

MICHAEL
MANTLER
SONGS
FEAT. GARETH DAVIS

17. OKTOBER 2022

MICHAEL MANTLER SONGS

**MICHAEL MANTLER „SONGS“
FOR BASS CLARINET & TRUMPET SOLOISTS,
VOCAL & BRASS ENSEMBLES & PERCUSSION
WITH TEXTS BY
SAMUEL BECKETT, ERNST MEISTER,
GIUSEPPE UNGARETTI & MICHAEL MANTLER**

MICHAEL MANTLER: TRUMPET
GARETH DAVIS: BASS CLARINET

BARBORA JIRÁSKOVÁ: SOPRANO
JANA VONDRŮ: SOPRANO
ELMAZ MRKVICKOVA: ALTO
ANNABELLE PLUM: ALTO
JAN MIKUŠEK: COUNTERTENOR, TENOR
VOJTĚCH ŠEMBERA: BARITONE
ŠTĚPÁN JANOUŠEK: BASS

LADISLAV KOZDERKA: TRUMPET
JAN PŘIBIL: TRUMPET
JIŘÍ TARANTÍK: FRENCH HORN
JAKUB ŽÍDEK: TROMBONE
JIŘÍ GENRT: TUBA
MARTIN OPRŠÁL: MARIMBA, VIBRAPHONE

MARKO IVANOVIĆ: CONDUCTOR

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MICHAEL MANTLER / LYRICS

[1] **TODAY**

today
like everyday
facing the news

ignorance, intolerance, chauvinism, bigotry,
nationalism, dictatorships, hostilities,
assaults, invasions, wars, methodical
violence, ethnic cleansing, genocide,
hatred, the horror

and again, and again, and again, again

terror, perverse religions, jihad, murderous fanaticism,
explosive belts, carnage, hostage taking, tortures,
executions, inhumanity, rage, the horror

and again, and again, and again, again

chemical, biological, radiological
weapons, of mass destruction,
nuclear warheads, fragmentation bombs,
combat drones, targeted strikes,
collateral damage

the horror, the horror
always wars, more wars,
always wars, more wars

and then, once more, it all starts again,
continuously

continuously, forever, constantly, without stopping,
endless, forever, always

[2] **INTOLERANCE**

power
a source of conflict and of war
of persecution and subjugation
of anguish and oppression
pain and suffering
and of hatred
for those we're not

the others
they're different
and therefore bad and dangerous
and we feel threatened
we need to win
subdue and torture
and even kill

not much
if anything
not much at all
we've learned from history

[3] **WAR**

how is it possible ?
we are used to war
we read about it
we see it on TV
but usually
it's not so close
but far away
so we don't care

but this, now
it's happening right here
and doesn't stop
it's close, so close
how can it be ?

that neighbors and friends
will fight and rape
torture, persecute and wound
torment and victimize
betray, forsake each other
how is it possible ?

[4] **BUSINESS**

weapons, they come from everywhere
they come from the West
they come from the East

it really is no problem
there is no shortage
it's good for business

everything's for sale,
you want to buy a jet ?
it can be done
your choice of features
just bring the cash
and we deliver

some nice explosives maybe ?
no color, no smell
undetectable, exportable,
a terrorist's delight

how about
some scrap uranium ?
that's easy too
we have it all
just ask and pay
and fight your war

and we supply
the means of death

[5] **WHAT ELSE TO SAY**

this is inhuman
dreadful
horrifying
hellish
disgusting
disgraceful
shocking
shameful
revolting
heinous
nauseating
barbaric
depressing
awful
heartbreaking
tragic

what else to say
what to say
what to say
what to say
what else to say
what to say

SAMUEL BECKETT / LYRICS

[6] **PSS**

there
the life late led
down there
all done unsaid
again gone
with what to tell
on again
retell
head oh hands
hold me
unclasp
hold me

