

Alec Roth – EARTHRISE – words from the Vulgate

for unaccompanied choir in 40 parts

commissioned by Ex Cathedra on the occasion of its 40th anniversary (1969-2009)

first performed by Ex Cathedra, Samuel Boden (tenor), conducted by Jeffrey Skidmore, Birmingham Town Hall, 31 January 2010



*“Can there have been any more inspiring vision this century than that of the Earth from space? We saw for the first time what a gem of a planet we live on. The astronauts who saw the whole earth from Apollo 8 gave us an icon.” (James Lovelock, *Homage to Gaia*, 2000).*

The music of *Earthrise* is a meditation on this icon and falls into three main sections:

Part I – man’s constant drive for exploration and exploitation

Part II – the vision of the Earth seen from space

Part III – a plea for true wisdom and understanding

The text is taken from various Old Testament sources (Psalms, Job, Isaiah, Proverbs), sung in the Latin of the Vulgate, and the whole is topped and tailed by settings of two of the great Advent antiphons.

DURATION

ca. 22 minutes

FORCES REQUIRED

Earthrise is composed for unaccompanied choir in 40 parts. The scoring uses the same format as the motet *Spem in Alium* by Thomas Tallis: eight choirs, each of five parts – soprano, alto, tenor, baritone and bass (some of the voice parts have a slightly larger range than in the Tallis). Each section of the work is introduced by a short solo sung by a tenor from Choir 1.

ALTERNATIVE ORCHESTRAL VERSION

An alternative version scored for normal-sized SATB choir with orchestra is projected and awaits a commissioner.

PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

Performance materials are available in the form of eight separate part books (one for each choir) together with conductor’s score (B3 or A2). A study score (A3) is also available.

SCORE SAMPLE

Click here for a sample page of the [Full Score](#); one of the [Part Books](#).

TEXT

Click here to see the [full text](#) of *Earthrise*, with a parallel English translation.

RECORDING

Earthrise is recorded by Ex Cathedra on the Signum label ([SIGCD270](#)).

Individual tracks may be sampled and downloaded at [iTunes](#).

REVIEWS

“. . . climaxes that send shivers down the spine.” (The Times)

Click here to read a selection of [reviews](#) of *Earthrise*.