

classic **CHANDOS**

ELGAR

THE LIGHT OF LIFE



Judith Howarth soprano
Linda Finnie contralto
Arthur Davies tenor
John Shirley-Quirk baritone

London Symphony Chorus
London Symphony Orchestra
Richard Hickox





Greg Barrett

Richard Hickox
(1948 – 2008)

Sir Edward Elgar (1857 – 1934)

The Light of Life, Op. 29

(Lux Christi)

1	1	Meditation –	5:29
2	2	Chorus and Solo: 'Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion' –	6:56
3	3	Recitative and Chorus: 'As Jesus passed by' –	1:24
4	4	Solo: 'Be not extreme, O Lord, to mark amiss' –	3:05
5	5	Solo: 'Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents' –	2:59
6	6	Chorus: 'Light out of darkness Thou hast brought!'	5:05
7	7	Recitative: 'And when He had thus spoken' –	1:19
8	8	Women's Chorus: 'Doubt not thy Father's care!'	2:16
9	9	Soli and Chorus: 'He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing' –	5:20
10	10	Solo: 'As a spirit didst Thou pass before mine eyes'	4:32
11	11	Recitative and Chorus: 'They brought him to the Pharisees' –	2:42

12	12	Solo: 'Thou only hast the words of life!' –	2:44
13	13	Soli and Chorus: 'But the Jews did not believe' –	3:37
14	14	Solo and Women's Chorus: 'Woe to the shepherds of the flock'	3:01
15	15	Recitative and Soli: 'Jesus heard that they had cast him out' –	2:30
16		'I am the Good Shepherd'	4:29
17	16	Chorus: 'Light of the World, we know Thy praise'	5:04
			TT 62:48

Judith Howarth soprano (The Mother of the Blind Man)

Linda Finnie contralto (Narrator)

Arthur Davies tenor (The Blind Man)

John Shirley-Quirk baritone (Jesus)

London Symphony Chorus

Stephen Westrop chorus master

John Scott organ

London Symphony Orchestra

Richard Hickox

Elgar: The Light of Life

During 1895 Edward Elgar, with the Three Choirs Festival at Worcester in 1896 in mind, asked an Anglican clergyman, the Rev. Edward Capel Cure, for a libretto on a biblical subject. Capel Cure had played chamber music with Elgar while he was curate of Holy Trinity, Worcester in the 1880s. He was now vicar of Bradninch in Devon. He replied with three suggestions, of which he thought the best was the story of Christ healing the blind man:

Call it *Lux Christi*... it is a perfect story,
descriptive & dramatic – would almost
arrange itself for musical treatment.

Elgar agreed and the finished libretto reached him in August 1895 while he and his wife, Alice, were on holiday in Garmisch in Bavaria. Some sketches for the music were composed at once.

In November the secretary of the Worcester Festival invited Elgar to play golf with him so that they could discuss Elgar's offer of a work for the following summer. Throughout the autumn Elgar worked on his cantata *King Olaf*, commissioned by the North Staffordshire Festival at Hanley for October 1896, and on *Lux Christi*. The vocal score of the cantata was finished on 21 March 1896

and the oratorio was complete in vocal score early in April. Novello's agreed to publish both works. They had asked for the oratorio to be kept under an hour in length and queried the Latin title lest an Anglican cathedral festival might detect Roman Catholic bias. Elgar suggested *The Light that Shineth*, but readily accepted Novello's suggestion of *The Light of Life*:

much better as it is in the chapter of
St John used in the work: we had thought
of this name but had an idea that it had
been used.

Orchestration was completed by 20 June and two days later Elgar conducted a choral rehearsal in Worcester. The London rehearsal for soloists and orchestra on 3 September was attended by Sir Walter Parratt, Master of the Queen's Musick, and others who, Alice Elgar confided to her diary, were 'quite carried away with enthusiasm for E's great music, also soloists'. The first performance took place on 8 September in Worcester Cathedral, with Edward Lloyd (later to be the first Gerontius), Watkin Mills, Anna Williams, and Jessie King as soloists. The music was well received, most criticism being reserved

for the libretto. A notice in the *Worcestershire Echo* by Edward Vine Hall, precentor of the cathedral and also a conductor, singled out the words 'Hadst Thou a son, O Lord' in the solo of the Mother of the Blind Man as 'somewhat deficient in reverence'. Novello's agreed and wrote to Capel Cure, who did not agree and said so vehemently. They refused to deal with him, but Elgar intervened and the passage was revised.

Three years later, the Worcester Festival hoped for the 'Gordon' Symphony from Elgar but it was not forthcoming, so *The Light of Life* was repeated. For this performance Elgar revised the solo parts extensively. A critic found them

all the easier and more effective... though one still feels that the composer has more sympathy with his instruments than with his voices.

The Light of Life is the prelude to the uncompleted trilogy of New Testament oratorios, which occupied Elgar in the first six years of the twentieth century. Some of its themes resemble those in *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom*. They come, to quote Elgar, 'from the same oven'. Listeners to *The Light of Life* need no longer be surprised by the fluency of the writing for solo tenor in *The Dream of Gerontius* (the tenor part in *The Light of Life* was, after all, revised only a few months before

Elgar began *Gerontius*), nor by the assurance with which the orchestra is handled in the later work, nor by the imaginative use of the chorus, prophetic at some points of his last choral work, *The Spirit of England* (1916). There are passages, notably the tenor's 'As a spirit didst Thou pass before mine eyes', at which the music seems to belong not to a cathedral festival but to a Massenet opera.

Elgar called the prelude to the oratorio a 'Meditation'. It contains the work's principal *Leitmotive*. The third of them, in G major and to be played *dolcissimo*, and also used in *The Apostles*, represents Jesus as giver of the Light of the World and pervades the whole work in some shape or other. After the chorus's entry, the voice of the Blind Man is heard praying for light, anticipating Gerontius very noticeably at the phrase 'I cannot prove / Thy truth and love'. Elgar uses the device of a contralto narrator, with a soprano singing the Mother of the Blind Man, whose solo 'Be not extreme, O Lord' is accompanied by complex string writing and decorative woodwind. When Jesus (baritone) is first heard, it is immediately evident that Elgar's treatment of the Saviour is to be virile and unsanctimonious.

The restoration of the Blind Man's sight is prosaically passed over and is followed by a choral fugue of which Elgar told an interviewer in the summer of 1896:

I thought a fugue would be expected of me. The British public would hardly tolerate oratorios without a fugue. So I tried to give them one. Not a 'barn-door' fugue, but one with an independent accompaniment. There's a bit of canon, too, and in short, I hope there's enough counterpoint to give the real British religious respectability!

In 1933 he told Delius that writing oratorios was 'the penalty of my English environment'.

