



Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir

Tuesday 30 January 2018 7.30pm
Milton Court Concert Hall

Arvo Pärt

Solfeggio
Summa
Magnificat
Zwei Beter
The Woman with the Alabaster Box
Nunc dimittis
Dopo la vittoria

interval 20 minutes

Cyrillus Kreek

Önnis on inimene (Blessed is the Man)
Psalm 104

Jonathan Harvey

Plainsongs for Peace and Light
The Angels

Veljo Tormis Jaanilaul (St John's Song)
Raua needmine (Curse upon Iron)

Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir
Kaspars Putniņš conductor

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Welcome

Perhaps more than any country in the world, the history of Estonia is a story intertwined with music. Estonians have long turned to music as a way of preserving their national identity during foreign domination. Choral singing and the striving for freedom have gone hand in hand since the first song festival in Estonia in 1869.

The connection was even stronger at the times of the Singing Revolution in the late 1980s and early 1990s when Estonia regained its independence. Singing is a

vital part of Estonian culture and identity. This is why Estonians are often called a singing nation.

We are delighted to open the Estonian centenary celebrations in the UK with a concert of the renowned Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. We hope you will enjoy it and will return to discover more of Estonia and its culture during this festive year.

Jüri Ratas
Prime Minister of Estonia

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Welcome

This evening's concert is a particularly special event, celebrating as it does Estonia's centenary. We're honoured to have with us Estonia's Prime Minister Jüri Ratas. On-stage we welcome the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir under their Artistic Director Kaspars Putniņš.

The first half of the concert, dedicated to the music of Arvo Pärt – arguably Estonia's best-known musical export – presents works ranging over nearly four decades, from the early *Solfeggio* to a setting of the *Nunc dimittis* from 2001.

Veljo Tormis and Cyrillus Kreek may be less well-known figures in the UK but both

played a seminal role in the music-making of Estonia, championing the country's rich singing tradition, which in turn influenced their own styles of composition.

The British composer Jonathan Harvey was not only a highly skilled choral composer, but also had a direct link with tonight's conductor, who gave the posthumous premiere of Harvey's *Plainsongs for Peace and Light* in 2013.

It promises to be a thrilling evening. I hope you enjoy it.

Huw Humphreys, Head of Music, Barbican

The land of song: Estonia at 100

For texts, please see page 7

The standard biographical synopsis for Arvo Pärt is that he started out as an avant-garde bad boy – all black-note complexity; screeching, cacophonous, serial nastiness – went quiet for nearly a decade, and came through the other side writing beautiful, other-worldly, white-note loveliness. Composed in 1963, the same year as his densely dissonant orchestral work *Perpetuum mobile*, *Solfeggio* rather disrupts this linear account of Pärt's compositional journey. In what is unquestionably his sparest work from those early years, the strict serial treatment of an ascending C major scale/tone row gives a tantalising glimpse of the composer's later choral style. The composure and control of 15 or 20 years hence are presaged right here, in the midst of his atonal investigations – and, it's hard to avoid mentioning, just four years on from Rodgers & Hammerstein's very different take on Do-Re-Mi in *The Sound of Music*.

Summa was one of the first works to emerge from the stylistic ground zero of Pärt's tintinnabulum in the mid-1970s. It is a setting of the Credo from the Latin Mass, but, since it came from a time when Pärt was still living in Soviet-era Estonia, its title conceals its religious nature. With its upper and lower voice-pairings of stepwise and triadic movement, it is a textbook display of Pärt's newly established tintinnabulist principles: neutrally flowing, stripped back and quasi-medieval in its sound world.

Unlike many other composers' settings of the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis written in tandem for the Anglican evensong liturgy, Pärt's settings of these two texts from Luke Chapters 1 and 2 (the Song of Mary and the Song of Simeon) were written 12 years apart. Composed respectively in 1989 and 2001 for cathedral choirs in Berlin (Pärt's city of residence for many years from 1980) and Edinburgh, these are precious gems indeed. Aside from their exquisitely controlled serenity and perfectly judged moments of transcendent climax,

the way Pärt always avoids obvious responses to these much-set texts is breathtaking. In a crowded 'Mag & Nunc' marketplace, there is nothing else like them.

Also from St Luke's gospel, *Zwei Beter* is a setting of the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, written in 1998 for the Hanover Girls Choir. Pärt makes a clear distinction in his writing between the Gospel narrative, the prayers ('Beter') of the Pharisee and the Publican, and Jesus's concluding analysis of the parable. The composer reserves the most distinctive passages for the Publican's show of humility – closely parallel triplets in as many as six parts – and the imposing, thickly harmonised words of Christ. The final Amen, needless to say, is charming and distinctive too.

