

An aerial photograph of a river with vibrant autumn foliage along its banks. The water is a deep blue, and a prominent circular vortex or eddy is visible in the center, creating a swirling pattern of blue and white. The surrounding trees and bushes are in full autumn color, with shades of yellow, orange, and red. The overall scene is serene and visually striking.

PAUL CARR AWAKENING

SAM FURNESS
BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY
CHORUS & ORCHESTRA
GAVIN CARR

RUBICON

The background of the entire page is a circular painting. It depicts a top-down view of a pond. The water is a pale, clear blue. Scattered throughout the pond are numerous autumn leaves in various shades of yellow, orange, and red. Some leaves are fully submerged, while others appear to be floating near the surface. The edges of the pond are framed by dark, textured brushstrokes in shades of brown and black, suggesting the presence of trees and foliage around the water's edge. The overall style is painterly and evocative of the autumn season.

PAUL CARR b.1961

AWAKENING

for Tenor Solo, Mixed Voice Choir, Youth Choir and Orchestra

Text by Stephen Feltham

1 I. Spring Equinox 13.00

2 II. Summer Solstice 9.21

3 III. Autumn Equinox 9.03

4 IV. Winter Solstice 15.45

SAM FURNESS tenor

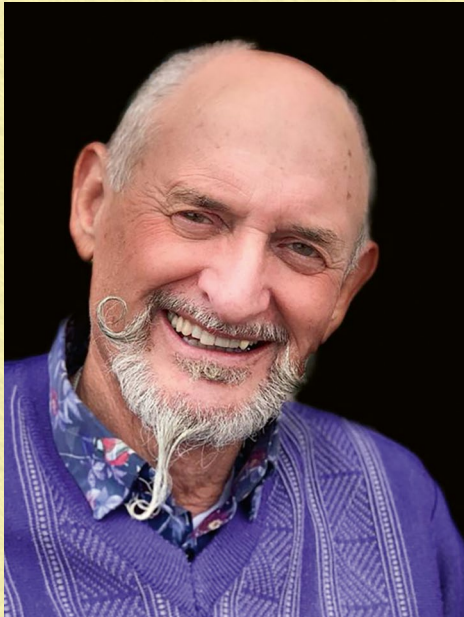
BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY YOUTH CHORUS

BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY CHORUS

BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

GAVIN CARR conductor

AWAKENING, THE CYCLE OF HOPE



Awakening started out as a poem that I wrote as the first step of a eulogy for a much-loved friend. That poem, *Dusk*, to which Paul Carr's score has done great justice, was the genesis of the book from which the libretto is taken.

I love the concept of Body, Mind and Spirit as being the essential building blocks of our humanity. There is a balance between the three that is unique to each one of us (Wow! That's 8 billion variations around the planet). For me, the spiritual is the most exciting and fulfilling dimension, and choral music brings it into the everyday domain. Spirituality need not be evangelically pursued or prescriptive in nature but may be experienced by folk as that special feeling one gets when 'something' is sensed. This something may create a sense of wholeness within oneself, and this 'wholeness' and hope are referenced within *Dusk* and also alluded to in *Awakening*.

A good meal can sustain you for 24 hours. A musical rendition may be recalled daily for many weeks, but sometimes a concert in the choral tradition can give you a special lift by penetrating the soul, and be remembered for years as a great spiritual happening. It is my hope that *Awakening* creates a special place within its audience.

I am grateful to Paul Carr for his setting of the piece; he has a talent for reaching out and touching the heart with his music, awakening emotions and feelings that are cherished long after.

One cannot be sure of the genesis of spiritual awareness or 'belief'. Could it be that it exists as a construct only because humanity needs it, or does it exist just because it exists, and humanity is aware of it? I do not know, and I am not sure now that it matters, but I am grateful to Sir Terry Waite KCMG CBE, who was gracious enough to read the first edition of the *Awakening* book, and from whose review the following extract is taken:

'I have frequently said that good language like good music has the capacity to breathe harmony into the soul. In "Awakening" you, the author, through the careful use of language, touch the hem of mystery.

We are drawn to seek for harmony within ourselves, with our neighbours and with the environment of which we are a part.

"Awakening" sounds a message of hope to a world that is frequently in despair.'

It is my hope that the choral work emulates Sir Terry's view of the book.

