

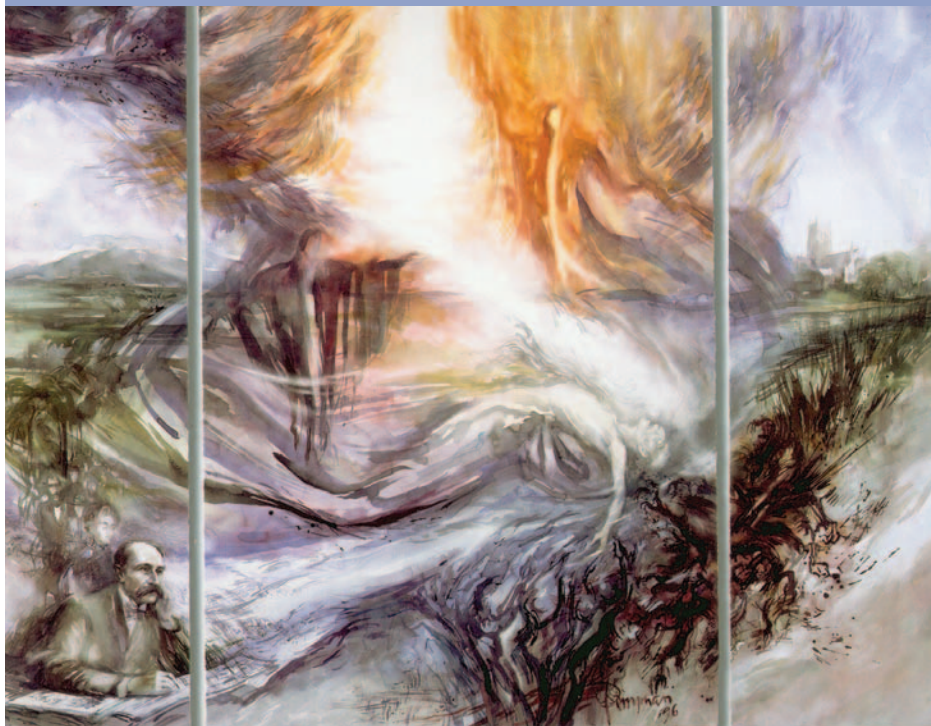
ELGAR
THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA / SAKARI ORAMO

ENIGMA VARIATIONS – THE HOLLY AND THE IVY



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



EDWARD ELGAR 1857-1934

"Elgar has been a regular and vital part of my musical life in Birmingham, and it has been an honour to share my love of this powerful, affecting music with the orchestra – of which Elgar was himself the first conductor – as well as our magnificent chorus. The performances that we have given of Gerontius especially – on the work's centenary, as well as in Helsinki, Amsterdam and Berlin – have been among the biggest highlights of my career to date, and always enthusiastically received by audiences who readily respond to the work's humanity and spirituality. This year I am delighted to be celebrating the composer's 150th birthday in Birmingham with special performances of *Gerontius*, *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom*." SAKARI ORAMO, 2007

CD ONE

1	THE HOLLY AND THE IVY*	4'58	THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS OP. 38 (Part One) †	
	VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME (ENIGMA), OP. 36		17	Prelude 7'59
2	Theme (Andante)	1'14	18	Gerontius: Jesu, Maria - I am near to death 3'25
3	I. (C.A.E.)	1'55	19	Chorus: Kyrie eleison 2'14
4	II. (H.D.S.-P.)	0'46	20	Gerontius: Rouse thee, my fainting soul 0'46
5	III. (R.B.T.)	1'21	21	Chorus: Be merciful, be gracious 2'46
6	IV. (W.M.B.)	0'26	22	Gerontius: Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus 4'48
7	V. (R.P.A.)	2'11	23	Gerontius: I can no more: for now it comes again 2'03
8	VI. (Ysobel.)	1'10	24	Chorus: Rescue him, O Lord! 1'58
9	VII. (Troyle.)	0'58	25	Gerontius: Novissima hora est 1'17
10	VIII. (W.N.)	1'58	26	The Priest: Proficiscere, anima Christiana 1'43
11	IX. (Nimrod)	4'17	27	Chorus: Go, in the name of Angels 4'31
12	X. (Dorabella.) Intermezzo	2'59		
13	XI. (G.R.S.)	0'56		
14	XII. (B.G.N.)	2'36		
15	XIII. (* * *) Romanza	2'56		
16	XIV. (E.D.U.) Finale	3'26		

CD TWO

THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS OP. 38 (Part Two) †

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|----|--|------|
| 1 | Introduction – The Soul: I went to sleep | 5'50 |
| 2 | The Angel: My work is done | 2'53 |
| 3 | The Angel and The Soul: All hail, My child! | 5'36 |
| 4 | Chorus: Low-born clods of brute earth | 1'44 |
| 5 | The Angel: It is the restless panting of their being | 0'18 |
| 6 | Chorus: The mind bold and independent | 2'17 |
| 7 | The Soul and The Angel: I see not those false spirits | 3'23 |
| 8 | Chorus: Praise to the Holiest | 2'22 |
| 9 | The Soul: The sound is like the rushing of the wind | 0'13 |
| 10 | Chorus: Glory to Him | 0'26 |
| 11 | The Angel and The Soul: They sing of thy approaching agony | 0'43 |
| 12 | The Soul: But hark! A grand mysterious harmony | 0'50 |
| 13 | The Angel: And now the threshold | 0'17 |
| 14 | Chorus: Praise to the Holiest | 5'27 |
| 15 | The Angel and The Soul: Thy judgement now is near | 3'06 |
| 16 | The Angel: Jesu! By that shuddering dread | 4'28 |
| 17 | Chorus: Be merciful, be gracious | 0'43 |
| 18 | The Angel: Praise to His Name! | 0'45 |
| 19 | The Soul: Take me away | 3'34 |
| 20 | Chorus: Lord, Thou hast been our refuge | 1'21 |
| 21 | The Angel: Softly and gently | 6'28 |