Further pointers to the future can be heard in the orchestral introduction to the contralto's 'Thou only hast the words of life!' and in the interlude, 'Woe to the shepherds of the flock' for soprano and women's chorus. The closing section begins with a dialogue between Jesus and the Man who was blind. Significantly, the Man's worship of Christ as divine is expressed by the orchestra in the most beautiful example of mature Elgar in the work. It is followed by Jesus' 'I am the Good Shepherd', with a solo violin leading the accompaniment. It is here, rather than in the choral apotheosis of the 'Light of the World' theme, that one is acutely aware of genius about to burst into flame.

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Judith Howarth studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and currently

studies with Patricia Macmahon. She won numerous awards before being awarded a special bursary – the first of its kind – to join The Royal Opera, Covent Garden as a principal soprano in the 1985/86 season. In the 1989/90 season she sang her first major roles with the Company, including Musetta (*La bohème*), Ännchen (*Der Freischütz*), and Gilda (*Rigoletto*). She has since sung Adele (*Die Fledermaus*), Marguerite de Valois (*Les Huguenots*), Liù (*Turandot*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Marzelline (*Fidelio*), and Morgana (*Alcina*) with the Company.

Judith Howarth has a wide concert repertoire and has appeared with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and with the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra in Paris and Innsbruck. In 1989 she made her American debut in Seattle in a gala concert with Plácido Domingo, and appeared again with Domingo in 1990 and 1992. She has appeared in the 1991, 1992, and 1993 BBC Promenade Concerts in London.

Linda Finnie was born in Scotland and studied at the Royal Scottish Academy

of Music and Drama. In 1974 she won the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Award, and three years later the Kathleen Ferrier Prize at the 's-Hertogenbosch International Competition. Her concert career has taken her to Australasia, the USA, Far East, and all over Europe. She broadcasts frequently on BBC Radio 3, as well as being a regular guest at the BBC Proms and the Edinburgh International Festival. She has worked with many international orchestras and opera companies. Such was her success at the 1988 Kupfer / Barenboim *Ring* Cycle at Bayreuth that she was re-invited for the following five seasons.

Linda Finnie is an exclusive recording artist with Chandos Records for concert and recital work. She is working on a cycle of Mahler recordings for Chandos with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, conducted by Neeme Järvi.

Arthur Davies was born in Wrexham, North Wales, and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music.

He first joined Welsh National Opera where his roles included Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*), Nadir (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*), Rodolfo (*La bohème*), and Don José (*Carmen*). He made his debut with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden in Henze's *We Come to the River*, and

has since appeared there, and with English National Opera, in leading roles in operas by Donizetti, Gounod, Janáček, Massenet, Puccini, and Verdi. He has also performed with Opera North and Scottish Opera.

Abroad, Arthur Davies has appeared in Chicago, Cincinnati, Connecticut, Ghent, Leipzig, Lisbon, Madrid, Moscow, New Orleans, New York (The Metropolitan Opera), Oporto, Pisa, Santiago de Chile, Seville, and Vancouver. His many recordings include, for Chandos, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and *Caractacus*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*.

John Shirley-Quirk, one of Britain's best-known international artists, was born in Liverpool, where his early musical studies were on the violin. After studying singing with Roy Henderson, he soon began to make his mark in British musical circles.

He has sung all over the world in concerts and recordings with most of the leading orchestras and conductors. His huge concert repertoire is complemented by a discography extending to more than one hundred recordings on all the major international labels.

John Shirley-Quirk devotes a considerable part of each season to appearances with the major orchestras in the USA, having recently appeared in Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* with

the Philadelphia Orchestra under Charles Dutoit in Philadelphia and New York. He lives in Washington D.C. with his wife, the oboist and conductor Sara Watkins Shirley-Quirk, and their three children.

At the time of his untimely death at the age of sixty in November 2008, **Richard Hickox** CBE, one of the most gifted and versatile British conductors of his generation, was Music Director of Opera Australia, having served as Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales from 2000 until 2006 when he became Conductor Emeritus. He founded the City of London Sinfonia, of which he was Music Director, in 1971. He was also Associate Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Emeritus of the Northern Sinfonia, and co-founder of Collegium Musicum 90.

He regularly conducted the major orchestras in the UK and appeared many times at the BBC Proms and at the Aldeburgh, Bath, and Cheltenham festivals, among others. With the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Centre he conducted a number of semi-staged operas, including *Billy Budd*, *Hänsel und Gretel*, and *Salome*. With the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra he gave the first ever complete cycle of Vaughan Williams's symphonies in London. In the course of an ongoing relationship with the

Philharmonia Orchestra he conducted Elgar, Walton, and Britten festivals at the South Bank and a semi-staged performance of *Gloriana* at the Aldeburgh Festival.

Apart from his activities at the Sydney Opera House, he enjoyed recent engagements with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera, Vienna State Opera, and Washington Opera, among others. He guest conducted such world-renowned orchestras as the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and New York Philharmonic.

His phenomenal success in the recording studio resulted in more than 280 recordings, including most recently cycles of orchestral works by Sir Lennox and Michael Berkeley and Frank Bridge with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the symphonies of Vaughan Williams with the London Symphony Orchestra, and a series of operas by Britten with the City of London Sinfonia. He received a Grammy (for *Peter Grimes*) and five *Gramophone* Awards. Richard Hickox was awarded a CBE in the Queen's Jubilee Honours List in 2002, and was the recipient of many other awards, including two Music Awards of the Royal Philharmonic Society, the first ever Sir Charles Groves Award, the *Evening Standard* Opera Award, and the Award of the Association of British Orchestras.



Hanya Chiata

Judith Howarth

Elgar: The Light of Life

Edward Elgar hatte 1895, als er den anglikanischen Geistlichen Rev. Edward Capel Cure um ein Libretto zu einem biblischen Thema bat, wohl bereits das 1896 Three Choirs Festival von Worcester im Kopf. Capel Cure hatte mit Elgar Kammermusik gespielt, als er in den 1880er Jahren Hilfspfarrer der Holy Trinity von Worcester gewesen war. Inzwischen war er Priester von Bradninch in Devon. Er antwortete Elgar mit drei Vorschlägen, von denen seiner Meinung nach der Beste die Geschichte von Christus und die Heilung des Blinden war:

Nenne es *Lux Christi* ... es ist eine vollkommene Geschichte, deskriptiv und dramatisch, die sich bei einer musikalischen Bearbeitung beinahe von selber zusammenfügen wird.

Elgar stimmte zu, und er erhielt das vollendete Libretto im August 1895, während er und seine Frau Alice sich in Garmisch in Bayern erholten. Elgar begann sofort mit einigen Skizzen für die Komposition.

Die Gasangspartitur des Oratoriums wurden Anfang April fertig gestellt. Die Verleger, Novello, hatten darum gebeten, die Länge des Oratoriums auf weniger als eine Stunde zu begrenzen, und hinterfragten den

lateinischen Titel, da man bei dem Festival einer anglikanischen Kathedrale dahinter vielleicht römisch-katholisches Gedankengut vermuten könnte. Elgar schlug den Titel *The Light that Shineth* vor, doch akzeptierte er sofort den Vorschlag von Novello *The Light of Life*:

Viel besser, da dieser Titel im Kapitel von St. Johannis vorkommt, das in diesem Werk bearbeitet wird. Wir hatten an diesen Titel gedacht, aber meinten, er sei bereits benutzt worden.

