

The Voice of the Bard

Die Stimme des Barden

Refrain (from The "Introduction" to "The Songs of Experience")

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees;
Whose ears have heard
The Holy Word
Walking among the ancient trees.

Höre die Stimme des Barden!
Der Gegenwart, Vergangenheit und Zukunft sieht;
Dessen Ohren
Das Heilige Wort gehört haben,
Als es unter den uralten Bäumen wandelte.

Recitative (from "Vala, Night the Third" lines 397-401)

What is the price of Experience?
Do men buy it for a song?
Or Wisdom for a dance in the street?
No, it is bought with the price of all
A man hath, his house, his wife, his children.
Wisdom is sold in the desolate market
Where none come to buy
And in the wither'd field,
where the farmer plows for bread in vain.

Was ist der Preis von Erfahrung?
Kauft man sie mit einem Lied?
Oder Weisheit für einen Tanz auf der Straße?
Nein, sie wurde gekauft um den Preis von allem
das ein Mann hat, sein Haus, seine Frau, seine Kinder.
Weisheit wird verkauft auf dem verlassenen Markt,
wo niemand einzukaufen kommt
Und auf dem verdorrten Feld,
wo der Bauer vergebens für Brot pflügt.

Refrain (vide supra)

Hear the voice of the Bard!

Höre die Stimme des Barden!

Chorus (from "Vala, Night the Seventh" lines 150-165)

They condemned the plow and
The hammer and the chisel, the
They broke and burned in fire
And in their stead invented intricate
Wheel without wheel,
To perplex youth in its outgoings
And to bind them to labours day and night,
That they might file and polish
Brass and iron hour after hour
In sorrowful drudgery to obtain a scanty pittance of bread,
Kept ignorant of the use,
Made blind to the simple rules of life

um die Jugend in ihrer Entwicklung zu verwirren
Und sie an die Arbeit Tag und Nacht zu fesseln,
Dass sie Messing und Eisen
feilen und polieren müssen, Stunde um Stunde,
In trister Plackerei für einen Hungerlohn,
In Unwissenheit gehalten über den Zweck,
Blind gemacht für die einfachen Lebensregeln.

Refrain (v.s.)

Hear the voice of the Bard, whose ears
have heard the Holy Word!

Höre die Stimme des Barden, dessen Ohren
Das Heilige Wort gehört haben.

Recitative (from "America" Plate 11)

Must the generous tremble
and leave his joy to the idle,
To the pestilence that mock him?
Must pity become a trade that men get rich by?

Müssen die Großzügigen zittern
Und ihre Freude den Faulen überlassen,
Der Plage, die ihnen spottet?
Muss Mitleid ein Geschäft werden, wodurch Männer sich
bereichern?
Welcher Gott schreibt Gesetze von Frieden
Und kleidet sich in einen Orkan?
Welcher kriechende Schuft predigt Askese
Und kleidet sich in das Fett von Lämmern?

What God writes laws of peace
And clothes himself in a tempest?
What crawling villain preaches abstinence
and wraps himself in fat of lambs?

Psalm (from "Vala, Night the Third" 408 – 416)

It is an easy thing to talk of patience
To the afflicted,
Of prudence to the houseless,
When the blood is filled with wine
And the marrow of lambs.

It is an easy thing to see a god in the storm
That destroys our neighbours' house,
And the sickness that cuts off his children
When *our* children bring home fruits and flowers.

Then the groan and the dolor are quite forgotten,
And the slave grinding at the mill
And the captive in chains,
And the poor in prison, and the soldier in the field,
Where the shattered bone hath laid him groaning
Among the happier dead.

It is an easy thing to triumph in the summer's sun
And to sing on the waggon loaded with hay.

Refrain (v.s.)

Hear the voice of the Bard!

Aria (from "The Song of Los" Pl

Shall not the King call for Fam
To thin the inhabitants of mour.
In the day of full-feeding prosp

Shall not the Councillor call for fires in the city
For heaps of smoking ruins
In the night of delicious songs?

Shall not the priest call for Pestilence from the fen
That the lust of the eyes be quench'd?
That the delicate ear in its infancy
Be dulled and the nostrils closed up?

Chorus (from "Milton" book one, 27 – 36 & 19 – 20 & v.s.)

Can such an Eye measure the sunny rays?
Can such an Ear judge of the harp divine?
Can such a Tongue boast of the living waters?
Can such gross Lips perceive?