Angel Jane Irwin (mezzo soprano) †
Gerontius/Soul Justin Lavender (tenor) †
Priest/Angel of the Agony Peter Rose (bass) †
City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus * †
(Simon Halsey: Chorus Director)
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
(Laurence Jackson: Leader)
Sakari Oramo Conductor

Recorded in Symphony Hall, Birmingham on
27, 29, 30 August and 1 September 2006

Producer: Tim Oldham
Engineer: Jean Chatauret
Project Management: David Hoskins
Design: Nick Withers

THE HOLLY & THE IVY WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

Elgar wrote several 'little' orchestral accompaniments – his description, which actually belies the scale and complexity, certainly of *The Holly and the Ivy* – to carol tunes for the Worcester Philharmonic Society at about the same time that he was working on the *Enigma Variations* in 1898. Whilst they may have been diversions from the larger task, his growing skill as an orchestrator with an individual voice is clearly evident. The accompaniments were almost certainly 'commissioned' as a result of his friendship with Martina Hyde, the daughter of a local solicitor, and Winifred Norbury (W.N. in the *Enigma Variations*). The three had been instrumental in forming the Worcester Philharmonic Society in October 1897 and Elgar was the conductor. 'The Holly and the Ivy' was first performed in Worcester on 7th January 1898.

Ten years later Elgar offered all the arrangements to his publisher, Novello – his correspondence with them indicates that the carol 'tunes' against which the arrangements were made came from a series of old French melodies available in Novello's 'Octavo' series – but without success. The manuscripts then disappeared until a parcel of music was purchased, in 1970, from an Antiques Shop in Bewdley, Worcestershire by Susan Savage, a former music teacher at King's School, Worcester, for 25p.

Mrs Savage, a keen viola player, found the parcel while exploring at the Bewdley shop – previously owned by her uncle, a bespoke tailor. She said that: "...in the middle of a room on the top floor was a huge round table full of music, which I believe was the library of George Street Chignell, Organist and Choirmaster of St John's Church, Worcester. I came across this package wrapped in brown Victorian paper. It was postmarked December 29, 1898. Having always been interested in Elgar, I knew that the arrangement was listed as lost or destroyed. The manuscript was still in its original covers, addressed to Miss Martina Hyde, one of his assistants and joint secretary of Worcester Philharmonic Society, living in Foregate Street, Worcester". *The Holly and the Ivy* was eventually revived at the 2005 Worcester Three Choirs Festival.

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VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME (ENIGMA), OP. 36

Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, begun in October 1898 and first performed in London under Hans Richter in June 1899, marked his breakthrough from the provincial musical life of the Midlands to national and international celebrity. The piece consists of a theme, thirteen variations and an extended Finale; the variations are free

variations, self-contained character-pieces which develop one idea or another from the theme without sticking closely to its melody or harmony. And the whole work adds up to a group portrait of the composer and his circle, all identified by initials or nicknames.

The theme represents Elgar himself, introspective and melancholy (its first bar sings the name "Edward Elgar"); it is followed by a companion-piece, an affectionate portrait of his wife Alice. Then come vignettes of their friends: Hew Stuart-Powell, who played the piano in chamber music with Elgar; Richard Townshend, squeakily taking the part of an old man in amateur theatricals; the country squire William Baker, banging the door behind him on leaving the room; Richard Arnold (son of the poet Matthew Arnold), whose serious conversation was interspersed with wit and whimsy; Isobel Fitton, a viola player, whose first name can be heard in the repeated string-crossing phrase; Arthur Troyte Griffith, a rough-and-ready pianist whom Elgar attempted to teach; and Winifred Norbury, who lived in a gracious 18th-century house.

At this point, the Variations broaden and deepen. The title "Nimrod", the mighty hunter of the Bible, stands for A.J. Jaeger (the German word for "hunter"), who was Elgar's editor: the variation recalls a conversation the two friends had about Beethoven's slow movements. "Dorabella" was Elgar's Mozartian nickname for his young friend Dora Penny. The next variation briefly mimics the pedal technique of the Hereford Cathedral organist George Sinclair, then depicts an adventure of Sinclair's bulldog Dan in the River Wye. This is followed by a portrait of the cellist Basil Nevinson, whose friendship is celebrated in a deeply-felt solo for his instrument.

The Romanza, by means of a quiet timpani roll imitating a ship's engines and a quotation from Mendelssohn's *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*, suggests someone departing on a sea journey: Elgar let it be known that the three asterisks of its title stood for Lady Mary Lygon, but he may in fact have been thinking of his former fiancée Helen Weaver, who in 1885 had emigrated to New Zealand. The Finale (named after Alice's nickname for her husband, "Edu") is a second self-portrait, suggesting the increasing confidence of the mature artist.