Die Orchestrierung wurde am 20. Juni beendet, und zwei Tage später dirigierte Elgar eine Chorprobe in Worcester. Der Probe in London am 3. September wohnten Sir Walter Parratt, Master of the Queen's Musick, und andere bei, die, wie Alice Elgar ihrem Tagebuch anvertraute, "von Elgars Musik mitgerissen wurden, und zwar auch die Solisten". Die Uraufführung fand am 8. September in der Kathedrale von Worcester statt, mit Edward Lloyd (später war er der erste Gerontius), Watkin Mills, Anna Williams und Jessie King als Solisten. Die Musik wurde positiv aufgenommen, und die Kritik blieb allein dem Libretto vorbehalten.

Drei Jahre später hoffte man auf dem Worcester Festival auf Elgars "Gordon Symphony", aber dieses Werk ließ noch auf sich warten, und so wurde *The Light of Life* noch einmal gegeben. Für diese Aufführung überarbeitete Elgar intensiv die Solostimmen. Ein Kritiker bemerkte zu den Solopassagen:

Sie seien müheloser und ausdrucksvoller
... aber man fühle immer noch, daß der
Komponist für seine Instrumente mehr
Sympathie empfände als für seine
Stimmen.

The Light of Life ist das Präludium der unvollendeten Trilogie der Oratorien des Neuen Testaments, mit denen Elgar die ersten sechs Jahre des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts beschäftigt war. Einige Themen sind denen von *The Apostles* und *The Kingdom* sehr ähnlich. Sie sind, um Elgar zu zitieren, "aus einem Guß". Hörer von *The Light of Life* sind dann auch nicht länger über den flüssigen Kompositionsstil für Solotenor in *The Dream of Gerontius* überrascht (die Tenorstimme von *The Light of Life* wurde ja nur einige Monate vor Elgars Beginn an *Gerontius* überarbeitet), noch über die Sicherheit mit der Elgar in den späteren Werken die Orchestrierung vornimmt oder über die geistreiche Verwendung der Chorpässagen, in denen bereits in einigen Passagen sein letztes Werk für Chor, *The Spirit of England* (1916), anklingt. In einigen Passagen, insbesondere

in "As a spirit didst Thou pass before mine eyes" des Tenor, scheint die Musik nicht zu dem Festival einer Kathedrale, sondern eher zu einer Oper Massenets zu gehören.

Elgar nannte das Präludium des Oratoriums "Meditation". Es enthält die vorherrschenden Leitmotive des Werks. Das dritte dieser Leitmotive, das in G-Dur steht, mit *dolcissimo* überschrieben ist und auch in *The Apostles* erklingt, stellt Jesus als den Lichtspender der Welt dar, und beherrscht das Werk in gewisser Weise. Nach dem Einsatz des Chors ist die Stimme des Blinden zu hören, der um Licht bittet und sicherlich mit der Phrase "I cannot prove / Thy truth and love" Gerontius vorweg nimmt. Elgar benutzt als Kunstgriff die Altstimme in der Rolle des Erzählers und den Sopran als Mutter des Blinden, deren Solo "Be not extreme, O Lord" von einer komplexen Komposition für Streicher mit Verzierungen bei den Holzbläsern begleitet wird. Bei dem ersten Einsatz von Jesus (Bariton) wird sogleich deutlich, daß Elgar den Retter männlich und wenig ergebungsvoll darstellt.

Wie der Blinde sein Augenlicht wiedergewinnt, wird prosaisch abgehandelt, und es folgt eine Fuge des Chors, über die Elgar im Sommer 1896 in einem Interview sagte:

Ich dachte, man würde von mir eine Fuge
erwarten. Das britische Publikum wird
kaum ein Oratorium ohne Fuge dulden.

Folglich versuchte ich, eine Fuge zu schreiben. Keine bombastische Fuge, sondern eine Fuge mit unabhängiger Begleitung. Etwas Kanon ist auch enthalten, und ich hoffe auch genügend Kontrapunkt, so daß der echte Brite religiöse Ehrfurcht fühlt!

1933 vertraute er Delius an, daß die Komposition von Oratorien "die Strafe meiner englischen Umgebung sei".

Weitere Verweise auf spätere Kompositionen sind in der Introduction des Orchesters zu "Thou only hast the words of life!" der Altstimme und in dem Zwischenspiel "Woe to the shepherds of the flock" für Sopran und Frauenchor zu hören. Die Schlußpassage beginnt mit einem Dialog zwischen Jesus und dem ehemaligen Blinden. Die Verehrung von Christus als den Göttlichen wird bezeichnenderweise durch das Orchester in einem wunderschönen Beispiel für die Musik des reiferen Elgar ausgedrückt. Es folgt Jesus in "I am the Good Shepherd", wobei die Solovioline die Begleitung anführt. Eher an dieser Stelle als in der Apotheose des Chors mit dem Thema über "Light of the World" erkennt man das steil aufsteigende Genie in aller Schärfe.

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Übersetzung: Sabine Schildknecht

Judith Howarth studierte an der Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama und studiert derzeit bei Patricia Macmahon. Sie gewann zahlreiche Preise bevor sie in der Spielzeit 1985 / 86 ein Sonderstipendium erhielt – das erste seiner Art –, mit dem sie als Solosopranistin an der Royal Opera Covent Garden verpflichtet wurde. In der Spielzeit 1989 / 90 sang sie dort ihre ersten Hauptrollen, darunter Musetta (*La bohème*), Ännchen (*Der Freischütz*) und Gilda (*Rigoletto*). Seitdem sang sie in diesem Opernhaus Adele (*Die Fledermaus*), Marguerite de Valois (*Les Huguenots*), Liù (*Turandot*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Marzelline (*Fidelio*) und Morgana (*Alcina*).

Judith Howarth besitzt außerdem ein weitgefächertes Konzertrepertoire und ist mit dem Boston Symphony Orchestra, dem London Philharmonic Orchestra, dem London Symphony Orchestra, dem BBC Symphony Orchestra, dem English Chamber Orchestra, dem City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra und dem Royal Scottish National Orchestra sowie in Paris und Innsbruck mit dem Monteverdi Choir und Orchestra aufgetreten. 1989 machte sie ihr Amerikadebüt in Seattle in einem Galakonzert mit Plácido Domingo, mit dem sie 1990 und 1992 erneut auftrat. Sie sang 1991, 1992 und 1993 in den Promenadenkonzerten der BBC in London.

