

Karl Jenkins - The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace (2000)

Wpisany przez bluesever

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1 *The Armed Man* 6:25 2 *The Call To Prayers (Adhaan)* 2:04 3 *Kyrie* 8:12 4 *Save Me From Bloody Men* 1:42 5 *Sanctus* 7:00 6 *Hymn Before Action* 2:38 7 *Charge!* 7:26 8 *Angry Flames* 4:44 9 *Torches* 2:58 10 *Agnus Dei* 3:39 11 *Now The Guns Have Stopped* 3:25 12 *Benedictus* 7:36 13 *Better Is Peace* 9:33 Baritone Vocals – Nicholas Merryweather Bass Vocals – Philip Shakesby Choir – The National Youth Choir Of Great Britain Conductor [National Youth Choir] – Mike Brewer OBE Leader [Orchestra] – Duncan Riddell Mezzo-soprano Vocals – Rachel Lloyd Orchestra – The London Philharmonic Orchestra Percussion [Additional] – Dave Hassell, Jody K Jenkins, Neil Percy Soprano Vocals – Elizabeth Witts, Susie Parkes Trumpet [Principal] – Paul Beniston + Soloist [Meuzzin] – Mohammed Gad (2) Soloist [Treble] – Tristan Hambleton (3) Soloist, Cello – Guy Johnston (12)

Karl Jenkins, a British composer who has written award-winning music for advertising, created this choral work for the Royal Armouries, a museum of medieval military objects housed in the Tower of London. The idea, writes the museum's director, was to use the medieval tune *L'homme armé* (The Armed Man) to create a modern mass, just as composers of half a millennium ago did with some frequency -- and thus "to look back and reflect as we leave behind the most war-torn and destructive century in human history." *L'homme armé* is a little scrap of music saying basically that "the armed man must be feared." No one really knows why it was so popular in its day, but one theory is that it referred to the mustering of forces that followed in the wake of the fall of Constantinople (now Istanbul) to Islamic forces in 1453.

There's nothing in the individual sections of music here that you haven't heard a dozen times in film or television scores, and Jenkins is one of those crossover composers who feel the need to put down those who attempt music of a different kind. It's especially classless of him to disrespect John Cale, who played the viola when Jenkins was an oboist with the Wales National Youth Orchestra and who will be remembered long after *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* has fallen off the charts. Nevertheless, Jenkins' work gets points for sheer ambition, and it's

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easy to understand the tremendous popularity it has attained in Britain -- it has been programmed by community choirs all over the place. Jenkins does not weave L'homme armé into a flow of polyphony as a Renaissance composer would have done. Instead, he bookends the work with two different treatments of the tune (whose title is mispronounced by the National Youth Choir of Great Britain). In between come parts of the Ordinary of the Mass (the Gloria and Credo are missing), interspersed with other texts pertaining to war and its horrors: a Japanese poem about the firestorms that followed the atomic bombs, Rudyard Kipling's "Hymn Before Action," and an apocalyptic passage from India's Mahabharata. Those who already love this work would be advised to check out Leonard Bernstein's Mass, a similar sort of piece that achieves much more variety and more of a sense of genuine surprise. But Jenkins does manage to weave disparate sources together into a coherent and compelling whole. The Armed Man is much less well known in the U.S. than in Britain, probably because the U.S. crossover market is smaller than Britain's and more oriented toward singers. ---James Manheim, AllMusic Review

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