The "Enigma" of the work's sub-title operates at several different levels. With Elgar's help, the subjects of the variations (the *Romanza* apart) have now been identified. But that still leaves the puzzle of his statement that "through and over the whole set another and larger theme 'goes' but is not played". Among the many suggestions for this hidden theme, the most plausible – denied by Elgar on one occasion, but allegedly admitted on another – remains *Auld lang syne*: this can be adapted to fit both parts of the theme, its characteristic rhythm plays a prominent part in the finale, and its subject is that of the Variations themselves, the abiding nature of friendship.

THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS OP. 38

In October 1898 the Birmingham Festival Committee asked Elgar to write a choral work for the 1900 Festival but he did little towards the commission for over a year. Other works, most notably the *Enigma Variations* were his preoccupation. When the daunting prospect of Birmingham became a reality and with less than a year remaining, Elgar decided to resign the commission but was persuaded to reconsider. He hurriedly proposed a setting of John Henry Newman's poem *The Dream of Gerontius*. Whilst there were major reservations about the overtly Roman Catholic subject of the poem – Dvořák had declined to set the text for Birmingham previously on similar grounds – it was a necessary compromise given the shortage of time. Composition began in March 1900 and was completed by July. Elgar did not finish the orchestration until early August 1900 with the result that the full orchestral score was not with the Festival's conductor until 10 days before the premiere. The choral parts too, were not ready until early August while rehearsals for the Festival began in May. Finally, and more fatefully for Elgar's work, the original chorus master died suddenly and his elderly replacement had neither the energy nor the insight to cope with Elgar's complex work.

Predictably, the premiere was something of a disaster, yet much of the audience recognised the greatness of the work immediately. The music critics were enthusiastic but Elgar was in despair. He was convinced that *The Dream of Gerontius* was his finest music, yet the widely-reported Birmingham problems led to the postponement of all projected British performances. However, the work was a triumph in Germany and there can be little doubt that this influenced the acceptance of Elgar's masterpiece in Britain.

But who was the Gerontius of Newman's poem? The name is traditionally interpreted as a generic Greek word meaning 'old man' but the source seems rather to be the fourth-century Bishop Gerontius of Nicomedia whom the Church authorities tried to depose on account of the scandal caused by his recounting the tales of his strange dreams. The title of the poem, and thus of Elgar's work, has been held to be slightly misleading, since in it death actually occurs and the journey of the soul is a reality. Although the work is widely thought of as an oratorio, such a description was not approved by Elgar and nowhere appears in the score.

It is easy to see why the poem, so attractive to Elgar, has immediacy with audiences. Newman's first section, which shows Gerontius' last hours on earth, offers a broad introduction to the remaining section. The function here is twofold. First, it presents Gerontius as an 'Everyman'. His prayers show that he desires the expected release of death. But he also fears it; Gerontius cannot fully comprehend the afterworld. In Part Two while his prayers and those of his Assistants propel him towards Judgment, an Angel explains aspects of Heaven to Gerontius' Soul as a patient master instructs a student. Demons deliver their curses and the Angelicals sing their choruses. Through these the Angel explains the history of religion to the Soul. The narrative frame of Gerontius' Soul moving through this realm towards its Judgment is ultimately not as important as the lessons taught throughout the journey.

In contrast Elgar constructed his libretto to avoid these lessons, centering instead on Gerontius' journey. He cut 470 lines from the poem, mostly angelic descriptions of Heaven, and further shifted the balance of the original poem by selectively excising lines that dealt largely with Heaven and Gerontius' fear of Hell. Elgar deleted some of these references from the first part to centre upon Gerontius' physical feelings, de-emphasized the figure of Death, and removed completely a mention of Hell. At the outset of the work, Elgar's Gerontius thinks less of his spiritual health and more of his physical. Excisions from the second part further diminished the force of Newman's interpretation of Heaven, Purgatory and descriptions of the Soul's experience. Because of Elgar's omission, the audience concentrates more on the Soul and its questions during its passage.

The changes Elgar made to Newman's poem do not detract from *The Dream of Gerontius*. Rather, they present a different version of the events the poem describes. By carefully excising and rearranging the poem's text Elgar perhaps portrayed Gerontius' character much more directly and movingly than Newman did. Such a focus on the humanity of his characters became a hallmark of Elgar's major religious choral works.

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THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

The Holly and the Ivy
Now both are full well grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The Holly bears the crown.

O the rising of the sun,
The running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the quire,
Sweet singing in the quire.

The Holly bears a blossom,
As white as lily flower;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our sweet Saviour.
O the rising of the sun &c.

The Holly bears a berry,
As red as any blood;
And Mary bore Sweet Jesus Christ,
To do poor sinners good.
O the rising of the sun &c.

The Holly bears a prickle,
As sharp as any thorn;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas Day in the morn.
O the rising of the sun &c.

The Holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all.
O the rising of the sun &c.

The Holly and the Ivy
Now both are full well grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The Holly bears the crown.

THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS PART ONE

[17] Prelude

Gerontius

- [18] Jesu, Maria - I am near to death,
And Thou art calling me; I know it now,
Not by the token of this faltering breath,
This chill at heart, this dampness on my brow –
(Jesu, have mercy! Mary, pray for me)
'Tis this new feeling, never felt before,
(Be with me, Lord, in my extremity!)
That I am going, that I am no more.
'Tis this strange innermost abandonment
(Lover of souls! great God! I look to Thee.)
This emptying out of each constituent
And natural force, by which I come to be.
Pray for me, O my friends: a visitant
Is knocking his dire summons at my door,
The like of whom, to scare me and to daunt
Has never, never come to me before;
- [19] So pray for me, my friends, who have not strength
to pray.