[7] **SOMETHING THERE**

something there
where
out there
out where
outside
what
the head what else
something there somewhere outside
the head
at the faint sound so brief
it is gone and the whole globe
not yet bare
the eye
opens wide
wide
till in the end
nothing more
shutters it again
so the odd time
out there
somewhere out there
like as if
as if
something
not life
necessarily

[8] WHAT IS THE WORD

folly -
 folly for to -
 for to -
 what is the word -
 folly from this -
 all this -
 folly from all this -
 given -
 folly given all this -
 seeing -
 folly seeing all this -
 this -
 what is the word -
 this this -
 this this here -
 all this this here -
 folly given all this -
 seeing -
 folly seeing all this this here -
 for to -
 what is the word -
 see -
 glimpse -
 seem to glimpse -
 need to seem to glimpse -
 folly for to need to seem to glimpse -
 what -
 what is the word -
 and where -
 folly for to need to seem to glimpse -
 what where -
 where -
 what is the word -
 there -
 over there -
 away over there -
 afar -
 afar away over there -
 afaint -
 afaint afar away over there what -
 what -
 what is the word -
 seeing all this -
 all this this -
 all this this here -
 folly for to see what -
 glimpse -
 seem to glimpse -
 need to seem to glimpse -
 afaint afar away over there what -
 folly for to need to seem to glimpse -
 afaint afar away over there what -
 what -
 what is the word -
 what is the word

ERNST MEISTER / LYRICS

[9] DARKER THAN THE LIGHT

In the end
 one of the two
 says:
 I've gotten you
 used to
 loneliness.
 In the end
 the other
 of the two says:
 Look, all that's close
 is so far
 so far.

Life connects
 only to life
 to nothing
 else. The
 other
 is „there where
 one thinks
 nothing
 nothing
 nothing“,
 for ever.

Just as someone
 had thought,
 to die:
 To turn
 from one side of
 experience to
 one of emptiness,
 un-afraid,
 a change of cheeks,
 nothing more.

And what
 does this sun
 do to us
 what jumps
 out of the narrow gate
 of those great embers?
 I don't know
 anything darker
 than the light.

[10] **SPEECHLESS**

Mark, nothing
appears
now, yet
your hands
are not estranged
from each other,
they themselves
know nothing
of grasping
(the one
who is dead
had wondered about that).
But what is this
beyond
sleep?
Reason
strolls
through hot grasses,
god-less.

Everything seems edge
despite („infinite“)
depth,
decay clings to it
like mould.
I shudder.
In the mind
the eyelashes
appearing all white,
before the eyes
unregal purple.
In the region
one hears
a song without sound.

The breath exchanged
indeed.

Now, lovely moment,
the air stands still.

Not lonely
and not to miss.
What had been oath,
the stir of solitude.

I've told you
what's dear to me
in vain,
and each
may speak
it's own in vain.

Many
have no speech.
Had I not
my fill of misery, I
would not move my tongue.

The poems, used by permission, are from Room Without Walls, Sage Vom Ganzen Den Satz,
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GIUSEPPE UNGARETTI / LYRICS

[11] **ETERNO**

Tra un fiore colto e l'altro donato
l'inesprimibile nulla

STASERA

Balaustrata di brezza
per appoggiare stasera
la mia malinconia

GIROVAGO

In nessuna
parte
di terra
mi posso
accasare

A ogni
nuovo
clima
che incontro
mi trovo
languente
che
una volta
già gli ero stato
assuefatto

E me ne stacco sempre
straniero

Nascendo
tornato da epoche troppo
vissute

Godere un solo
minuto di vita
iniziale

Cerco un paese
innocente

ETERNAL

Between one flower gathered and the other given
the inexpressible null

THIS EVENING

Balustrade of breeze
to prop my melancholia
this evening

VAGRANT

In no
place
on earth
can I
settle down

Every time
I experience
a new climate
my longing
starts
again
because
I have
already
grown accustomed

