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R O Y A L

C O L L E G E

O F M U S I C

London

PETER GELLHORN

AEDH WISHES FOR THE CLOTHS OF HEAVEN (1995)

FOR VOICE AND PIANO

RCM EDITIONS

About RCM Editions

RCM Editions are performing editions of works. They have been created to support College performances, recordings and research. They are published to bring the works to a wider public.

About the Peter Gellhorn Project

This edition was created as part of the AHRC-funded Cultural Engagement Project “Exile Estates – Music Restitution: The Musical Legacy of Conductor/Composer Peter Gellhorn”, in collaboration with the International Centre for Suppressed Music (ICSM) and the Jewish Music Institute (JMI).

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We would also like to acknowledge the support of the British Library in providing access to its collection of Peter Gellhorn's papers.

Preface

Aedh Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven is the last of Gellhorn's known compositions, written in 1995 for his daughter Barbara, who showed him Yeats's poem and asked him to set it to music. Barbara Gellhorn recalled that it took her father some time to complete the song but that it was finished in time for her to sing it on a tour of the USA.¹ The first performance took place in May 1995 at the La MaMa Galleria in New York, with Barbara Gellhorn accompanied by the pianist Jonathan Hart Makwaia. In an interview conducted towards the end of his life, Peter Gellhorn described this song as 'the best thing I ever wrote'.²

Dr. Terence Curran and Norbert Meyn

References:

1. Gellhorn, B. (2016). Panel discussion with Norbert Meyn as part of the event 'A Celebration of Peter Gellhorn' at the Royal College of Music, 3 July 2016.
2. Gellhorn, P. (2002). Interview by Geraldine Auerbach, Martin Anderson, and Betty Sagon Collick, 9 January 2002 [Video]. London: International Centre for Suppressed Music [Copy of video donated to Royal College of Music Library].

Editorial Statement

A collection of Peter Gellhorn's papers, including autograph manuscripts for all of his extant compositions, was donated to the British Library on 30th April 2010 and 20th July 2011 as Music Deposit 2010/15. The official reference for the collection is now MS Mus. 1800, and a complete catalogue can be found at www.petergellhorn.com/sheet-music. Alongside sketches and drafts, the composition manuscripts include a number of autograph fair copies, written in ink, clearly notated, and with few corrections, suggesting that Gellhorn intended them to be regarded as authoritative. It has therefore been possible to make urtext editions of these works, accurately conveying Gellhorn's intentions. Some minor corrections and changes to formatting have been made so that the scores are ready for use by performers, in keeping with the ethos of the RCM Editions. On a similar basis, any specific modifications are outlined in the preface to each work, rather than using editorial brackets in the score, in order to reduce clutter on the page and to ensure easy reading. For an overarching outline of the approach to transcription, see "The Peter Gellhorn Edition: General Statement", available at www.petergellhorn.com/sheet-music and at researchonline.rcm.ac.uk/69/.

Sources

The Gellhorn Papers contain two items relating to *Aedh Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven*, catalogued under MS Mus. 1800/3/3 Vocal music; 1972-1995: an autograph pencil draft, and a photocopy of an autograph fair score. Although it is not an original

manuscript, the photocopy is in Gellhorn's hand, and is free from any corrections, and has therefore been used as the primary copy text.

The original autograph fair score was written in ink on 12-stave IMP Academy Manuscript paper. This was then photocopied in black and white. The manuscript is formed from two folios attached using three pieces of clear tape, making a four-page booklet measuring roughly 300mm by 240mm. The contents are as follows:

[p.1]: Title page

[pp.2-3]: Score

[p.4]: Blank page

Specific Editorial Remarks

The following minor correction has been made:

Measure 3, beat 1: the lyrics appear to show the word "cloth". This has been changed to "cloths" to bring it into line with the title page, the title of the score, and the original poem.

Dr. Bruno Bower

Aedh wishes for the Cloths of Heaven

W. B. Yeats (1865–1939)

Peter Gellhorn (1912–2004)

The musical score is written for voice and piano in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It is marked 'Andante' throughout. The score is divided into four systems, each with a voice line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: 'Had I the heavens' em-broi-der'd cloths, En-wrought with gol-den and sil-ver light, The blue and the dim and the dark cloths Of night and light and the half-light, I would spread the cloths un-der your feet: But I, be-ing poor, have on-ly my dreams; I have spread my dreams un-der your feet; Tread soft-ly, soft-ly, be-cause you tread on my dreams.' The score includes various dynamic markings such as *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *dim.*, *rit.*, and *a tempo*. There are also triplets and slurs throughout the piece.