Linda Finnie stammt aus Schottland und studierte an der Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, wo sie alle wichtigen Preise im Gesangsfach gewann. Im Jahr 1974 wurde ihr der Kathleen-Ferrier-Memorial-Preis verliehen und drei Jahre später der Kathleen-Ferrier-Preis beim internationalen Wettbewerb von 's-Hertogenbosch. Im Rahmen ihrer Engagements ist Linda Finnie in Australasien, den USA, dem Fernen Osten und allen Teilen Europas aufgetreten. Sie ist häufig im Musikprogramm der BBC zu hören und ist regelmäßig bei den Londoner BBC-Promenadenkonzerten und den Edinburgher internationalen Festspielen zu Gast. Sie hat mit vielen internationalen Orchestern und Opernensembles gastiert. Ihr Auftritt in der neuen Kupfer / Barenboim-Inszenierung von Wagners *Ring* in Bayreuth im Jahr 1988 war ein derartiger Erfolg, daß sie für die nächsten fünf Jahre nach Bayreuth verpflichtet wurde.

Linda Finnie hat mit Chandos einen Exklusivvertrag über Konzert- und Recitalaufnahmen abgeschlossen. Sie arbeitet für Chandos an einem Zyklus von Einspielungen von Mahler mit dem Royal Scottish National Orchestra unter Neeme Järvi.

Arthur Davies wurde in Wales geboren und studierte am Royal Northern College of Music.

Sein erstes Engagement führte ihn an die Welsh National Opera, wo er Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*), Nadir (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*), Rodolfo (*La bohème*) und Don José (*Carmen*) sang. Er gab sein Debüt an der Royal Opera Covent Garden in Henzes *We Come to the River* (Wir erreichen den Fluß) und sang dort sowie an der English National Opera Hauptrollen in Opern von Donizetti, Gounod, Janáček, Massenet, Puccini und Verdi. Er trat außerdem mit Opera North und Scottish Opera auf.

Außerhalb Großbritanniens ist Arthur Davies in Chicago, Cincinnati, Connecticut, Gent, Leipzig, Lissabon, Madrid, Moskau, New Orleans, New York (an der Metropolitan Opera), Oporto, Pisa, Santiago de Chile, Sevilla und Vancouver aufgetreten. Er hat zahlreiche Schallplatteneinspielungen gemacht, darunter für Chandos Elgars *The Dream of Gerontius* und *Caractacus*, Mendelssohns *Elijah* und Rossinis *Stabat Mater*.

John Shirley-Quirk, einer der auf internationaler Ebene bekanntesten britischen Künstler, wurde in Liverpool geboren, wo er zunächst Violine studierte. Schon bald nach seinem Gesangsstudium bei Roy Henderson begann er sich in den musikalischen Kreisen Großbritanniens einen Namen zu machen.

Er hat weltweit in Konzerten und Schallplattenaufnahmen mit vielen führenden Orchestern und Dirigenten gearbeitet. Sein gewaltiges Konzertrepertoire spiegelt sich in seiner Diskographie wider, die über hundert Titel für alle führenden internationalen Schallplattenlabels verzeichnet.

John Shirley-Quirk widmet einen Großteil jeder Saison seinen Auftritten mit den führenden Orchestern der USA, darunter in jüngerer Zeit in Strawinskys *Oedipus Rex* mit dem Philadelphia Orchestra unter Charles Dutoit in Philadelphia und New York. Er lebt mit seiner Frau, der Oboistin und Dirigentin Sara Watkins Shirley-Quirk, und ihren drei Kindern in Washington D.C.

Bei seinem frühzeitigen Tod im November 2008 wirkte der sechzigjährige **Richard Hickox** CBE, einer der begabtesten und vielseitigsten britischen Dirigenten seiner Generation, als Musikdirektor an der Opera Australia. Sein Name verbindet sich vor allem auch mit der 1971 von ihm gegründeten und künstlerisch geleiteten City of London Sinfonia sowie dem BBC National Orchestra of Wales, dem er von 2000 bis 2006 als Chefdirigent vorstand und danach als Conductor Emeritus treu blieb. Außerdem war er Gastdirigent beim London Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Emeritus der Northern

Sinfonia und Mitbegründer des Collegium Musicum 90.

Er dirigierte regelmäßig die namhaften Orchester Großbritanniens und gastierte vielfach bei den BBC Proms und anderen Festivals, wie Aldeburgh, Bath und Cheltenham. Mit dem London Symphony Orchestra gab er im Barbican Centre konzertant inszenierte Opernaufführungen, darunter *Billy Budd*, *Hänsel und Gretel* und *Salome*. Mit dem Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra brachte er zum erstenmal in London den gesamten Zyklus von Vaughan-Williams-Sinfonien zu Gehör, und im Rahmen seiner langjährigen Zusammenarbeit mit dem Philharmonia Orchestra dirigierte er Elgar, Walton und Britten gewidmete Konzertreihen im Londoner Southbank Centre sowie beim Aldeburgh Festival eine konzertante Inszenierung von *Gloriana*.

Trotz seiner Tätigkeit in Australien konnte er weiterhin Einladungen an die Royal Opera Covent Garden, English National Opera, Wiener Staatsoper und Washington Opera folgen. Weltberühmte Orchester wie das Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, das Orchestre de Paris, das Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks und die New Yorker Philharmoniker verpflichteten ihn als Gastdirigenten.

Sein phänomenaler Erfolg im Schallplattenstudio schlug sich in mehr als 280 Aufnahmen nieder; jüngste

Projekte waren Gesamteinspielungen der Orchesterwerke von Frank Bridge sowie Sir Lennox und Michael Berkeley mit dem BBC National Orchestra of Wales, die Sinfonien von Vaughan Williams mit dem London Symphony Orchestra und eine Reihe von Britten-Opern mit der City of London Sinfonia. Richard Hickox wurde mit einem Grammy (für *Peter Grimes*) und

fünf *Gramophone* Awards ausgezeichnet. Neben dem britischen Verdienstorden CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire), der ihm 2002 verliehen wurde, erhielt er zahlreiche weitere Auszeichnungen, so etwa zwei Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards, den ersten Sir Charles Groves Award, den *Evening Standard* Opera Award und den Association of British Orchestras Award.



Fritz Curzon

Linda Finnie

Elgar: The Light of Life

En 1895, Edward Elgar qui avait à l'esprit le Three Choirs Festival de Worcester de 1896 demanda à un ecclésiastique anglican, le révérend Edward Capel Cure, un livret sur un sujet biblique. Capel Cure avait joué de la musique de chambre avec Elgar lorsqu'il desservait la Sainte Trinité à Worcester dans les années 1880. En 1895, il était pasteur de Bradninch dans le Devonshire. En réponse, il fit trois suggestions, dont la meilleure, selon lui, était la parabole du Christ guérissant l'aveugle:

Choisissez pour titre *Lux Christi*... c'est une parabole convenant parfaitement par son caractère à la fois descriptif et dramatique, et se prêtant bien, de plus, à un traitement musical.

Elgar acquiesça et le livret terminé lui parvint en août 1895 alors qu'il était en vacances avec son épouse, Alice, à Garmisch en Bavière. Il composa immédiatement quelques esquisses.