In 1982 Pärt established a syllabically deadpan, recitative-like way of storytelling with his monolithic setting of the St John Passion (*Passio*). Though it follows less strictly his tintinnabulist routemap of combined stepwise and triadic movement, *The Woman with the Alabaster Box*, which takes its text from the Gospel of St Matthew, has a similar crystalline simplicity. Adjacent thirds interweave against long-held notes, creating subtle clashes and resolution. The choral texture unites with *pianissimo* emphasis for Christ's final words 'Verily I say unto you ...'. The vocal compass expands, both upwards and downwards, for effect; the control and subtlety of expression are, once again, mesmerising.

This 1997 setting was composed for the 350th anniversary of the Karlstad Diocese in Sweden. The same year, a more distant anniversary – that of the death of Saint Ambrose 1600 years earlier – was marked in another new, and quite different Pärt work, *Dopo la vittoria*. Commissioned by the City of Milan, and premiered by the Swedish Radio Choir in the San Simpliciano Basilica, this 'piccola cantata' honours St Ambrose (patron saint of Milan and credited as the author of the *Te Deum laudamus* text) with a narrative lightness that is relatively uncommon in Pärt's

output. In contrast with the broader homogenous sweep of many of his choral settings, this work is sharply defined by sections closely related to his chosen text – an excerpt, in translation, from an old Russian church-music encyclopaedia describing the baptism of Augustine by Ambrose. Pärt explains: ‘What I found particularly special and unusual is the fact that Ambrose, while the ceremony was in full swing, began to sing his *Te Deum*, and Augustine joined in, easily continuing the chant as if he had known it for ever.’

The pulsing, staccato briskness of the opening and close suggest the urgent enthusiasm of the storyteller. Low solo voices mark out with ancient solemnity the words ‘An unknown early biographer of Augustine writes’. And at three climactic points, Pärt makes particular emphasis of key words from Ambrosius’s famous text: ‘*Te Deum laudamus*’ early on, the Italian equivalent a little later (*‘Lodiamo Te o Signore’*), and the *Te Deum*’s final verse, ‘*In Te, o Signore, ho posto la mia speranza*’ – a passage as majestic and affirmative as the ‘*Amen*’ that follows is strikingly sonorous.

interval 20 minutes

Arvo Pärt, an émigré since 1980, may be the Estonian composer to have achieved the most widespread international fame; indeed, he is one of a very small number of living classical composers to attain anything approaching household-name status around the world in this lower-brow century. But Veljo Tormis – five years Pärt’s senior and his one-time teacher – is the composer Estonia has cherished most on home turf over several decades. His 70th birthday in November 2000 was marked by no fewer than 55 choirs in a concert in Tallinn.

The year 2000 was also the point at which Tormis chose, perhaps unusually for a composer, to retire. He subsequently described himself – even on the doorbell of his Tallinn apartment – as ‘Composer Emeritus’, though he remained fully engaged with a lifelong evangelism for his country’s folk-song tradition until his death last January. As well as enjoying an almost mystic, shamanic status in Estonia, he was the passionate and practical torchbearer for folk-singing revival – from kindergarten to pensioner homes – and the integration of an ancient cultural inheritance into thoroughly modern, post-Soviet lives.

Tormis’s father was a Lutheran Köster, a music teacher and church organist, and from early on he was steeped in Estonia’s rich, essentially Germanic, song culture. Early 20th-century folk revivalism was all part of this, stemming from Estonia’s ‘National Awakening’ in the 19th century and the country’s first United Song Festival in 1869. Composers from the generation before him, such as Cyrillus Kreek and Mart Saar, created a new and substantial body of choral folk-song arrangements, more sentimental and rounded than Regilaul’s rugged terrain. Kreek alone was responsible for over 700 folk-song arrangements and 500 other folk-song-infused choral settings. Tormis would have been an admirer of Kreek works such as his Psalms of David settings from 1923, two of which are heard here, and which are characterised by their prominent melodic lines and easy harmonic flow.

Kreek was at the centre of much Estonian folk-song ‘collection’ in the early decades of the 20th century too – an important ethnographical exercise similar to that of Vaughan Williams, Grainger and Cecil Sharp in Britain, and Bartók and Kodály in Hungary and Romania. Subsequently, Veljo Tormis’s towering achievement was to bring back to life this ‘primeval’ heritage – what he called his ‘musical mother-tongue’ – within the broader context of his country’s proud and vibrant singing culture. With means as varied as entry-level school songbooks, articles, lectures and choral arrangements of remarkable character and sophistication, Tormis was forever optimistic that ancient Estonian song would hold its own in the consciousness of younger generations otherwise bombarded by globally homogenised pop culture.

