

## Arvo Pärt – some interesting links

It's pretty obvious from the 'brief' suggestions, that I have a hard time limiting my recommendations. So, here is the medium length version. A longer version may follow!

### **Biography (the man):**

*The Sound of Spirit*, New York Times Magazine

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/17/magazine/17part-t.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>

*24 Preludes for a Fugue* (documentary, 2002):

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKcIM00Xq\\_Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKcIM00Xq_Y)

This is long (1 ½ hours) but gives a very interesting picture of AP and his music. Since it is with subtitles, you need to pay attention.

*And then came the evening and the morning* (documentary, 1990)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VekWO6p5400>

Also long (1 hour), but quite interesting; set entirely in Germany – I think. Definitely recommended if you can find the time.

### **Arvo Pärt's Music**

Arvo Pärt's Credo and the Battle of Ideas in the Twentieth Century

<http://voices.yahoo.com/arvo-parts-credo-battle-ideas-twentieth-1409535.html>

*Soundstreams presents Salon 21: The Music of Arvo Pärt* September/October 2013, Toronto, CA, Mark Vuorinen, Lawrence Chorney, Chris Lorway

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YwD8zqc\\_Oro](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YwD8zqc_Oro) (Part I)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvJMBrd12ag> (Part II)

*Soundstreams at Bata Shoe Museum*, Glenn Buhr

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xj-MR0MqUGU> (Complete version, first 10

minutes are introduction, which I found unhelpful.)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02K84cLGcu4> (10 min. excerpt from the

above)

### **YouTube Links to the music**

NOTES FOR THESE LINKS:

1. \* indicates a video that I particularly recommend watching
2. The compositions are listed in chronological order and the date of composition is given in brackets after the name, which is in italics.
3. From this list, you may get the idea that my favourite Arvo Pärt composition is the one I am listening to. That's about right.

*Credo* (1968)

*Credo* is not easy listening, especially the first time you hear it. If Arvo Pärt is a new composer for you, you may want to listen to some later works first. This is one of the compositions that led to his being expelled from the composers' union, etc. etc. and so forth. So, you will want to listen to it eventually. It is sung in Latin, but the words are important, so here is the translation:

I believe in Jesus Christ.

It has been said: an eye for an eye; a tooth for tooth

But I say to you: Do not resist injuries.

(King James: "Ye have heard that it hath been said: an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil.")

Do not resist. I believe.

\*Opening of the Jõhvi Concert Hall, Jõhvi, Estonia, in two parts:

Part 1 of 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYWpfNi9h4c>

Part 2 of 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QUuq5Cf5Fs>

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This particular performance has several things to recommend it among them that it is conducted by Tõnu Kaljuste, who conducted *Credo* at Festival 500 in St. John's in 2005. The performance in this video takes place in the fall of 2005.

*Symphony No. 3* (1971) (The 'sole authorized work from this period. – AP Centre\*\*\*)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3DsdAouAmc>

\**Für Alina* (1976)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYXkunzWeSM>

This is the first composition in the tintinnabuli style.

*Fratres* (1977 – 2009 ...) Three-part music, originally without fixed instrumentation. At the last revisions of the AP Centre website, there were 18 revisions for specific instruments. On first hearing, they do not seem to all sound like the same piece. As a result, I have no recommend links – yet!

*Summa* (1977) first choral piece in tintinnabuli style. I think I read that this became the credo for the *Berliner Messe*; I am including this link just in case they are different.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzINcFCZc3s>

*Tabula Rasa* (1977)

This is an early and popular composition in the tintinnabuli style. I am struck by it's two movements: *Ludus* (game, play) - *con moto* and *Silentium* - *senza moto*. (I do not think that I have ever seen the instruction *senza moto* before!)

YouTube suggestions:

First movement – *Ludus*:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msF5mWGZxLk> (Definitely worth watching. The violinist, Gidon Kremer, played it in the original performance.)

Second movement – *Silentium*:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP-F\\_aiQmTg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP-F_aiQmTg) (Played by the same group as in the original performance).

Complete:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-J8LNcZgTA>

\**Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten* (1977)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3B4YWCj1a4>

With score; if you read music, you may find this interesting.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJ1r8CaRCCE>

BBC, Gennadi Roschdestwenski conducting, British premiere; Seen on German-French TV-Channel arte (19.06.2011, 11:05 in "Klassikarchiv - Gennadi Roschdestwenski")

This performance was filmed at the British premier of *Cantus*. It is incredibly moving. I find *Cantus* fascinating on many levels. Pärt composed it early in the *tintinnabuli* period, before he was expelled from the composers' union. It has a very simple principal: a descending scale, played at different speeds by various sections of the orchestra. At the beginning, you can hear the violins coming in against the other sections. Near the end you can see other players' fingers holding the same note, while their bows move up and down to keep the music going. And you can see their music with the held notes. At the very end, you hear the lowest note sounding as if it will go on forever. And you see the raw emotion of the conductor. It is, after all, a memorial.