Assistants

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.
Holy Mary, pray for him.
All holy Angels, pray for him.
Choirs of the righteous, pray for him.
All Apostles, all Evangelists, pray for him,

All holy Disciples of the Lord, pray for him.
All holy Innocents, pray for him.
All holy Martyrs, all holy Confessors,
All holy Hermits, all holy virgins,
All ye Saints of God, pray for him.

Gerontius

- [20] Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play the man;
And through such waning span
Of life and thought as still has to be trod,
Prepare to meet thy God.
And while the storm of that bewilderment
Is for a season spent
And, ere afresh the ruin on me fall,
[21] Use well the interval.

Assistants

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord,
Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.
From the sins that are past;
From Thy frown and Thine ire;
From the perils of dying;
From any complying
With sin, or denying
His God or relying
On self, at the Last;
From the nethermost fire;
From all that is evil;

From power of the devil;
Thy servant deliver,
For once and for ever.
By Thy birth, and by Thy Cross
Rescue him from endless loss;
By Thy death and burial,
Save him from a final fall;
By Thy rising from the tomb,
By Thy mounting up above,
By the Spirit's gracious love
Save him in the day of doom.

Gerontius

[22] Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Parce mihi, Domine.
Firmly I believe and truly
God is Three, and God is One;
And I next acknowledge duly
Manhood taken by the Son.
And I trust and hope most fully
In that Manhood crucified:
And each thought and deed unruly
Do to death, as He has died.
Simply to His Grace and wholly
Light and life and strength belong.
And I love, supremely, solely,
Him the holy, Him the strong,
Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,

De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Parce mihi, Domine,
And I hold in veneration,
For the love of Him alone,
Holy Church, as His creation,
And her teachings, as His own.
And I take with joy whatever
Now besets me, pain or fear,
And with a strong will I sever
All the ties which bind me here.

Adoration aye be given,
With and through the angelic host.
To the God of earth and heaven,
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Mortis in discrimine.
[23] I can no more; for now it comes again
That sense of ruin, which is worse than pain,
That masterful negation and collapse
Of all that makes me man.
...And, crueller still,
A fierce and restless fright begins to fill
The mansion of my soul,
And, worse and worse,
Some bodily form of ill floats on the wind,
With many a loathsome curse

Tainting the hallowed air, and laughs,
And flaps its hideous wings,
And makes me wild with horror and dismay.
O Jesu, help! pray for me, Mary, pray!
Some Angel, Jesu! such as came to Thee

[24] In Thine own agony...

Mary, pray for me. Joseph, pray for me.
Mary, pray for me.

Assistants

Rescue him, O Lord, in this his evil hour,
As of old so many by Thy gracious power: -
Noe from the waters in a saving home;
(Amen).

Job from all his multiform and fell distress;
(Amen).

Moses from the land of bondage and despair;
(Amen).

David from Golia and the wrath of Saul;
(Amen).

...So, to show, Thy power,
Rescue this Thy servant in his evil hour.

Gerontius

[25] Novissima hora est and I fain would sleep,
The pain has wearied me... Into Thy hands
O Lord, into Thy hands...

Priest and Assistants

[26] Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo!
Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul!
Go from this world! Go, in the Name of God
The Omnipotent Father, Who created thee!
Go, in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord,
Son of the living God, Who bled for Thee!
Go, in the Name of the Holy Spirit,

[27] Who Hath been poured out on thee!

Go in the name
Of Angels and Archangels; in the name
Of Thrones and Dominations; in the name
Of Princedoms and of Powers;
And in the name
Of Cherubim and Seraphim; go forth!
Go, in the name of Patriarchs and Prophets!
And of Apostles and Evangelists,
Of Martyrs and Confessors, in the name
Of holy Monks and Hermits; in the name
Of holy virgins; and all Saints of God.
Both men and women, go! Go on thy course;
And may thy place today be found in peace,
And may thy dwelling be the Holy Mount
Of Sion: through the Same, through Christ
Our Lord.

PART TWO

Soul of Gerontius
[1] I went to sleep; and now I am refreshed.
A strange refreshment for I feel in me
An inexpressive lightness, and a sense
Of freedom, as I were at length myself,
And ne'er had been before. How still it is!
I hear no more the busy beat of time,
No, nor my fluttering breath, nor struggling pulse;
Nor does one moment differ from the next.
This silence pours a solitariness
Into the very essence of my soul:
And the deep rest so soothing and so sweet
Hath something too of sternness and of pain.
Another marvel: Someone has me fast
Within his ample palm: ...
...A uniform
And gentle pressure tells me I am not
Self-moving, but borne forward on my way,
And hark! I hear a singing; yet in sooth
I cannot of that music rightly say
Whether I hear, or touch, or taste the tones.
Oh, what a heart-subduing melody!

Angel
[2] My work is done,
My task is o'er,
And so I come,
Taking it home,

For the crown is won,
Alleluia. For evermore.

My Father gave
In charge to me
This child of earth
E'en from its birth,
To serve and save,
Alleluia,
And saved is he.

This child of clay
To me was given,
To rear and train
By sorrow and pain
In the narrow way,
Alleluia.
From earth to heaven.

Soul
It is a member of that family
Of wondrous beings, who,
Ere the world were made,
Millions of ages back, have stood around
The throne of God.
I will address him,
Mighty One, my Lord,
My Guardian Spirit all hail!

Angel

3 All hail! My child

My child and brother,

Hail! what wouldest thou!