Born in the middle of Estonia’s 20 years of self-rule early in the 20th century (1920–39), Tormis subsequently witnessed as a boy the to-and-fro of wartime annexation (Soviet 1939–41, German 1941–44) and then the enforced stability of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic from 1944 to 1991. The central paradox, then, of a man whose life’s work was almost entirely devoted to defining Estonian musical nationhood is that he was a Soviet artist, the product of a regime dedicated strictly to ‘russifying’ its satellite peoples. After teenage studies in organ, conducting and composition in Tallinn, Tormis acquired his rigorous, formative training at the Moscow

Conservatoire in the early 1950s. He was present at Prokofiev's funeral in 1953. His teacher was Vissarion Shebalin, and fellow classmates included Rodion Shchedrin, Edison Denisov and Gennady Rozhdestvensky. Shostakovich was Chairman of the Jury for his graduation portfolio in 1956. And there are KGB files on Tormis from 1960 to 1989.

St John's Song belongs to the cycle *St John's Day Songs* (1967), which describes customs and traditions of the most important feast in Estonia – Jaanipäev (Midsummer) on 24 June. Marking the end of springtime work in the fields and the beginning of haymaking, Estonian midsummer celebrations included bonfires, dancing, eating and drinking. Tormis's setting takes ritualistically simple melodic material and works it with increasing harmonic complexity into something haunting and cumulatively ecstatic.

Curse upon Iron ('Raua needmine') is one of Tormis's most celebrated and adventurous works, written in 1972. 'The idea of *Curse upon Iron*', Tormis wrote, 'was in my mind for years, before I found a perfect form for it in an enchanting repetitive ostinato accompanied by a shamanic drum. I combined those elements with modern choral techniques. The idea of the composition derives from shamanism: in order to acquire power over a material or immaterial thing, one communicates knowledge to the object. Thus the describing and explaining of the birth of iron to iron itself forms a part of the shamanic process.'

The magical rite is performed to restrain the evil hiding inside iron. Each and every thing created by man may turn against man himself when used without respect towards the living. The lyrics composed in Estonian by August Annist were based on the ritual incantations of the Finnish epic *Kalevala*, to which modern-day Estonian poets Paul-Eerik Rummo and Jaan Kaplinski added elements from modern reality.'

Between the works by Kreek and Tormis come two works by the British composer Jonathan Harvey, probably best known internationally for his pioneering electro-acoustic works, but also a committed and distinctive choral composer throughout his career. *Plainsongs for Peace and Light* was written in the last year of his life, and premiered in Riga the following year, 2013, by the Latvian Radio Choir and tonight's conductor, Kaspars Putniņš. These 'elaborations' of three plainsongs – Easter Graduale II, Christmas Alleluia II and Ordinary Time Week III, Alleluia VIII – have moments of smudged harmonic terrain through rhythmic freedoms given to each line of the 16-part texture at certain points.

A sense of eternal calm is evoked with a lilting, hummed accompaniment in a setting of *The Angels* by John Taylor, Bishop of Winchester Cathedral from 1975 to 1985. It was written for the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge, on Christmas Eve 1994.

Programme note © Meurig Bowen

Arvo Pärt (born 1935)**Solfeggio**

do, re, mi, fa, so, la, si ...

Summa

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem caeli et terrae, visibilibus omnium,
et invisibilibus. Et in unum Dominum Jesum
Christum,

Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante
omnia saecula, Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum non factum,
consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta
sunt.

Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram
salutem descendit de caelis.

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est.

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

Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum
scripturas. Et ascendit in caelum:
sedet ad dexteram Patris.

Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, iudicare vivos

et mortuos: cuius regni non erit finis.

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum
et vivificantem: qui ex Patre Filioque procedit,

qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur
et conglorificatur: qui locutus est per prophetas.

Et unam sanctam catholicam
et apostolicam ecclesiam. Confiteor unum
baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.

Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum,
et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

Magnificat

Magnificat anima mea Dominum.

Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo, salutari meo.

Quia respexit humilitatem

ancillae suae:

ecce enim ex hoc

beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est:

et sanctum nomen eius.

Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo:
dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede,
et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis:
et divites dimisit inanes.

Suscepit Israel, puerum suum,

I believe in one God, Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all visible
and invisible things. I believe in one Lord Jesus
Christ,

the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father
before all ages, God from God, light from light,
true God from true God, begotten not made,
consubstantial with the Father, by whom all
things were made.

Who for us men, and for our salvation,
came down from heaven.

And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit
through the virgin Mary, and was made man.

He was crucified also for us:
under Pontius Pilate he suffered death and was
buried.

And the third day he rose again according
to the scriptures. And ascended into heaven:
he sitteth at the right hand of the Father.

And he shall come again with glory to judge the
living
and the dead: of whose kingdom there shall be
no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, Lord and
giver of life: who proceedeth from the Father
and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified; who spoke through the prophets.

And in one holy, catholic
and apostolic church. I confess one
baptism for the remission of sins.

And I await the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord.

And my spirit rejoices in God, my saviour.

For he has looked with favour on the lowliness
of his handmaiden:

behold, from henceforth

all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty has done wondrous
things for me: and holy is his name.

And his mercy is upon them that fear him
throughout all generations.

