

**ARVO PÄRT**  
**ADAM'S LAMENT**

**ECM NEW SERIES**

**Arvo Pärt** (\*1935)

Adam's Lament

Beatus Petronius

Salve Regina

Statuit ei Dominus

Alleluia-Tropus

L'Abbé Agathon

Estonian Lullaby

Christmas Lullaby

**Latvian Radio Choir**

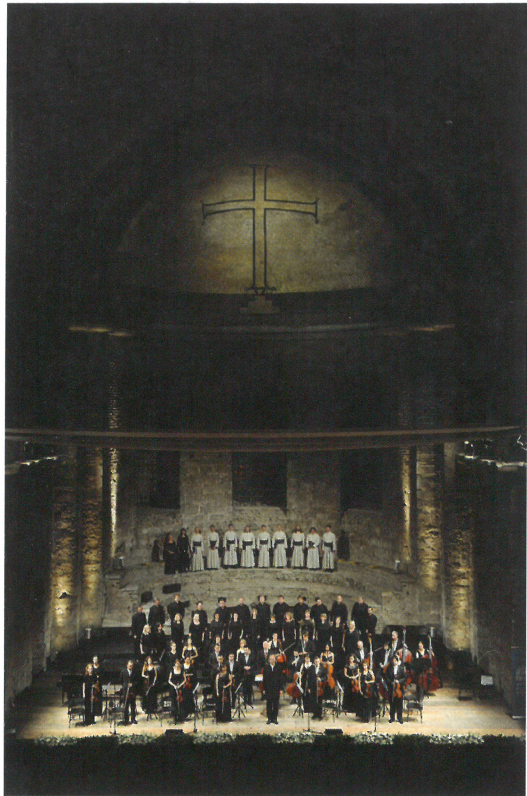
**Sinfonietta Riga**

**Vox Clamantis**

**Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir**

**Tallinn Chamber Orchestra**

**Tõnu Kaljuste, conductor**



- 1 **Adam's Lament** (2009) 24:09  
for choir and string orchestra

*Dedicated to Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov)*

**Latvian Radio Choir**  
**Vox Clamantis**  
**Sinfonietta Riga**

- 2 **Beatus Petronius** (1990/2011) 5:16  
for two choirs, eight woodwind instruments,  
tubular bells and string orchestra

- 3 **Salve Regina** (2001/2011) 12:15  
for choir, celesta and string orchestra

*Dedicated to Hubert Luthé, Bishop of Essen*

**Latvian Radio Choir**  
**Sinfonietta Riga**

- 4 **Statuit ei Dominus** (1990/2011) 4:57  
for two choirs, eight woodwind instruments  
and string orchestra

**Latvian Radio Choir**  
**Vox Clamantis**  
**Sinfonietta Riga**

- 5 **Alleluia-Tropus** (2008/2010) 2:39  
for choir and string orchestra

**Vox Clamantis**  
**Sinfonietta Riga**

- 6 **L'Abbé Agathon** (2004/2008) 14:04  
for soprano, baritone, female choir  
and string orchestra

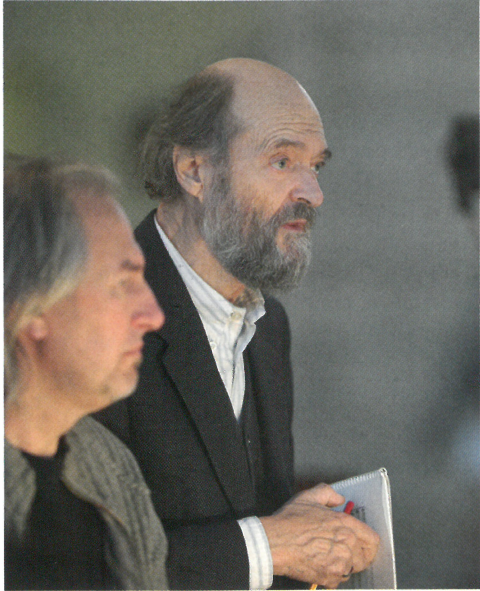
**Tui Hirv, soprano**  
**Rainer Vilu, baritone**  
**Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir**  
**Tallinn Chamber Orchestra**

