

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

in association with the

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

BEETHOVEN
MISSA SOLEMNIS

(MASS IN D)

E.U.M.S. CHOIR
THE REID ORCHESTRA

Leader: MILES BASTER

Conductor: SIDNEY NEWMAN

ELIZABETH SIMON

IAN PARTRIDGE

DELIA WOOLFORD

CHRISTOPHER KEYTE

Organ: LEON COATES

USHER HALL

WEDNESDAY, 25th FEBRUARY, 1970

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME ONE SHILLING

INTRODUCTION

When Beethoven began in 1818 to plan this great setting of the Mass it was with the intention of producing it at the enthronement of his distinguished pupil and friend the Archduke Rudolph as Archbishop of Olmütz (which took place in March 1820). But the score was not completed until fully three years after the event. Beethoven presented the Archduke with a copy in March 1823. The first performance (the only complete performance in Beethoven's lifetime) was given at St. Petersburg in April 1824 at the instigation of Prince Galitzin. A few weeks later on 7th May the Kyrie, Credo and Agnus Dei (under the title "Three Grand Hymns"—to satisfy the requirements of the censor) were performed in Beethoven's presence at that special concert in the Kärntner Theatre at which the Ninth Symphony was first given. The first complete performance in Germany was at Warningsdorf in 1830.

Although this tremendous work, both in the scale of its design and in the particular emphases which it enlarges, quite transcends the possibilities of liturgical use, we shall do well to remember that its original conception as designed for a liturgical occasion of exceptional pomp is one that Beethoven has realised as though he had idealised the circumstances. And indeed there are very many parts that keep to a time scale which is wholly appropriate for liturgical use on a festive occasion. But in addition to the very broad span of the *Kyrie* there are four points in the great design of the whole at which Beethoven moves far beyond the time scale of liturgical sequence to realise his basic concepts.

The first is in the conclusion of the *Gloria*. The liturgical text is already completed to its uplifting Amen when there extends from this a great fugal paean of praise to "in gloria Dei patris, amen," (chorus and solo quartet alternating) and with quickened tempo to this succeeds a finale to the fugue (combining soloists and chorus), and yet to the most final Amens declaimed here there yet succeeds a resumption (*Presto*) of the initial "Gloria in excelsis Deo" which is left ringing out into the space of the heaven and earth.

The second is the conclusion of the *Credo*. Again the liturgical text is already complete to the Amen when there opens a great vision of supreme joy in "the life of the world to come," at first a fugal chorus that seems to tread the air in quiet exaltation and yet clothed in mystery, until the reality breaks forth exuberantly and with redoubled vivacity in a second fugue (where joy must exult over all difficulty), and the blaze of glory which follows majestically dissolves to let our blinded eyes gaze upwards and beyond as though we followed the flight of angels ascending into heaven.

The third is the *Benedictus*—as it were the profound slow-movement of the whole design. The *Sanctus* is realised as a moment of quiet and profound adoration (solo quartet). The succeeding "Pleni sunt coeli" and "Osanna" are resplendent, but not expanded beyond liturgical dimensions. (These are assuredly choral as the orchestration proves, though Beethoven inadvertently wrote the vocal parts on the soloists staves). Thereupon a solemn orchestral prelude prefaces the great span of superlative beauty in which Beethoven clothes the *Benedictus* with solo violin, solo quartet, chorus and orchestra in a concerted movement of sonata form to which the "Osanna" is the fulfilling coda.

Lastly the conclusion of the *Agnus Dei*, which opens in the sombre depths of B minor, spreading upwards through all voices as the tension of anguished contrition increases. As this resolves into the final prayer, *Dona nobis pacem*,

Beethoven opens out to us a great benediction in which the prayer and its answer seem for a while to be as one. He inscribed on this movement "A prayer for inward and outward peace." But the emblems of martial strife, trumpet and drum, strike terror and wring an anguished "miserere" before the prayer and vision of peace are restored. And yet again when peace is triumphant, there grows from that very triumph to our astonishment an orchestral conflict which culminates in a tremendous onslaught of trumpeted danger before we are left to abide in peace.

It is impossible in so many words to define exactly the position which this tremendous work occupies in the very wide field of great and infinitely varied music with which composers throughout the centuries have given exalted expression to the Christian liturgy. Paul Bekker wrote of it, "As surely as this Mass is a most exalted memorial of perfected understanding between a man and his God, so surely does this understanding rest on a Christian philosophy of life." Others have been more ready to stress the universality of Beethoven's conception—the sublimation of his intensely personal thought and language to a level which speaks profoundly for all humanity, in which respect this Mass is the clear counterpart to the Ninth Symphony. The stature and the inspiration of this work are indeed so transcendent that they validate both these different emphases. We know that Beethoven prepared himself by giving much careful thought to the import of every part of the text, about which he also consulted others. Bekker's insistence that we must see this Mass "as an exposition of Christian teaching by the power of the poetic imagination" is surely borne out not only in the four great phases already noted above and in the opening *Kyrie* (at once both a prayer and a proclaiming of the Divine Majesty as though this were itself a *Sanctus*), but also in countless moments of supremely significant detail.

