

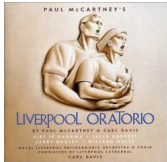
## Paul McCartney – Liverpool Oratorio (1991)

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 26 June 2011 21:01 - Last Updated Monday, 17 February 2014 16:32

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CD1 War      *Andante (Orchestra)* – 2:02      *'Non nobis solum'* – 2:35      *'The Air Raid Siren Slices Through...'* (Shanty) – 2:09      *'Oh Will It All End Here?'* (Shanty) – 1:36      *'Mother And Father Holding Their Child'* – 1:16      School      *'We're Here In School Today To Get A Perfect Education'* – 2:10 [play](#)

*'Walk In Single File Out Of The Classroom'* (Headmaster) – 1:02      *'Settle Down'* – 0:40  
*'Kept In Confusion'* (Shanty) – 2:35      *'I'll Always Be Here'* (Mary Dee) – 1:35      *'Boys, This Is Your Teacher'* (Headmaster, Miss Inkley) – 1:23      *'Tres conejos'* (Miss Inkley, Headmaster, Shanty) – 1:50      *'Not For Ourselves'* (Headmaster, Miss Inkley, Shanty) – 0:55

Crypt

*'And So It Was That I Had Grown'* (Shanty) – 0:48      *Dance* – 1:44      *'I Used To Come Here When This Place Was A Crypt'* (Shanty, Preacher) – 1:58      *'Here Now'* (Shanty) – 0:46  
*'I'll Always Be Here'* (Mary Dee, Shanty) – 2:24      *'Now's The Time To Tell Him'* (Mary Dee, Shanty) – 2:21

Father

*Andante Lamentoso* – 2:59      *'O Father, You Have Given...'* (Chief Mourner) – 1:05      *'(Ah)'* – 1:13      *'Hey, Wait A Minute'* (Shanty) – 1:44      *'Father, Father, Father'* (Shanty, Chief Mourner) – 4:12

CD2 Wedding

*Andante Amoroso* - *'I Know I Should Be Glad Of This'* (Shanty, Mary Dee) – 5:42      *'Father, Hear Our Humble Voices'* (Preacher) – 1:13      *'Hosanna, Hosanna'* (Mary Dee, Shanty) – 1:40

Work

*Allegro Energico* – 1:20      *'Working Women At The Top'* (Mary Dee) – 2:52      *Violin Solo* – 5:05      *'Did I Sign The Letter...'* (Mary Dee) – 1:34      *Tempo I* – 0:30      *'When You Ask A Working Man'* (Shanty, Mr. Dingle) – 1:34      *'Let's Find Ourselves A Little Hostelry'* (Mr. Dingle) – 2:04

[play](#)

Crises

*Allegro Molto* – 0:54      *'The World You're Coming Into'* (Mary Dee) – 2:28      *Tempo I* – 0:45      *'Where's My Dinner?'* (Shanty, Mary Dee) – 2:40      *'Let's Not Argue'* (Shanty, Mary Dee) – 0:31      *'I'm Not A Slave'* (Mary Dee, Shanty) – 0:52      *'Right! That's It!'* (Mary Dee) – 0:49      *'Stop. Wait.'* – 2:03      *'Do You Know Who You Are...'* (Nurse) – 3:36      *'Ghosts Of The Past Left Behind'* (Nurse, Shanty, Mary Dee) – 3:08      *'Do We Live In A World...'* (Mary Dee,

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*Nurse, Shanty) – 3:18*

Peace 'And So It Was That You Were Born' (Shanty) – 1:22 'God Is Good' – 1:26  
'What People Want Is A Family Life' (Preacher) – 2:17 'Dad's In The Garden' (Nurse, Mary  
Dee, Preacher, Shanty) – 3:13 'So On And On The Story Goes' (Shanty, Mary Dee) – 1:06  
Kiri Te Kanawa – soprano Jerry Hadley – tenor Sally Burgess – mezzo-soprano Willard White  
– bass Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir Liverpool  
Cathedral Choiristers Carl Davis – conductor Ian Tracey – conductor

Paul McCartney's Liverpool Oratorio is Paul McCartney's first official foray into classical music and was released in 1991. Composed in collaboration with Carl Davis to commemorate The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's 150th anniversary, the project received a large amount of media attention upon its unveiling in June 1991.

Broken up into eight separate movements, the story of the oratorio loosely follows McCartney's own lifeline, with the main character, Shanty, who is born in 1942 in Liverpool, raised to believe that "being born where you are born carries with it certain responsibilities". After his school days where he often "sagged off" (Liverpool slang for skipping class), Shanty began working and meets his future bride, Mary Dee. Following the death of his father, Shanty and Mary Dee are married and are forced to deal with the rigours of balancing a happy marriage and their careers. Amid a quarrel, Mary Dee reveals that she is pregnant and after surviving a nearly fatal accident, gives birth to their son. Thus, the cycle of life in Liverpool carries on.

This recording was captured at the oratorio's premiere at Liverpool Cathedral with McCartney in attendance and features noted professional classical singers Kiri Te Kanawa, Jerry Hadley, Sally Burgess and Willard White re-enacting the roles in the oratorio.