La partie vocale de l'oratorio, fut achevée début avril. La maison d'édition Novello avait demandé qu'il ne fasse pas plus d'une heure et avait mis en question le titre latin craignant que le public d'un festival organisé

dans le cadre d'une cathédrale anglicane n'y perçoive une connotation catholique. Elgar proposa *The Light that Shineth*, mais accepta volontiers la suggestion de Novello: *The Light of Life* –

de loin préférable, car ces termes figurent dans le chapitre de St Jean repris dans l'œuvre: nous avions songé à ce titre, mais pensions qu'il avait déjà été utilisé.

L'orchestration fut achevée le 20 juin et deux jours plus tard, Elgar répéta avec les chœurs à Worcester. Sir Walter Parratt, Master of the Queen's Musick, et d'autres assistaient à la répétition de l'orchestre et des solistes à Londres, le 3 septembre. Alice Elgar confia à son journal: "La superbe musique d'Elgar et les solistes les enthousiasmèrent." La création eut lieu le 8 septembre à la Worcester Cathedral avec Edward Lloyd (plus tard, le premier Gerontius), Watkin Mills, Anna Williams et Jessie King comme solistes. La musique fut accueillie favorablement, la plupart des critiques s'adressant au livret.

Trois ans plus tard, le Festival de Worcester espérait pouvoir mettre au programme la "Symphonie Gordon" d'Elgar. Mais l'œuvre n'étant pas terminée, *The Light*

of Life fut repris. Pour cette exécution, Elgar révisa en profondeur les parties solistes. Un critique les jugea

d'autant plus faciles et plus éloquentes...
bien qu'il apparaisse encore que le compositeur ait plus d'affinités avec ses instruments qu'avec ses voix.

The Light of Life est le prélude de la trilogie inachevée des oratorios du Nouveau Testament sur lesquels travailla Elgar de 1900 à 1906. Certains de ses thèmes ressemblent à ceux de *The Apostles* et *The Kingdom*. Ils sont, pour citer Elgar, "de la même fournée". Ceux qui ont entendu *The Light of Life* ne s'étonneront plus de l'aisance d'Elgar dans la partie du ténor solo de *The Dream of Gerontius* (la partie du ténor dans *The Light of Life* ne fut révisée, après tout, que quelques mois avant qu'Elgar ne mette la première main à *Gerontius*). Ils ne s'étonneront pas non plus de son assurance dans le traitement de l'orchestre dans cette œuvre ou de son imagination dans l'emploi du chœur, prophétique parfois, dans sa dernière œuvre chorale *The Spirit of England* (1916). Dans certains passages, notamment "As a spirit didst Thou pass before mine eyes" (Tel un esprit tu passas devant mes yeux) chanté par le ténor, la musique semble extraite d'un opéra de Massenet plutôt que du programme d'un festival de cathédrale.

Elgar appela le prélude de cet oratorio "Meditation". Il contient les grands *Leitmotive* de l'œuvre. Le troisième, en sol majeur et joué *dolcissimo*, qui apparaît aussi dans *The Apostles*, représente Jésus comme source de la Lumière du Monde et imprègne l'œuvre tout entière, d'une manière ou d'une autre. Après l'entrée du chœur, on perçoit la voix de l'Aveugle priant pour la lumière, devançant très nettement Gerontius dans cette phrase "I cannot prove / Thy truth and love" (Je ne peux prouver / ton existence ni ton amour). Elgar a recours à un contralto, la narratrice, et à une soprano, la Mère de l'Aveugle. L'accompagnement de son solo "Be not extreme, O Lord" (Ne soyez pas excessif, ô Seigneur) est complexe aux cordes et décoratif aux bois. Lorsqu'on entend Jésus (baryton) pour la première fois, il apparaît immédiatement qu'Elgar situe le Sauveur dans un contexte musical viril et non moralisateur.

Au terme du prosaïque survol de la guérison de l'Aveugle, les chœurs entament un épisode fugué. À son sujet, Elgar donna à un journaliste, pendant l'été 1896, les précisions suivantes:

On s'attendait, je m'en doutais, à une fugue de ma part. Le public anglais ne peut à peine imaginer des oratorios sans fugue. J'ai donc essayé de lui en donner une, non pas une fugue ordinaire, mais une fugue avec

un accompagnement indépendant. Il y a quelques passages en canon aussi; en bref, j'espère que la musique est suffisamment contrapuntique pour que soient respectées les aspirations des cercles religieux anglais!

En 1933, Elgar dit à Delius qu'écrire des oratorios était "la rançon de son environnement anglais".

D'autres indices laissant présumer du futur sont perceptibles dans l'introduction orchestrale de "Thou only hast the words of life!" (Tu es seul à avoir les paroles de vie!) chanté par le contralto et dans l'interlude "Woe to the shepherds of the flock" (Malheur aux bergers du troupeau) pour soprano et chœur de femmes. La section finale s'ouvre sur un dialogue entre Jésus et l'Aveugle maintenant guéri. Sa vénération pour le divin Christ, exprimée par l'orchestre, est de toute évidence le plus bel exemple dans l'œuvre du style de la période de maturité d'Elgar. Suit alors le passage où Jésus chante "I am the Good Shepherd" (Je suis le bon Pasteur), un violon solo menant l'accompagnement. C'est ici, plus que dans l'apothéose chorale du thème "Light of the World" (Lumière du Monde), que le génie, sur le point de s'embraser, s'impose à nous.

© Michael Kennedy

Traduction: Marie-Françoise de Meeûs

Judith Howarth, ancienne étudiante de la Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, suit des cours de perfectionnement auprès de Patricia Macmahon. Gagnante de nombreux prix, elle a reçu une bourse spéciale – la première du genre – du Royal Opera de Covent Garden (saison 1985 / 1986) et figure maintenant sur la liste des premières sopranos de la compagnie. Elle a interprété ses premiers grands rôles, notamment celui de Musette (*La bohème*), d'Ännchen (*Der Freischütz*) et de Gilda (*Rigoletto*) pendant la saison 1989 / 1990. Ensuite ce furent ceux d'Adele (*Die Fledermaus*), Marguerite de Valois (*Les Huguenots*), Liù (*Turandot*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Marzelline (*Fidelio*) et Morgana (*Alcina*).

Judith Howarth s'est constitué un large répertoire en dehors de l'opéra. On a pu apprécier sa voix au cours de concerts donnés par de grands orchestres, tels: le Boston Symphony Orchestra, le London Philharmonic Orchestra, le London Symphony Orchestra, le BBC Symphony Orchestra, l'English Chamber Orchestra, le City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra et le Royal Scottish National Orchestra; ainsi que le Monteverdi Choir et Orchestra (à Paris et à Innsbruck). En 1989, elle chantait pour la première fois aux États-Unis, à Seattle, dans un concert de gala, où elle partageait

la vedette avec Plácido Domingo. Elle s'est produite à nouveau avec le célèbre ténor en 1990 et en 1992. En 1991, en 1992 et en 1993, elle participait aux Concerts promenade de la BBC à Londres.

