

Rued Langgaard - The End of Time (2000)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Endens tid (The Time of the End)*, BVN 243: I. *Antichrist: Prelude* 10:17 2. *Endens tid (The Time of the End)*, BVN 243: II. *At the End of Time* 4:32 3. *Endens tid (The Time of the End)*, BVN 243: III. *Towards the End of the World* 3:47 4. *Endens tid (The Time of the End)*, BVN 243: IV. *The Catastrophe* 5:37 5. *From the Song of Solomon*, BVN 381 16:31 6. *Interdict*, BVN 335: I. *Furiously fast - faster* 1:46 7. *Interdict*, BVN 335: II. *Agitatedly fast - slow* 8:48 8. *Carl Nielsen, Our Great Composer!*, BVN 355 8:48 Nina Pavlovski, soprano Stig Andersen, tenor Per Høyer, baritone Per Salo, organ Danish National Choir Danish National Symphony Orchestra Gennady Rozhdestvensky – conductor

Rued Langgaard (1893 - 1952) was the great loner of twentieth-century Danish music, ignored or marginalized by the Danish musical establishment due to his unfashionable romanticism and his interest in such visionary subjects as the Apocalypse. *The End of Time* is a concert arrangement of the prelude and three scenes from Langgaard's opera *Antikrist*. Langgaard wrote the opera in its original version from 1921 to 1923. The Royal Danish Opera rejected it and did so again after its thorough revision from 1926 to 1930. It would not be staged until 1999, when the final version of the opera was produced in Innsbruck, Austria. Meanwhile, Langgaard, in 1939 and 1940, worked out this concert arrangement of music from the opera for orchestra, organ, chorus, and soloists. Interestingly, he used the original version of the opera as his source, but again revised the music. In 1943 he returned to the score of *The End of Time* for further revisions. In 1945 *The End of Time* entered the list of that minority of Langgaard's more than 400 compositions that were actually performed during his life, when it was sung in Denmark. It would not be heard again until 1999, when Danish Radio presented a performance in connection with issuing a recording of the work on the Chandos record label. The style of the music is purely late romantic, with similarities to Gustav Mahler, Leos Janacek, and Alexander Scriabin. The source of the libretto of the opera and text of this 24-minute dramatic suite from it is *Antikrist (A Dramatical Poem)* by Peter Eggert Benzon (1857-1925). The phrase "the end of time" comes from the Book of Daniel 8:17. The first and longest movement is called 'Antichrist.' Prelude. It is a choral invocation asking the Lord to grant a vision of what is to come: The time of monsters, the time of heroes, and the time of victory. During these times creatures of the abyss will "coil around your church" but then the pious will triumph. The second movement , At

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the End of Time, pictures Antichrist as having spiritual dominion over the world, with the full support of the Church. The people clamor to Bishop Sal for Antichrist to lead them. Antichrist awakens and accepts them as his own.

In the third movement, Towards the End of the World, the people cry in alarm as Antichrist turns the sky to blood and makes the stars fall. The people cry for the return of the sun, but Antichrist proclaims he is the sun. At this point a smaller choir, representing the few faithful Christians, and a Young Christian Woman emerge to oppose Antichrist. She resists his threats and blandishments. In the final movement, The Catastrophe, the people continue to endure suffering as Antichrist brings on the portents of Apocalypse, then begins to lose control of the powers he has unleashed. The excerpts end at the point when a character called Babel (The Scarlet Woman) appears. They are fated both to perish in Antichrist's vision of doom. --- Joseph Stevenson, Rovi

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