- 7 **Estonian Lullaby** (2002/2006) 2:08  
for female choir and string orchestra

- 8 **Christmas Lullaby** (2002/2006) 2:27  
for female choir and string orchestra

**Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir**  
**Tallinn Chamber Orchestra**

**Tõnu Kaljuste, conductor**



## Approaching the Text

**“The text is independent of us; it awaits us. Everyone needs his own time to come to it. The encounter occurs when the text is no longer treated as literature or artwork, but as reference point or model.”** Arvo Pärt

The text has always been the basis of Arvo Pärt’s vocal works, especially since the *Credo* of 1968. Broken down into its separate parts, dissected and carefully transferred to the music, the text is at once the source – the germ from which a work’s entire structure unfolds – and the objective. Its function is neither ornamental nor purely literary – on the contrary, it is essential.

## Adam’s Lament

**“For the holy man Silouan of Mount Athos, the name Adam is like a collective term which comprises humankind in its entirety and each individual person alike, irrespective of time, epochs, social strata and confession. But who is this banished Adam? We could say that he is all of us who bear his legacy. And this “Total Adam” has been suffering and lamenting for thousands of years on earth. Adam himself, our primal father, foresaw the human tragedy and experienced it as his personal guilt. He has suffered all human cataclysms, to the depths of despair.**

**Holy Silouan’s writings have great poetic, expressive power; their central message is Love – Love and Humility. All of his texts, every-**

**thing he wanted to accomplish with his life was concerned with the issue of humility. Yet the true meaning of the term is difficult to apprehend – like marble, its beauty radiates from its depths.**

**I wanted to close my work with the words which were so important for Silouan; words full of the deepest pain but, this time, not spoken by Adam, but by Silouan himself: a desperate cry to God – ‘I, too, have lost grace, and with Adam I cry, “Be merciful to me, Lord. Give me the spirit of humility and love.”’**

**While I was composing the piece, I wanted to remain as close as possible to Silouan’s words and, as far as I could, to entrust myself with them, to internalise them. That perfect melding caused me somehow to think less of a work of art when I was composing.”** Arvo Pärt

*Adam’s Lament*, the most comprehensive work on this CD, is based on texts by the sainted monk of Mount Athos, Staretz Silouan (1866–1938), published in the 1950s by his pupil and biographer Archimandrite Sophrony (1897–1993) and translated thereafter into more than twenty languages. After the English edition appeared, literary critics wrote that no anthology of Russian poems could be without these texts in future.

Jointly commissioned by the cities of Tallinn and Istanbul, the European Cultural Capitals in 2010 and 2011, *Adam’s Lament* was premiered at the 38th Istanbul Music Festival, where Arvo Pärt received a lifetime-achievement award on 7 June 2010. It was an unforgettable performance for everyone who heard it. It had been raining torrentially all day; it seemed

as if all Adam's tears were falling from the sky and flooding over the city. Under conductor Tõnu Kaljuste's direction, a Turkish orchestra and an Estonian choir performed a work [the *Lament*] in Russian in the Hagia Irene (the only Byzantine basilica which was never converted to a mosque and in which the First Council of Constantinople took place in 381). The text suddenly became manifest and clear in that atmosphere of unity, conveyed by artists of different cultures.

### Salve Regina

"A commission from Essen Cathedral in 2001 provided an opportunity for me to write a work linking all four of the church's choirs with organ accompaniment. One children's choir, male choir, female choir and mixed choir were placed in the galleries around the church; that spatial and sonic combination impressed me, inspired me and awoke in me the emotion of communal singing – precisely that which brings the spirits and souls of a congregation together.