As Duke Orsino said in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, 'If music be the food of love, play on'. Well, play on we must, but whether it be romantic love as with Orsino's feelings for the fair Olivia or a love to which the ancient philosopher Plato gave his name, this love is experienced when we identify positive qualities and a feeling of completeness (or wholeness) within us. So – let the music play on.

STEPHEN FELTHAM

CHORALI FISCUS, founded by Stephen Feltham, is a charitable fund for the support of choral work, advancing the enjoyment and education of the public in the performance of choral and similar classical music in the community.

Chorali Fiscus provides financial assistance in the form of grants and or loans to applicants of non-commercial or charitable status. The charity prints, publishes and issues publications dealing with matters of interest to members and the public. In addition, Chorali Fiscus invites donations from the public to supplement funds and also promotes and holds lectures, discussions, conferences and meetings to encourage generally the objects of Chorali Fiscus.

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PAUL CARR was born in Cornwall in 1961. He studied voice and piano at The Guildhall School of Music & Drama, but as a composer is largely self-taught. He was first published at the age of 17 with a set of *Dance Pieces* written for the legendary clarinettist, Dame Thea King. Over the years Paul has written much chamber music, various concertos and orchestral pieces, but is perhaps best known for his choral music. In 2011, Classic FM championed Paul's recording of his new *Requiem for an Angel*, taking his music to a much wider audience and helping make the Requiem his most frequently performed work, with over 35 performances to date in this country and abroad. In 2014, Paul was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Music from Nottingham Trent University for his 'significant contribution to music at a national level'.

Various commissions have included a setting of *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, which was premiered by Bath Minerva Choir in Bath Abbey in 2013 and has since been performed by various choirs in the UK, as well as gaining repeat performances in America at Easter time. In 2017, English Arts Chorale commissioned and premiered his *Stabat Mater*, which was released on EM Records under the title of "Radiance". In 2019 the Dutch choral group Opus presented three concerts of Paul's choral music in the Netherlands – the first given at Amsterdam's iconic Concertgebouw –, which received glowing reviews in the national press.

Paul has also written several concertos, including an Oboe Concerto for Nicholas Daniel, which was premiered at the English Music Festival in 2008 and recorded on the Dutton label, and a Violin Concerto for Rupert Marshall-Luck, which was also premiered at EMF, in 2016. At the suggestion of Nick Daniel he also wrote a version of the Oboe Concerto for soprano saxophone for the young saxophonist Rob Burton; the piece was premiered in Southwell Minster in March 2022. Recent choral commissions include *Into the Light*, a work for tenor solo, choir and large orchestra, commissioned for the 1000th Anniversary of the Abbey at St Edmundsbury, and *Four New Seasons*, a quadruple-commission from three choirs based in the UK and Dallas Chamber Choir. Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Chorus recorded the latter work for the Stone Records label in 2022, along with the Saxophone Concerto. The same year the label also released an album of Paul's solo choral pieces and part-songs (*I Offer You Love*) with Chorus Angelorum.

Classic FM continues to support Paul's music with many broadcasts of his popular *Air for Strings*, which is frequently played on Smooth Classics in the recording made with Bath Philharmonia, conducted by the composer's brother, Gavin Carr.

Paul is also an opera director, and his first opera, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, commissioned by Dorset Opera Festival in celebration of their 50th anniversary, received its world premiere at the festival on 23 July 2024.



Sam Furness



Gavin Carr

AWAKENING

When I was first approached by Carolyn Date and Stephen Feltham with the suggestion of a commission for Bournemouth Symphony Chorus on the subject of Hope and Renewal and the Celestial Cycle of the Seasons which governs the earth, and therefore governs us all, I was intrigued. But, having just finished a re-working of Vivaldi's iconic *Four Seasons* as a choral piece (*Four New Seasons*), I wasn't so sure I wanted to tackle the seasons again so soon, although, funnily enough, I then received a commission from Dorset Opera Festival celebrating its 50th anniversary (in 2024), for a Dorset-based work, and I chose Thomas Hardy's ever-popular romantic novel, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, which also takes place over four seasons. So, over the course of three years I had composed three very different works with the four seasons at their very core.

Having read Stephen's texts, it became clear to me that this was a big-boned subject, starting with the majesty and weight of Stonehenge, and would therefore call for big forces, as in chorus, youth chorus (it was a request that I involve the youth chorus as part of the commission, and setting Stephen's words for young people has been one of the most moving and rewarding experiences on this human journey we share together), tenor soloist and symphony orchestra, plus organ – it's almost a 'choral symphony' in fact, in the traditional setting of four movements (or in this case, seasons).