A brief example must suffice. In the Creed the *descendit* is given so stupendous an utterance that it stands like the greatest of the great acts of God Almighty. And so for the Christian it is indeed. The "et homo factus est" shows in simple radiant warmth the humanity of Christ made "perfect man." Between lies the mystery of the incarnation wherein Beethoven seeks the power of mystery from modal melody and harmonies of the Dorian mode.

This is only one of many places in which the influence of plain-song modes and of Palestrina's modal harmonies show themselves within the basically classical modality of the whole.

In a few points of detail Beethoven does not confine himself absolutely strictly to the liturgical text. The reiteration of *Credo* at each main paragraph of the creed (in substitution for *et*) adds tremendous emphasis to the fact that the initial "Credo" must be understood and felt throughout. The interpolation of "Ah" before the cry of *miserere* is but a sign of the full heart that utters the cry.

I make no attempt to differentiate the choral and solo passages. The soloists are used primarily as a quartet ensemble, though this also deploys in solo, duet, and trio passages, and the whole quartet is often treated as an antiphonal choir to the main chorus.

In setting out the text paragraph-spacing has been used to indicate the different movements within the unbroken sequence of the whole.

S.T.M.N.

TEXT

I KYRIE

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

I

Lord have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord have mercy upon us.

II GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra
pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.
Laudamus Te; benedicimus Te;
adoramus Te; glorificamus Te;

Gratias agimus Tibi propter mag-
nam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis, Deus
Pater omnipotens; Domine Fili
unigenite, Jesu Christe altissime!
Domine Deus, agnus Dei, Filius
Patris!

Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere
nobis; Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram:
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis

Quoniam Tu solus sanctus, Tu
solus Dominus, Tu solus altissimus,
Jesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu in
gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

[Gloria in excelsis Deo]

II

Glory be to God on high, and on
earth peace to men of good will.
We praise Thee; we bless Thee;
we worship Thee; we glorify Thee;

We give thanks to Thee for Thy
great glory.

O Lord God, heavenly King, God
the Father Almighty; O Lord, the
only begotten Son, Jesu Christ most
high; O Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father.

Thou Who takest away the sins of
the world, have mercy upon us;
Thou Who takest away the sins of
the world, receive our prayer: Thou
Who sittest at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy; Thou only
art Lord; Thou only art most high
—Jesu Christ—with the Holy Spirit
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

INTERVAL

III CREDO

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem
omnipotentem, factorem cœli et
terræ, visibilium omnium et invi-
sibilium:

III

I believe in one God, the Father
Almighty, Maker of heaven and
earth, and of all things visible and
invisible:

Credo in unum Dominum, Jesum
Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum,
et ex Patre natum ante omnia
sæcula, Deum de Deo, lumen de
lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero,
genitum, non factum, consubstan-
tialem Patri per quem omnia facta
sunt: Qui propter nos homines et
propter nostram salutem descendit
de cœlis;

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus
est;

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis, sub
Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est;

Et resurrexit tertia die secundum
scripturas.

Et ascendit in cœlum, sedet ad dex-
teram Patris, et iterum venturus
est cum gloria judicare vivos et
mortuos, cujus regni non erit finis.

Credo in Spiritum Sanctum, Dom-
inum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre
et Filio procedit, qui cum Patre et
Filio simul adoratur et conglorifi-
catur, qui locutus est per Prophetas.

Credo in unam sanctam catholicam
et apostolicam ecclesiam. Confiteor
unum baptisma in remissionem
peccatorum, et expecto resurrec-
tionem mortuorum, et vitam ven-
turi sæculi. Amen.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God, born
of the Father before all worlds:
God of God, Light of Light, Very
God of Very God, begotten not
made, being of one substance with
the Father, by Whom all things
were made: Who for us men and
for our salvation descended from
heaven;

And was incarnate by the Holy
Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was
made man;

And was crucified also for us; under
Pontius Pilate He suffered and was
buried;

And the third day He rose again
according to the Scriptures.

And He ascended into heaven and
sitteth on the right hand of God the
Father. And He shall come again
with glory to judge both the quick
and the dead: Whose kingdom shall
have no end.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the
Lord and Giver of life, Who pro-
ceedeth from the Father and Son,
Who with the Father and the Son
together is worshipped and glori-
fied, Who spoke by the Prophets.

I believe in one Catholic and
Apostolic Church. I acknowledge
one Baptism for the remission of
sins. And I look for the Resurrec-
tion of the dead, and the life of
the world to come. Amen.

SHORT INTERVAL

IV SANCTUS. BENEDICTUS

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus
Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine
Domini. Osanna in excelsis.

IV

Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of Thy
Glory. Osanna in excelsis.

Blessed is He that cometh in the
name of the Lord. Osanna in
excelsis.

V AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi
miserere nobis;

Dona nobis pacem.

V

O Lamb of God, Who takest away
the sins of the world, have mercy
upon us;

Grant us peace.

Members of the audience are requested to remain in
their seats for a few minutes after the performance
as there will be a presentation to Professor Newman.

The National Federation of Music Societies, to which the Edinburgh
University Musical Society is affiliated, supports this concert with funds
provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC

14th MAY, at 8 p.m.

First Performance of the
FUGUE FOR STRING ORCHESTRA
BY SIDNEY NEWMAN

performed by the Strings of

THE REID ORCHESTRA

The performance will be preceded by a short
Introductory Lecture by PROFESSOR NEWMAN

ADMISSION FREE
