

PHCD

107

Peter Menmin

Symphony No.4 "THE CYCLE"

1 *Allegro Energico* 5:03 2 *Andante Arioso* 9:49

3 *Allegro Deciso* 8:56

Cameraata Singers and Symphony Orchestra
Abraham Kaplan, Conductor

Alberto Ginastera

Milena for Soprano & Orchestra

4 *Praeludium* 2:40 5 *Cantus I* 4:26 6 *Prosa I* 3:17

7 *Cantus II* 3:49 8 *Prosa II* 4:08 9 *Cantus Finalis* 4:42

Denver Symphony - Brian Priestman, Conductor
Phyllis Curtin, Soprano

Total Timing 47:05

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Produced for CD by Jeffrey Kaufman

CD Preparation : New York Digital Recording

Original Recording Engineer:

Symphony No.4 Tom Jung Milena Paul Goodman

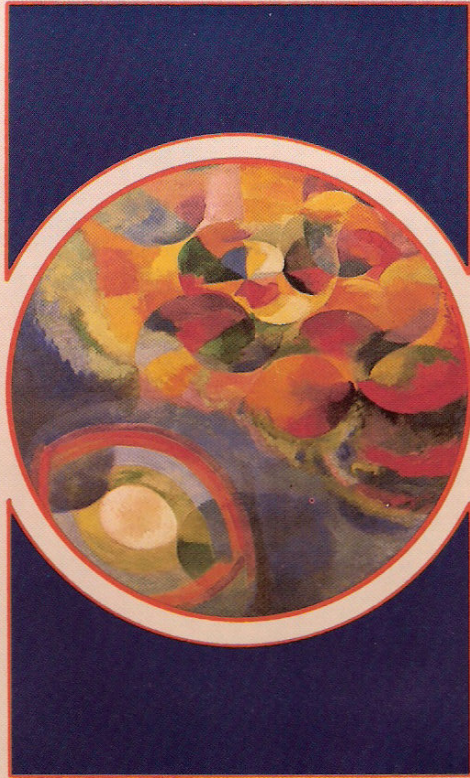
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DIGITAL AUDIO

Cover: Robert Delaunay "Sun Disks"

Graphic Design: Donald J. Munz

Peter Menmin

SYMPHONY No.4 "THE CYCLE"



MILENA for SOPRANO & ORCHESTRA

Alberto Ginastera

Symphony No.4 for Chorus and Orchestra ("The Cycle")

Peter Mennin 1923-1983

The career of Peter Mennin has been closely bound up with most of the nation's leading music schools. From 1940 to 1942, he studied at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Oberlin, Ohio. After serving in the Army Air Force during World War II, he resumed his work in music at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where his composition teachers were Howard Hanson and Bernard Rogers, and where he earned both Master's and Doctor's degrees. He also studied conducting with Serge Koussevitzky at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood in Lenox, Massachusetts. From 1947 to 1958, Mennin was on the faculty of The Juilliard School of Music in New York. He left that institution to assume the directorship of the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore, but returned to Juilliard in 1963 as its President.

Mennin's compositions, many of which have been performed throughout the world, include seven symphonies and a number of other works for orchestra, chamber orchestra and string orchestra; concertos for cello and for piano; music for band; choral works, large and small; chamber music; and piano pieces. Many of his works have been commissioned by leading musical organizations of this country, and he has been the recipient of numerous awards, grants and citations.

The Symphony No.4 for Chorus and Orchestra, subtitled *The Cycle*, was begun in the summer of 1947 and completed in November 1948. It was commissioned by the Collegiate Chorale, which organization, assisted by members of the New York Philharmonic, gave the work its premiere, under the direction of Robert Shaw, at Carnegie Hall on March 18, 1949.

The composer himself wrote the text for the chorus, whose music he has treated both homophonically and polyphonically. The first of the Symphony's three movements is a vigorous *Allegro energico*. The middle movement is a lyrical *Andante arioso*. An assertive introductory section, marked *Pronunziato*, opens the final movement on the words "Time passing, waters flowing, the great cycle begins once more, washing stains away." This leads to the main section of the movement, *Allegro deciso*, wherein these words, always in a homophonic setting, recur as a sort of refrain between sections that are contrapuntal, including a double fugue.

The orchestral requirements are: two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, kettledrums, percussion and strings.

THE CYCLE

I The dark sea is a tide of flowering waters,
And in its vasty depth we view eternity.

Look where the start hurls from its flaming rest
And eyeless worlds are suppliant yet.

They act not from random thought,
But from old wounds and maturing Time,
With sounds that pierce the marrow
With savage songs of exultation.

II Come back to the earth again and feel her roots.
Man forgets.
The dark waters remember ancient conflicts and are silent.
Return to the earth.

III Time passing, waters flowing,
The great cycle begins once more,
Washing stains away.

With dark and tragic destiny
Do all things return to dust.

Stirring fills the air.
Sounds of deliverance
Cancel the past rages.

Still rising does the waiting earth
Sublimely sing,
Embracing all of man.

