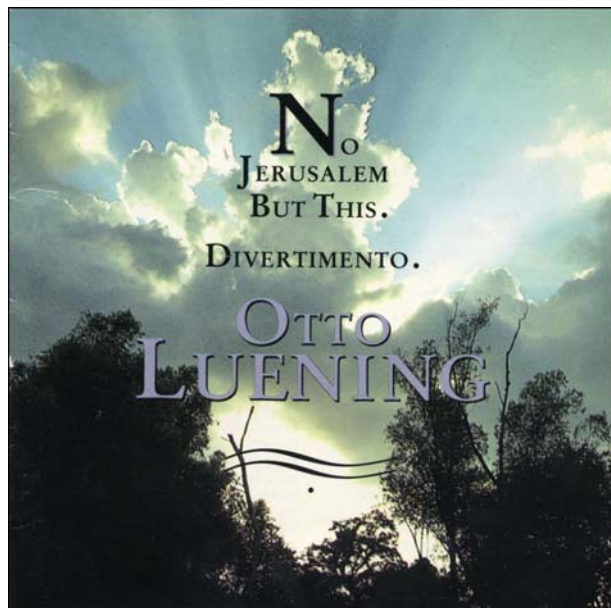


Otto Luening

No Jerusalem But This; Divertimento



No Jerusalem But This (1982)..... (46:18)

1. 1. The shrine whose shape I am (1:49)
2. 2. Eaves at dusk (1:19)
3. 3. Wind (2:19)
4. 4. Stone would be water..... (1:02)
5. 5. In Stride (2:29)
6. 6. My angels are dark..... (1:46)
7. 7. Small stones for the Temple..... (1:37)
8. 8. Rural Sunrise..... (0:49)
9. 9. Reeds rise from water (1:10)
10. 9a. The Niche..... (1:01)
11. 10. A- (0:43)
12. 11. Paschal Wilderness (0:51)
13. 12. Paradise —*After Giovanni di Paolo*..... (1:44)
14. 13. Pity us (1:24)
15. 14. The friends of my father..... (2:10)

16. 15. Pastoral..... (1:00)
17. 16. April (1:20)
18. 17. May (0:50)
19. 18. The Sandpiper (0:53)
20. 19. O Many Named Beloved..... (2:02)
21. 20. Shade..... (1:20)
22. 21. Roads run forever..... (0:58)
23. 22. She who saw the moon last night (2:22)
24. 23. Pirate (1:53)
25. 24. Warrior Wisdom..... (3:04)
26. 25. Dusk (1:12)
27. 26. Voyage (1:23)
28. 27. My Mother's Grave (0:34)
28. The shrine whose shape I am (reprise)
29. 29. The Water of the World is Love..... (2:10)

Kathleen Sullivan, soprano; Jacqueline Pierce, mezzo-soprano; Philip Wilder, countertenor; Stephen Rosser, tenor; Mark Moliterno, baritone; Paul Sperry, narrator; The Goodman Chamber Choir; The Music Project Chamber Orchestra; Andrea Goodman, conductor

Divertimento for Brass Quintet (1988) (12:17)

Commissioned by the Catskill Brass Quintet

30. I. Allegro..... (2:24)
31. II. Slow (2:12)
32. III. Slow (3:03)
33. IV. Allegro..... (1:47)
34. V. Vivace (1:45)
35. VI. Presto..... (0:46)

The Meridian Arts Ensemble: John Nelson, trumpet; Richard Kelley, trumpet; Daniel Grabois, horn; Benjamin Herrington, trombone; Raymond Stewart, tuba

Total playing time: 58:42

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Notes

Otto Luening (*b* Milwaukee, 1900; *d* New York, 1996) recently celebrated ninety years of raising his voice in song. Through many and varied endeavors as composer, flutist, conductor, writer, educator, organizer, and pioneer of electronic music, Luening has been a guiding force in the vast growth of our musical life during the century, and he continues to inspire and encourage a new generation of composers and musicians.

Luening received his formal musical education in Munich and Zurich, where he studied composition with Ferruccio Busoni and Philipp Jarnach while earning a living as a flutist in the Tonhalle Orchestra and as an actor in James Joyce's English Players. In 1920, he returned to the United States, and following brief stints in a silent movie house orchestra and conducting an opera in Chicago, he accepted posts on the faculties of the Eastman School (1925–28), the University of

Arizona (1932–34), Bennington College (1934–44), and Barnard College and Columbia University, where, in 1959, he co-founded and co-directed the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center with Vladimir Ussachevsky, Milton Babbitt, and Roger Sessions.