Musically, *Salve Regina* could be comparable to a funnel – and, like a funnel, the work begins with large circles, slowly turning and becoming more and more concentrated and grave until it reaches the deepest point. The mighty sonic mass on the one hand and the very sparsely used "simple" musical material in constant three-quarter metre on the other finally condense in the coda, like in an undertow until they reach the point of greatest possible concentration." Arvo Pärt

*Salve Regina*, a hymn to the Virgin Mary originally composed for choir and organ, was written in 2001 for the 75th birthday of Hubert Luthe, Bishop of Essen Cathedral. The edifice is especially known for its Golden Madonna, considered to be the oldest image of the Madonna in the Occident. Commissioned by Enzo Restagno and the 2011 MITO Festival, Pärt scored *Salve Regina* for choir and string orchestra, and *Beatus Petronius* and *Statuit ei Dominus* for two choirs, string orchestra and woodwinds. *Salve Regina* is a slow and majestic procession, its subtle motion mainly due to the changing choral sound colours; the choir begins *unisono*, gradually building to reach an eight-part polyphonic texture.

### Beatus Petronius / Statuit ei Dominus

"The feathery lightness of *Beatus Petronius* and, by contrast, the potency of *Statuit ei Dominus* are two sonic worlds, like the two sides of God, which I tried to touch, to trace in these works. It is difficult for us to fathom God – in terms of both his greatness and simultaneous infinite benevolence." Arvo Pärt

Both these works were originally written for two choirs and two organs in 1990 for the occasion of the 600th anniversary of San Petronio Basilica, Bologna's main church. Pärt took advantage of that opportunity to reproduce the profound impression the church's majestic dimensions made on him. To do justice to San Petronio's size and particular reverberation, he conceived both choirs antiphonally, two ensembles alternating

and reciprocally responding to each other. The character of the piece is emphasised in the new version (2011) by the dialogue between the instrumental groups (strings and woodwinds).

### Alleluia-Tropus

“I had already used the English trope of St. Nicholas in my piece *Trio-dion*. Apparently, my work this time was influenced by the ecclesial Slavic language which I chose, with all its special associations and its hint of the archaic. The parallel fifths, fourths and thirds – the structure’s simple and elementary form, the refrain returning over and over – all of that is intended to convey a happy affinity with past epochs, the time of Nicholas.

The refrain – the Alleluia itself – frames the trope and repeatedly interrupts the flux before it begins to move again. The refrain is based on a simple, elementary harmonic progression: tonic (T), subdominant (S), dominant (D), which shows different sides at every repetition, like a cube – TSDT, SDTS, DTSD, TSDT. The circulatory repetition of the Alleluia has the effect of a temporal hub, practically neutralising our perception of time, thus emphasising the feeling of timelessness.” Arvo Pärt

The words are from the Christian liturgy devoted to St. Nicholas of Myra or Nicholas of Bari (270–345) – one of the great hagiographical figures, whose presence emanates far beyond the sphere of Christendom.

Pärt was invited to compose the piece in 2008 by the Voci dell’Anima Festival in Bari, the locale in Apulia where the saint’s relics are kept. He wrote the original version (for vocal ensemble and eight cellos) for Vox Clamantis in 2004.

### L’Abbé Agathon

“This piece happened spontaneously. Although I had misunderstood the commission and assumed that the work would be performed for people stricken with leprosy, I learned later on that it concerned a historical hospital for lepers. Nevertheless my original impulse – to send a direct message to the lepers – found its way into the piece. Looking for a text, I soon thought of St. Agathon, who is associated with several legends involving lepers. One of the best-known says that Agathon’s love was so great that he was prepared to exchange his body with that of a leper.

Three musical situations dominate the piece: Agathon on the way to the market, characterized by his gait heavy with the leper on his shoulders, the dialogues between the leper and Agathon, and the life at the market. The coda is a surprising dramaturgical turning point – but also a logical conclusion to the idea which brings the entire notion of Agathon to a head.” Arvo Pärt

In 2004, Pärt wrote *L’Abbé Agathon* for eight cellos (those of L’Octuor de violoncelles de Beauvais) and soprano Barbara Hendricks; he reworked it

in 2008 for female choir and string orchestra. The piece begins in the Egyptian desert, tracing the origin of Christian monasticism, i.e. the hermits who withdrew in 364 to the Scetic Desert to devote their lives to asceticism and prayer.