I was delighted when Salisbury Musical Society came in on the commission and even more so as this meant the work would receive two performances, first at Lighthouse, Poole and then a repeat performance at Salisbury Cathedral, albeit with a different soloist and conductor for each performance, and with the addition of the Cathedral Choristers in Salisbury. So the term 'big-boned' really does apply to this work as it was sung with double chorus at both performances – so with this in mind, alongside the gentler, more beautiful moments in the piece, come some much larger ones of almost terrifying grandeur. The work opens deep in the orchestra, with huge chords in the brass, percussion and lower strings representing the massive solid stones of 'The Henge', before taking us on a celestial journey over the four seasons – high up into the stars and back down to an earthy reality again, before closing with a kind of *paean to humanity* with the words, 'For cosmic glory is the pantheon in which love thrives and spirits don't elope, to dwell forever in love and glorious hope.'

'For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven, and a generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever. What has been, is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun.' (*Ecclesiastes* 3 ESV).

PAUL CARR



AWAKENING

1. SPRING EQUINOX

THE HENGE

Here in these prehistoric time-worn rings
Lies dust of long forgotten priests and kings.
Give honour to these souls without a name;
The shadow of the stones inspires shame.
These stones, in tune with nature and the sky,
Caused priests and kings to proudly question why,
One thousand choirs, or one still voice, a sigh –

Gave no answer to who should live or die,
Instead leaving query and further strife;
What should befall the sad petitioner's life?
Petitioning wisdom from the roving stars,
If harvests, health and happiness is ours,
Is to challenge our fate, the cosmic cycle,
Invite the wrath of Archangel Michael.

WORSHIP

Perhaps in some mysterious, distant time
When humans, conscious of a greater being,
With reverent, humble adoring mind –
They, who could not phrase now write, but seeing
Eternal powers more spiritual than man –
Raised stones to worship things beyond the earth:
Such monuments, concordant with a plan

That once exceeded all material worth.
And with prayer and rite to Gods unknown,
In supplication and with pageant strong,
Made grisly offerings of flesh and bone
To meet the hopes of all the gathered throng.
But the Gods looked on, questioned if they'd
Accede to mortal will, or judgements weigh.

AWAKENING OF BELIEF

The shroud of night falls slowly from my eyes
And I behold the world in cautious fear,
Drift into light where comfort from me flies;
I cringe and do not hold the bright day dear.

The comfort of my bed begs my return
For I am loath to shun its warm embrace.
I am afraid, so these new steps I'll spurn,

The future does not call; the past I face.
The night now gone was safe and sound for me
For I knew not of that which might befall -
In circumstance or serendipity -
The pilgrim's soul, to nurture or enthrall.
And so, my netherworld I'm loath to leave
Until such time my heart says, 'I believe.'

RISE UP, EMBRACE THE DAWN

Dread not with fear the coming morn,
For fear itself makes fear dilate.
Rise up, rise up, embrace the dawn.

Should caution cause a step withdrawn
A gross aversion to your fate,
Dread not with fear the coming morn.

There is no mischief or wicked faun
Can daunt the Spirit you relate.
Rise up, rise up, embrace the dawn.

There is no loss you need to mourn,
Rise up, rise up, embrace the dawn,
Embrace the coming morn.

2. SUMMER SOLSTICE

SUMMER SOLSTICE

Sever the year, this cosmic solstice knife
Directs focus toward new life and growth,
Spring has made promise of further life,
Now Summer boldly keeps Spring's brazen oath.

And nature's magic leaves us still in awe,
The year dissected, four seasons each grow,
With nature blood-red both in tooth and claw

And follow paths flowing from where stars glow.
The sun, still-standing, that celestial mark,
Constant, with energy will surely find it shifts,
Dancing to summon angels hark

And sing of earth's wonders,
For humankind to process what it poorly understood,
That Gods dispense their favours to the good.

AWAKENING OF GRACE

The heavens fold and humankind embrace,
The lightyears make far suns grow weak and faint.
And night and day all earthly souls find grace.

The rising sun, the joyful spring with pace
Adds colour like an artist's joyful paint.
The heavens fold and humankind embrace.

The break of day, joyful in any place,
Cannot be denied nor ceased by feint.
And night and day all earthly souls find grace.

The buds of spring witness Imbolc's past trace,
To warm hearts and comfort with no restraint,
The heavens fold and humankind embrace.