An ardent advocate of American music, Luening has also been a catalyst in the establishment of organizations such as the American Music Center (founder, 1940), the American Composers Alliance (president, 1945–51), and Composers Recordings, Inc. (co-founder, 1954). He has served on the board of trustees of the American Academy in Rome (1953–70) and is a member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. In recognition of his profound contributions and achievements, Luening has been the recipient of honors and awards from many organizations, and he has written an engaging account of his experiences in an

autobiography, *The Odyssey of an American Composer* (C. Scribner's Sons, 1980).

Throughout his life, Luening's ties to vocal music have been close and enduring in his pursuits as composer and musician. At a precocious age he easily mastered an extensive song repertory. He also was surrounded by the sounds of his father's activities as a professional musician, which included coaching private voice students in addition to the soloists and choristers of the Milwaukee Musical Society. Luening soon acquired firsthand knowledge of choral singing while a music student in Europe, where, to reinforce rigorous exercises in counterpoint, the motets, masses, and oratorios of Palestrina, Bach, and others were sung as part of the curriculum.

Luening also began to explore the world of opera early in his career, first in the ranks of the Municipal Opera orchestra in Zurich, then as conductor of Charles Wakefield Cadman's *Shanewis* in Chicago in 1922. At the Eastman School, in addition to assisting Eugene Goossens in launching the Rochester American Opera Company, Luening served as vocal coach, opera conductor, and executive director of the opera department, emerging from these experiences as a seasoned professional.

Over the years, Luening has often returned to composing music for voices. The poetry of William Blake, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Lord Byron, Hermann Hesse, and others have provided inspiration for approximately seventy-five songs, some of which were composed in Zurich and in Cologne in the late 1920s, and which served to introduce the composer in New York musical circles in 1929. With the support of two Guggenheim Fellowships, Luening composed an opera, *Evangeline* (1930–32; after Longfellow), which he conducted in 1948 at Columbia University. There he also conducted the premieres of other American operas, among them Gian Carlo Menotti's *The Medium* and Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All*. And, in addition to a number of smaller pieces, Luening has also composed two larger works for chorus, *Lines from Blake's "The First Book of Urizen"* and "Vala, or a Dream of Nine Nights" (1983), and the cantata *No Jerusalem But This* (1982).

No Jerusalem But This was composed for the Gregg Smith Singers and was first performed during the summer of 1982 at the Adirondack Festival of American Music. An accessible work comprised of twenty-nine aphoristic settings of poems by Samuel Menashe (b New York City, 1925), *No Jerusalem But This*, in the words of the composer, "represents a vision of life with the shadow of defeats and death, but also with the moments both in nature and in our own human actions which bring us joy." It is scored for mixed chorus, soloists, narrator, and a chamber ensemble of fifteen players (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, horn, trombone, percussion, piano, harp, two violins, viola, cello, and contrabass). The performance by the Goodman Chamber Choir and members of the Music Project heard on this recording was given in honor of the composer's ninetieth birthday at Merkin Hall, New York City, on June 6, 1990.

The text of the cantata comes from two collections of Samuel Menashe's work, *The Many Named Beloved* (1961) and *No Jerusalem But This*. *The New York Review of Books* described Menashe as a "poet who compresses thoughts and sensations into language intense and clear as diamonds." The British writer and editor P. N. Furbank expands: "Menashe is a strange and remarkable poet, whose tiny poems – perfect little

mechanisms, minute cathedrals – are not only very elaborate structures, but are, as it were, all structure: acoustic structures, counter changing assonance and internal rhyme; syntactical structures concentrating great changes of energy; etymological structures, re-enacting the life history of words."

A remarkable affinity exists between Luening's music and Menashe's poetry. Both embody a clarity of expression, whether in uncluttered textures and resonant orchestrations or in words meticulously chosen for precision of meaning. But at the same time, Luening, like the poet, exploits the multiplicity of means inherent in his materials and has developed a system of "acoustic harmony" in which harmonies are created by careful spacing of overtones and contextual reinterpretation of their relationships. Luening espouses many of the ideals of Busoni's "young classicism," and, like Menashe, considers formal structure and balance rather than epic proportions to be an expressive element. He often describes his compositions as "compressed statements."

Luening found that Menashe's poetry "set my imagination going musically" on "frames" for each poem that would offer musical commentary for an "illumination of the poetic thought." To preserve the integrity of the poetry in the musical settings, text repetition is infrequent, and Luening's innate lyricism, together with his use of forces in diverse combinations and contrasting textures, creates a striking variety of aural images that eloquently heightens the emotional intensity of Menashe's poetry.

