

J E R E M Y B E C K W A V E

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Rayanne Dupuis, soprano
Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra
Kirk Trevor, conductor

STATE OF THE UNION 1992 for orchestra

I. March of the Politicians	3:05	1
II. Lullaby (for an urban child)	2:53	2
III. Revels	3:00	3

SINFONIETTA 2000 for string orchestra

I. Allegro furioso	4:30	4
II. Grave	2:56	5
III. Allegretto	4:31	6
IV. Moderato	4:49	7

DEATH OF A LITTLE GIRL WITH DOVES 1998 for soprano and orchestra

IN PARIS		
I.	10:53	8
II.	3:28	9
IN THE ASYLUM		
III.	10:26	10
IV.	6:31	11

total time 57:06

Jeremy Beck is a very fine composer whose work is full of vitality, optimism and beauty. He has a compositional technique which permits him to express his musical thoughts clearly and in a way which is instantly communicative. Each work on this recording gives the listener the feeling that Beck is a composer whose music is accessible without compromising musical standards. His music challenges but is never threatening. The performances are enthusiastic, accurate and make one wish to get increasingly more acquainted with the music of this outstanding American composer.
— Samuel Adler

State of the Union was composed in 1992 in New Haven, Connecticut. This work was written in response to then-President George H.W. Bush's "State of the Union" Address to Congress in January of that year. In contrast to Bush's characterization that all was well with the nation, the three movements of the orchestral suite depict elements of a country in crisis, a domestic crisis which has continued through to the present time.

"March of the Politicians" contrasts strict march-like rhythms with wild swirls of sound, representative of the incessant arguing and lack of forward motion that still exists in Washington today. "Lullaby (for an urban child)" is meant to be an uncomfortable lullaby, one which reflects the distress of children growing up in a society rife with violence and abuse. Finally, "Revels" is a false celebration of current times, where the dance-like music frequently is interrupted by ideas from the first two movements.

State of the Union has been read by the Yale Philharmonia (1992), the Chicago Civic Orchestra (1994) and the Plymouth Music Series in Minneapolis (1994). It was premiered by Rebecca Burkhardt and the Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra at the University of Northern Iowa in 1996.

Sinfonietta for string orchestra is in four movements. These four movements are then paired in a non-linear fashion. The opening *Allegro furioso* is interrupted by a brief *Allegretto*, which acts more as an interlude to the fast music than as a complete contrasting section. This more graceful music is, in fact, a foreshadowing of the third movement, and is more fully developed when it returns at that time. The second movement, *Grave*, is in the character of a hymn or a spiritual - the music from this movement will return towards the end of the last movement, both as a reminiscence, and as a part of a summary and closing of the entire work. As well, brief gestures from the opening movement attempt to break into the final closing bars, but the energy from these gestures is not enough to rouse the music at the end, which soon disappears in a tonal haze of floating harmonies.

Sinfonietta was composed in Yorba Linda, California, from the Fall of 1999 to the Spring of 2000. It was premiered by the Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra under Scott Yoo on 28 September 2001 in Troy, New York.

Death of a Little Girl with Doves for soprano and orchestra is an operatic soliloquy, based on the life of the French sculptor Camille Claudel (1864-1943). Claudel was an accomplished and celebrated sculptor in late-19th century Paris, where she was known as the talented and original young apprentice to Auguste Rodin. In addition to her own powerful work, Claudel assisted on many of Rodin's most famous sculptures, including his *La Porte d'enfer* (The Gates of Hell). Claudel and the much-older Rodin later became lovers, and their breakup precipitated Claudel's own "fall from grace" and the terrible mental and physical anguish which followed. After ten years of intense creative activity as an independent young woman, she was committed to the psychiatric hospital at Ville-Évrard against her will in 1913. After thirty years of seclusion, Claudel died in 1943, in the asylum of Montdevergues, near Avignon. Hers is a story of love, Art, innocence betrayed and the tragedy of a young woman's persecution for being imaginative and independent during a time when such characteristics were viewed as inappropriate and dangerous for women.

Çacountala (The Abandonment) [1888; 1905] is one of Claudel's most sensuous works. As in another of her pieces from this time, *La Valse* (The Waltz) [1905], two figures are realized as one, as an interconnected spirit. In *La Valse*, the spirit is fluid, swirling in passionate motion, while in *Çacountala*, the dance is over, and the spirit finds itself dissolving. One cannot help but draw parallels from Claudel's art to her life, and to experience some of her work as metaphors for her triumphs, struggle and pain. I have found the music for my piece in this spirit, and have retained it as the central emotional image throughout this symphonic rhapsody.

Death of a Little Girl with Doves is in two parts, subtitled "In Paris" and "In the Asylum." Each of these two parts is then also divided into two movements. The music and text often move rapidly through different moods and time frames, reflecting the instability of Claudel's life, and its ultimate dissolution.

