

ALAN
HOVHANNES

WORLD PREMIERE

MYSTERY OF THE
HOLY MARTYRS
OP. 251

&

SYMPHONY No. 3
OP. 148

KBS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VAKHTANG JORDANIA
CONDUCTOR

MICHAEL LONG
GUITAR

20 BIT RECORDING

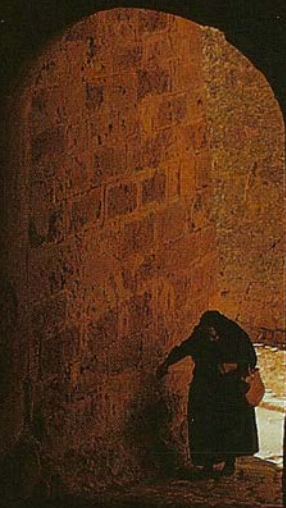




Photo by Chris Bennion

ALAN HOVHANESS

The two works on this disc represent composer Alan Hovhaness at opposite ends of a wide aesthetic spectrum. In *Khorhoort Nahadagats* (*Mystery of the Holy Martyrs*), the meditative and the introspective hold sway. Its overt religious and ethnic association — the score was commissioned by the Diocese of the Armenian Church — places *Khorhoort Nahadagats* among the many mystical, Eastern-inspired scores in the composer's catalogue. In the Symphony No. 3, by contrast, Hovhaness reached perhaps the pinnacle of his mastery of Western classical form. Many materials in this work are redolent of the Near-East, but their treatment is thoroughly European.

The man born Alan Chakmakjian in Somerville, Mass., in 1911 to parents of Armenian and Scottish descent was a composer from the age of 4. By his early teens he was composing operas, and it was his high school librettist who suggested the change to Hovhaness, an Armenian name cognate with 'Johannes' — John. The young composer studied piano and played organ for the Armenian church, where he was locally famous for improvising on ancient modes. Though he later studied composition with Frederick Converse at the New England Conservatory and with Bohuslav Martinu at Tanglewood, Hovhaness absorbed and nurtured this early ethnic influence, resulting in many works with Armenian names and flavors, such as the orchestral Armenian Rhapsody No. 1, *Lousadzak* for piano and orchestra, and the present *Khorhoort Nahadagats*.

Subtitled 'Seventeen Prayers for Oud, Lute or Guitar and String Quartet or String Orchestra,' *Khorhoort Nahadagats*, Op. 251, was composed in 1976. No one can recall a performance ever having been given, despite the score's generation in a commission and its publication by a major house, Peer International. In this time-stretching, 40-minute meditation, the oud/lute/guitar solo more or less plays the role of religious celebrant, with the string orchestra (sans double bass) substituting for the choir. Each movement has a name, but the movements are not in any liturgical order, and titles appropriate to the requiem mix with those more apt for weddings or weekly worship.

The 'holy martyrs' of the title are the more than 1,000 Armenian Christians slaughtered in 451 AD. Armenia had been Christianized 150 years before and the nation's Persian conquerors saw the religion as an impediment to their absolute rule. Instead of

subduing the Armenians, however, the mass-murder intensified Armenian Christianity and unified the nation against Persia. The third entry in Hovhaness' suite is a reference to this transcendence of genocide by spiritual and cultural solidarity: *Norahrash*, meaning 'new miracle.' Among the other movements are several processions: *Khorhoort Khorin* is a processional for ordinary use; *Kovia Yeroosaghem* is one used only at Easter; *Tapor* is another general-use processional; *Hrashapar* announces the appearance and procession of a high clergyman. Other titles are Armenian versions of familiar Catholic terms and concepts: *Soorp*, *Soorp* means 'Holy, Holy'; *Amen Hayr Soorp* invokes the Trinity; *Hayr Mer* is the Lord's Prayer. Three movements are called *Yerk*, meaning simply 'song'; these are brief personal meditations between the liturgical movements. *Oorakh Ler* means 'Song of Happiness' and is used at weddings. *Kahanayk* and *I Verinn Yeroosaghem* come from the requiem, while *Kerezman* is sung only at burials. The work ends with an evocation of the Resurrection, *Harootyan*. (My thanks to Armenian choir director George Mangigian for his translations and explanations.)