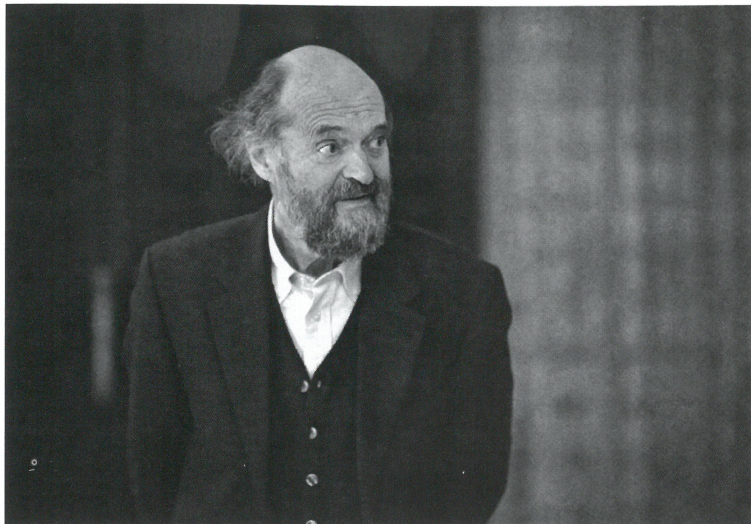
According to legend, Agathon carried a leper on his back and gave him everything he asked for, until he realised that the leper was actually an angel, sent by God to test him.

### Two Lullabies

**“Lullabies are like little pieces of lost Paradise – a small consolation combined with the feeling of profundity and intimacy. I wrote these two lullabies for adults and for the child within every one of us.”** Arvo Pärt

The *Estonian Lullaby* and the *Christmas Lullaby* were commissioned by Jordi Savall for his Ensemble Hespèrion XXI, written in 2002 and dedicated to Jordi Savall, Monserrat Figueras and Arianna Savall. Originally for two female voices, Pärt later arranged them for female choir and string orchestra. As if brought to life by a simple stroke of a genius painter’s brush, these two pieces are musically expressive in a spontaneous, unfettered and direct way.

David Sanson



Translated from the German by Grant Chorley

## Adam's Lament

Adam, father of all mankind, in paradise knew the sweetness of the love of God; and so when for his sin he was driven forth from the garden of Eden, and was widowed of the love of God, he suffered grievously and lamented with a mighty moan. And the whole desert rang with his lamentations. His soul was racked as he thought: "I have grieved my beloved Lord."

He sorrowed less after paradise and the beauty thereof – he sorrowed that he was bereft of the love of God, which insatiably, at every instant, draws the soul to Him.

In the same way the soul which has known God through the Holy Spirit but has afterwards lost grace experiences the torment that Adam suffered. There is an aching and a deep regret in the soul that has grieved the beloved Lord.

Adam pined on earth, and wept bitterly, and the earth was not pleasing to him.

He was heartsick for God, and this was his cry:

"My soul wearies for the Lord, and I seek Him in tears. How should I not seek Him? When I was with him my soul was glad and at rest, and the enemy could not come nigh me. But now the spirit of evil has gained power over me, harassing and oppressing my soul, so that I weary for the Lord even unto death, and my spirit strains to God, and there is nought on earth can make me glad. Nor can my soul take comfort in any thing, but longs once more to see the Lord, that its hunger may be appeased.

I cannot forget Him for a single moment, and my soul languishes after Him, and from the multitude of my afflictions I lift up my voice and cry: 'Have mercy upon me, O God. Have mercy on Thy fallen creature.'"

Thus did Adam lament, and tears streamed down his face on to his beard, on to the ground beneath his feet, and the whole desert heard the sound of his moaning. The beasts and the birds were hushed in grief; while Adam wept because peace and love were lost to all men on account of his sin.

Adam knew great grief when he was banished from paradise, but when he saw his son Abel slain by Cain his brother, Adam's grief was even heavier. His soul was heavy, and he lamented and thought: "Peoples and nations will descend from me, and multiply, and suffering will be their lot, and they will live in enmity and seek to slay one another."