He has shown the power of his arm:
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has put down the mighty from their seat,
and has exalted the humble and meek.

He has filled the hungry with good things:
and the rich he has sent empty away.

He has sustained his servant, Israel,

recordatus misericordiae suae.
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
Abraham, et semini eius in saecula.

Luke 1:45–55

Zwei Beter

Jesus sprach zu einigen, die davon überzeugt waren, gerecht zu sein und die anderen verachteten, dieses Gleichnis:

‘Zwei Menschen gingen hinauf in den Tempel, um zu beten. Der eine war ein Pharisäer, der andere ein Zöllner.

Der Pharisäer stellte sich hin und betete also: “O Gott, ich danke dir, dass ich nicht bin wie die übrigen Menschen, Räuber, Ungerechte, Ehebrecher, oder auch wie dieser Zöllner da. Ich faste zweimal in der Woche und gebe den Zehnten von allem, was ich besitze.”

Der Zöllner aber blieb hinten stehen und wagte die Augen nicht zum Himmel zu erheben, sondern er schlug an seine Brust und sprach: “Gott sei mir Sünder gnädig!”

Ich sage euch: Dieser ging gerechtfertigt nach Hause, jener nicht. Denn jeder, der sich selbst erhöht, wird erniedrigt werden; und jeder, der sich selbst erniedrigt, wird erhöht werden.’
Amen.

Luke 18:9–14

The Woman with the Alabaster Box

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.

But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, ‘To what purpose is this waste?

For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.’

When Jesus understood it, he said unto them:

‘Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me, for ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.’

Matthew 26:6–13

in remembrance of his mercy.
As he promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his sons for ever.

And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

‘Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, “God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.’

Amen.

Nunc dimittis

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine,
secundum verbum tuum in pace,
quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum,
quod parasti ante faciem omnium populorum,

lumen ad revelationem gentium,
et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.

Gloria Patri, et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio,
et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Luke 2:29–32

Dopo la vittoria

Dopo la vittoria definitiva sugli Ariani,
Sant' Ambrogio compose un inno solenne
di ringraziamento:

'Te Deum laudamus';

... da allora questo canto viene ripetuto
in occasione di cerimonie solenni di
ringraziamento.

Trascorsi due anni, quando davanti al cossesso
dei potenti di Milano venne battezzato Agostino,
quelle strofe di ringraziamento furono cantate
dagli officianti e dai battezzati e quindi
entrarono a far parte da quel momento del
cerimoniale religioso.

L'antico e ignoto biografo di Agostino scrive:

'Sant' Ambrogio allora con voce lieta lodò la
Santissima Trinità e indusse lo stesso Agostino a
proclamare la sua fede nella gloria di Dio.'

Lodando e ringraziando il Signore
Sant' Ambrogio diceva:

'Lodiamo Te, o Signore, in Te crediamo, o
Signore.'

Agostino proseguiva:

'A Te, Padre Eterno, tutta la terra rende gloria.
A Te cantano gli angeli e tutte le potenze dei cieli.'

Così entrambi cantarono l'intero inno di gloria
alla Santissima Trinità. Sant' Ambrogio diceva il
primo verso e Agostino cantava quello seguente.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart
in peace according to thy word,
for mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
which thou hast prepared before the face of all
people,
a light to lighten the gentiles,
and the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

After the victory over the Arians was complete
St Ambrose composed a solemn hymn of thanks:

'We praise you, Lord';

... this hymn has been sung at services of
thanksgiving ever since.

Two years later, when Augustine came to
be baptised before the dignitaries of Milan,
these verses of thanksgiving were sung by the
baptising and the baptised and thereafter
became part of the great body of church chants.

An unknown early biographer of Augustine
writes:

'The blessed Ambrose praised the Holy Trinity
with joyful singing and encouraged Augustine
to confess his faith in the glory of God.'

Ambrose blessed and praised the Lord and
said:

'We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee
to be Lord.'

Augustine continued:

'All the earth doth worship thee, the Father
everlasting. To thee all angels cry aloud, the
heavens and all the powers therein.'

Thus, in constant interplay, they sang the Hymn
in honour of the Holy Trinity. Ambrose sang the
first line, Augustine the next.

L'ultimo verso venne proclamato da Agostino:

'In Te, o Signore, ho posto la mia speranza
e mai dovrò dolermene. Amen.'

... da allora questo canto viene ripetuto
in occasione di cerimonie solenni di
ringraziamento.

interval 20 minutes

Cyrillus Kreek (1889–1962)

Taaveti laulud Õnnis on inimene

Õnnis on inimene,
kes ei käi õelate nõu järele.
Sest Issand tunneb õigete teed,
aga õelate tee läheb hukka.
Teenige Issandat kartusega
ja olge rõõmsad värisemisega.
Väga õndsad on kõik, kes Tema juurde kipuvad.
Tõuse üles, Issand, päästa mind, mu Jumal.
Au olgu Isale, Pojale ja Pühale Vaimule, nüüd ja
igavest. Aamen.