Soul

I would have nothing but to speak with thee

For speaking's sake. I wish to hold with thee

Conscious communion: though I fain would know

A maze of things, were it but meet to ask,

And not a curiousness.

Angel

You cannot now

Cherish a wish which ought not to be wished.

Soul

Then I will speak.

I ever had believed

That on the moment when the struggling soul

Quitted its mortal case, forthwith it fell

Under the awful Presence of its God,

There to be judged and sent to its own place.

What lets me now from going to my Lord!

Angel

Thou art not let but with extremest speed

Art hurrying to the Just and Holy Judge.

Soul

Dear Angel, say,

Why have I now no fear of meeting Him!

Along my earthly life, the thought of death

And judgement was to me most terrible.

Angel

It is because

Then thou didst fear, that now thou dost not fear,

Thou hast forestalled the agony, and so

For thee the bitterness of death is passed.

Also, because already in thy soul

The judgement is begun.

Angel

A presage falls upon thee, as a ray

Straight from the Judge, expressive of thy lot.

That calm and joy uprising in thy soul

Is first-fruit to thee of thy recompense,

And heaven begun.

Soul

Now that the hour is come, my fear is fled;

And at this balance of my destiny,

Now close upon me, I can forward look

With a serenest joy.

But hark! upon my senses

Comes a fierce hubbub, which would make me fear

Could I be frightened.

Angel

We are now arrived
Close on the judgement-court; that sullen howl
Is from the demons who assemble there
Hungry and wild, to claim their property,
And gather souls for hell. Hist to their cry!

Soul

How sour and how uncouth a dissonance!

Demons

4 Low-born clods
Of brute earth, They aspire
To become gods,
By a new birth,
And an extra grace,
And a score of merits,
As if aught
Could stand in place of the high thought
And the glance of fire
Of the great spirits,
The powers blest
The lords by right
The primal owners,
Of the proud dwelling
And realm of light –
Dispossessed,
Aside thrust,
Chucked down,
By the sheer might

Of a despot's will.

Of a tyrant's frown,
Who after expelling
Their hosts, gave,
Triumphant still,
And still unjust
Each forfeit crown
To psalm droners,
And canting groaners
To every slave,
And pious cheat
And crawling knave,
Who licked the dust
Under his feet.

Angel

5 It is the restless panting of their being;
Like beasts of prey, who, caged within their bars,
In a deep hideous purring have their life,
And an incessant pacing to and fro.

Demons

6 The mind bold
And independent
The purpose free,
So we are told,
Must not think
To have the ascendant
What's a saint!
One whose breath

Doth the air taint
Before his death;
A bundle of bones,
Which fools adore,
Ha! Ha!
When life is o'er.
Virtue and vice,
A knave's pretence.
'Tis all the same;
Ha! ha!
Dread of hell-fire,
Of the venomous flame,
A coward's plea.
Give him his price,
Saint though he be,
Ha! ha!
From shrewd good sense
He'll slave for hire;
Ha! Ha!
And does but aspire
To the heaven above
With sordid aim,
And not from love.
Ha! ha!

Soul

[7] I see not those false spirits; shall I see
My dearest Master, when I reach His throne!

Angel

Yes - for one moment thou shalt see thy Lord.
One moment; but thou knowest not my child,
What thou dost ask: that sight of the Most Fair
Will gladden thee, but it will pierce thee, too.

Soul

Thou speakest darkly, Angel! and an awe
Falls on me, and a fear lest I be rash.

Angel

There was a Mortal, who is now above
In the mid glory: he, when near to die,
Was given communion with the Crucified -
Such, that the Master's very wounds were stamped
Upon his flesh; and, from the agony
Which thrilled through body and soul in that embrace,
Learn that the flame of the Everlasting Love
Doth burn ere it transform...

Choir of Angelicals

[8] ...Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise:

Angel

...Hark to those sounds!
They come of tender beings angelical,
Least and most childlike of the sons of God.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful:
Most sure in all His ways!

To us His elder race He gave
To battle and to win,
Without the chastisement of pain,
Without the soil of sin.

The younger son He willed to be
A marvel in His birth:
Spirit and flesh His parents were;
His home was heaven and earth.

The Eternal blessed His child, and armed,
And sent Him hence afar,
To serve as champion in the field
Of elemental war.

To be His Viceroy in the world
Of matter, and of sense;
Upon the frontier, towards the foe,
A resolute defence.

Angel

We now have passed the gate, and are within
The House of Judgement...

Soul

[9] The sound is like the rushing of the wind -
The summer wind - among the lofty pines.

Choir of Angelicals

[10] Glory to Him, Who evermore
By truth and justice reigns;
Who tears the soul from out its case,
And burns away its stains!

Angel

[11] They sing of thy approaching agony,
Which thou so eagerly didst question of.

Soul

My soul is in my hand: I have no fear -
[12] But hark! a grand mysterious harmony:
It floods me, like the deep and solemn sound
Of many waters.

Angel

[13] And now the threshold, as we traverse it
Utters aloud its glad responsive chant.

Choir of Angelicals

[14] Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise;
In all His words most wonderful:
Most sure in all His ways!

O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.

O wisest love! that flesh and blood
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe,
Should strive and should prevail;

And that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's Presence and His very Self,
And Essence all divine.

O gen'rous love! that He who smote
In man for man the foe,
The double agony in man
For man should undergo;

And in the garden secretly,
And on the cross on high,
Should teach His brethren and inspire
To suffer and to die.

Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!

Angel

[15] Thy judgement now is near, for we are come
Into the veiled presence of our God.

Soul

I hear the voices that I left on earth.

Angel

It is the voice of friends around thy bed,
Who say the "Subvenite" with the priest
Hither the echoes come; before the Throne
Stands the great Angel of the Agony,
The same who strengthened Him, what time He knelt
Lone in the garden shade, bedewed with blood.
That Angel best can plead with Him for all
Tormented souls, the dying and the dead.

Angel of the Agony

[16] Jesu! by that shuddering dread which fell on Thee;
Jesu! by that cold dismay which sickened Thee;
Jesu! by that pang of heart which thrilled in Thee;
Jesu! by that mount of sins which crippled Thee;
Jesu! by that sense of guilt which stifled Thee;
Jesu! by that innocence which girdled Thee;
Jesu! by that sanctity which reigned in Thee;
Jesu! by that Godhead which was one with Thee;
Jesu! spare these souls which are so dear to Thee;
Souls, who in prison, calm and patient, wait for Thee,
Hasten, Lord, their hour, and bid them come to Thee,
To that glorious Home, where they shall ever gaze
on Thee.

Soul

I go before my Judge...

Voices on earth

- [17] Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord.
Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.

Angel

- [18] ...Praise to his Name!
O happy, suffering soul! for it is safe
Consumed, yet quickened, by the glance of God.
Alleluia! Praise to His Name.

Soul

- [19] Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be,
And there in hope the lone night-watches keep,
Told out for me.
There, motionless, and happy in my pain,
Lone, not forlorn – There will I sing my sad
perpetual strain,
Until the morn,
There will I sing, and soothe my stricken breast,
Which ne'er can cease
To throb, and pine, and languish, till possess
Of its Sole Peace.
There will I sing my absent Lord and Love: –
Take me away,
That sooner I may rise, and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting day.

Souls in Purgatory

- [20] Lord, Thou hast been our refuge: in every generation
Before the hills were born, and the world was,

from age to age Thou art God.

Bring us not Lord, very low; Thou hast said,
Come back again, ye sons of Adam.
Come back, O Lord! how long: and be entreated for
Thy servants.

Angel

- [21] Softly and gently, dearly ransomed soul,
In my most loving arms I now enfold thee,
And o'er the penal waters, as they roll,
I poise thee, and I lower thee, and hold thee.
And carefully I dip thee in the lake,
And thou, without a sob or a resistance,
Dost through the flood thy rapid passage take,
Sinking deep, deeper, into the dim distance.
Angels, to whom the willing task is given,
Shall tend, and nurse, and lull thee, as thou liest:
And Masses on the earth, and prayers in heaven,
Shall aid thee at the Throne of the Most Highest.
Farewell, but not for ever brother dear,
Be brave and patient on thy bed of sorrow;
Swiftly shall pass thy night of trial here,
And I will come and wake thee on the morrow.

Souls

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge, *etc.* Amen.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest, *etc.* Amen.

Text: Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-1890)



Photo: walsongallery.co.uk

"Oramo has proved himself a notable Elgarian, and his account here of the Enigma Variations was of the very highest order."

John Allison. *The Times*,
2 June 2004

SAKARI ORAMO

Sakari Oramo was appointed Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in September 1999, after a highly successful year as its Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser. In September 2003, he also became Chief Conductor at the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, having already held the post of Associate Principal Conductor. An accomplished violinist, Sakari Oramo was originally concertmaster of the Orchestra, during which time he enrolled in Jorma Panula's conducting class at the Sibelius Academy. In 1993, one year after completing the course, Sakari Oramo replaced an ailing conductor at very short notice, and the resulting concert was an unprecedented success, leading to the announcement of his appointment as Associate Principal Conductor.

Sakari Oramo is also Principal Conductor of Kokkola Opera and, from the 2008/09 season, he will take up the post of Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra.

During his nine seasons with the CBSO, Sakari Oramo has toured extensively with the Orchestra throughout Europe and Japan. His programmes reflect his Finnish origins, as well as exploring the English tradition through composers such as Bax, Bridge, Britten, Elgar, Vaughan Williams and Walton.

Since his conducting debut with the Finnish Radio Symphony, Sakari Oramo has conducted regularly in Finland and throughout Scandinavia with many prestigious orchestras, and in 2003-04 conducted Britten's *Peter Grimes* at Finnish National Opera. He enjoys regular working relationships with leading orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and has also guest conducted the Cleveland Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris and Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Sakari Oramo has a number of recordings to his credit, the most recent releases being a live recording of Mahler's 5th Symphony with the CBSO for Warner Classics, two highly-acclaimed discs of works by English composer John Foulds, and a recording of Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1 with Leila Josefowicz. He also recently released a disc of works by Bartók with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. His recording for Hyperion of the complete Saint-Saëns Piano Concertos with the CBSO and Stephen Hough collected several prestigious awards, including a Grammy nomination and Gramophone's 'Record of the Year'.