This composition is a fantasy. It was inspired by the life of Camille Claudel; however, the depictions of the characters who appear in it are fictional, as are many of the events described. The overall title of the work is taken from the title of one of Camille Claudel's own paintings, the painting to which she refers in movements one and four.

Death of a Little Girl with Doves was composed from May to December 1998 for Leslie Morgan, soprano, and the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestra (Iowa). The short score and text were drafted in Cedar Falls, Iowa, and the full score was finished in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The work was premiered by Leslie Morgan and the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestra with Jack Graham as Acting Music Director on 5 February 1999. It is dedicated, with love, to Christine Ehrick.

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Jeremy Beck (b. 1960) has an extensive catalogue of works for varying orchestral, chamber and vocal forces. His opera *The Biddle Boys and Mrs. Soffel* was named by the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* as one of the Top Ten Cultural Events in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the year 2001. Another of his operas, *The Highway*, was presented by New York City Opera as a part of that company's *Showcasing American Composers* series in May of 2000. Beck has earned awards, grants and honors from the American Composers Orchestra,

California Arts Council, the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Composers Forum, Kentucky Foundation for Women, Millay Colony for the Arts (NY), Meet the Composer, Wellesley Composers Conference, Oregon Bach Festival, Iowa Arts Council and the American Music Center. Recordings of his music may be heard on the Capstone, ERM, Vienna Modern Masters, New Ariel and Living Artist labels. Beck holds degrees from the Yale University School of Music, Duke University and the Mannes College of Music, where his teachers included Lukas Foss, Stephen Jaffe, David Loeb, Martin Bresnick and Jacob Druckman. Formerly tenured on the faculties of California State University, Fullerton and the University of Northern Iowa, Beck is currently based in Louisville, Kentucky.



Rayanne Dupuis (soprano) is a former member of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio and has appeared in many roles with that company. Diverse in the scope of her abilities and interests, Ms. Dupuis has sung traditional roles, performed demanding 20th-century repertoire as well as given world premieres of new works with such companies and presenters as Seattle Opera, the Edmonton Opera Association, the Banff Centre, l'Opéra Théâtre de Besançon, l'Opéra de

Nantes, l'Opéra Théâtre de Metz, Aberdeen International Festival and l'Opéra de Montpellier in Athens, Greece. Her repertoire includes the title role in Berg's *Lulu*, Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*, *La voix humaine* and Blanche in *Dialogues des carmélites*, to name but a few. Her other recordings include a Soupir Édition release of new music with l'Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire. Now based in Paris, Ms. Dupuis holds a doctoral degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and has also studied at Yale University and the University of Toronto.

Kirk Trevor (conductor) trained at London's Guildhall School of Music where he graduated *cum laude* in cello performance and conducting. He came to the U.S. on a Fulbright Exchange Grant, which led to such positions as Associate Conductor of the Charlotte Symphony, the Exxon Arts Endowment Conductor with the Dallas Symphony and Principle Conductor of the Knoxville Symphony. In 1994, he was named Chief Conductor of the Martinů Philharmonic in Zlin (Czech Republic) and has recorded with that group for Koch, Albany, Fatra, Crystal and Carlton Classics. In 2000, Trevor forged a new relationship with the Slovak Radio

Symphony Orchestra in Bratislava, and is now Principal Guest Conductor, leading that orchestra in subscription programs and recordings of new music. In the U.S., he is also the Music Director of the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra and the Missouri Symphony.

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All compositions are published by Ashmere Music (BMI). Scores and parts are available on a rental basis from The Edwin A. Fleisher Collection of Orchestral Music, The Free Library of Philadelphia, 1901 Vine Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1116, tel (215) 686-5313. Study scores may be purchased directly from the composer.

For further information: www.beckmusic.org

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***Death of a Little Girl
with Doves***

*a symphonic rhapsody
for soprano and orchestra*

*music and text
by Jeremy Beck*

*based on the life
of Camille Claudel*

IN PARIS

I.

I share these thoughts only with you
My despair and anger, only with you
Please, I beg you, don't tell anyone -
Don't tell Maman, she would be so angry with me!
Please, I beg of you...

Dear Paul, dear brother!
Thanks for your letter
No, I am fine
Those people are liars!
Who told you I'm broke, and living in rags?
My room is a studio, of course it's a mess!
I'm a sculptor - what do they expect?
That I should clean after cutting stone?
Who are they to judge me?
Silly fools and gossips!
Jealous women -
Frightened men.

Afraid of a woman who dares to be free!
Afraid of passion!
Afraid of me!
Who are they to judge this life that I have chosen?
A glorious life!
Shaping the clay, feeling the earth in my hands...

The joy of holding clay in one's hands...
caressing the earth
And this other soul,
Working with me,
passionate artist!
He understands,
Like no one has ever understood!
Oh, Paul!
He's a good man, a great man -

Don't call me foolish!
Don't call me young!
I'm already twenty-two!
So what if he's older? So what if he's married?
We work together, that's all!
I'm learning so much, so much from this Master,
this passionate artist - Rodin!

