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8.557202

Playing Time
66:47

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Britten's five *Canticles* are marvellously vivid, intensely dramatic works. Although they were not designed to be performed together – they span virtually his whole career, from the early 1940s to the mid-1970s, and were composed for a variety of forces and singers – they form a remarkably effective sequence. Each is in some way inspired by religion and takes the form of an extended song, scena, miniature cantata or even, in the case of *Abraham and Isaac*, virtually a mini opera. All five were composed for the tenor voice of Peter Pears, and chart the personal and creative relationship between Britten and his most important muse.

Benjamin
BRITTEN
(1913-1976)

1	Canticle I, Op. 40 - My Beloved is Mine ^{1 6}	7:11
2	Canticle II, Op. 51 - Abraham and Isaac ^{1 2 6}	16:10
3-7	The Heart of the Matter (rev. Peter Pears, 1983) ^{1 7 6 5}	24:56
8	Canticle III, Op. 55 - Still Falls the Rain	11:31
9-10	The Heart of the Matter (cont.)	
11	Canticle IV, Op. 86 - Journey of the Magi ^{4 1 3 6}	10:50
12	Canticle V, Op. 89 - The Death of Saint Narcissus ^{1 8}	7:39

Philip Langridge, Tenor¹ • Jean Rigby, Contralto² • Gerald Finley, Baritone³
Derek Lee Ragin, Counter-tenor⁴ • Dame Judi Dench, Narrator⁵
Steuart Bedford, Piano⁶ • Frank Lloyd, Horn⁷ • Osian Ellis, Harp⁸

Recorded at All Hallows, Gospel Oak, London, on 19th, 20th, 23rd and 24th March, 1996
Narrations recorded at Floating Earth, on May 16th, 1996 • First issued on Collins Classics in 1996
Producer: John West • Engineer: Mike Hatch (Floating Earth) • Booklet Notes: Malcolm MacDonald
For a complete track list please see the booklet • Publishers: Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd. (1-10);
Faber Music Ltd. (11-12) • Cover Picture: *Crucifixion with darkened sun* by Egon Schiele (1890-1918)
(Christie's Images, London, UK / Bridgeman Art Library)

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