JANE IRWIN MEZZO SOPRANO

Jane Irwin studied at Lancaster University and at the Royal Northern College of Music. As a concert and recital singer she has appeared regularly in Britain, Europe and America. In 2002 she made her Carnegie Hall debut with the Pittsburgh Symphony under Mariss Jansons. She has sung for the BBC Proms, at the Edinburgh International Festival, the Berlin Festival, the Concertgebouw and the Musikverein. She has worked with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Deutsche Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Orchestre de Paris, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, American Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Spanish National Orchestra, Zurich Tonhalle, Philharmonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Hallé Orchestra and with conductors Myung Whun Chung, Günther Herbig, Semyon Bychkov, Ivor Bolton, Andrew Davis, Libor Pešek, Donald Runnicles, Antonio Pappano, Sakari Oramo, Mark Elder, Matthias Bamert, Trevor Pinnock, Petr Altrichter, Paul Daniel, Joseph Swensen, Sir Richard Armstrong and Yakov Kreizberg. She has given recitals at the Châtelet, Paris, London, Edinburgh, Geneva, Aix-en-Provence and Japan.

Concert repertoire includes Verdi *Requiem*, Wagner *Wesendonck Lieder*, Mahler Symphony No 2, *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, *Rückert-Lieder*, *Das Lied von der Erde* and *Kindertotenlieder*, Elgar *Dream of Gerontius*, *The Music Makers* and *The Kingdom*, Britten *Phaedra*, Chausson *Poème de l'amour et de la mer*, Berlioz *La mort de Cléopâtre*, and Brahms Alto Rhapsody.

She made her Royal Opera debut in a new production of *Götterdämmerung* (Second Norn) under Bernard Haitink, returning in 2003 to sing Suzuki in *Madam Butterfly*. She has sung in *Die Walküre* at Bayreuth, and Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* for San Francisco Opera and English National Opera, Mère Marie in *Dialogues des Carmélites* for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and appears regularly with Scottish Opera most recently as Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung* in complete *Ring* cycles at the Edinburgh Festival and Thea in *The Knot Garden*.



Photo: John Barr



Photo: Filz Curzon

JUSTIN LAVENDER TENOR

Originally encouraged by Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears to abandon nuclear engineering in favour of a musical career, Justin Lavender has since appeared as soloist with many of the world's great opera companies, conductors and orchestras. His distinguished débuts include The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Arnold *Guillaume Tell*, the Vienna State Opera as Tamino *Die Zauberflöte*, La Scala, Milan, in the title role *Le Comte Ory* and Sydney Opera house as Nadir *The Pearl Fishers*.

Since then his roles have included: title role *Faust*, Almaviva *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and the title roles *Mitridate*, *Mosè in Egitto* and *Faust* for the Royal Opera; Belmonte *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Vienna and Berlin State Operas; Roméo *Roméo et Juliette* in Cleveland and El Paso, Texas; Pierre *War and Peace* at the Spoleto Festival; Des Grieux in Massenet's *Manon* in New Zealand; Ferrando *Così fan tutte* for the Teatro La Fenice; *Madama Butterfly* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* in Taipei; Dallapiccola's *Ulisse* in Salzburg; Nadir at ENO; *Lucia di Lammermoor* for the Opéra du Rhin.

His concert career is equally distinguished. He made his BBC Proms début singing the tenor lead in Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers*, subsequently issued on CD. He is particularly well known for his interpretations of Verdi's *Requiem*, which he sang at the tercentenary celebrations in St Paul's Cathedral, and of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, which he performed with the CBSO at the 2006 Berlin Festival. He has also performed Liszt's *Faust Symphony* with Mark Elder and the OAE in London and Frankfurt, Britten's *Spring Symphony* in Tokyo, Schnittke's *Faust Cantata* with Abbado and Slatkin, and Mahler's 8th Symphony at the Royal Albert Hall.

Justin's many recordings include Schnittke's *Faust Cantata*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bellini's *I Puritani*, Gluck's *Alceste*, Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, Rossini and Donizetti arias, three Benjamin Britten song cycles, and Mozart operatic arias.

PETER ROSE BASS

Peter Rose was born in Canterbury. He read music at the University of East Anglia and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. In 1985 he won the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Scholarship and in 1986 the Glyndebourne John Christie Award. Peter Rose made his operatic debut in 1986 as the Commendatore with Glyndebourne Festival Opera in Hong Kong. He was principal bass with the Welsh National Opera between 1986 and 1989. He made his Royal Opera House debut as Rochefort (Anna Bolena) with Dame Joan Sutherland.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden his roles have included Ramfis, Fasolt, Cadmus/Somnus (Semele), Daland, King Marke, Commendatore, Timur and Kecal. He made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera, New York as Bottom, and has subsequently sung there Ramfis, Daland and Ochs. His extensive repertoire includes Ochs (Vienna Staatsoper, the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, Seattle Opera and Opera Australia); Bottom (Aix-en-Provence, Glyndebourne, Paris, London, Rome and Barcelona), Gurnemann (Graz, Hamburg and the Vienna Staatsoper), King Marke (Vienna Staatsoper), Gremin (Vienna Staatsoper and English National Opera); Claggart (Vienna, Cologne, Hamburg); Basilio (San Francisco, Berlin Deutsche Staatsoper, Paris), Vodnik in *Rusalka* (Seattle); Rocco (Bregenz Festival and Theater an der Wien, Vienna); Sarastro (Vienna Staatsoper, Netherlands Opera, Berlin Deutsche Staatsoper and Glyndebourne); Mustafa in *Italiana in Algeri* (Netherlands Opera and Dresden); Osmin (Salzburg Festival); and King Fisher *A Midsummer Marriage* for Lyric Opera, Chicago. He sang his first performances of King Philip *Don Carlos* for Cologne Opera and Zaccaria *Nabucco* for Dallas Opera.