Milena, Cantata No.3 for Soprano and Orchestra, opus 37

Alberto Ginastera (1913-1983)

Born in Buenos Aires, Ginastera studied at the National Conservatory there, and was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1941, of which he was unable to take advantage until the end of World War II. Two of his works in vividly nationalist Argentine style were already becoming known in this country at the time of Ginastera's stay here: the *Estancia* ballet composed in 1941 for Lincoln Kirstein's Ballet Caravan and a ballet Suite, *Panambi*, dating from his 20th year, which was performed during the 1945-46 season by the NBC Symphony Orchestra under the late Erich Kleiber. The *Variaciones Concertantes* for orchestra (1953) has also enjoyed considerable popularity in U.S. concert halls. All three of the above-mentioned works have been recorded, as well as the *Overture to the Creole Faust* (1943), the Quartet No.1 (1948), *Pampeana* No.3 (1954), the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah for a cappella choir (1946) and the *Cantata para America Magica* (1960). The perceptive listener will discover for himself Ginastera's gradual transition from a strongly regional musical language toward a national style, which has done for Latin American art-music what Bartok did for the art-music of Hungary — namely, fused it with the main stream of world musical tradition without depriving it of the vitality that stems from the composer's own personality and roots in his native cultural tradition.

Kafka's letters to Milena constitute one half of the sentimental bridge between the physically separated protagonists of an intense love affair which, at first a friendship begun during a literary cooperation, exploded into the most ardent passion. Since my youth, when Kafka first became my favorite twentieth-century author, these "Letters to Milena" fascinated me because, in them, the creator of fantastic and metaphysical stories becomes a man in love and heartsick. That is

why, when the Institute of International Education of New York commissioned me to write a work in celebration of its fiftieth anniversary, I proposed this "CANTATA FOR SOPRANO AND ORCHESTRA" Op.37, which had been on my mind for decades. I composed the work in 1971, after a silence of more than three years, which was broken by my wife, the cellist Aurora Natola, entered my life.

Milena Jesenska belonged to an old Czech family, and the correspondence which Kafka addressed to her began in 1920 and lasted two years. One might call the letters Kafka's most unconscious and private masterpiece; he tells of the happiness this relationship gave him, and later relates his painful collapse.

"Milena is truly a fire, such as I have never seen... but, at the same time, a tender, courageous and intelligent being," Kafka confessed in his diary. Suffering was gradually changing this relationship of affectionate lovers. Milena was married, and Franz wanted all of her for himself. Milena in turn suffered because she saw Kafka's anguish; he was already ill, and she contracted the same pulmonary disease, perhaps through some strange spiritual unity. And it is these "Letters to Milena" which give an insight into the heights of spiritual love to which Kafka could rise. Unfortunately, Milena's letters to Kafka are lost.

I selected and adapted the text in the form of a "collage," and thus every movement in musical form corresponds to a literary unit comprising an integrated subject: apparitions in the **Prelude**; love in **Cantus I**; dreams in **Prosa I**; letters in **Cantus II**; jealousy and despair in **Prosa II**, and the Infinite in the **Cantus Finalis**. Someone will surely ask me: "But what is in the music? What is its form? What style does it have?" And I can answer: It is the music which we imagine to accompany a woman in her loneliness, rereading, in the faint twilight of a life — and of a society — the letters from her dead lover. One single musical indication: in the **Cantus Finalis** the theme of the organ grinder in the last lied of the "WINTERREISE" by Schubert is to me a song for the dead.

—by Alberto Ginastera

Abraham Kaplan

Abraham Kaplan is the founder and conductor of the Camerata Singers and Camerata Symphony Orchestra, and Musical Director of the Symphony Choral Society of New York. He is also Music Director of the Collegiate Chorale and Director of Choral Music at The Julliard School. Mr. Kaplan appears regularly with his groups at Carnegie, Philharmonic and Alice Tully Halls, as well as conducting programs at Julliard. He has also appeared as guest conductor with Calgary Philharmonic, the Park East Orchestra, the LENA Orchestra in New York, Long Island's Orchestra de Camera, the Little Symphony of St. Louis, the NBC Symphony, Kol Yisrael Orchestra, and the Israeli Philharmonic among others.

Brian Priestman

Brian Priestman conducts regularly in the United States and in Europe, Canada and New Zealand where he is Principal Conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation. He has conducted several full length opera productions for television which have been shown throughout the world and in addition he has broadcast on many occasions for important national and international radio networks.

As a student at the Brussels Conservatory he received the rarely awarded Conductor's prize in 1952 and soon after he was appointed assistant Conductor of the Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra, at that time one of the most important British orchestras established outside London. In 1960 he was appointed Music Director of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon and during this period he also made several appearances as a guest Conductor with the Sadler's Wells Opera Company in London. In 1963 he made his American debut in Philharmonic Hall, New York. In 1964 he became Music Director of the Edmonton (Canada) Symphony Orchestra, a position he held for four years. He then assumed the duties of Resident Conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in 1968 prior to his accepting the position of Music Director and Conductor of the Denver Orchestra.

Phyllis Curtin

Born in Clarksburg, West Virginia, Phyllis Curtin played violin from early childhood until she went to Wellesley College, from which she graduated with honors as a political science student. While at the college she began formal vocal study. Her career started with concerts in Boston and New York, where she made her debut with the New York City Opera in 1954. Miss Curtin has premiered more new operas than any American soprano and has had more than 100 works written especially for her.

She has sung with the major orchestras in the United States and Europe, performed at the principal music festivals in the country, and her Master Classes at the Berkshire Festival (Tanglewood) are world-renowned.

Camerata Singers

The Camerata Singers came into existence when the composer William Schuman was asked to select a conductor for a choral concert of his music. Israeli-born Abraham Kaplan was his choice, and the chorus assembled for that concert grew into the Camerata Singers. They made their first countrywide tour, appearing in 36 cities during a six-week period. Milestones in the Camerata's past have included their participation in the 1965 world premiere of Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, which they subsequently recorded under the composer's direction.