



BEETHOVEN

**Cantata on the Death
of Emperor Joseph II**

**Cantata on the Accession
of Leopold II**

Soloists

Chorus Cathedralis Aboensis

Key Ensemble

Turku Philharmonic Orchestra

Leif Segerstam



Ludwig van
BEETHOVEN
(1770–1827)

**Kantate auf den Tod Kaiser Josephs II, WoO 87 ‘Trauerkantate’
 (‘Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II’) (1790)**

(Text: Severin Anton Averdonk, 1768–1817)

①	Chorus: Tot, stöhnt es durch die öde Nacht! ('Death, groan it through the barren night!')	8:30
②	Recitative: Ein Ungeheuer, sein Name Fanatismus ('A monster, Fanaticism by name') (<i>Bass</i>)	1:24
③	Aria: Da kam Joseph, mit Gottes Stärke ('Then came Joseph, with the strength of God') (<i>Bass</i>)	5:57
④	Aria with Chorus: Da stiegen die Menschen an's Licht ('Then mankind climbed into the light') (<i>Soprano, Chorus</i>)	5:57
⑤	Recitative: Er schläft, von den Sorgen seiner Welten entladen ('He sleeps, freed from the cares of his world') (<i>Soprano</i>)	3:31
⑥	Aria: Hier schlummert seinen stillen Frieden ('Here slumbers in his quiet peace') (<i>Soprano</i>)	9:31
⑦	Chorus: Tot, stöhnt es durch die öde Nacht! ('Death, groan it through the barren night!')	9:31

**Kantate auf die Erhebung Leopold II. zur Kaiserwürde, WoO 88
 (‘Cantata on the Accession of Emperor Leopold II’) (c. 1790)**

(Text: Severin Anton Averdonk)

⑧	Recitative with Chorus: Er schlummert ... schlummert! ('He slumbers ... slumbers!') (<i>Soprano, Chorus</i>)	4:36
⑨	Aria: Fliesse, Wonnezähre, fliesse! ('Flow, tears of joy, flow!') (<i>Soprano</i>)	11:29
⑩	Recitative: Ihr staunt, Völker der Erde! ('Do you wonder, O peoples of the earth!') (<i>Bass</i>)	0:47
⑪	Recitative: Wie bebt mein Herz vor Wonne! ('How beats my heart for bliss!') (<i>Tenor</i>)	1:03
⑫	Terzetto: Ihr, die Joseph ihren Vater nannten ('You, who called Joseph your father') (<i>Soprano, Tenor, Bass</i>)	4:44
⑬	Chorus: Heil! Stürzt nieder, Millionen ('Hail! Prostrate yourselves, you millions')	5:31

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Cantatas

The Empress Maria Theresa took good care of her children, those of the 16 that had survived. The youngest, Maximilian Franz, was born in 1756 and was appointed Archbishop-Elector of Cologne in 1784, his court in Bonn an important cultural centre. Beethoven had been born in Bonn in 1770, during the reign of the Archbishop-Elector Maximilian Friedrich, but the new Archbishop-Elector shared with many members of his family an interest in the arts. The Hapsburgs had had the problem of a paucity of male heirs. It had been, therefore, a matter for wide rejoicing when Maria Theresa gave birth to her first son in 1741, the future Joseph II. His mother had reigned as co-regent with her husband, Francis of Lorraine, and Joseph, after the death of his father in 1765, became Holy Roman Emperor and co-regent with his mother, an arrangement that, to some extent, limited the influence of the Enlightenment and the changes that Joseph would have wanted to make. The co-regency continued until the death of Maria Theresa in 1780. During the last ten years of his life Joseph was able finally to attempt some of the reforms that had been impossible while his mother was alive, but political circumstances limited his success. He died in February 1790.

In Bonn, ruled by Joseph's youngest brother, there was general mourning when news reached the city of the Emperor's death. Beethoven was, by now, a member of the court musical establishment and had already shown sufficient ability to have enjoyed the particular support of his patron when, in 1787, he had been sent to Vienna for possible study with Mozart, a scheme that came to nothing when his mother's final illness made it necessary for Beethoven to return to Bonn. The death of the Emperor, however, suggested the need for music to mark this very significant occasion.