Concert engagements include Beethoven Symphony No. 9 with Giulini, Eschenbach and Maazel; Mozart's Requiem with Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta and at Tanglewood with Robert Shaw; Mahler 8 with Tilson Thomas at the Royal Albert Hall; Verdi's Requiem at the Barbican; *La Damnation de Faust* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Sir Georg Solti; Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* and *L'Heure Espagnole* with the Cleveland Orchestra under Boulez, and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* under Masur with the New York Philharmonic.

Recordings include *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Barenboim and the Berlin Philharmonic; *The Seven Deadly Sins* with Nagano and *Salome* with von Dohnányi, both with the Vienna Philharmonic, for Decca; *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Rizzi for Teldec; *The Bartered Bride*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Tosca*, *Aida* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Chandos; *Beatrice Cenci* for Sony and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* under Sir Charles Mackerras which was also released on video.





CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Music Director: Sakari Oramo

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra is the resident orchestra of Symphony Hall, Birmingham, and is one of the world's leading symphonic ensembles. The Orchestra has worked with many leading international conductors since its inaugural concert in 1920, conducted by Sir Edward Elgar, and established itself as a major force during its 18-year association with Sir Simon Rattle. It has continued to flourish under the Finnish conductor Sakari Oramo, who was appointed Principal Conductor in 1998 and Music Director in 1999.

The CBSO plays to over 300,000 people each year in the UK and overseas and is heard and seen by many millions more through its regular radio and TV appearances. In constant demand to perform all over the world, the CBSO also makes regular appearances at the BBC Proms and the Aldeburgh Festival. Under Oramo, the Orchestra has made a number of award-winning recordings, including the 2002 Gramophone Record of the Year disc of Saint-Saëns Piano Concertos, with soloist Stephen Hough. The range of the CBSO's programming initiatives includes Friday Night concerts of music from the lighter end of the symphonic repertoire, schools, matinée and family concerts. The CBSO also runs a chamber music series at CBSO Centre, a medium-scale performance venue in the centre of Birmingham, which doubles as the Orchestra's rehearsal and administrative home.

In addition, the CBSO plays a leading role in amateur music-making in the Midlands: it runs four 'unpaid professional' choruses – one for adults, two for children, and an unauditioned youth choir – which are regularly in demand to perform both at home and abroad with the CBSO and other leading orchestras and musical groups. The CBSO also has a busy education department which co-ordinates an extensive programme of work with schools and in the local community, working directly with over 28,000 people per year. The CBSO Youth Orchestra, formed in 2004, has already established a reputation for recruiting the best young musicians aged 14-21 across the Midlands region.

The CBSO's mission is to share its passion of music through world-class music performed by a world-class orchestra in a world-class city. To find out more, visit the CBSO website: www.cbs.co.uk

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY CHORUS

Chorus Director: Simon Halsey

Associate Conductor: David Lawrence Assistant Conductor: Julian Wilkins

Since its debut in 1974, the City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus – a body of 'unpaid professionals' – has become one of the finest choirs of its kind, performing regularly with the CBSO and in regular demand from other world-class orchestras. The CBSC is one of the four choruses within the CBSO family, along with two symphony youth choruses and a community-based choir for young people; this extensive choral set-up is unique in Great Britain.

The CBSC performs regularly at Symphony Hall and has undertaken a huge range of challenging repertoire with the CBSO and its Music Director Sakari Oramo. The Chorus is also an important cultural ambassador, both for the CBSO and for Birmingham, and its résumé of engagements with other orchestras rivals any other symphony chorus in the world. Among a wealth of prestigious engagements in the past few years are a performance at the opening of the Sydney Olympic Arts Festival in 2000, a live recording for EMI with the Vienna Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle in 2002 and the Finnish premiere of *The Dream of Gerontius* with Sakari Oramo and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Helsinki in 2004. In 2006 CBSC performed twice at the Hong Kong Festival with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and the Chorus toured to Lyon and Grenoble over New Year 2007 to perform with Orchestre National de Lyon. The CBSC also has over 30 recordings to its credit.

For further information about the work of the Choruses, visit our website at www.cbsco.co.uk/choruses.

SIMON HALSEY

Simon Halsey is one of Britain's leading conductors and has been Chorus Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus since 1982. The Chorus has won many awards and toured extensively with Halsey, building strong relationships with the orchestras and festivals in Vienna, Salzburg, Leipzig and the BBC Proms. In Birmingham the CBSC continues to be a central part of the musical life of the city and performs in a wide range of repertoire with some of the world's greatest conductors.

Alongside his role with the CBSC Halsey is also Chief Conductor of both the Berlin and Netherlands Radio Choirs, Principal Conductor Choral Programme of The Sage Gateshead and Artistic Director and founder of the dynamic professional choir European Voices, formed at the invitation of Sir Simon Rattle.

Halsey has worked on countless major recording projects, many of which have won major awards. Other recent recordings with the City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus include Julian Anderson's *Four American Choruses* for NMC and *English Choral Favourites* for EMI.



Photo: Matthias Heyde

EDWARD ELGAR 1857-1934

THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CD **ONE**

1	THE HOLLY AND THE IVY	4'58
2-16	ENIGMA VARIATIONS	29'16
17-27	THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Part One)	33'35

CD **TWO**

1-21	THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS (Part Two)	52'56
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JANE IRWIN MEZZO SOPRANO

JUSTIN LAVENDER TENOR

PETER ROSE BASS

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY CHORUS

SIMON HALSEY CHORUS DIRECTOR

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SAKARI ORAMO CONDUCTOR

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