



**Torsten Nilsson** (born 1902) has long been one of Sweden's most controversial musicians, not on account of any subversive tendencies, but rather the opposite — an upright striving for genuineness and truth. His desire to rid the Church of dullness and banality has, we guess, gone unopposed.

As organist he studied first, under Alf Unger, but applied later to Vienna and Anton Hüller, where he began to use a personally-fashioned twelve-tone technique which refers back to Hüller but has developed a more radical tonal language. The French romantics Franck and Vierne have also had significance for his development. He took up his first post as organist in Köping, moving later to St. Mary's in Helsingborg (Buxtehude's old church).

From 1962 to 1982 he was active in Oscar's Church in Stockholm, where he has drawn attention to himself as a dynamic choirmaster and organ improviser. A fifth of his output, standing today at about one hundred open, consists of pieces for the organ, among them the great *Septem Improvisationes* and *Satira* op. 89.

**THE RECORDING** was made by STIM at the Oscar's Church, Stockholm, in May and June 1982. Producer: Mikael Elmqvist  
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Production: Jacob Bekkvig  
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TORSTEN NILSSON is unquestionably one of the major figures in contemporary Swedish music. His remarkable qualities as a composer derive from his brilliance as an organist and choirmaster. From specific circumstances of his youth come his mysticism and an extreme sensibility. All these qualities fuse in his compositions, whose visionary nature will not be lost on the listener . . .

## A

**1. SIGNATI EX GENTIBUS** op. 36 (1970) 12' 20"  
(Apocalypsis 7:9-17)  
Siv Wennberg, soprano; Torsten Nilsson, organ;  
Assistant: Peter Bengtsson

*Signati ex gentibus* (Pagan before the throne of God) and *Behold, he comes with the heavens* (PROP 9905 A) were conceived during a couple of summer nights in the Stockholm archipelago. A close relative had suddenly died of cancer, leaving his family in sorrow and despair. The intense and inexpressibly beautiful light of the summer night stood in incredibly sharp contrast to death. This contrast served as a source of inspiration for these two works, with texts from the Book of Revelation about death and the eternal light.

**2. THRONUS DEI IN CAELO** op. 51 (1972) 12' 35"  
(Apocalypsis 4)  
Anne-Marie Mühle, alto; Torsten Nilsson, organ;  
Assistant: Peter Bengtsson

*Thronus Dei in caelo* (The Lord's throne in heaven) received its premiere in 1972. A close relationship exists between this work and *Isalah* Call (v. side E), owing to their textual similarity.

## B

**1. VOCATIO ISALAE** op. 69 (1976) 11' 55"  
(Isalah 6:1-8)  
Kristina Nilsson, soprano; Torsten Nilsson, organ;  
Assistant: Peter Bengtsson

*Vocatio Isalah* (Isalah's Call) is a commissioned work composed for the Music Weeks in Jullen/Southern Sweden, on the occasion of the 30-years jubilee in 1976. The text from Isalah deals with the description of the Prophet's Call, with among others the Sanctus (Holy is the Lord Sabaoth; all the earth is full of his bountifulness) and the final text, which encourages the prophet to become the messenger of the Lord. The specific organ notes in the instrumental section symbolise the heavenly vision which the prophet encounters in this revelation.

**2. ECCE EGO MITTO ANGELUM MEUM** op. 32 (1970) 11' 40"  
(Malachi 3:1-4)  
Siv Wennberg, soprano; Bärje Malmström, flute;  
Erik Boström, organ;  
Assistant: Anna Kihlberg-Boström

*Ecce ego mitto angelum meum* (Behold, I send forth my angel) was written in 1970 and received its premiere in Oscar Church, Stockholm, in the same year. The work is typical of the composer, with lyrical and tuneful sections varied by dramatic moments. Besides the usual flute, an alto flute is also used in certain passages.