Beethoven's *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II*, was completed in March 1790. In his reminiscences of the composer, Franz Wegeler claims that the cantata or the work written to mark the accession of Leopold II was shown to Haydn, returning from his first

visit to England, winning the older composer's approval. Haydn's visits to Bonn took place in 1790, on his way to London, and on his return in 1792. Haydn's approval on either occasion may be questioned, but Wegeler goes on to tell of a later attempt to play one or other of the cantatas at Mergentheim, a favourite resort of the Archbisop-Elector, where some of the wind-players found the work too difficult for them. The cantatas, it seems, were never performed. The words set are by Severin Anton Averdonk, a Bethlehemite monk, son of a Bonn official, and member of the Bonn Reading Society that had commissioned the first, at least, of the cantata texts.

The *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II* opens with a chorus of mourning in C minor, with much use of the word *tot* ('dead') and pauses in the music, to stress the grief of the occasion. There follows an excited accompanied recitative for bass, suggesting the evil of fanaticism that the Emperor had had to confront. The bass aria, dramatically conceived, tells how Joseph came and with God's help confronted and suppressed the monster. A soprano aria, with oboe solo, later joined by the chorus, celebrates the coming of light, dispelling the darkness. In a soprano recitative we are told that Joseph sleeps in the grave, awaiting the day of judgement and his due crown of reward. His sleep in peace provides the substance of the ensuing soprano aria. The cantata ends with a return to the opening.

Leopold II, a younger brother of Joseph II, acceded to the throne, assuming the position of Emperor in October 1790, when the appropriate ceremonies took place. Joseph had had no surviving children; of the two born to him, one died in infancy and the other in early childhood. Leopold, with his enlightened views on the education of his children, fathered 16, but was to reign only a short time, dying in 1792. The events of the time brought continuing problems, not least the tragic situation of his sister, Marie Antoinette, now a prisoner of the revolutionaries in Paris, with her pleas for help and the urging of French émigrés seeking action.

The *Cantata on the Accession of Leopold II* starts with a soprano recitative and a memory of the death of Joseph II, who now sleeps, while his people sorrow. Jehovah has mercy and from Olympus a shining cloud appears revealing Leopold, Emperor and Father. The soprano continues with a demanding but cheerful G major aria, with all the embellishment of a Queen of the Night, relating the grace of Jehovah and the flowing of his mercy. The bass, in an unaccompanied recitative, seeks to know why mortals are not amazed, and the tenor, in an

accompanied recitative, welcomes the peace that will ensue, with an end to sorrow. There follows a *Terzetto* for the three soloists, soprano, tenor and bass, urging the people to weep no more, with the new Emperor a worthy successor. The work ends with a triumphant chorus that adjures the millions to rise to the altars and thank the Lord of Thrones for the gifts of joy and peace granted them, for he is great.

Keith Anderson

Reetta Haavisto



Photo: Eero Kokko

Finnish lyric dramatic soprano Reetta Haavisto made her debut in spring 2011 at the Finnish National Opera in the role of Madama Cortese in *Il viaggio a Reims*, subsequently appearing in *Don Pasquale* and *Turandot* in the 2013–14 season. In 2014 she appeared as the soprano soloist in Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, and made her debut at the Savonlinna Opera Festival in Aulis Sallinen's *Kullervo*. In 2015 she appeared in Sibelius's *Kullervo* with Dima Slobodeniouk and Tommi Hakala. In 2016 she performed in *Don Giovanni* in Jyväskylä, Finland, and in 2017 appeared at the Aino Ackté Festival, Helsinki, and as a soloist in Verdi's *Requiem* and Britten's *War Requiem*. Haavisto studied at the Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences and the Sibelius Academy. Her teachers have included Irja Auroora, Pirkko Törnqvist-Paakkanen, Juha Karvonen and Raija Kempainen. Haavisto also studied *Lied* repertoire with Heikki Pellinen, Ulrich Rademacher and Helmut Deutsch, and has recorded Rachmaninov *Lieder* with pianist Jouni Somero. Haavisto has been awarded prizes at the 2010 Lappeenranta Singing Competition and the 7th Internationaler Lions Gesangswettbewerb des Opernfestivals Gut Immling.

