

## Alec Roth – THE TRAVELLER – words by Vikram Seth

an oratorio for solo tenor, solo violin, mixed choir, children's choir and orchestra  
commissioned jointly by the Salisbury, Chelsea and Lichfield Festivals  
first performed by Philippe Honoré (violin), Mark Padmore (tenor), The Britten Sinfonia, Alec Roth (conductor):  
with the Salisbury Festival Chorus and Salisbury Area Young Musicians' Junior Choir, Salisbury Cathedral, 31 May;  
the Joyful Company of Singers and Redcliffe School Junior Choir, Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, Chelsea, 18 June;  
and the Lichfield Festival Chorus, Lichfield Cathedral, 8 July 2008.

*Rise, traveller, the sky is light.  
Why do you sleep? It is not night.  
The sleeping lose, and sleep in vain.  
The waking rise, and rise to gain.*

India provides the literary and cultural inspiration for the text of *The Traveller*. In addition to writing six new poems, Vikram Seth has made English translations of over twenty Indian texts from a rich variety of traditions and languages, including Sanskrit, Pali, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and Tamil.

Taking as its theme the Ages of Man, the work is divided into six main sections: *Unborn – Child – Youth – Adult – Old – Dead*, followed by a short epilogue. Each part is introduced in turn by one of the seven verses of the great Hymn to Creation from the Rig Veda.

In this universal tale of Man's journey through life, the role of *The Traveller* is taken by the solo violin, *The Companions* by the Choir and *The Poet* by the tenor soloist.

### DURATION

ca. 50 minutes

### FORCES REQUIRED

Solo Violin ("The Traveller")

Solo Tenor ("The Poet")

Mixed Choir & Children's Choir ("The Companions")

Speaker: each Part is introduced by a short spoken text performed by a Speaker or by the Tenor soloist.

Orchestra: Strings with Harp and 2 Percussion: Player 1: Bass Drum; 3 Tomtoms; Toy Drum; Pedal Bass Drum; Hi-hat; Suspended Cymbal; Large Tamtam; Small Opera Gong (rising tone); 3 Temple-blocks; Jingles; 2 Cowbells; Claves; Bell (G#); and Ceremonial Bell (or Singing Bowl). Player 2: Bass Drum; Birch; 3 Tomtoms; Suspended Cymbal; Toy Cymbals; Medium Tamtam; Glockenspiel; Processional Drum.

The adult choir part is aimed at an amateur choral society level.

The children's choir part is designed for untrained voices and should be sung from memory.

Ideally, given the subject matter, the choir should be inter-generational, covering a wide range of ages. The work begins and ends with a processional chorus which may be sung by the full choir or a smaller representative group.

### PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

Full Score

Vocal Score

Children's Chorus Part (single melody line) to facilitate learning

Orchestral Parts

### SCORE SAMPLE

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

### REVIEWS

"... we seemed to be hearing music that always existed." (The Times)

Click here to read a selection of [reviews](#) of *The Traveller*

### THE RIVERED EARTH

*The Traveller* forms Part 3 of the tetralogy [The Rivered Earth](#)