

Melody to the Memory of a Lost Friend XIII (1985)

Melody to the Memory of a Lost Friend XIII was written on commission by work for the South German Radio (Süd-West Funk) for the Bach year in 1985 and was premiered in Stuttgart the same year.

Melody...XIII is the last work in a chamber music cycle for instrument and recorded tape. A close friend's choice to take his own life was the starting point and the driving force for this cyclical work. His hopelessness and despair began in me a search for meaning. I developed a system that can most closely be compared to a chess game where every interval was given individual rules like those assigned to each of the chess pieces.

Another large source of inspiration was Hieronymus Bosch's exceptional triptych "Ascension to Heaven" that I, thanks to a friend of Luigi Nono, was allowed to be locked in with for a morning in the spring of 1984. The painting was restored in an out of the way room in the Ducal Palace in Venice and was not accessible to the public. In this painting Hieronymus Bosch shows the tunnel that many people have described in near-death experiences. A divine revelation!

Canzon del Principe – An intabulation on an intabulation (2002)

Canzon del Principe was composed for organ and electronics in 2002. The work has the subtitle "An intabulation on an intabulation". During the Renaissance and the early Baroque era it was a popular custom to arrange vocal compositions for keyboard instruments. This art form was called intavolatura or intabulation. In these intabulations the composer often added improvised passages that were suited to the particular keyboard instrument in question. Don Carlo Gesualdo's works for keyboard are limited to this Canzon francese del Principe on an unknown vocal work by the same composer. I have chosen to use this arrangement as the basis of an arrangement of my own, where I make use of Gesualdo's astonishing improvisational outbursts, extending them even further and fitting them into a new pattern. I also exploit the contrasts between different temperaments, where the mean-tone temperament of the tape part is juxtaposed with the equal temperament of the organ part.

The Four Beasts' Amen (1999-2000)

Dedicated to my dear friend Harald Vogel

A National concert commissioned work for Gothenburg's International Organ Academy 2000 in conjunction with the inauguration of the North German Baroque organ in Örgryte Nya kyrka.

My own music fell silent in 1984, ironically enough with the work for choir " ... and all that remains is silence..." My own thoughts about composition and my own music have since that time continued in silence. The Organ Mass for Gothenburg's International Organ Academy was my first completed work since that self-imposed silence in 1984.

Interpretation of other contemporary composers' work has been extremely important for me and I will never give up the struggle to facilitate the demands of unperformed composers to be heard. In my work as an interpreter and teacher I have always felt a great longing to return to the composer's workshop, but this longing has always filled me with a great respect and often

created a black hole – all energy has been focused toward this power. In the years since the work for choir "...and all that remains is silence..." I have tried to find a way back but have not wanted to set these thoughts down in print.

When I was asked to write an Organ Mass specially designed for the Schnitger reconstruction in Örgryte, I could no longer resist the pull. For the work's tape part, I have used sounds from the instruments that have been important for the research project in Gothenburg - Rap Schnitger organs in Hamburg, Stade, Norden, Cappel and in Lüdingworth. These organs have been aurally dissected and selectively documented for this work. An inexpressible source of inspiration has been the bewildering theological poetry of Olov Hartman. The powerfulness and strength that permeates his poetry has been very important for me. The selections of texts were made in collaboration with Archbishop emeritus Gunnar Weman.

Time - it is creation's journey
towards a land where everything unites.
Everything yearns. A flight of birds.
God's kingdom is near.
From: "Psalm on a night flight"

Preludium - "Embers"

At some point the former creation will die
but in the embers the forgotten Kingdom will appear
a new Jerusalem among God's mountains
our Lord Jesus Christ's country.
But already today the Kingdom is coming
though concealed in humbleness
when Christ in the Gospels releases humanity
from the violent powers
until that in word and deed they
confess their true homeland
From: "What is that?"

Kyrie - "The Key"

O you who imprison us in our flight
and make of yourself a testimony of our denial
what help to us is our broken down ships' hateful anxiety in the silence
when our footsteps are a secret message
that you are coming soon
and hell's portals alone awaiting your key
what help to us is our obedient armor around our heart
what refuge is our outer cliff of piety
when you are so compassionate in your judgement
and you judge us so mercilessly in your compassion
From: "Prophet and Carpenter"

Gloria - "Wing-mirrors"

Praised be to you who created the heavens like a clay cover
and the ages of time like a bowl in your hands

...

Praised be to you who loved in the dust
a peculiar sapling from a distant coast rooted in a damned land
our suffering tree with centuries-old rings of peoples' dread
and the barbed wire of our evil, your crown
manifested in resurrection in blessing in paradise.
Praised be to you comforting wind over the water.

...

Shining autumn flocks of birds frightened aloft by his arrival
Congregate on the sky's wires of fire
let your sound counterpoint the winter streets and frost crystals
and loan to the dew drops purple from their winged-mirrors of northern light.
From: "The Burning Oven"

Interludium "...concealed in every stone..."

The heavens are concealed in every stone on the ground
a secret presence in every word we speak
and yet inaccessible
enclosed behind locks of guilt
of dread
of corruption
until the Gospels open the way to our Father
and the seeker finds himself standing on holy ground:
"certainly here lives God,
and here is heaven's gate."
From: "What is that?"

Sanctus - "The Seed"

There is a pain in all
stones, clouds, the roots of grass.
Home-longing.
Everything will die. At some point the elements will burst.
But the earth will not burst like a bomb, rather like a seed.
There is a stirring
where God's humanity
with its roots in the earth, knitted together in fellowship
praying, working, longing
shall be replanted in a reality
that no eye has seen and no ear has heard.
One thing I know about God's new world.
I will always be with the Lord.
I will behold God.

Eternal life.

From: "What is that?"

Agnus Dei - "...branching out..."

In the holy grapevine
rooted in Christ's death
branching out over times and continents
with its crown in the land of glory -
the fallen creation
the splintered community
the restless soul
has recovered its lost unity

From: "What is that?"

Communion - "Scala angelica"

When I saw down in the deep where I had been loved, a tottering picket fence of letters that I have held inside me. These notes - not anew iron grate but a swallow's life before him, summer evening's winged cry, or perhaps the brief stroke a moment before it is broken. Late summer's note signs on swinging telephone lines. The Swallow's life or the angels', and I saw their steps, scala angelica, they ordered themselves incontinuously growing intervals, but continuously returning to their theme, simple, unison as when birds fly up but gather again.

From: "Stonefish"

Postludium - "Nails"

...

stars no longer have their secrets,
all of earth's gladness has gathered itself in your eyes
and all of its tears, o God, my God
nailed fast to the human, crucified
to our thousand thousand years under Pontius Pilate
so have you finally come to glory,

...

home to that which was part of the love of the Beginning
there the sparrow and the hawk played in the wind
and the human had the tiger look after her child
while the great water cried peace in her heart.
and we who have loaned our voices to the lie
and carried it forward in your light,
we pray to you that your truth may prevail on our lips
and that creation once reborn in your holy fire
may sing and play in our hearts

From: "The Burning Oven"