Johanna Lehesvuori



Photo: Johanna Lehtinen

Finnish lyric soprano Johanna Lehesvuori has been hailed for her powerful and sensual voice, stunning coloraturas and delicate interpretations. Most recently she made her international debut in the title role of *Suor Angelica* in Lucca, Italy. She made her debut with the Finnish National Opera in 2017 as Vedenneito in Melartin's *Aino*. On the concert platform, Lehesvuori is sought after as a sensitive and versatile artist. She has performed as a soloist with numerous Finnish orchestras. Lehesvuori received her Master of Music at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm studying with Christina Billing.

www.johannalehesvuori.com

Tuomas Katajala



Photo: Eliina Katajala

Tuomas Katajala is one of the most versatile and sought-after Scandinavian tenors, and has achieved notable success both as a concert and an opera singer. His concert and oratorio repertoire includes key works by J.S. Bach, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Bruckner and Mahler. He is a welcome guest at renowned institutions and festivals worldwide, including the Salle Pleyel in Paris and Avery Fisher Hall in New York, as well as the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and Glyndebourne Festival, and has worked with conductors such as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Kent Nagano, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Mikko Franck.

www.tuomaskatajala.com

Juha Kotilainen



Photo: Tuire Ruokosuo

Baritone Juha Kotilainen made his debut at the Finnish National Opera in 1986 and has since performed such roles as Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Marcello (*La Bohème*) and Gunther (*Götterdämmerung*). Kotilainen has also performed regularly at Savonlinna Opera Festival. During the 1990s, Kotilainen appeared at the Aalto Theatre in Essen, and has since performed in many opera houses around Europe. Kotilainen's repertoire also includes solo songs, from classical *Lied* to contemporary works, and solo parts in major church music works. In recent years Kotilainen has premiered a number of Finnish contemporary operas.

www.fazerartists.fi/artisti/kotilainen-juha

Niklas Spångberg



Bass-baritone Niklas Spångberg has performed widely on opera stages and as an orchestral soloist, appearing with the Finnish National Opera since 2001. Spångberg has also appeared with the operas of Stockholm, Savonlinna, Tampere, Turku, Vaasa, Pori and Oulu. Internationally, Spångberg has performed in Russia, Germany and the Czech Republic. Niklas Spångberg first sung as a boy in the boys' choir Cantores Minores in 1977. He studied at the Sibelius Academy under Erkki Rajamäki and has also periodically studied under Jaakko Ryhänen, Irina Gavrilovici, Raimo Laukka and Enrico Facini.

Key Ensemble



Photo: Mats Lillhannus

Based in Turku, the Chamber Choir Key Ensemble is one of the top choirs in Finland. It is renowned for its pure, balanced and distinctive sound, and for its innovative programming. The international reputation of the choir has also been enhanced through its win at the Let the Peoples Sing Choir Competition 2013 in Luxembourg, and its successful tour of China in 2019. A semi-professional choir, the Key Ensemble works on a project basis, and varies its ensemble size and set up to meet the varying demands of assorted repertoire. The choir has commissioned, premiered and recorded several new works. Teemu Honkanen has been the artistic director of the Key Ensemble since 2009.

www.keyensemble.fi

Chorus Cathedralis Aboensis



Photo Vesa-Matti Väärä

Chorus Cathedralis Aboensis (CCA) has specialised in large-scale choral works – often in cooperation with the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra – since the choir's inception in 1982. Märt Krell (M. Mus.) was appointed artistic director in 2015. Virtually the entire canon of works for choir and orchestra are in the CCA's repertoire: it has performed requiems by Verdi, Mozart, Fauré and Pärt, as well as Bach's *Passions* and Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*. The CCA has also performed with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra as well as with several other established groups including the Lahti Symphony Orchestra and the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra. The choir regularly performs with notable soloists in addition to organising a cappella concerts. The CCA has also expanded its repertoire to include opera, performing in the world premiere of Müller-Berghaus's *Die Kalewainen in Pochjola* in 2017, and in Wagner's *Parsifal* for the Turku Music Festival in 2018. www.cca.fi