Psalm 1:1, 6; Psalm 2:11a, 12b; Psalm 3:7

Psalm 104

Kiida, mu hing, Issandat!
Kiidetud oled Sina! Issand, mu Jumal,
Sa oled suur.
Kui suured on Sinu teod Issand!
Sa oled kõik targasti teinud.
Au olgu Isale, Pojale, Pühale Vaimule nüüd ja
igavest. Aamen.

Psalm 104:1, 24

Jonathan Harvey (1939–2012) **Plainsongs for Peace and Light**

Haec dies quam fecit Dominus exultemus et
laetemur in ea.

Psalm 118:24

Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus
quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius.

Psalm 117:1

Alleluia
Dies sanctificatus illuxit nobis;
venite gentes et adorare Dominum,
quia hodie descendit lux magna super terram.

And Ambrose proclaimed the last line:

'O Lord, in thee have I trusted,
let me never be confounded. Amen.'

... this hymn has been sung at services of
thanksgiving ever since.

Psalms of David Blessed is the Man

Blessed is the man
who does not take the wicked for his guide ...
The Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked is doomed.
Worship the Lord with reverence,
tremble, and kiss the king ...
Blessed are all who find refuge in him ...
Rise up, Lord, save me, O my God.
Glory to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Bless the Lord, my soul:
O Lord, my God, thou art great indeed ...
Countless are the things thou hast made,
O Lord.
Thou hast made all by thy wisdom, ...
Glory to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

This is the day which the Lord hath made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good:
because his mercy endureth for ever.

Alleluia.
This most holy day has brought light to us: come
all ye people and worship the Lord: because
today a great light has descended to the earth.

Alleluia
 Dominus regnavit, exsultet terra: laetentur
 insulae multae.

Psalm 97

The Angels

Should you hear them singing among stars
 or whispering secrets of a wiser world,
 do not imagine ardent, fledgling children;
 they are intelligences old as sunrise
 that never learnt right from left, before from
 after,
 knowing but one direction, into God,
 but one duration, now.

Their melody strides not from bar to bar,
 but, like a painting, hangs there entire,
 one chord of limitless communication.
 You have heard it in the rhythms of the hills,
 the spiralling turn of a dance, the fall of words,
 the touch of fingers at the rare, right moment,
 and these were holy, holy.

*John V Taylor (1914–2001); reproduced by
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Veljo Tormis (1930–2017) Jaanilaul (Hargla)

Läämi vällä Jaani kaima,
 jaani, jaani,
 kas om Jaanil kahhar pää,
 jaani,
 sis omma kesvä keerulidse,
 kaara katsökandilidse,
 jaani.

Läämi vällä Jaani kaima,
 jaanika, jaanika,
 kas om Jaanil kahhar pää,
 jaanika,
 sis omma kesvä keerulidse,
 kaara katsökandilidse.

Jaan tull' põldu müüdä,
 jaani, jaanika,
 kõnde kullast kondu müüda,
 jaanika,
 ligi tõie liiaõnne,
 kaasa tõie karjaõnne.
 Jaan tõi pika piimapütü,
 madaligu võiupunna,
 rüa tõie rüüpügä,
 kaara tõie kaindlõn.

Alleluia.
 The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice: let the
 multitude of isles be glad thereof.

St John's Song (from Hargla parish)

Let's go out and look at John,
 jaani jaani
 and see if he has bushy hair –
 jaani
 then the barley will curl
 and the oats be octagonal.
 jaani

Let's go out and look at John,
 jaanika jaanika
 and see if he has bushy hair –
 jaanika
 then the barley will curl
 and the oats be octagonal.

John came across the field,
 jaani jaanika
 walked across the golden chaff,
 jaanika
 brought with him much good luck,
 brought with him cattle-luck.
 John brought a tall churn of milk
 and a hundredweight pat of butter,
 brought in his lap rye
 and oats under his arm.

Läämi vällä Jaani kaima,
jaani, jaanika,
kas om Jaanil kahhar pää,
jaani,
sis omma kesvä keerulidse,
kaara katsõkandilidse.
jaani, jaanika.

Raua needmine

oi-joi-joi-joi-jai-jai-jäi-jäi-jäü-jäü-jau-jau-jou-jou-
jou-jou-jõü-jõü-jõü-jõü-jei-jei-jäi-jäi-jai-jai-joi-joi-
joi-joi...

Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska,
rauda raiska, rähka kurja,
liha söõja, luu pureja,
vere süütuma valaja!
Kust said kurja, kange'eksi,
üleliia ülbe'eksi?
Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!
Tean ma sündi su sõgeda,
arvan algust su õela!