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*Sarah was 90 years old* (1977/1990)

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAD4A92B63980540A> (The recording is in 3 parts. This is a link to a playlist.)

*Spiegel im Spiegel* (1978)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uvmVWwxeAs> (bassoon and piano; recorded at U of T)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5QAFSPqeJY> (violin and organ)

*Stabat Mater* (1985)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHDd772iLfi> (Gidon Kremer, violin; the Hilliard Ensemble)

*Magnificat* (1989)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZjDyR5-nfYI> (The Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir; Paul Hillier, conductor)

*Berliner Messe* (1990/1992) (I added this after listening to Glenn Buhr; it is a full mass, so it has several movements. The link leads to a playlist with all of them. University of Memphis – Tennessee - Chamber Choir)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwKBGhMob2k&list=PL5C02B78B3DFFBBE2>

*Te Deum* (1993)

Kaljuste (b. 1953) conducting Estonian Philharmonic Choir & Tallinn Chamber Orchestra

Part 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mD3tRr2CkDo>

Part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtzF5De9rbc>

Part 3: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jwc065aGVWA>

Church of St. Nicholas, Tallinn, Estonia; Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir; Tallinn Chamber Orchestra; Conductor - Kaljuste

(all 30 minutes on one video; worth watching to watch K.)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPd3e5woOyc>

*Passio Nostri Domino Secundum Joannem* (1988) (The choir is the choir of the Warsaw School of Economics!)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0lt6R2PTPg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0lt6R2PTPg)

*Adam's Lament* (2009)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSORdlwHs8U> (This is only a segment of the piece – 7 of 22 minutes, but it was recorded at the world premiere: Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra; Estonian Philharmonic Chamber; Choir Vox Clamantis; Tõnu Kaljuste conductor; Hagia Eirene Museum, Istanbul, Turkey 2010)

*Silhouette, Hommage à Gustave Eiffel* (2010); most recent work for large orchestra (fascinating video!)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cr7XHpMqEg>

*Virgencita* (2012) (The Little Virgin); most recent work (AP Centre)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVHFJtXWhBw>

## Chronology

1935 born

1938 – 1964 lived in Rakvere, Estonia

1945 – 1953 studied at the Rakvere Children's Music School

(Rakvere, pop. 15,264, 98 km from Tallinn, may be the smallest town in Europe to have a professional theatre. The idea of a professional theatre took shape in the late 1930's and the theatre house, which survives, was opened in February, 1940.)

1958 – 1968 First 'creative period': Neoclassicism – Avante Garde (twelve-tone; serialism; collage – and possibly other techniques)

1959 *Nekrolog* First 'mature' work; first Estonian work to employ serialism

1968 *Credo* Last composition of collage period.

1968 – 1976 Crisis (this is the term used by the AP Centre)

1972 *Hortus Musicus* founded by Andres Mustonen

1972 Entered the Russian Orthodox Church; married Nora

1976 *Für Alina*, first piece in tintinnabuli style

1977 *Tabula Rasa*, led to ECM New Series, which was started by Manfred Eicher, founder of ECM, who start the series to produce a recording of this composition.

1977 *Summa*, first choral piece in tintinnabuli style.

1978 Seven of Pärt's works in the tintinnabuli style were performed at the first Tallinn Festival of Old and New Music, set up by Mustonen. The other work performed at the Festival was Dufay's *Missa l'Homme Armé* (15<sup>th</sup> C.)

1979 expelled from the Composers' Union of Soviet Estonia

1980 *Annum per Annum*

1980 (January 18) left Estonia ("in 1980, Estonia's communist government encouraged him to leave the country." – AP Centre); lived first in Austria and took Austrian citizenship.

1981 *Tõnu Kaljuste* turned the Ellerhein Chamber Choir, which his father had founded, into full-time ensemble and renamed it the Estonian Chamber Choir.

1981 Arvo Pärt (August) began to live in Berlin

1984 Manfred Eicher, founder of ECM Records, started ECM Record's 'New Series' in order to produce a recording of *Tabula Rasa*

1987 – 1991 The *Singing Revolution*

1991 Estonia won independence

1993 visited Estonia after a 13 year exile

1997 Paul Hillier, leader/founder of the Hilliard Ensemble, published the biography, *Biography, Arvo Pärt*.

2004 *Da pacem Domine*, a cappella work commissioned by Jordi Savall; won Grammy Award in 2007.

2009 *Adam's Lament* (nominated for 2014 Grammy Award; recording is by several Latvian and Estonian choirs and the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Kaljuste)

2010 The International Arvo Pärt Centre was founded in Laulasmaa, Estonia by Arvo Pärt and his family. Website: <http://www.arvopart.ee/>

2011 Returned to Estonia where he resides today.

\*\*\* References to the 'AP Centre' are to material found on the website of the International Arvo Pärt Centre. Since it is found there, I assume it has his imprimatur.