

Quale Coniugium !

for mezzo-soprano or baritone and orchestra

2014

preview
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Willem Jeths

Compulsory Vocal Work
50th International Vocal Competition 's-Hertogenbosch

Willem Jeths (*1959) - 'Quale coniugium!'

Dedicated to Jan Swinkels

On a text by **Pé Hawinkels (1942-1977)**

Poems "Bosch en Bruegel"

De tuin der lusten

Publisher: **De Stiel** - Nijmegen

Translated into Latin by **Dr. Harm-Jan van Dam**

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Quale coniugium ! Sic viro
 Strenuo fortique cultissimae
 Feminae, comas solutae radiantem,
 Lene et constanter brachium
 tenente

Sic stellas conspiciat marcescentes,
 Caelum conspiciat rugosius squamo-
 Siusque ut frons antiqua,
 lucem in ignem vertentem
 in flammisve vomentes aut inane.

Wat een paar! Zo, terwijl de energieke
 Krachtige man de uiterst verfijnde
 Vrouw in een aureool van haren
 Zachtmoedig maar beslist bij de pols
 houdt, Zou het de sterren kunnen zien verwelken,
 De hemel kunnen zien rimpelen en schil-
 Feren als een verouderd voorhoofd,
 Het licht zien wijzigen in vuur
 Of brakende vonnen, of in het niets.

What a pair! So, as the energetic
 And powerful man grasps the most refined
 Woman with her halo of hair
 Gently but firmly by the wrist,
 They could see the stars fade,
 The heavens wrinkle and flake
 Away like an aged forehead,
 See the light change into fire
 Or vomiting flames, or into nothing.

Notes on the painting

Dr. Harm-Jan van Dam

Bosch en Bruegel was the first book of poems by the writer, poet and translator Pé (Petrus Hermandus Hubertus) Hawinkels (1942-1977) and was published by Ambo in Utrecht in 1968. It contains seven poems inspired by paintings by Hieronymus Bosch and thirteen poems inspired by paintings by Brueghel the Elder. *The Garden of Earthly Delights* is the last of the seven Bosch poems. The reasons for Hawinkels' choice of these poems and their placement in this order remain unknown.

Words themselves play the leading roles in Hawinkels' poems, which are characterised by verbal excess, word play and allusion. Elements of the innovatory Dutch Vijftigers school are evident, such as the use of associative imagery, but his main influences stem from the 1960s — a time in which both poetry and society tested every boundary and then went beyond them — punctuating grandiloquent phrases with everyday language and events. Hawinkels himself said once that the core of his poetry was always changing, for it was dependent on the moment. We should not seek any systematic vision or all-encompassing idea of the world in his poetry. According to the editors of his *Collected Poems* in 1988, "Clearly Pé Hawinkels will never be numbered amongst the great thinkers of this century [...] his verses are incredible soap bubbles that are blown into such a wealth of colours and of such a size; we have never seen anything like them before". There is some truth in this, although 'soap bubbles' seems to me far too negative a term for the *Bosch en Bruegel* poems. Hawinkels stated his own intentions as follows: "With poetry I can actively make complex what someone else has already expressed in music or in painting"; the *Bosch en Bruegel* poems are a good example of this. Whoever reads the poems based on Bosch's paintings will understand them better if he also looks at the paintings themselves. He will then see that the poems do not attempt to provide a complete description of the painting, but that they extract a number of striking elements and then base verbal embroidery and wordplay around them. The reader is taken by surprise by the sometimes puzzling flow of words, but as a result then looks at Hieronymus Bosch's inexhaustible paintings with a different eye.

The Garden of Earthly Delights



This great triptych, most likely painted around 1481, hangs in the Prado in Madrid. The reverse sides of the two side panels are painted in grisaille; when the triptych is closed, they depict the third day of the Creation. When the triptych is opened, on the left we see Paradise, a fantastical landscape filled with all kinds of plants and animals and with Adam and Eve on God's left and right hand. On the right-hand panel we see Hell with the damned, demons and all sorts of imaginary attributes. The meaning of the large central panel is much disputed: it shows a fantastical landscape in the same manner as the left-hand panel, but one that is now filled with countless people, most of whom are naked; imaginary plants; animals only heard of in fables; mythological figures, all in different poses and doing different things. The panel as a whole has an undeniably erotic charge and was most likely intended as a warning of where such behaviour would lead.