Turku Philharmonic Orchestra



Photo: Seilo Ristimäki

The Turku Musical Society, which later formed the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra, was founded in 1790. As the oldest orchestra in Finland, the ensemble continues to develop and flourish under the baton of renowned conductors. From 2012 to 2019, the orchestra's 74 musicians have been under the artistic leadership of Leif Segerstam. The orchestra's resident composer is Mikko Heiniö. Several of the Turku Philharmonic's recordings have been awarded platinum discs and other prizes. In 2019 the orchestra won the International Classical Music Award for Best Collection with their recording of Jean Sibelius's *Incidental Music*. In 2009 the orchestra was awarded the EMMA Classical Album of the Year for the recording *Transient Moods*. The orchestra gives weekly concerts, often streamed live throughout the world, while its chamber music ensembles perform in the historical venues of Turku. The orchestra also organises family concerts and performs in opera productions. The Turku Philharmonic is a pioneer in audience accessibility, providing access to concerts online in hospitals, residential care homes and schools. www.tfo.fi/en

Leif Segerstam



Photo: Jan Segerstam

Born in 1944, Leif Segerstam is recognised internationally as a conductor, composer, violinist and pianist. He studied at the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki and The Juilliard School. He is chief conductor emeritus of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, and holds honorary titles with the Malmö Opera, the Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz and the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also been chief conductor of the Austrian and Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestras plus the Royal Swedish Opera and director of the Finnish National Opera. He has conducted most of the world's most prestigious orchestras and was one of the most important ambassadors for Sibelius's 2015 anniversary year. Segerstam began his conducting career in the opera houses of Helsinki, Stockholm and Berlin, and has made guest appearances at international opera houses and festivals. His many recordings have been critically acclaimed and feature works by contemporary composers as well as the complete symphonies of Mahler, Sibelius and Nielsen among many others. Segerstam is a voracious composer, notably developing a free-pulsative style in Rosenkranz form for his later symphonies which are performed without conductor. He was professor of conducting at the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki for many years. Segerstam was awarded the 1999 Nordic Council Music Prize and the Swedish Cultural Foundation's Prize for Music in 2003. In 2004 he was given the annual Finnish State Prize for Music and in 2005 the Sibelius Medal.

By the time of Emperor Joseph II's death in 1790 Beethoven was a member of the court musical establishment in Bonn. To mark the occasion, Beethoven was commissioned to write two cantatas, one to mourn Joseph's death and the other to celebrate the accession to the throne of Emperor Leopold II. Although Beethoven was only 19 years old at the time, both works show the embryonic marks of his greatness: intense expression and control of structure in one, and an almost operatic panache in the other. Neither piece was performed during Beethoven's lifetime.

Ludwig van
BEETHOVEN
(1770–1827)

1–7 Kantate auf den Tod Kaiser Josephs II, WoO 87 'Trauerkantate'
(**'Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II'**) (1790)
(Text: Severin Anton Averdonk, 1768–1817) **44:25**

8–13 Kantate auf die Erhebung Leopold II. zur Kaiserwürde, WoO 88
(**'Cantata on the Accession of Emperor Leopold II'**) (c. 1790)
(Text: Severin Anton Averdonk) **28:19**

Reetta Haavisto 4–6, Johanna Lehesvuori 8 9 12, Soprano
Tuomas Katajala, Tenor 11 12

Juha Kotilainen 2 3, Niklas Spångberg 10 12, Bass

Chorus Cathedralis Aboensis 1 4 7 • Key Ensemble 8 13

Turku Philharmonic Orchestra • Leif Segerstam

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet. The German sung texts and English translations can be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/574077.htm • Recorded: 27–31 August 2018 **8–13** and 15–19 October 2018 **1–7** at the Turku Concert Hall, Turku, Finland

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