa právde Tvoyéi.
Alliluya...

[21] Thanksgiving and Dismissal

Góspodí, pomíly. Zastupí, spaší,
pomíly i sohrañí nas,
Bózhe, Tvoyéyu blagodátīu.
Tebé, Góspodí. Amiñ.
O imēñi Gospódñi. Góspodí, pomíly.

[22] Blessed be the Name of the Lord

Amiñ. Búđi imīa Gospódñe
blagoslovenno ot níne i do věka.
Slava Ottsú i Sínu i Svīatómu Dúhu,
i níne i přiso i vo věki věkóv.
Góspodí, pomíly. Blagosloví.

to partake of Thy holy, divine,
immortal and life-giving mysteries,
Keep us in Thy holiness,
as we meditate on Thy righteousness all the day long.
Alleluia.

Lord, have mercy. Help us, save us,
have mercy on us, and keep us,
O Lord, by Thy grace.
To Thee, O Lord. Amen.
Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy,

Amen. Blessed be the Name of the Lord,
from this time forth and for evermore.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
both now and for ever, and to the ages of ages.
Lord, have mercy. Give the blessing.

ALEXANDER LEVINE

Born in Moscow in 1955, Alexander Levine studied at the Gnessin Music Academy and soon established himself working with highly acclaimed artists in Russia, winning prestigious awards between 1989-1991. In 1992 he moved to the UK where he continued his post-graduate studies with Gary Carpenter and Simon Bainbridge, going on to win further awards and competition prizes.

Since 1994 he has worked as a composer, arranger and music director on theatre productions including *War and Peace*, *The Beggar's Opera* and *Love's Labour's Lost*.

Alexander Levine's first work published by Edition Peters is *Prayers for Mankind*, a profound six-movement a cappella choral work recorded by the UK choir Tenebrae, and described by Gramophone Magazine as "impressive and moving". His new work *The Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* will be published by Edition Peters in early 2013 to coincide with this new recording.

Alexander Levine has collaborated with artists as diverse as Maria Freedman, Christian Forshaw, the Stanzeleit/Jacobson Duo, Darragh Morgan,

Mary Dullea, the Fidelio Trio, Konstantin Boyarsky, Jonathan Powell, Andrew McNeill, Bozidar Vukovic, the Tippett Quartet, the Orlando Consort, the BBC Singers, the Choir of the 21st Century, Tenebrae, the Mariinsky Opera Choir, the Russian State Orchestra "Novaia Rossia" and the Bel Canto Chorus.



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TENEBRAE

Soprano

Joanna Forbes L'Estrange
Emilia Hughes
Marie Macklin
Amy Moore
Katie Trethewey

Alto

Stephen Burrows
Mark Chambers
Daniel Collins
Claire Eadington
Carris Jones
Martha McLorinan

Tenor

Benjamin Alden
Matthew Howard
Benedict Hymas
Nicholas Madden
Nicholas Todd

Bass

Nicholas Ashby
William Gaunt
Jimmy Holliday
Stephen Kennedy
Adrian Peacock
Reuben Thomas

Hailed as “one of the country’s most outstanding vocal ensembles” (Evening Standard), Tenebrae has established itself as the chamber choir of choice for critics and audiences in the UK and around the world. Founded and directed by Nigel Short, the group blends the passion of a large Cathedral choir with the precision of a chamber ensemble to create a unique and enchanting sound, one which is dazzlingly effective in medieval chant as it is in contemporary works. With every performance exploiting the unique acoustic and atmosphere of each venue in which they perform with movement and light, often using candlelight as the sole means of illumination, the carefully chosen team of singers enable the audience to experience the power and intimacy of the human voice at its very best.

Formed in 2001, the group was launched to critical acclaim with a performance of Nigel Short’s own composition, *The Dream of Herod*. Since then they have collaborated with Sir John Tavener, Karl Jenkins, Pierre Thilloy, Alexander Levine, Will Todd and Joby Talbot. Their dedication to the music of today is complemented by a commitment to the music of the past; from medieval chant to Romantic masterworks, they respond to the demands inherent in whatever they sing with equal passion and musicality.

The group has toured all over the world, extensively throughout Europe, the USA and Bermuda, performing in many renowned festivals (BBC Proms, Montreux Choral Festival, Edinburgh Festival) and tailoring their distinctive performances to many venues (Royal Albert Hall, King’s College Chapel, Lausanne Cathedral). Working with the LSO under Sir Colin Davis, the English Concert, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, The English Chamber Orchestra, the Scottish Ensemble, and the Endymion ensemble, the choir have proved themselves as adept at larger orchestral works as the a cappella repertoire for which they are so well known.

Recording on the Signum, LSO Live, Warner Classics, EMI Classics, Deutsche Grammophon and Decca labels, the group has so far released 18 albums; from Christmas carols to solemn vespers, with their recent Victoria Requiem disc winning the ‘Choral’ category of the 2012 BBC Music Magazine Awards. These revelatory performances have thrilled listeners across the world and ensured their continued position as one of the world’s favourite choirs.

NIGEL SHORT

Nigel began his musical life as a chorister at Solihull Parish Church going on to study singing and piano at the Royal College of Music in London. He was a member of The Tallis Scholars, Westminster Abbey and Cathedral choirs and The King’s Consort before going on to concentrate on work as a soloist in Oratorio and Opera. He sang many roles in opera productions all over Europe and for ENO and Opera North in the UK.

Whilst touring the world with The King’s Singers, Nigel began to seriously consider the possibility of starting up a new choral group which would combine a larger force of singers with movement around the performance venue as well as considerations of lighting, ambience, time and space. It would not only mean that the singers were more physically involved in the performance but also that the audiences could become caught up in the experience.

Since the group’s formation in 2001, Nigel has continued the touring life with Tenebrae as they perform in many of the world’s most prestigious music festivals. Nigel has now conducted several of the world’s finest orchestras alongside Tenebrae both in concert and in recordings including the

London Symphony Orchestra, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra and in Baroque repertoire the English Concert. Nigel is married to the soprano Grace Davidson.



Recorded at St Augustine’s Church, Highbury, London from 13 - 15 February 2012.

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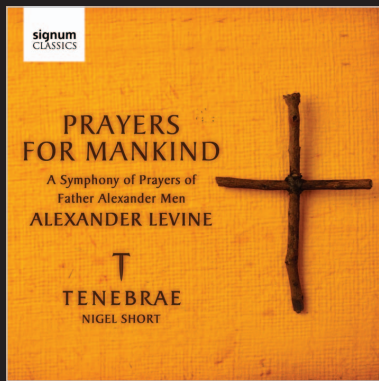
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