Käisid kolme ilmaneitsit,
taeva tüarta tulista,
lüpsid maale rindasida,
soo pääle piimasida.
Üks see lüpsis musta piima,
sest sai rauda pehme'eda;
teine valgeta valasi,
sellest tehtus on teraksed;
kolmas see veripunasta,
sellest malmi ilma tulnud.

Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska,
rauda raiska, rähka kurja!
Ei sa siis veel suuri olnud,
ei veel suuri, ei veel uhke,
kui sind soossa solguteldi,
vedelassa väntsuteldi.
Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!
Tean ma sündi su sõgeda,
arvan algust su õela!

Susi jooksis sooda mõõda,
karu kõmberdas rabassa,
soo tõusis soe jalusta,
raba karu käpa alta.
Kasvid raudased orased,
soe jalgade jälile,
karu käppade kohale.
Ohoi rauda, laukalapsi,
rabarooste, pehme piima!
Kes su küll vihalle kõskis,
kes pani pahalle tööle?

Let's go out and look at John,
jaani jannika
and see if he has bushy hair –
jaani
then the barley will curl
and the oats be octagonal.
jaani jaanika

Curse upon Iron

oi-joi-joi-joi-jai-jai-jäi-jäi-jäü-jäü-jau-jau-jou-jou-
jou-jõu-jõu-jõu-jõu-jõü-jõü-jõü-jõü-jei-jei-jäi-jäi-jai-jai-joi-
joi-joi-joi...

Ohoi, villain! Wretched iron!
Wretched iron! Cursed bog ore!
You flesh-eater, gnawer of bones,
You spiller of innocent blood!
Wicked, how did you get power?
Tell how you became so haughty!
Damn you, bastard! Wretched iron!
I know your birth, you purblind fool,
I know well your source, you villain!

Once there walked three nature spirits,
three fiery daughters of the sky.
They milked their swelling breasts to earth,
they squeezed their milk onto the fens.
From the first maid spurted black iron,
this turned into soft wrought iron.
White milk squirted the second maid,
this was the source of tempered steel.
The third maid spouted blood-red milk,
this gave birth to bog iron ore.

Ohoi, villain! Wretched iron!
Wretched iron! Cursed bog ore!
Then you were not high and mighty,
not yet mighty, not yet haughty,
when you sloshed in swamps and marshes,
when in bogholes you were trampled.
Damn you, bastard! Wretched iron!
I know your birth, you purblind fool!
I know well your source, you evil!

A wolf then ran across the fen,
a shambling bear walked in the moor.
And the swamp rose from the wolf tracks,
and the moor from under the bear's paws.
And there sprouted iron seedlings
in the traces of the wolf's claws,
in the hollows of the bear tracks.
Ohoi, iron! Child of boghole!
Swamp's red rust and gentle smooth milk!
Tell me, who made you so baleful!
Who decreed your works of mischief?

Surma sõitis sooda mööda,
taudi talveteeda mööda,
leidis soost terakse taime,
raua rooste lauka'alta.

uu-üü-ii-ee-ää-aa-ohoo ...

Nii kõneles suuri surma,
taudi tappaja tähendas:
mäe alla männikus,sa,
põllulla küla päralla,
talu aitude tagana:
siin saab surma sepipada,
siia ahju ma asetan,
siia tõstan lõõtsad laiad,
hakkam rauda keetamaie,
raua roostet lõõtsumaie,
rauda tampima tigidaks.

o-hoo ... oi-oi-joi-joi- ...

Rauda, vaene mees, värises,
jo värises, jo vöbises,
kuulis kui tule nimeda,
tule kurja kutsumista.

Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska!
Ei sa siis veel suuri olnud,
ei veel suuri, ei veel uhke,
kui sa ääsilla ägasid,
vingusid vasara alla.

Taat see ahjulta ärises,
halliparda vommi päälta:

aa-oo-öö-ee-ii

Rauda rasvana venikse,
ila kombel valgunekse,
veerdes alla ääsi'ilta,
voolates valutulesta.

Veel sa rauda pehmekene,
miska sind karastatakse,
terakseksi tehtaneks?
Toodi ussilta ilada,
musta maolta mürgikesta.
Ei see raud kuri olekski
ilma usside ilata,
mao musta märkideta.

aa-oo-uu-öö-ee-ää-öö-üü-ii-ee ...

Taat see ahjulta ärises,
halliparda vommi päälta:
Varja nüüd vägeva Looja,
kaitse kaunike Jumala,

Death was riding through the marshes,
plague was on a winter journey.
Seedling steel it found in swampland,
rusty iron in a boghole.

uu-üü-ii-ee-ää-aa-ohoo ...

The great death then began to talk,
the killer plague then spoke and said:
In a pine grove on a hillside,
in a field behind the village,
far beyond the farmers' granges,
right here will be the forge of death.
Here I'll build the forge's furnace,
here I'll place the widest bellows,
here I'll start to boil the iron,
fan and blast the rust-red bog ore,
hammer anger into iron.

o-hoo...oi-oi-joi-joi- ...