The commercial reaction for the work, predictably, was strong, with the oratorio spending many weeks atop the classical charts worldwide, and even charting at #177 in regular album chart in the US. Critical reaction was less positive, the virtually unanimous verdict being that the work, while attractive, was simplistic, overlong and, given its aspirations, insubstantial. ---[wiki]

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Listening to the United States premiere of Paul McCartney's "Liverpool Oratorio" in Carnegie Hall on Monday night brought back memories of a time a bit over 20 years ago when the hottest rumor in the politically charged youth culture was that "Paul is dead" and his place taken by an impostor. Hidden in recordings, went this conspiratorial notion, were cryptic signs of Paul's demise. On the cover of "Abbey Road," Paul marches barefoot with a cigarette (a "coffin nail"); the jacket to "Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" shows a flower-covered grave; above Paul's head a hand is outstretched (a sign, it was said, of death). Moreover, one Beatles song, "Revolution No. 9," if played backward on a turntable, made reference to a "dead man."

Mr. McCartney, of course, was very much alive and has, in fact, been the most successful survivor of the Beatles' disintegration. But that esoteric search through the Beatles' songs and artwork showed how earnest the public was about this group, how much complexity was felt to lie latent in its music, how profound and how "high" it all was. Some of this feeling seemed still present when Mr. McCartney took his seat in a first-tier box of that high-art temple Carnegie Hall on Monday night. The audience erupted in excitement, and fans on the second and third tiers leaned perilously over the railing. The audience's ovation when the performance concluded seemed partly in celebration, partly in relief that the seriousness always claimed for Mr. McCartney had at last been confirmed on seriousness's home turf.

Of all the Beatles, Mr. McCartney had been most drawn to such ambitions. The classical musical tradition has intrigued him, even influencing, for example, the accompaniments to "Yesterday" and "Eleanor Rigby." Knowing this, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society commissioned this oratorio from a native son in honor of the city's 150th anniversary. Mr. McCartney collaborated with Carl Davis in composing the work, which was unveiled last summer in Liverpool. A recording has been issued with Mr. Davis conducting the commissioning orchestra, and Monday night, a polished American premiere was given by the same players and conductor, with four of the same soloists -- Salley Burgess, mezzo; Jerry Hadley, tenor; Willard White, bass; Jeremy Budd, treble -- and with Barbara Bonney taking the soprano part that Kiri Te Kanawa originally sang. The British choruses were replaced by the Collegiate Chorale and the Boys Choir of Harlem.

But the performance, far from proving the ease with which pop sophistication can segue into classical esthetic realms, demonstrated just the opposite. Mr. McCartney has described his approach to music as "primitive," so Mr. Davis, who is an accomplished writer of film scores, provided the "classical" experience. That is exactly how the oratorio sounded: like a musically primitive assemblage of material, gussied up through some clever scoring. There are echoes of English oratorio and church traditions and the occasional inclusion of a dissonance to signal pain or distress. But the dominant style is of a euphonically tonal pop ballad: the musical texture is very thin, the counterpoint elementary and many settings awkward. The music, often sweet and simple, is incapable of handling contradictory tensions or of expressing intricacy of

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character.

The story of the oratorio labors under weighty ambitions. It is semi-autobiographical, the story of a boy born in Liverpool in 1942 as the bombs are falling. School days are recalled, with a recurrent anthem-like school motto juxtaposed against another recurring leitmotif that represents the hero's love. There is a scene of teen-age confusion and solitude, a wedding with the woman who inspires the love leitmotif, some evocations of daily life ("Working women on the go,/Will they ever know/What it takes to run the show?"), and a marital crisis in which the pregnant wife runs into the street and is hit by a car. By the end, all is resolved, and even religion is invoked ("God is good without an O" is one expression of new-found faith). ---Edward Rothstein

"Liverpool Oratorio" skomponowane zostało na zamówienie Królewskiego Towarzystwa Filharmonicznego w Liverpoolu (Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society) z okazji 150 -lecia jego istnienia.

Paul McCartney przyznaje: "Najtrudniejsze dla mnie było to, że w przeszłości wielokrotnie próbowałem nauczyć się klasycznego podejścia do muzyki, ale brakowało mi cierpliwości. Za każdym razem nadchodził moment, kiedy znaczki na kartce przestawały zgadzać się z tym, co słyszałem w głowie, i koniec końców tworzyłem muzykę, a ktoś inny ją zapisywał".

"Jestem niezmiernie szczęśliwy, że Królewska Orkiestra Filharmonii w Liverpoolu i dyrygent Carl Davis poprosili mnie o skomponowanie czegoś z okazji jubileuszu Królewskiego Towarzystwa Filharmonicznego. Dzięki temu mam doskonałą wymówkę, żeby po kilku wcześniejszych flirtach na poważnie zagłębić się w świat muzyki symfonicznej i chóralnej".

W tych wyjątkowych nagraniach udział wzięli Kiri Te Kanawa, Sally Burgess, Jerry Hadley, Willard White i Jeremy Budd.

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