Linda Finnie est née en Écosse et a étudié au Conservatoire de Musique et d'Art dramatique d'Écosse où elle a remporté tous les premiers prix de chant. En 1974, Linda Finnie était la lauréate du Palmarès Kathleen Ferrier, en mémoire de la cantatrice, et trois ans plus tard, elle gagnait le Prix Kathleen Ferrier au concours international de 's Hertogenbosch. Les contrats de Linda Finnie l'ont conduite en Asie australe, aux États-Unis, en extrême Orient, et un peu partout en Europe. On l'entend fréquemment sur les ondes de la BBC (programme culturel), aux Concerts promenade de la BBC et au festival international d'Édimbourg. Elle s'est produite auprès de divers grands orchestres internationaux et sur de nombreuses scènes d'opéra. Elle obtint un tel succès au festival 1988 de Bayreuth dans la tétralogie (Kupfer / Barenboim) qu'on lui offrit un contrat pour les cinq saisons suivantes.

Les Disques Chandos ont l'exclusivité des enregistrements de Linda Finnie en concert et en récital. En ce moment elle prépare un cycle Mahler, en vue d'une série d'enregistrements

Chandos, avec le Royal Scottish National Orchestra sous la direction de Neeme Järvi.

Arthur Davies, né à Wrexham, Pays de Galles, a fait ses études au Royal Northern College of Music.

Il a débuté au Welsh National Opera, où il a interprété les rôles de Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*), Nadir (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*), Rodolphe (*La bohème*) et Don José (*Carmen*), suivis d'un premier engagement au Royal Opera de Covent Garden pour les représentations de *We Come to the River* (Nous nous rendons vers le fleuve) de Henze. Depuis, il a tenu les premiers rôles dans des œuvres de Donizetti, Gounod, Janáček, Massenet, Puccini et Verdi, sur les scènes de Covent Garden et de l'English National Opera, ainsi que sur les scènes d'Opera North et du Scottish Opera.

Arthur Davies s'est produit fréquemment hors du Royaume-Uni, notamment à Chicago, Cincinnati, dans le Connecticut, à Gand, Leipzig, Lisbonne, Madrid, Moscou, La Nouvelle-Orléans, New York (Metropolitan Opera), Oporto, Pisa, Santiago-du-Chili, Séville et Vancouver. Le nom d'Arthur Davies figure sur de nombreux disques, dont, sous étiquette Chandos: *Caractacus* et *The Dream of Gerontius* d'Elgar, *Elijah* de Mendelssohn et *Stabat Mater* de Rossini.

John Shirley-Quirk, un artiste britannique bien connu sur la scène internationale, est né à Liverpool, où il choisit d'abord d'étudier le violon. Il étudia ensuite les techniques vocales, sous la direction de Roy Henderson, et rapidement les cercles musicaux britanniques découvrirent ses qualités.

Il s'est produit pratiquement dans le monde entier avec la majeure partie des plus grands orchestres, sous la direction de chefs renommés. Son répertoire, récitals et concerts, est immense, sa discographie impressionnante: plus de 100 enregistrements sous les étiquettes de toutes les grandes maisons internationales de disques.

John Shirley-Quirk consacre une grande partie de son temps à la saison musicale des États-Unis, pendant laquelle il se produit auprès des orchestres les plus renommées. On a pu l'entendre récemment à Philadelphie et à New York, dans l'oratorio *Oedipus Rex* de Stravinsky, avec le Philadelphia Orchestra, sous la direction de Charles Dutoit. John Shirley-Quirk demeure à Washington D.C., avec son épouse, hautboïste / chef d'orchestre, Sara Watkins Shirley-Quirk, et leur trois enfants.

Au moment de sa disparition prématurée à l'âge de soixante ans en novembre 2008, **Richard Hickox** CBE, l'un des chefs

d'orchestre britanniques les plus doués et les plus complets de sa génération, était le directeur musical d'Opera Australia. Auparavant, il avait été chef principal du BBC National Orchestra of Wales de 2000 à 2006, date à laquelle il devint chef honoraire. Il était le directeur musical du City of London Sinfonia qu'il fonda en 1971. Il était également chef invité associé du London Symphony Orchestra, chef honoraire du Northern Sinfonia et co-fondateur de Collegium Musicum 90.

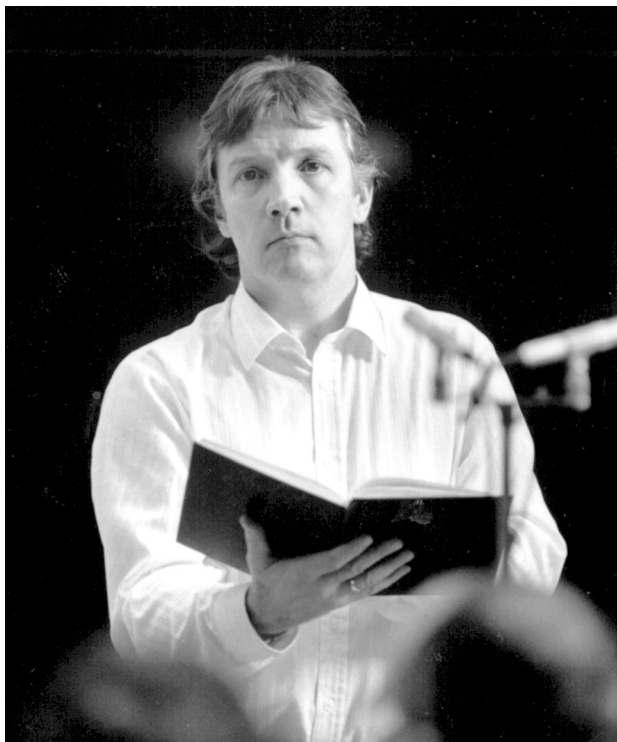
Il dirigea régulièrement les plus grands orchestres du Royaume-Uni et participa souvent aux Proms de la BBC ainsi qu'aux festivals d'Aldeburgh, de Bath et de Cheltenham entre autres. Avec le London Symphony Orchestra, il dirigea au Barbican Centre à Londres plusieurs mises en scène partielles d'opéras dont *Billy Budd*, *Hänsel und Gretel* et *Salome*. À la tête du Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, il donna la première intégrale des symphonies de Vaughan Williams à Londres. Dans le cadre de son association avec le Philharmonia Orchestra, il dirigea des festivals Elgar, Walton et Britten au South Bank de Londres et une mise en scène partielle de *Gloriana* au Festival d'Aldeburgh.

Outre ses activités avec l'Opéra de Sydney, il avait récemment travaillé entre autres avec le Royal Opera de Covent Garden, l'English

National Opera, l'Opéra d'état de Vienne et le Washington Opera. Il fut invité à diriger des orchestres de renom mondial tels le Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, l'Orchestre de Paris, l'Orchestre symphonique de la Radio bavaroise et le New York Philharmonic.