Iron, poor man, shivered, trembled,
shivered, trembled, shuddered, quavered,
when he heard fire being called by name,
heard the plea for wicked fire.

Ohoy, villain! Wretched iron!
Then you were not high and mighty,
not yet mighty, not yet haughty,
when you moaned in the white-hot furnace,
whined under beating hammers.

Scolded the old man from upon the oven,
the greybeard from the furnace roof:

aa-oo-öö-ee-ii

Iron stretches, like blubber,
spreads like saliva,
oozing from the blazing furnace,
flowing from the scorching fire.

Iron, you're still soft and gentle.
How have you yet to be tempered
to make steel from you?
Saliva was brought from a viper,
venom from a black snake!
For iron wouldn't harbour evil
without saliva from vipers,
without venom from black snakes.

aa-oo-uu-öö-ee-ää-öö-üü-ii-ee ...

Scolded the old man from upon the oven,
the greybeard from the furnace roof:
Shelter us now, supreme Creator!
Keep us safe, God Almighty!

et ei kaoks see mees koguni,
hoopistükkis ema lapsi,
Looja loodusta elusta,
Jumala alustatusta.

Uued ajad. Uued jumalad.
Kahurid, lennukid,
tankid, kuulipildujad.
Uus raud ja teras,
uhiuued, targad,
täpsed, vägevad tapjad,
automaatsete sihtimisseadmetega
tuumalaengut kandvad,
tõrjerelvadele kättesaamatud
raketid.

Noad, odad,
kirved, taprid, saablid,
lingud, tomahawkid, bumerangid,
ammud, nooled, kivid, kaikad,
kütüned, hambad, liiv ja sool,
tuhk ja tõrv, napalm ja süsi.

Uus ja kõige kaasaegsem tehnika,
elektroonika viimane sõna,
valmis liikuma igasse punkti,
kõrvalekaldumatult sihti tabama,
peatama, rivist välja lööma,
hävitama,
võitlusvõimetuks tegema,
haavama, teadmata kaotama,
tapma, tapma raua, terase,
kroomi, titaani, uraani, plutooniumi,
ja paljude teiste elementidega.

Oi-joi-joi-jai-jai-jäi-jäi-jäu-jäu-jau-jau-jou-jou-
jou-jou-jöu-jöu-jöü-jöü-
jõi-jõi-jei-jei-jäi-jäi-jai-jai-joi-joi-joi-joo

Ohoi sinda, rauda kurja,
mõõka sõja sünnitaja,
rauda rähka, kulda kilpi,
sina teras, nurja tõugu!
Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!
Oleme ühesta soosta,
ühest seemnest me signud,
sina maasta, mina maasta,
musta mulda me mõlemad,
ühe maa pääl me elame,
ühe maa sees kokku saame,
maad meil küllalt siis mõlemal.

*Texts by August Annist, Paul-Eerik Rummo and Jaan
Kaplinski on Kalevala motifs*

So that mankind would not perish,
mother's child vanish without trace
from life created by Creator,
commenced by God.

New eras. New gods.
And cannons and airplanes
and tanks and machine guns.
New iron and steel.
Brand-new, intelligent,
precise powerful killers,
equipped with automated guiding devices,
armed with nuclear warheads.
Missiles invulnerable to defensive
rocketry.

Knives and spears,
axes, halberds, sabres,
and slings and tomahawks and boomerangs,
bows and arrows, rocks and warclubs,
and claws and teeth, sand and salt,
dust and tar, napalm and coal.

Brand-new and up-to-date technology,
the ultimate word in electronics,
ready to fly in any direction,
stay undeflected on its course, hit the target,
paralyse, and knock out of action,
obliterate,
disable,
wound, list missing,
and kill, kill with iron and with steel,
with chromium, titanium, uranium, plutonium,
and with a multitude of other elements.

Oi-joi-joi-jai-jai-jäi-jäi-jäu-jäu-jau-jau-jou-jou-
jou-jou-jöu-jöu-jöü-jöü-
jõi-jõi-jei-jei-jäi-jäi-jai-jai-joi-joi-joi-joo

Ohoi, villain! Evil iron!
Blade of the sword, mother of war!
Boghole ore's golden shield,
you, steel, of vile breed!
Damn you, bastard! Wretched iron!
We are kinsmen, of the same breed,
of the same seed we have sprouted,
You are earth-born, I am earth-born,
we are both black soil.
For we both live on the same earth
and in that earth we two will merge.
Then there will be land enough for both.