The left-hand panel and the translated text



Paradise is filled with many types of strange animals and plants; there are blue mountains in the distance, a limpid lake in the middle distance and a dark pool in the foreground. The central figures, however, attract all our attention: Adam is seated and Eve, clearly recently created from his rib, kneels on the grass; both are naked. Between them stands not God the Father and Creator, but Christ in a flesh-coloured robe; his index and middle fingers are raised as a symbol of his double nature as man and God. We do not know why Bosch placed Christ here and not God himself. He holds Eve's wrist with his left hand and her golden hair streams down her body. Adam sits somewhat to one side. Eve and her relationship to Christ receive the greater part of Hawinkels' attention in the approximately 250 lines that he devotes to this panel, nine of which have been chosen for translation into Latin and musical setting. A number of themes recur in the poem: Eve is always described as light, delicate, modest, chaste, unspotted, shy and, in this excerpt, refined. Her white skin and blonde hair are praised, and the poet calls her strong fingers, her large hands and her wrist to our attention more than once. The Christ figure becomes an energetic and powerful man in the passage we have selected. His connection with Eve, whom he holds by the wrist, is stressed: together they could witness the end of everything. Later the poet states how Adam gazes longingly at their duality, wishing that it were a trinity. The passage that we have selected is an important element of the poem as a whole: the energetic man and the refined woman, sanctified with her halo of blonde hair, together could achieve eternity. Fire and the apocalypse here point not only to the end of the poem, to oblivion and death, but also to the final panel of Bosch's triptych. The poet seems to suggest that Hell is already present in Paradise and that death and decay is an inherent part of creation.

Text Compulsory Vocal Work

Wat een paar! Zo, terwijl de energieke
 Krachtige man de uiterst verfijnde
 Vrouw in een aureool van haren
 Zachtmoedig maar beslist bij de pols houdt,
 Zou het de sterren kunnen zien verwelken,
 De hemel kunnen zien rimpelen en schil-
 Feren als een verouderd voorhoofd,
 Het licht zien wijzigen in vuur
 Of brakende vlammen, of in het niets.

What a pair! So, as the energetic
 And powerful man grasps the most refined
 Woman with her halo of hair
 Gently but firmly by the wrist,
 They could see the stars fade,
 The heavens wrinkle and flake
 Away like an aged forehead,
 See the light change into fire
 Or vomiting flames, or into nothing.

The Dutch text

The Hieronymus Bosch cycle first appeared in 1967 in a special issue of the magazine Raam; it was then published together with the Brueghel poems in book form in 1968 and later appeared in Hawinkels' *Verzamelde Gedichten* in 1988. The lines of the Bosch cycle are numbered individually in the first two of these publications but this was discontinued in the *Verzamelde Gedichten*. We give no line numbers in our chosen fragment. There are no textual variants between the three versions for the passage we have chosen; the text used, complete with layout and punctuation, is as it appears in the *Verzamelde Gedichten*.

The Latin translation

Translation is not a question of taking words from one language and replacing them with words from another, but rather an attempt at transposing the effect that a text is intended to convey into another language system. Classical Latin poetry is characterised by its metrical system, a regular succession of long and short syllables. Hawinkels' modern irregular style does not, in my view, lend itself to such constrictions, so I have chosen to make a translation in free verse, as is sometimes done in Neo-Latin literature, works written in Latin after the Middle Ages, both for original works and for translations. To create a poetic effect I have attempted to replicate the sound effects and verbal echoes of the original in the translation. As a result I have tried to avoid hiatus between two vowels as much as possible, although at times I was nevertheless constrained to attach more importance to good Latin word order. I have attempted to express Hawinkels' double meanings, word play and use of language as much as possible in my translation. There are many comprehensive dictionaries, grammars and texts for Latin for every period from classical Antiquity to modern times: all the vocabulary and constructions that appear in my translation can be found in existing original Latin texts, even if at times it is as a variant or even one single time.

Quale coniugium! Sic viro
 Strenuo fortique cultissimae
 Feminae, comas solutae radiantes,
 Lene et constanter bracchium tenente
 Sic stellas conspiciat marcescentes,
 Caelum conspiciat rugosius squamo-
 Siusque ut frons antiqua,
 lucem in ignem vertentem
 in flammisve vomentes aut inane.