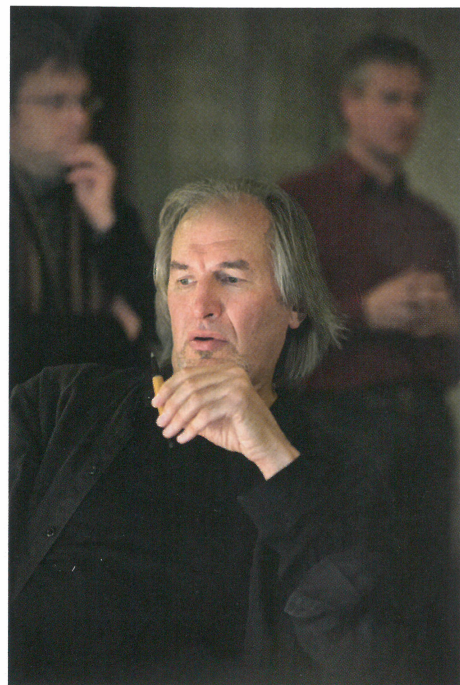
And his sorrow stretched wide as the sea, and only the soul that has come to know the Lord and the magnitude of His love for us can understand.

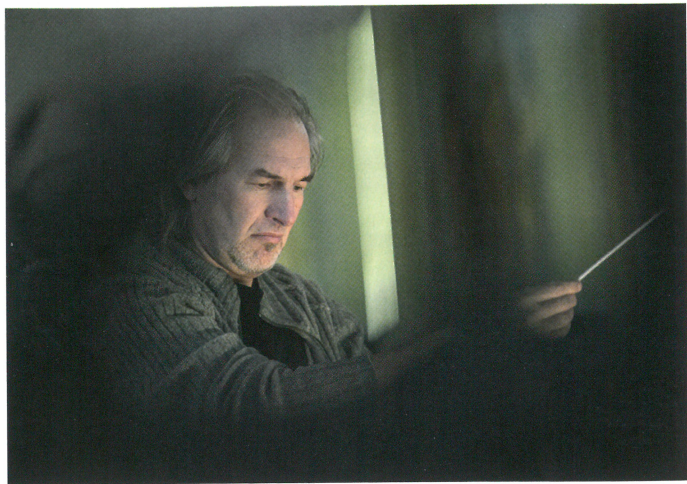
I, too, have lost grace and call with Adam: "Be merciful unto me, O Lord! Bestow on me the spirit of humility and love."

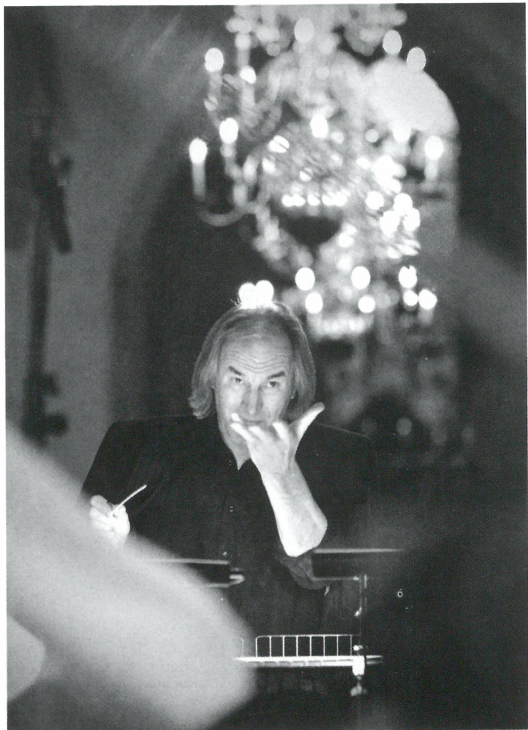
Staretz Silouan

Translated by Rosemary Edmonds









### **Beatus Petronius**

May Blessed Petronius  
intercede on our behalf  
with Him who has given us  
the true blessed prize  
so that every plague may cease.