*Translated from the Estonian by Eero Vihman,
adapted by Kristin Kuutma*

About the performers



Kaspars Putniņš

Kaspars Putniņš conductor

Kaspars Putniņš became Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir in September 2014. He has been the conductor of the Latvian Radio Choir since 1992. In 1994, he formed the Latvian Radio Chamber Singers, an ensemble of soloists formed from the members of the Latvian Radio Choir. He regularly appears as a guest conductor with other leading European choirs such as the BBC Singers, RIAS Kammerchor, Berliner Rundfunkchor, NDR Kammerchor, Netherlands Radio Choir, Collegium Vocale Gent and Flemish Radio Choir, among others.

While his work encompasses a wide range of choral repertoire from Renaissance polyphony to works of the Romantic period, his primary goal has always been to promote outstanding new choral music. This new repertoire challenges and develops the abilities of his performers and takes them into entirely uncharted territories in terms of vocal technique.

His discography includes Pēteris Vasks's *Māte Saule* for BIS Records, Harvey's *The Angels* for Hyperion and works by Bryars, Vasks, Ešenvalds, Maskats and Silvestrov, all with the Latvian Radio Choir. He has also recorded Rachmaninov's *The Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* with the Flemish Radio Choir for Glossa. BIS Records has recently released Schnittke's *Psalms of Repentance* with the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir.

Kaspars Putniņš has initiated several theatrical projects, which involve the participation of his choir in collaboration with visual and theatre artists. He also frequently gives lectures and masterclasses internationally.

Kaspars Putniņš is the recipient of the Latvian Music Grand Prix and the Latvian Council of Ministers Award for Achievements in Culture and Science.

Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir

The Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir is one of the best-known Estonian music ensembles in the world. The EPCC was founded in 1981 by Tõnu Kaljuste, who was its Artistic Director and Chief Conductor for 20 years. He was succeeded by Paul Hillier (2001–07) and then Daniel Reuss (2008–13). Since September 2014 its chief conductor has been Kaspars Putniņš.

The choir's repertoire extends from Gregorian chant via the Baroque to the music of the 21st century, with a special focus on introducing the work of Estonian composers, such as Arvo Pärt, Veljo Tormis, Erkki-Sven Tüür, Galina Grigoryeva, Toivo Tulev, Tõnu Kõrvits and Helena Tulve, to a wider audience. Each season the choir gives about 60 to 70 concerts both in Estonia and internationally.

The EPCC has collaborated with a number of outstanding conductors and orchestras, including Claudio Abbado, Helmuth Rilling, Eric Ericson, Ward Swingle, Neeme Järvi, Paavo Järvi, Nikolai Alekseyev, Olari Elts, Andrew Lawrence-King, Roland Böer, Frieder Bernius, Stephen Layton, Marc Minkowski, Christoph Poppen, Colin Davis, Louis Langrée, Paul McCreech, Andrés Orozco-Estrada and Gustavo Dudamel.

The EPCC has also worked with many world-class orchestras, among them the Australian, Basle, Mahler, Norwegian, Prague, Stuttgart and Tallinn Chamber orchestras, London Symphony Orchestra, Berlin and Frankfurt Radio Symphony orchestras, Concerto Copenhagen,

Salzburg Camerata, Les Musiciens du Louvre-Grenoble, the Philip Glass Ensemble, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Sarasota Orchestra and the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra.

The EPCC has been a guest at leading venues all over the world, including the Sydney Opera House, Vienna Konzerthaus, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Kennedy Center, Washington DC, Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Center and the Esplanade Concert Hall in Singapore. Its festival appearances have included the BBC Proms, Mozartwoche, Abu Gosh Festival, Hong Kong Arts Festival and

the Bremen, Salzburg, Edinburgh, Aix-en-Provence, Cervantino, Vale of Glamorgan, Bergen and Schleswig-Holstein festivals.

Another important strand to the choir is its recordings on a wide range of labels, including ECM, Virgin Classics, Carus, Harmonia Mundi and Ondine. It has won two Grammy awards – in 2007 for the album *Arvo Pärt: Da pacem* with conductor Paul Hillier and in 2014 *Arvo Pärt: Adam's Lament* with conductor Tõnu Kaljuste. The choir has received no fewer than 14 Grammy nominations for discs of works by Pärt, Erkki-Sven Tüür and other Baltic/Nordic composers. It has also won other awards, including *Diapasons d'or* and the German Record Critics' Awards.

Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir

Soprano

Karoliina Kriis
Kristine Muldma
Hele-Mall Leego
Annika Lõhmus
Karolis Kaljuste
Ülle Tuisk
Triin Sakermäa

Tenor

Kaido Janke
Toomas Toherth*
Raul Mikson
Madis Enson
Joosep Trumm
Sander Sökk
Danila Frantou

Alto

Marianne Pärna
Karin Salumäe
Maarja Helstein
Anna Dötõna
Ave Hännikäinen
Cätly Talvik

Bass

Aarne Talvik
Tõnu Tormis
Rainer Vilu
Henry Tiisma
Olari Viikholm*
Kaarel Kukkk

* soloists in 'Curse upon Iron'