Connaissant un succès phénoménal en studio, il réalisa plus de 280 enregistrements, dont dernièrement des cycles d'œuvres orchestrales de Sir Lennox Berkeley, Michael Berkeley et Frank Bridge avec le BBC National Orchestra of Wales, les symphonies de

Vaughan Williams avec le London Symphony Orchestra ainsi qu'une série d'opéras de Britten avec le City of London Sinfonia. Il obtint un Grammy (pour *Peter Grimes*) et cinq *Gramophone Awards*. Créé Commandeur de l'Ordre de l'empire britannique (CBE) en 2002, Richard Hickox remporta de nombreux autres prix, dont deux *Music Awards* de la Royal Philharmonic Society, le tout premier *Sir Charles Groves Award*, l'*Evening Standard Opera Award* et l'*Association of British Orchestras Award*.



Fritz Curzon

Arthur Davies

The Light of Life

[1] No. 1. Meditation

[2] No. 2. Chorus and Solo

Chorus of Levites (*within the Temple Courts*)

Seek Him that maketh the seven stars
and Orion, and turneth the shadow
of death into the morning, and maketh the
day dark with night.

The Lord is His name.

O give thanks unto the Lord: for His mercy
endureth for ever.

Who hath made great lights: for His mercy
endureth for ever.

The sun to rule the day; the moon and stars
to govern the night: for His mercy
endureth for ever.

Tenor Solo, The Blind Man (*outside the Temple*)

O Thou, in Heaven's dome,
In Light's eternal home,
For Whom the cloud
Of night's endowed

With splendour like the sun:
To me the day and the night
Are equal: both are night.
O God, I pray for light.

Chorus

Seek Him *etc.*

Tenor Solo

All, all is dark to me:
I lose my way to Thee;

I cannot prove
Thy truth and love;
Lord, grant that I may see.
Oh, hateful is the night
Which hides Thee from my sight:
O God! I pray for light.

Chorus

Seek Him *etc.*

[3] No. 3. Recitative and Chorus

Contralto Solo, Narrator

As Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was
blind from his birth, and His disciples asked
Him, saying:

Chorus of Disciples

Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that
he was born blind? Behold, God will not cast
away a perfect man, neither will he help the
evildoers: Therefore darkness is round him
that he cannot see.

[4] No. 4. Solo

Soprano Solo, Mother of the Blind Man

Be not extreme, O Lord, to mark amiss
Those secret sins I know, yet scarce I know;
For man or angel, who may face the Judge
That asks a whiteness, whiter than the
snow?

Is this my sin's reward? O Lord, too much!
Too great a load of sorrow for my strength!
Oh, cruel is Thy power, if Thou hast made
My child a sacrifice for my offence!

Can it be true, O Lord, that Thou hadst
brought
Upon a mother's heart, to love and yet to
hate
The child, her sin's own signature, a gift
Not given in love but as the sinner's fate?

It is not so! Who tell it me blaspheme,
And blinder than my own blind child are they;
And blind am I. Lighten mine eyes, O Lord,
That I may learn Thy love's mysterious way.

5 No. 5. Solo

Baritone Solo, Jesus

Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents,
but that the works of God should be made
manifest in him. I must work the works of Him
that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh,
when no man can work. As long as I am in
the world, I am the Light of the World. He that
followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but
shall have the light of life.

6 No. 6. Chorus

Light out of darkness Thou hast brought!
Within the shadow of Thy cross
Now burns a light, and we are taught
the truer truths of human loss.

Wast Thou a sinner? Thou hast borne
The sinner's sentence and his shame;
Thy side was pierced, Thy forehead torn,
Thy sad heart broken by our blame.

But so a beacon light Thou sent
To signal thro' our night of grief;
How Love upon His mission went
Crowned with sorrow's sharp-set wreath.

Enough it was we needed Thee,
Our misery alone did pray
And Mercy answer'd eagerly.
And trod for us steep Calvary's way.

So let us answer sorrow's cry!
The past is dead: search not its grave
For hidden faults! The remedy
Is ours to seek, to find and save.

7 No. 7. Recitative

Contralto Solo, Narrator

And when He had thus spoken, He made
clay from the ground and anointed the eyes
of the blind man with the clay, and said unto
him:

Baritone Solo, Jesus

Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.

8 No. 8. Women's Chorus

Doubt not thy Father's care!
For ev'ry grief
He finds relief,
And answers every prayer.

Night comes: the sun is lost;
He doth provide
In the Heavens wide
The gleam of a starry host.

Night comes: the soul is dark;
All joy is dead
All gladness fled
And life has miss'd its mark.

Then Thou – the wounded soul,
In that sad hour,
With healing power
Dost touch, and makest whole.

9 No. 9. Soli and Chorus
Contralto Solo, Narrator

He went his way therefore, and washed,
and came seeing: the neighbours therefore
and they which before had seen him that he
was blind, said:

First Chorus, Male Voices

Is not this he that sat and begged? Have we
not seen him before that he was blind?

Second Chorus

He is like him.

Tenor Solo, The man that was blind

I am he.

First Chorus

How were thine eyes opened?

Chorus, Tutti

Since the world began was it not heard that
any man opened the eyes of one that was
born blind.

Tenor Solo, The man that was blind

A man that is called Jesus made clay, and
anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, 'Go
to the pool of Siloam, and wash': I went and
washed, and I received sight.

Chorus

Where is He? He has done a marvellous work
and a wonder: The wisdom of their wise men
shall perish, and the eyes of the blind shall
see out of darkness. Where is He?

Tenor Solo, The man that was blind

I know not.

10 No. 10. Solo

Tenor Solo, The man that was blind

As a spirit didst Thou pass before mine eyes,
I saw Thee not, but heard Thy voice, 'Arise
Go, wash' – and greatly wond'ring I obeyed
And washed the seal of clay Thy hand had
laid

Upon my brow: and, as it melted, oh! no more
The world was shrouded in the night! I saw!

O Jesu! But Thy name is all I know,
Where may I hope to find Thee? I would throw
Myself and all I am before Thy feet,
And Thee for evermore as Master greet.
O sight more precious than my aching heart
E'er dreamt, to see Thee, Jesu, who Thou art.

But more than this Thou canst! Who doubts

Thy power
Can other waters with new virtue dower?

For has not God sealed up our souls in clay
That they are blind to Heaven's eternal day?
Now, Death, I fear thee not! When I have trod
Thine icy flood, Lo! I shall see my God!

11 No. 11. Recitative and Chorus

Contralto Solo, Narrator

They brought him to the Pharisees, and
it was the Sabbath day when Jesus opened
his eyes.

First Chorus, Pharisees

This man is not of God, because He keepeth
not the Sabbath.

The Lord spake unto Moses, 'Verily my
Sabbaths ye shall keep, for it is a sign
between me and you throughout your
generations: every one that defileth it shall
surely be put to death.'

