

The 70th Week

A visual music opera

João Pedro Oliveira

2022

Covid statement

When I proposed to compose the opera *The 70th Week*, back in early 2020, the main purpose was to write a piece of music covid related and covid adapted. There would be no singers on stage, no instrumentalists or any other live participants. The idea was to create an autonomous art object that could be presented in any concert room, home tv, or theater without the intervention of any live performers.

In that period, we did not know what would happen with the pandemics. Depending on the direction it would take, it could prevent mankind to have a normal artistic life again. Fortunately, that did not happen, and now we can go back to regular concert attendance.

Therefore, the visual part of the scenes of this opera were mainly computer generated, the vocal lines and group sections were pre-recorded, and most of the action was re-interpreted as pre-recorded dance movements and assembled together in a video format.

The instrumental part was replaced by electronic music, and the final product resembles a movie about an opera, an artistic product that breaks the usual barriers of production, montage and rehearsal.

The 70th Week was premiered in Denton (Texas) on September 26th, 2022.

Short program notes

The 70th Week (a visual music opera).
2022

The Book of Daniel is probably one of the most mysterious books in the Bible. The description of the events and prophecies include murder, treason, orgies, and torture. But it has also several very interesting and enigmatic prophecies that can be interpreted in many ways to be related to the present times. Social instability, global war, mass extermination, and many other events can possibly be interpreted in the prophetic writings of this young boy.

This visual music opera includes several events in the life of this prophet and his companions, as well as the three main prophecies that still may not have been fulfilled. The 70th week described in the book is one of these prophecies, and it relates to a state of constant war, sacrilege and destruction, that will finally lead to a miraculous transformation of the world in a new space of peace and justice. This prophecy is then re-stated in the Book of Revelation, in the Bible.

As the description of the piece (a visual music opera) suggests, the operatic action is re-interpreted in a screen, using several computer-generated images and sounds, as well as pre-recorded vocal lines and dance movements. Some of the 8 scenes that constitute this piece are imagined representations of the events described in the book and some other scenes are symbolic. The texts used are direct transcriptions of the original texts in the book, sung in Latin, Hebrew and Aramaic.

The 70th Week was the result of a commission by the Ministry of Culture in Portugal. It also received the support of Manitou Fund (USA), mpmp - Património Musical Vivo (Portugal), University of Aveiro (Portugal) and University of California – Santa Barbara (USA). It was composed between March 2021 and September 2022.

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Scene 1 - Introduction, Daniel's Prayer

♩ = 60

poco vibrato

1'14" *mfpp* *f* *mp* *f* *p* *mf*

Soprano Ah! o - bse - cro Do - mi - ne De - us

9 *f* *p* *f* *p*

ma - gne et ter - ri - bi - lis

14 *pp* *p* *mf* *pp*

cus-to - di - ens pac - tum et mi - se - ri - cor - di - am di - li - gen - ti - bus te

20 *mp* 10" *ff* *mp* *f* *ff*

et cus-to - di - en - ti - bus man - da - ta tu -

26 *mp* *f* *mp* *f* *ff*

a Nunc er - go ex - au - di De - us nos -

36 *mp* *f* *mp* 8" *f* *mp* *ff*

- ter o - ra - ti - o -

44 *mf* *p* *pp* *mp*

- - nem ser - vi tu - - - i et pre-cis ei- us Et os - ten -

55 *f* *mp* *f* *f* *p* *mf*

de fa - ci-em tu - am su - per sanc-tu - a - ri-um tu - um quod de - ser - tum

60 *p* *mf* *f* *ff* 18"

est pro-pter te-me-ti-psum E - xau-di Do - mi - ne E - xau-di Do - mi - ne Pla-ca -

67 *mf* *p*

- - - - - re Do - mi - ne a - - - - ten - de et fac ne mo-re- ris

74 *pp* *mp* *ff* *mf*

- pro-pter te-me-ti-psum De - us me - us qui - a no - men tu-um in-vo - ca - tum est su - per ci-vi-

81 *f* *p* 20"

ta - tem et su - per po - pu-lum tu - um

Scene 2 - The Vision of Four Beasts

♩ = 66

1'00"

speaking, almost whispered, anguished,

Contralto

Videbam in visione mea nocte, et ecce quattuor venti caeli pugnabant in mari magno. Ah oh

9

Et quat-tuor bes-ti-ae gran-des as-cen-de-bant de ma-ri di-ver-se in-ter

14

se. Pri-ma qua-si lea-e-na, et a-las ha-be-bat a-qui-lae: as-pi-ci-e-bam do-nec e-vul-sae sunt a-lae ei-us, et su-

20

bla-ta est de-ter-ra et su-per pe-des qua-si ho-mo ste-tit; et cor ho-mi-nis da-tum est ei.

25

Et ec-ce bes-ti-a a-li-a si-mi-lis ur-so in par-te ste-tit: et tres or-di-nes e-rant in o-re ei-us, et in den-ti-

30

bus ei-us, et sic di-ce-bant ei: Sur-ge, co-me-de car-nes plu-ri-mas.