(emphasis on the **bold** syllables)
QUAle con**I**Ugium! Sic **VI**ro
STREnuo for**TI**que cul**TISS**imae
FEminae, **CO**mas so**LU**tae radi**AN**tes,
LEne et con**STAN**ter **BRAC**chium te**NEN**te
 Sic **STEL**las cons**PI**ciat mar**CES**centes,
CAElum cons**PI**ciat ru**GO**sius squamo-
SIUSque ut frons an**TI**qua,
LUcem in **IG**nem ver**TEN**tem
 in flam**MAS**ve vo**MEN**tes aut in**AN**e.

Willem Jeths' compositions present a highly individual reaction to music tradition. Jeths has composed chamber and orchestral music (including solo concertos and a recent symphony), songs and an opera, initially in an atonal idiom, but later flirting with traditional tonality. Of the musical parameters, he devotes the greatest attention to tone colour. He meticulously works out timbral effects, often calling for playing techniques unused in the West – or even elsewhere – and creatively incorporating uncommon sound sources: toy instruments, breaking glass, dripping water. That seems more subtle than it sometimes sounds, for subtlety and beauty are not always his goal – showing the extremes is more important. Internationally acclaimed, Jeths is driven by spirit and fancy, unfettered by predetermined routes or goals. Because he is so conscious of the basic material, the resulting form, individual and personal, appears to the listener as a taut, consistent concept that unifies the piece. This apparent contradiction, in which aesthetics and working method seem to collide, remains one of the most intriguing aspects, both musically and personally, of Willem Jeths. In 2014 he is nominated for the prestigious Amsterdamprijs voor de Kunst.

Willem Jeths' works in Donemus catalogue

Recorder Concerto, to be premiered at Zaterdag Matinee Concertgebouw in December 2014	TIM/BA (1999/2000) for piano and percussion
Maktub (2014), premiered by Calefax reedquintet at Philharmonie Luxembourg	Falsa / Ficta (1999) for violoncello and orchestra
Symphony N° 1 (2013), premiered at Zaterdag Matinee Concertgebouw.	Flux / Reflux (1998) for orchestra
Clamavi: ellendejaar; Mini opera voor bariton en orkest (2013)	Onde (1998) for wind quintet
Metanoia (2011) for orchestra	Fas / Nefas (1997) for piano and orchestra
Monument to a universal marriage (2011) for voices, clarinet and string quartet	Vertooning (1997) for harp solo
Triple Concerto (2011) for piano trio and small orchestra	... Un vago ricordo... (1996) for string quartet
Scale: le Tombeau de Mahler (2010) for orchestra	Chiaroscuro (1995/1996) for ensemble
Violin concerto N° 2 (2009)	Throb (1995) for symphony orchestra
Sosia (2009) for violin solo	Dwaallicht (1995) for flute and tape
Hôtel de Pékin: dreams for a dragon queen (2008, rev. 2010), opera	Ljisziss (1995) for soprano and saxophone quartet
Meme (2006) for 2 violas and orchestra	Pianoconcerto (1994)
Clarinet concerto: Yellow darkness (2005)	Meander (1994, rev. 1999) for orchestra
Ombre Cinesi (2005) for orchestra	Genz (1993) for violin solo and string orchestra
Seanchai: - an after-image - (2004) for orchestra	A bout de souffle (1993) for ensemble
E Pluribus unum (2003) for orchestra	Mythos (1992) for harpsichord solo
Intus trepidare: string quartet no 3 (2003)	D'aprile e di maggio (1992) for ensemble
Elegia (2002) for viola	Epitheta (1991) for piano solo
Flugelhorn Concerto: al fondo per l' oscuro (2002) for flugelhorn and orchestra	Arcate (1991), version for string orchestra
Bandoneon concerto (2001)	Crimes glorieux (1990) for mixed choir, two pianos and percussion
Bella figura (2000) for violoncello solo	Raptim (1988) for flute, alto or bass clarinet and piano
Chiasmus (2000) for piano trio	Brezza (1987, rev. 1988) for flute and percussion
	Novelette (1986) for violin and piano
	Altsaxofoonconcert (1985, rev. 1987)
	Procurans odium (1984) per orchestra
	Les Chats (1982) for soprano (or tenor) and piano

Dr. Harm-Jan van Dam was an associate professor of Latin at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam until 2011, his research concentrates on classical Latin poetry and Neo-Latin poetry of the 16th and 17th centuries. He is also active in the field of translation and is one of the editors of *Filter*, the Dutch periodical on translation. He has translated poetry and Erasmus' Praise of Folly and other works from Latin as well as a selection of Holland's most famous children's stories into Latin: these include twenty-one stories from Annie M.G. Schmidt's *Jip en Janneke* (*Jippus et Jannica*). He has won several contests for the translation of poetry from English, Italian and Latin into Dutch.