Each movement of *No Jerusalem But This* is distinctive, from the lilting "Around my neck an amulet," a choral round for women's voices, to the haunting and lushly scored "My Angels are Dark," to "The Sandpiper," with its beguiling flourishes of vocalise, to the sparsely scored conversations and dialogues between vocal and instrumental soloists. Included among these dialogues are "Shade," "Wind," and "Pastoral," all of which call to mind Luening's songs and works for soprano and flute. In reviewing this performance for *The New York Times*, James R. Oestreich described *No Jerusalem But This* as "a felicitous blend of economy and extravagance... So sparing, pointed and inventive is the scoring, a listener always has the sense that instruments join in only when and as needed. This is a delightful work."

The Divertimento for Brass Quintet (1988), one of eight works Luening has written for brasses, was commissioned by Carleton Clay, director of the Catskill Chamber Players. Its premiere was given by that ensemble at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute on August 27, 1988. This recording was made subsequent to a performance by the Meridian Arts Ensemble during a ninetieth-birthday celebration for the composer on October 15, 1990, that was sponsored by the Music Division of the New York Public Library at Lincoln Center.

Divertimento is a set of six studies in contrasting harmonic areas, which are articulated through a series of clearly marked phrases of linear counterpoint and points of imitation. The first movement opens with a pointillistic exposition of materials. The second begins with a progression of changing tone clusters. Throughout the work, crisp and rapid-fire statements for muted brasses are juxtaposed with more lyrical passages, often introduced in the lower voices, and also with hymn-like settings for the full ensemble.

—Emily Good

The Goodman Chamber Choir was founded by Andrea Goodman in the winter of 1984 and has since presented a yearly concert series in New York City. In 1985, Tonality Now, Inc. (named by board member and composer David Del Tredici) was formed as a non-profit organization to sponsor the choir's concerts as well as other non-choral events that reflect the return to tonality in music. Highlights from seven seasons include a prize-winning tour of Switzerland in 1987, where the group placed third in the Montreux International Choral Competition, a U.S. Embassy performance, a 1989 tour of Italy, and a Town Hall concert featuring the music of David Del Tredici.

In its seven-year history, the choir has built a reputation for performing rare and unusual repertoire. Although it performs music from all periods, its most important contributions to the music scene have been rarely heard nineteenth-century American works by composers like Beach, Chadwick, MacDowell, and Loeffler, and its premieres of twentieth-century contemporary works by Soviet composers Nikolai Sidelnikov, Sergei Slonimsky, and Georgii Sviridov. On the contemporary American scene, it has premiered works by Vincent Persichetti, Leonard Bernstein (on Italian tour), and John Corigliano's *Fern Hill*. Last season marked the group's third performance on WQXR's *The Listening Room* with Robert Sherman, in celebration of the ninetieth birthday of

Otto Luening. This release marks the ensemble's first recording on compact disc.

Andrea Goodman, conductor, has participated in such noted festivals as Gregg Smith's Adirondack Festival of American Music, the Bach Aria Festival, the Festival de Musique Sacrée in Fribourg, Switzerland, and she has served as assistant conductor of the Aspen Chamber Choir in the 1988 Aspen Music Festival. Last summer she was selected among five conductors world-wide to serve in a master class under the direction of noted Swedish conductor Eric Ericson for the second International Symposium on Choral Music in Stockholm, Sweden. Ms. Goodman developed a special interest in contemporary choral literature from the Soviet Union after serving several apprenticeships under the noted choir conductor Vladimir Minin of the Moscow Chamber Choir.

The Meridian Arts Ensemble was founded in 1987 at the Juilliard School and has quickly established itself as one of America's finest young brass quintets. Although their repertoire includes music spanning six centuries, this group of skilled musicians has won particular acclaim for its performances of works by contemporary American composers. Among their many awards, they have most recently won first prize in the Concert Artists Guild 1990 New York Competition.

Production Notes

Executive Producer: Joseph R. Dalton
Digital mastering by Classic Sound, Inc.
Recorded at Merkin Concert Hall, NYC.

No Jerusalem But This

Engineered and edited by Rob Rapley.
Recorded on June 6, 1990.
Published by C. F. Peters (BMI).

Divertimento

Producer: Tim Martyn.
Engineered and edited by Rob Rapley.
Recorded on February 11, 1991.
Published by ACA (BMI).

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