

# CARMINA PAX

## (Peace Songs)

*Peace does not mean an absence of conflicts; differences will always be there. Peace means solving these differences through peaceful means; through dialogue, education, knowledge, and through humane ways (Dalai Lama)*

*Carmina Pax* is a choral/orchestral setting of seven texts, all encountering a different aspect of conflict and peace. "Peace" can narrowly be seen as an absence of war between individuals, groups or nations. But more broad applications exist in every society, measured by the absence of famine, class conflict, disease, terror, desire to expunge a religion. Depression is also an "internal war" suffered by many. The causes of conflict are numerous; the results are countless. This work is a musical "discussion" of the tragic results of prejudice, hate, hunger, inner conflict and yes - war. It is meant to create a "dialogue" between the performers and the audience to not lose hope, but to begin seeking more aggressive and humane solutions to conflict. As the world becomes more technologically "connected," the collision of political, social and personal credos will continue to dramatically increase. Music is a great unifier - we must first find peace in our own minds and hearts in order to find common ground and peace with those around us.

Z. Randall Stroope

### 1. Exordium (2:42) boy solo, chorus

#### *Peace*

*The Ara Pacis Augustae (Latin, "Altar of Austan Peace," or shortened to **Ara Pacis**) is a Roman altar, commissioned by the Senate on July 4, 13 BC, and dedicated to Pax, the Roman goddess of Peace. It stands in Rome today. Ara Pacis was well documented by the Roman poet, Publius Ovidius Naso (Ovid); Fasti 1.709-722. Translated from Latin:*

Come goddess of peace; make the world your dwelling.  
Light your flames of incense from shore to shore on altars of peace.  
Whisper now, let dreams begin; echo through all struggle.  
Til the nation seeks in one accord a place called "PEACE" for all.

### 2. Lieutenant Henry Lee, December 8, 1944 (3:08) chorus

#### *War*

*Poem written by 27-year old Lieutenant Henry Lee, December 8, 1944; found in a notebook buried under his barracks of Carbanatuan prison camp (Bataan); it was recovered after the liberation. He did not survive.*

"Teach me to hate," I prayed — for I was young,  
And fear was in my heart, and faith had fled....

"Teach me to hate — the world I loved is dead;  
Who would survive must learn a savage tongue."  
And I have learned — and paid in days that ran  
To bitter schooling. Love was lost in pains, ....  
And faith in God dissolved with faith in man.

### 3. ...little boy, sweet boy, narrow path (3:08) chorus

#### *Extermination of culture and religion*

*Text written by Frantisek Bass; 14-year old boy who died at Auschwitz.*

A little garden  
Fragrant and full of roses  
The path is narrow  
And a little boy walks along it.

A little boy, a sweet boy,  
Like that growing blossom.  
When the blossom comes to bloom,  
The little boy will be no more.

### 4. Invictus (3:40) chorus and baritone

#### *Class and racial discrimination*

*"I learned that courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it." (Nelson Mandela)  
Mandela embraced this poem (by William Ernest Henley) in his imprisonment as the result of Apartheid.*

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.

## 5. Four horsemen of the apocalypse (3:00) men's chorus

### *Pestilence, war, famine and terror*

*Alfred Durer (Nuremberg, 1498); third woodcut; imagery of four horsemen of the apocalypse; text in Latin (paraphrased below)*

Et vidi: et ecce equus albus. (And I beheld a bane WHITE horse. Its rider had a bow and a crown, and conquered all through blight, disease and pestilence. Pestilence. **Pestilence.**

Et vidi: et ecce equus rufus. And I beheld a blood RED horse. Its rider had a sword, and conquered all through violence, strife and war. War. **War**

Et vid: et ecce equus niger. I beheld a cold BLACK horse. Its rider had scales in hand, and conquered all through debt, destitution and famine. Famine. **Famine.**

Et vid: et ecce equus pallidus. And I saw, and beheld a stone PALE horse. Its rider had the jaws of Hades and conquered all through terror, genocide and death. Death. **Death.**

## 6. I am a pool of blue... (6:15) chorus

### *Depression and defeat*

*American poetess, Sara Teasdale; suffered depression and struggled to find peace; tragically ended her life*

Peace flows into me  
As the tide to the pool by the shore;  
It is mine forevermore,  
It ebbs not back like the sea.

I am the pool of blue  
That worships the vivid sky;  
My hopes were heaven-high,  
They are all fulfilled in you.

I am the pool of gold  
When sunset burns and dies, —  
You are my deepening skies,  
Give me your stars to hold.

## 7. Ara Pacis (4:45) chorus

*Call to Peace: "Come PEACE, be present and make the entire world your home"*

Pax, ades et toto mitis in orbe mane.  
transl: *PEACE, be present, and make the entire world your home.*  
tura, sacerdotes, pacalibus addite flammis,  
transl: *Priests burn incense on the altar of peace.*  
utque domus, quae praestat eam, cum pace perennet  
transl: *That the House which brought us peace, will bring us peace forever*

***Carmina Pax*** is for mixed chorus/soloists/orchestra (1110-1211, timp, perc (2), piano and strings; secular; seven movements; length 26 minutes; the work was premiered by the Arlington Master Chorale on March 22, 2018. Partial funding for this commission project made possible through the **Arlington Master Chorale**, Randy Jordan, director, and the **Doug and Nickie Burns Endowed Chair in Choral Music** at Oklahoma State University.

**Z. Randall Stroope** is an American composer, conductor and university professor. His composition teachers were Normand Lockwood and Cecil Effinger, both students of Nadia Boulanger, the famous French teacher (and student of Gabriel Fauré.) He is the artistic director of two European summer music festivals, as well annually conducting at Carnegie Hall (New York), Chicago Orchestra Hall, and many other U.S. and international venues. He has 165 published musical works and has received numerous composition awards. Recordings of his music can be heard on his web site ([www.zrstroope.com](http://www.zrstroope.com)), or various other social media sites.