The cosmic sky invites to face the heavens
All those who seek purity without taint.
And night and day all earthly souls find grace.

Oh happy thought: that kindness is the base
Of all of life's conditions, however quaint.
Heavens fold and humankind embrace,
And night and day all earthly souls find grace.

AWARENESS

I see,
The wind, perfumes,

All manner of creation,
My heart soars and my soul feels light,
I live.

3. AUTUMN EQUINOX

REFLECTION

This life
Once lived and vital,

Ends now in sad decay,
No more to bloom, no more regret:
We die.

JUDGEMENT

Judgement compares, it does not value love,
And passions sway the thoughtless unkind breast.
Discernment seeks true meaning from above.

For all the world's creations, gifts enough,
We should not strive to seek the least from best,
Judgement compares, it does not value love.

Though the savage raptor consumes the dove,
Are not all living things truly blessed?
Discernment seeks true meaning from above.

Is Gaia served most by eagle or dove?
Which serves us well, and which causes us stress?
Judgement compares, it does not value love.

Discernment is not forced and needs no shove,
To bid the Gods abandon logic, lest
Discernment seeks true meaning from above.

And though our conscience comforts like a glove,
Only compassionate choices give rest.
Judgement compares, it does not value love.

DUSK

I lay to rest my heart, my flesh, my soul,
My course is run, my journey done, I'm whole.
No more to wander this land or to stroll;
I lay to rest my heart, my flesh, my soul.

The setting sun hints day is soon undone,
I've travelled far but now my race is run.
I lay to rest my heart, my flesh, my soul,
My course is run, my journey done, I'm whole.

4. WINTER SOLSTICE

REVELATION

The light reveals the love within the soul,
The dark invites grim woes and fears,
All rue the name for whom the bell must toll,
The light reveals the love within the soul.

For there is treasure held in our true goals,
Do hellhounds cringe or angels shed their tears?
The light reveals the love within the soul,
The dark invites grim woes and fears.

JOY AND RENEWAL

The hearts beats on, the sun bursts and nature abounds,
The stars shine bright, the moon glows and all is joyful.

There is no death, rebirth is the promise,
That what has been will be, and will again
Live once more to smile, bring joy on us.
There is no death, rebirth is the promise,

What once we knew, we'll know again, and solace
Shall comfort, and with certainty, Amen.

Happiness caresses, songbird sounds,
And all of life's content, happy and full.
The heart beats on, the sun bursts and nature abounds,
The stars shine bright, the moon glows and all is joyful.

BENEDICTION

Go forth with joy, have naught but hope and cheer,
And may the light in you now shine,
Aught else is not for now, another year.

Go forth and face the world with conscience clear,
And be not pained, no more to whinge and whine,
Go forth with joy, have naught but hope and cheer.

The world is happy when you walk with no fear,
Welcome and warmth is yours from sky to shore,
Aught else is not for now, another year.

May you feast on kindness and shed no tear,
And may your cup be filled with love's sweet wine,
Go forth with joy, have naught but hope and cheer.

There is no cloud, nor dark horizon drear,
That can negate your life's promise so fine,
Aught else is not for now, another year.

Go boldly, may all embrace you near,
Dance in life's dance, then be kind,
Go forth with joy, have naught but hope and cheer,
Aught else is not for now, another year.

SPES GLORIA

And so, the heaven's glory's now revealed
What stars and moons and galaxies have known:
Darkness and morbid fears can be full healed,
As human hearts are flesh and blood not stone.
The past is past and may someday return
But not as was, for humanity now learns,
That hope springs eternal and will now spurn
That which once it feared; today it yearns,

For love and happiness within its reach,
And conflict, turmoil and stress are gone
And needs no more the prelate's words to preach.
For cosmic glory is our pantheon
In which love thrives and spirits don't elope,
To dwell forever in love and glorious hope.

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Executive producer for Rubicon: MATTHEW COSGROVE
Producer and engineer, mixing & mastering: PHILIP ROWLANDS
Recording: The Lighthouse, Poole, 20 & 21 July 2024
Publisher: Goodmusic Publishing
Photography: Victoria Brackstone (Stephen Feltham);
Julian Guidera (Paul Carr); Pablo Strong (Sam Furness);
Paul Groom (Gavin Carr); Richard Budd (session photos)
Cover design: PAUL MARC MITCHELL for WLP LONDON LTD 
Layout, editorial: WLP LONDON LTD
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