Ssh! Quiet!
Ssh! Quiet!
Keep this all to yourself
Useless to speak out
Better to act under cover
Don't show my letter to anyone
Beware of how they bribe you
Don't mention any names
Otherwise they'll threaten me

Ssh! Quiet!
Be quiet!
Not a word...

It is so pretty here, out in the country, at this estate -
I went for a walk in the gardens, such lovely flowers!
If you are good enough to come,
We shall be in paradise!
I've thought about your latest work; I want you here
to talk about it.
And I've been painting - I can't wait to show you!
Each night I go to bed naked pretending
that you are there
but when I wake up it's not the same thing...

Rodin... Rodin... Rodin...

Rodin!
Rodin! That devil!
He cannot be trusted, and he cannot be stopped!
He steals from me! They all do!
They use me -
They have no ideas - nothing new!

Ssh! Quiet!
Keep this all to yourself
Useless to act under cover

That devil!
Raping my imagination!
Getting rich from my work!
They all make money!
Millions of francs!

The scoundrel takes advantage of us, of me, of you,
and makes himself quite a little bundle.
And when I fight against him, he uses you and Maman
to whip me

(spoken)

“I am like a cabbage that is gnawed on by caterpillars
As soon as I grow another leaf, they eat it.”

Ssh! Quiet!

Millions of francs for the caster, millions for the merchants,
millions for the dealers
Millions of francs for the Master,
Millions of francs, millions of francs, millions of francs,
millions of francs, millions of francs -

II.

“It is March 10, 1913; another Monday in Paris. Two men force their way into Camille Claudel’s studio, and bodily take her away by car. Unknown to Camille, it was her brother Paul - esteemed writer, poet and diplomat - who applied for the medical certificate, authorizing her internment in the asylum at Ville-Évrard.”

Dear Paul,
It’s illegal! Criminal!
I’ve been kidnapped - and I know by whom!
That devil, Rodin -
He wants his fame untarnished by me!

“Dear daughter,
Your last letter is before my eyes
and I can't imagine that you can
write such horrors to your mother.
God alone knows what I will
have suffered on account of my
children! How dare you accuse me
of poisoning your father! You know
as well as I do that he was nearly
90 years old when he left us!
How terribly he suffered, when he
learned the truth about your
relations with that monster Rodin,
and the disgraceful comedy you
performed for us on your visits.
And I, I was naive enough to invite
the “Great Man,” along with his
wife and you, his concubine! While
you played the sweet innocent and
were living with him as a kept
woman. I hardly dare write the
words that come to mind! Let's
stop here, shall we? Your letter is
nothing but a mass of slanders,
each more odious than the next.
- I send you a kiss.”

Dear Maman,
It has been so cold; I am numb.
These hands, which drew life from clay and from stone,
now shake, I can barely hold a pen...
I haven't been warm all winter.
Tell me, how is Paul? Where is he now?

Mother, please come see me
Mother, please forgive.
I'm frightened and lonely
I miss you and Paul...

You treat me so harshly, your letters, so cold
If you could only see conditions here
Perhaps you'd be moved
I still am your daughter.

You don't forgive me for being an artist
You don't forgive me for once being young...
For my freedom, for passion,
For Rodin!
Life was once a swirling wave of hope and light.

Please don't forget your little sculptor daughter
Please don't forget;
Forgive...

(small laugh)

IV.

I share these thoughts only
with you
My despair and anger, only
with you

Dear Paul, dear brother!
Thanks for your letter
No, I am fine
Those people are cruel - who cares what they say about me?
Gossips! Idiots!

You know what I do, when something unpleasant happens?
I take my hammer and I crush a statue!
A lot of executions have taken place!
You should see the pile of rubble!
It's a grand human sacrifice!

Where - are you?
I am waiting for the visit you promised last summer -
I know - Paris is so far away..

At this holiday time, I always think about Mother -
I never saw her again, not since the day you sent me here.
I remember her eyes, filled with sadness
(spoken)
"I am thinking about the beautiful portrait I did of her
in the shade of our beautiful garden.
I remember a spirit of resignation over her face..."

It's been twenty-four years since Rodin
and the dealers
sent me away, condemning me to a place
where they themselves should be!
Especially, Rodin!

They want me to die, forgotten, in rags!
An artist without any defense -
How could you believe their lies about me?
How could you be fooled?

Ah, Rodin!
I knew you would come!
I knew you would keep your promise!

Do you like it? This painting? It's new!
I'm not quite finished, still thinking of
adding flowers, some flowers -

(he kisses her neck, she smiles)

(spoken)

"Stop it! That tickles!"

Do you like it? This painting?
I know, it's not finished,
But can you feel how peaceful it is?
The doves surround her, protect the young girl...
Their wings caress, with tenderness...

Yes - I know, the colors are dark.
No, she's not sleeping.

(spoken)

Hmm?

I call it

"Death of a Little Girl with Doves."

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