

Maximilian Steinberg - Passion Week (2016)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 09 September 2017 13:14 -

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- Passion Week, Op. 13 1. *Alliluiya (Alleluia)* 00:01:58 2. *Se Zhenih griadet (Behold, the Bridegroom Comes)* 00:03:36 Chertog Tvoy (Thy Bridal Chamber) [Kievan Chant] 3. *Chertog Tvoy (Thy Bridal Chamber)* [Kievan Chant] 00:01:47
Passion Week, Op. 13
4. *Chertog Tvoy (Thy Bridal Chamber)* 00:02:52 5. *Yegda slavnii uchenitsi (When the Glorious Disciples)* 00:04:58 Stranstviya Vladichnia (The Master's Hospitality) [Znamenny Chant]
6. *Stranstviya Vladichnia (The Master's Hospitality)* [Znamenny Chant] 00:02:00
Passion Week, Op. 13
7. *Stranstviya Vladichnia (The Master's Hospitality)* 00:03:17 Vecheri Tvoyeya tayniya (Of Thy Mystical Supper) [Znamenny Chant]
8. *Vecheri Tvoyeya tayniya (Of Thy Mystical Supper)* [Znamenny Chant] 00:02:44
Passion Week, Op. 13
9. *Vecheri Tvoyeya tayniya (Of Thy Mystical Supper)* 00:03:58 10. *Blagoobrazniy Iosif (The Noble Joseph)* 00:04:44 11. *Razboynika blagorazumnago (The Wise Thief)* 00:02:32 Ne riday Mene, Mati (Do Not Lament Me, O Mother) [Znamenny Chant]
12. *Ne riday Mene, Mati (Do Not Lament Me, O Mother)* [Znamenny Chant] 00:02:16
Passion Week, Op. 13
13. *Ne riday Mene, Mati (Do Not Lament Me, O Mother)* 00:02:47 Voskresni, Bozhe (Arise, O God) [Znamenny Chant]
14. *Voskresni, Bozhe (Arise, O God)* [Znamenny Chant] 00:00:56
Passion Week, Op. 13
15. *Voskresni, Bozhe (Arise, O God)* 00:06:36 16. *Da molchit fsiakaya plot (Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence)* 00:07:51
The Clarion Choir Steven Fox - conductor

Passion Week is a long-lost choral masterpiece composed by Rimsky-Korsakov's favourite student, heir apparent and son-in-law, Maximilian Steinberg. A product of his interest in the sacred and mystical, it is a tour de force of the systematic use of medieval Church Slavonic

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chant melodies and shares with Rachmaninov's All-Night Vigil the colourful use of choral textures. Steinberg's settings are complex and rich, with a diverse and sometimes daring harmonic palette, offering eleven movements of distinctive and expressive content that reveal an artist's search for identity at a time of increasing hostility to religion. ---naxos.com

The work on this Grammy-nominated recording has a complex history: it was written by its composer, a Lithuanian Jew who had converted to Christianity to marry the daughter of his teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov, just as the Soviet Union got serious about banning religious observances. The work was published abroad, but attracted little publicity. It was known to Shostakovich, who gave a copy to a Russian-American conductor, whose daughter passed it along to the present forces. This and a version by the Cappella Romana (also an American choir) are the first recordings of the piece. It's quite compelling. Steinberg's most important model is the Rachmaninov All-Night Vigil, Op. 37, with the similarity residing in the degree to which Slavonic chant melodies permeate the music. Most of the 16 sections of Steinberg's work use chant in some way (some are simply pieces of chant), and you can sample one of the movements (such as "Of Thy Mystical Supper") that elaborates on the chant immediately preceding. Steinberg does not exploit the characteristic Russian bass sound as much as Rachmaninov does, but his choral writing is satisfyingly dense, and the small Clarion Choir keeps things clear with the divisi passages that at times include as many as 12 parts. The sound from New York's Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity is a major attraction. Another model for Steinberg was the similarly titled work by Alexander Grechaninov, which, like Steinberg's, was a concert work, and it seems certain that listeners who have heard only the Rachmaninov work in this somewhat forgotten tradition will value this release highly. ---James Manheim

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