Second Chorus

How can a man that is a sinner do such a
miracle? Can a devil open the eyes of the
blind? They shall cry unto the Lord, but there
shall be none to help them.

First Chorus

He is a sinner.

Second Chorus

He is of God.

Chorus, Tutti

What sayest thou of Him, that He hath opened
thine eyes?

Tenor Solo, The man that was blind

He is a prophet.

12 No. 12. Solo

Contralto Solo, Narrator

Thou only hast the words of life!

Be prophet to my heart, O Lord:

Thy servant heareth, though the world
With babel cries disclaims Thy Word.

As Thou didst Mammon and the market drive

Beyond the Temple's holy ground,

So make a silence in my soul,

Where only Thy true voice shall sound.

13 No. 13. Soli and Chorus

Recitative

Contralto Solo, Narrator

But the Jews did not believe concerning
him that he had been blind, until they asked
his parents, and his parents answered them,
and said:

Soprano Solo, Mother of the Blind Man

We know that this is our son, and that he
was born blind; but by what means he now
seeth, we know not; he is of age; ask him: he
shall speak for himself.

Recitative

Contralto Solo, Narrator

Then again called they the man that was
blind, and said unto him:

Chorus of Pharisees

Give God the praise, we know that this man
is a sinner.

Tenor Solo, The man that was blind

Whether He be a sinner or no, I know not: one
thing I know, that, whereas I was blind,
now I see.

Chorus

We know that God spake unto Moses, as for
this fellow we know not from whence He is.

Recitative

Tenor Solo, The man that was blind

Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye
know not from whence He is, and yet He
hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that
God heareth not sinners: but if any man be
a worshipper of God, him He heareth. If this
man were not of God, He could do nothing.

Chorus

Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost
thou teach us? We cast you out!

14 No. 14. Solo and Women's Chorus

**Soprano Solo, Mother of the Blind Man,
and Women's Chorus**

Woe to the shepherds of the flock,
Ye have not healed that which was sick;
Ye have not sought that which was lost.
Therefore, ye shepherds, hear ye the word
of the Lord,
I will require my flock at your hands,

I will seek out my sheep,
And will deliver them out of all places
Where they have been scatter'd in the
cloudy and dark day.

I will feed them in a good pasture,
I will seek out that which was lost,
And bring again that which was driven away.

**15 No. 15. Recitative and Soli
Recitative**

Contralto Solo, Narrator

Jesus heard that they had cast him out,
and when He had found him, He said unto
him:

Baritone Solo, Jesus

Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

Tenor Solo, The man who was blind

Who is He, Lord, that I might?

Baritone Solo, Jesus

Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that
talketh with thee.

Tenor Solo, The man who was blind

Lord, I believe.

Baritone Solo, Jesus

16 I am the Good Shepherd, and know my
sheep, and am known of mine:
I am come that they might have life, and that
they might have it more abundantly.
Holy Father, keep thro' Thine own name
those whom Thou hast giv'n me.

Sanctify them thro' Thy truth. Thy word is
truth.
Father, I will that they be with me, where I
am, that they may behold my glory
Which Thou hast given me.

17

No. 16. Chorus

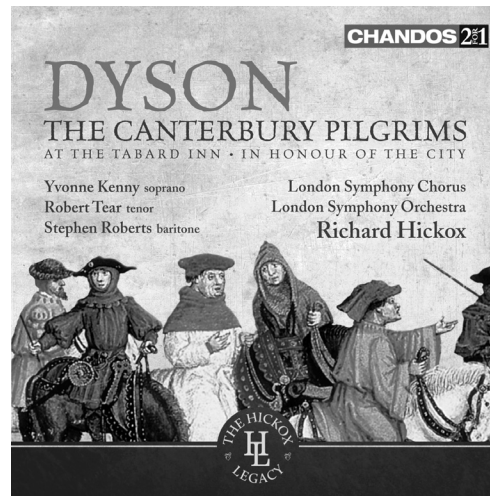
Light of the World, we know Thy praise
The angels and archangels raise
And all the host of Heav'n
More worthily than our faint hymns,
Whose jarring sound that glory dims,
Which God to Thee has giv'n.

But Thou didst not disdain to take
Our low estate, or e'en to make
The tomb Thy resting place;
So Thou might bring into our night
The dawn of Thine eternal light,
To shine upon our face.

Nor death, nor hell, nor sin is Lord,
But Thou, O Son of God. Thy Word
Is now our sov'reign law.
Therefore we thank Thee, and we pray
Thy Light may shine unto the Perfect Day,
On us for ever more.

Rev. Edward Capel Cure (1860 – 1953)

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The premature death of Richard Hickox on 23 November 2008, at the age of just sixty, deprived the musical world of one of its greatest conductors. The depth and breadth of his musical achievements were astonishing, not least in his remarkable work on behalf of British composers. An inspiring figure, and a guiding light to his friends and colleagues, he had a generosity of spirit and a wonderful quality of empathy for others.

For someone of his musical achievements, he was never arrogant, never pompous. Indeed there was a degree of humility about Richard that was as endearing as it was unexpected. He was light-hearted and, above all, incredibly enthusiastic about those causes which he held dear. His determination to make things happen for these passions was astonishing – without this energy and focus his achievements could not have been as great as they were. He was able to take others with him on his crusades, and all in the pursuit of great music.

Richard was a completely rounded musician with a patience, kindness, and charisma that endeared him to players and singers alike. His enthusiasm bred its own energy and this, in turn, inspired performers. He was superb at marshalling

large forces. He cared about the development of the artists with whom he worked and they repaid this loyalty by giving of their best for him.

An unassuming man who was always a delight to meet, Richard was a tireless musical explorer who was able to create a wonderful sense of spirituality, which lifted performances to become special, memorable events. For these reasons, Richard was loved as well as respected.

The Richard Hickox Legacy is a celebration of the enormously fruitful, long-standing collaboration between Richard Hickox and Chandos, which reached more than 280 recordings. This large discography will remain a testament to his musical energy and exceptional gifts for years to come. The series of re-issues now underway captures all aspects of his art. It demonstrates his commitment to an extraordinarily wide range of music, both vocal and orchestral, from the past three centuries. Through these recordings we can continue to marvel at the consistently high level of his interpretations whilst wondering what more he might have achieved had he lived longer.

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Fritz Curzon

John Shirley-Quirk

ELGAR: THE LIGHT OF LIFE – Soloists/LSC/LSO/Hickox

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Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

1 - 17 The Light of Life, Op. 29
(*Lux Christi*)

TT 62:48

Judith Howarth soprano (The Mother of the Blind Man)

Linda Finnie contralto (Narrator)

Arthur Davies tenor (The Blind Man)

John Shirley-Quirk baritone (Jesus)

London Symphony Chorus

Stephen Westrop chorus master

John Scott organ

London Symphony Orchestra

Richard Hickox

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