Ah, weak and wide astray,
Shut in a narrow doleful form,
Creeping upon the bosom of the ground,
Blind to the simple rules of life.

Refrain (v.s.)

Hear the voice of the Bard!

Es ist ein Leichtes, über Geduld zu reden
mit den Leidenden,
Von Vernunft mit den Obdachlosen,
Wenn das Blut angefüllt ist mit Wein
Und dem Mark des Lamms.

Es ist ein Leichtes, einen Gott im Sturm zu erkennen
Der das Haus unseres Nachbarn vernichtet,
Und in der Krankheit, die seine Kinder tötet,
Wenn *unsere* Kinder Früchte und Blumen
nachhause bringen.

Dann sind Greinen und Kummer ganz vergessen,
Und der Sklave, schleifend in der Mühle
Und der Gefangene in Ketten ,
Und die Armen im Gefängnis, und der Soldat im Feld,
Wo der zerschmetterte Knochen ihn Stöhnend zu Liegen
gebracht hat unter die glücklicheren Toten.

Es ist ein Leichtes, zu triumphieren in des Sommers Sonne
Und zu singen auf dem Wagen, vollbeladen mit Heu.

Höre die Stimme des Barden!

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aus der Heide
auszudünnen
s?

Kann nicht der Minister nach Feuer in der Stadt
Nach Bergen rauchender Ruinen
In der Nacht voll entzückender Lieder?

Ruft nicht der Priester nach Seuche aus dem Sumpf
Daß die Augenfreude ausgelöscht wird?
Daß das zarte Ohr in seiner Entwicklung
Abgestumpft wird und die Nüstern verschlossen?

Kann solch ein Auge die Sonnenstrahlen schätzen?
Kann solch ein Ohr die göttliche Harfe würdigen?
Kann solch eine Zunge lebendiges Wasser schmecken?
Können solch grobe Lippen spüren?

Oh, schwach und weit verloren,
In eine enge und traurige Form eingesperrt,
Kriechend auf dem Busen der Erde,
Blind für die einfachen Lebensregeln.

Höre die Stimme des Barden!

To the Text

The opening verse, which becomes a sort of refrain, is from „The Songs of Experience“, in which experience is seen to involve suffering. The following extracts are from Blake's „Prophetic Books“ and deal with the afflictions of the downtrodden at the time of the industrial revolution, that is, at Blake's time.

Blake's compassion with the oppressed is clear, and, if his fury with king, government and church seems shocking, J. Bronowski, in his book, „William Blake“, makes it clear that Blake had good reason for his anger.

I am also deeply indebted to Dr. Bronowski for pointing out that, however difficult to understand Blake's Prophetic books are as a whole, there are many passages of absolute clarity, in which Blake, like the old testament prophets, castigates the ills of his time. It is from such passages that my text is put together.

To the Music

According to Alexander Gilchrist, Blake's first biographer, Blake was „very impressionable to simple national melodies but not to music of a more complicated nature“ („William Blake“ chapter 33). As Blake finished etching his „Songs of Experience“ in the year that Haydn commenced his second stay in England, we must think that Haydn's London Symphonies were not to his taste. But one can't say that Blake was not to music of the type of „national melodies“ either. His death-bed, wished for an Anglican, his prophetic books are in an old testament style, biblical texts, a way which suits Blake well too.



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The instrumentation is deliberately simple. It is Blake's message which is important. Strings usually double the voices in the choruses. For the solo passages the piano is probably the best accompanying instrument. In Blake's time the fortepiano had almost completely ousted the harpsichord (although Haydn and Mozart directed their Symphonies from the latter instrument to the last) because it was capable of quick dramatic effects, which is just what Blake's texts need.

The Voice of the Bard

(the Bard being William Blake)



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Keith F. Booker



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Título: [The Voice of the Bard](#)

Compositor: [Keith Booker](#)

Época: Siglo XXI

Tema: .Misceláneas

Categoría: Cantatas

Dificultad: Mittel

Instrumentación Grupo: Coro mixto con ensamble/orquesta

Instrumentación: Coro>SATB+[VI2+Vla+Vc]

Instrumentación: Canto coro>voces de bajo = B (1),Canto coro>voces de contralto = A(1),Canto coro>voces de soprano = S(1),Canto coro>voces de tenor = T(1),Viola = Vla(1),Violín = VI(2),Violoncello (Cello) = Vc(1)

Secular cantata. Text from the "Prophetic Books" of William Blake about social conditions.