Scoring

Solo: Mezzo Soprano or Baritone

2 Flutes (Flute 2 also Piccolo)
2 Oboes (Oboe 2 also English Horn)
2 Clarinets in B \flat (Clarinet 2 also Clarinet in E \flat)
2 Bassoons (Bassoon 2 also Contrabassoon)

2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets
2 Trombones (Tenor & Bass)
Tuba

Percussion

Timpani
Glockenspiel
Tubular Bells
Vibraphone
Gongs
Boobars
Water Gongs
Lion's Roar
Crash Cymbals
Wind Machine
Large Tamtam
Celesta

Watergongs

Congas

Boobars



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String Orchestra

Quale Coniugium !

Mezzo Soprano / Baritone

Donemus
Willems

♩ = 66

rit. molto a tempo

5

The musical score is arranged in systems. The first system includes Flute, Piccolo, Oboe, English Horn, Clarinet in B♭, Clarinet in E♭, Bassoon 1 & 2, Horn 1 & 2, Trumpet 1 & 2, Trombone 1 & 2, Tuba, Tubular Bells, Gongs, Lion's Roar, Celesta, and Mezzo Soprano / Baritone. The second system includes Violin 1 & 2, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The score features various dynamics such as *mp*, *pp*, *ff*, *f*, *p*, *ppp*, *sub.*, *molto*, *poco dim.*, and *l.v.*. It also includes performance instructions like *pizz.*, *p ma chiaro*, *col legno battuto*, and *ten.*. A large watermark 'preview' and 'webshop.donemus.nl' is overlaid on the score.

poco rit. 10 a tempo 15

Fl. *sf sub. mp* *p fragile ma espr.* *espr. mp* *p*

Picc. *ff* *p* *fragile ma espr.* *p espr.*

Ob. *p* *pp* *espr.* *pp*

E. Hn. *mp* *pp*

Clar. in B \flat *sf* *mp* *p* *pp*

Clar. in E \flat *mf* *p* *espr.* *pp*

1 Bsn. *p espr.* *p* *ppp*

2 Bsn.

1 Hn. *p* *pp* *mp*

2 Hn.

1 Trp.

2 Trp.

1 Trb.

2 Trb.

Tb.

Gr. C. *coperto* *pp*

Cel. *f* *pp* *p*

poco rit. 10 a tempo 15

Vl. 1 *sf* *pp ten.* *con vibr.* *pp* (con sord.) solo 1 *non vibr.* *pp*

Vl. 2 *sf* *pp ten.* *con vibr.* *pp* (con sord.) solo 2 *non vibr.* *pp*

Vla. *con sord.* solo 1 *non vibr.* *pp ten.* *con vibr.* *pp* (con sord.) solo 3 *non vibr.* *pp*

Vlc. *con sord.* sola *non vibr.* *pp ten.* *con vibr.* *pp* pizz. *p*

D.B.

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accel. molto rit. molto meno mosso **20** t° primo ♩ = 66 poco a poco accel. molto a tempo poco a

Fl. *p* *pp* *espr. p* *ff*

Picc. *p* *ff*

Ob. *f* *ff* *mp*³

E. Hn. *f* *sub.* *p*

Clar. in B♭ *f* *sub.* *p*

Clar. in E♭ *espr. p* *ff*

1 Bsn. *f* *ff*

2 Bsn. *f* *ff*

1 Hn. *f* *ff*

2 Hn. *f* *ff*

1 Tmp. *f* *ff*

2 Tmp. *f* *ff*

1 Trb. *f* *ff*

2 Trb. *f* *ff*

Tb. *f* *ff*

Glock. *f* *ff*

T. Bells *f* *ff*

Cel. *f* *ff*

M. Sopr. *poco a poco cresc.* *mp* *mf* *f*

Bar. (8) Qua - le con - iu - gium!

accel. molto rit. molto meno mosso **20** t° primo ♩ = 66 poco a poco accel. molto a tempo tutti senza sord. (pizz.) tutti senza sord. (pizz.) tutte senza sord.

Vl. 1 *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Vl. 2 *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Vla. *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Vlc. *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

D.B. *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pp*