Translation by Francis Marchal

### **Salve Regina**

Hail Queen, mother of mercy;  
our life, our sweetness and our hope, hail.  
To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve.  
To thee do we send up our sighs,  
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.

Turn then, most gracious advocate,  
thine eyes of mercy toward us.  
After this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus.  
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

### **Statuit ei Dominus**

The Lord made to him  
a covenant of peace,  
and made him a prince;  
that the dignity  
of priesthood  
should be to him for ever.  
Alleluia, alleluia.

Translation by Francis Marchal

## Alleluia-Tropus

A rule of faith and a model of meekness,  
a teacher of abstinence hath the reality shewn thee unto thy flock;  
therewithal hast thou acquired:  
by humility – greatness,  
by poverty – riches;  
O Father hierarch Nicholas,  
intercede before Christ the God  
that our souls may be saved.

## L'Abbé Agathon

The Abbot Agathon went one afternoon into town, to market to sell his wares and there, along the road was a leper. The leper said: "Where will you go?"

The Abbot Agathon replied: "Into town selling humble wares."

So the leper replied: "For mercy's sake, take me forth with you." So he did. Agathon took the leper into town.

Then the leper spoke: "Transport me to the market stalls where you sell all your wares."

And the Abbot Agathon did as he was asked. When the monk had made his first sale, the leper dared to ask him: "How much have you sold it for?"

"Much."

"Kind Sir, then buy me a cake." And he obliged. When the monk had sold another ware, the leper said: "This item here, how much did it fetch you?"

"Much."

"Then purchase it for me." Agathon did the leper's will. When Abbot Agathon sold all his wares, and then desired to leave, the leper said: "You depart?"

"Yes."

"If you will, for mercy's sake, take me back along the

road where I lay today." The Abbot Agathon lifted the man, took the leper back to where he'd lain. When he had, the leper said: "Blest indeed are you, Agathon. Blest indeed are you by Jesus, the Lord of Heaven and of the Earth."

Agathon raised up his eyes, but he saw not anyone. For the leper was an angel of the lord come to put him to the trial.

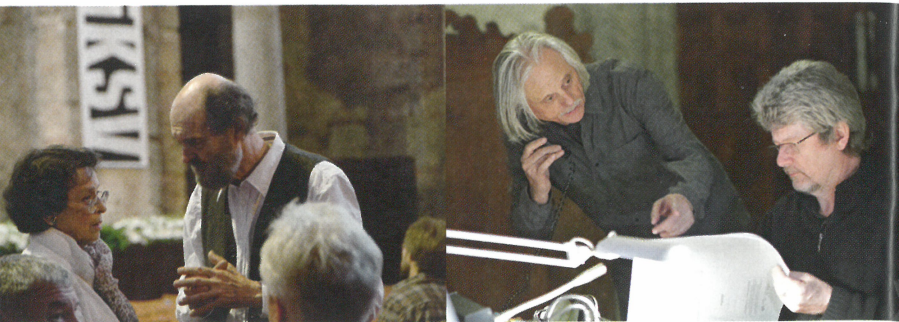
## Estonian Lullaby

Lulla, lulla

## Christmas Lullaby

And she brought forth her firstborn son,  
and wrapped him in swaddling clothes  
and laid him  
in a manger;  
because there was no room for them  
in the inn.  
And wrapped him in swaddling clothes  
and laid him  
in a manger.

St Luke 2:7



*Adam's Lament, Beatus Petronius, Salve Regina,  
Statuit ei Dominus, Alleluia-Tropus, L'Abbé Agathon:*

Recorded November 2011 at Niguliste Church in Tallinn

by Peter Laenger and Stephan Schellmann

*Estonian Lullaby, Christmas Lullaby:*

Recorded May 2007 at Niguliste Church

by Margo Kõlar and mixed at Rainbow Studio in Oslo

by Arvo Pärt, Manfred Eicher with Jan Erik Kongshaug (engineer)

Liner photos: Kaupo Kikkas (courtesy Arvo Pärt Centre),

Mahmut Ceylan (2, 26 bottom left), Ali Borovali (17, 26 top left)

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