And I always leave
as a stranger

Reborn
returning from times
where life was too intense

To enjoy a single
moment of life
beginning

I search for an innocent
land

[12] **SEMPRE NOTTE**

La mia squallida
vita si estende
più spaventata di sé

In un
infinito
che mi calca e mi
preme col suo
fievole tatto

L'ILLUMINATA RUGIADA

La terra tremola
di piacere
sotto un sole
di violenze
gentili

PROVERBI! (UNO)

S'incomincia per cantare
E si canta per finire

[13] **VANITÀ**

D'improvviso
e alto
su lle macerie
il limpido
stupore
dell'immensità

E l'uomo
curvato
sull'acqua
sorpresa
dal sole
si rinviene
un'ombra

Cullata e
piano
franta

EVERLASTING NIGHT

My squalid life
stretches out
more fearful of itself

In an
infinity
which oppresses me and
weighs heavy upon me through its
light touch

THE SUNSTRUCK DEW

Earth quivers
with pleasure
beneath a sun
whose violence
is gentle

PROVERBS (ONE)

Beginning has us singing
And we sing to make an ending

VANITY

Suddenly
steep
above the rubble heaps
the limpid
wonder
of immensity

And the man
bent
over the water
startled
by the sun
awakes
as shadow

Cradled and
slowly
shattered

[14] **È SENZA FIATO**

È senza fiato, sera, irrespirabile,
Se voi, miei morti,
e i pochi vivi che amo
Non mi venite in mente
Bene a portarmi quando
Per solitudine, capisco, a sera

[15] **NON GRIDATE PIÙ**

Cessate d'uccidere i morti,
Non gridate più, non gridate
Se li volete ancora udire,
Se sperate di non perire

Hanno l'impercettibile sussurro,
Non fanno più rumore
Del crescere dell'erba,
Lieta dove non passa l'uomo

MOTIONLESS

It is motionless, the evening, unbreathable,
if you my dead
and the few living beings I love
do not come to mind
and bear me affection when
through solitude, I comprehend, at eventide

OUTCRY NO MORE

Stop killing the dead,
Outcry no more, do not outcry
If you would hear them still,
If you would hope not to die

Their whisper is imperceptible,
They are no louder
Than the growing of the grass,
Happy where man does not pass

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Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), Irish, went to Paris in the late Twenties, where he began writing both prose and poetry. Until 1945 he wrote in English, but thereafter directly in French, consciously choosing the estrangement of the second, adopted language to „write without style.“

His literary output consists of novels, poetry, and plays, including his seminal *Waiting for Godot*, a classic of the contemporary theater. He is considered one of the most important writers of the 20th century, with an influence on contemporary literature as powerful as that of Joyce, Proust, and Kafka. In 1969 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Ernst Meister (1911-1979), German, was recognized as one of Germany's greatest modern poets, in the line of Hölderlin, Trakl, and Celan, the latter of whom he discovered. He was awarded a number of literary awards, including the Petrarca-Preis, the Rilke-Preis, and from the German Academy for Languages and Literature, posthumously, the Büchner-Preis.

Many of his poems, from his earliest publication in 1935 (*Ausstellung*) until his last and perhaps most achieved work (*Wandloser Raum*) in 1979, are meditations on death. He also published numerous other volumes of poetry and several radio plays.

Giuseppe Ungaretti (1888 -1970), the first and one of the most important and influential of modern Italian poets. He was born in Alexandria, Egypt. He studied at the Sorbonne, and while in Paris he became a close friend of Guillaume Apollinaire's. He published his first volume of poetry in 1916, a definitive break with the late 19th-century conventions of Italian poetry. After living in Italy for a number of years, he went to Brazil as a professor of Italian literature at the University of Sao Paulo. On his return he taught at the University of Rome.

His work deals with the large themes of human existence: loneliness, love, loss, nature. But above all, his work is a long record of confrontation with death. T.S.Eliot ranked Ungaretti as „one of the few authentic poets“ of the century. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969.