Due to Hovhaness' incredible prolificacy, much of his catalogue is a chaos of real and manufactured opus numbers, contradictory dates and confusing sequences. Before he composed his best-known symphony, the Symphony No. 2, Op. 132, called *Mysterious Mountain*, Hovhaness penned works now labeled Symphony No. 5, Op. 170; Symphony No. 8, Op. 179 (*Arunja*); and Symphony No. 9, Op. 180 (*Saint Vartan*).

Yet Symphony No. 3, Op. 148, really did follow Symphony No. 2. Composed in 1956, it boasts the largest orchestration of any Hovhaness symphony: woodwinds in threes, five horns, three each trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, celesta, harp and strings. It trumps the *Mysterious Mountain* orchestration by the addition of percussion, is some eight minutes longer, and is formally much more ambitious. In fact, it is tempting to think of Symphony No. 3 having been composed in elation over the success of *Mysterious Mountain* in 1955, a success the like of which Hovhaness rarely enjoyed: an establishment triumph, complete with premiere featuring a major symphony orchestra (the Houston Symphony) led by a superstar mainstream conductor, Leopold Stokowski, followed by an enthusiastic reception from the press.

The premiere of Symphony No. 3, led once again by Stokowski (this time conducting the Symphony of the Air), took place at Carnegie Hall exactly one year later to the month, in October of 1956. This time the press reception was ho-hum. Writing in The New York Times, critic Howard Taubman grudgingly called the score 'tuneful, expansively orchestrated,' conceding a 'certain integrity' of form. But, he protested, 'Mr. Hovhaness does not have enough force or personality.' Thus was one of Hovhaness' most potent formal essays dispensed with in a short paragraph. Symphony No. 3 subsequently went unperformed for years, until the Denver Symphony played it under the composer's baton in 1962. The local papers praised the new symphony and reported a standing ovation. Still, the work wasn't picked up by anyone else, and while Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony recorded a landmark LP of *Mysterious Mountain*, Symphony No. 3 instantly entered obscurity. Such are the contingencies of high art. Producers of the present recording decided to bring the score to light when Hovhaness mentioned to guitarist Michael Long that, of all his 67 symphonies, No. 3 was one of his enduring personal favorites.

Generally something of an outcast among establishment musicians (the composer recalls Leonard Bernstein, at Tanglewood, denouncing his Symphony No.1 as 'filthy ghetto music'), much of Hovhaness' work looks Eastward almost in defiance — not just to Armenian modal church music but to Indian ragas and Japanese gagaku music. Symphony No. 3 is the grand exception: an eager embrace of everything Western and classical. In notes supplied by C.F. Peters, publisher of Symphony No. 3, Hovhaness calls the score 'a tribute to Mozartian classical sonata form.'

After an Andante introduction for tuba solo over muttering timpani and strings, a buoyant, dancey theme announces the formal exposition. 'The development begins with a short polytonal canon,' Hovhaness writes, 'quickly merging into classical counterpoint. There is a full recapitulation.' The second movement is a richly beautiful Andante in modified rondo form; the composer has called this movement 'music of compassion.' The finale is a massive sonata-allegro, marked *Allegro Molto*, cast as an ongoing metrical duel pitting measures of 5, 7, 11 and 13 against one another. Counterpoint dominates the development. Canons in 8, 10 and even 15 parts lead to the classical recapitulation.

THE KBS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1956, is renowned for its high standard of performance worldwide, performing over 90 concerts annually, including 30 subscription concerts, special concerts, regional concerts and television/radio broadcasts. Asserting a strong international presence, the orchestra has toured in the major cities of the United States (1979), Southeast Asia (1984), and Japan (1985, 1991, 1992, 1994). These appearances have brought great critical acclaim and honors; in particular, a special invitation in 1995 to perform a concert in the United Nations General Assembly Hall as part of the world organization's 50th-anniversary celebration.

The distinguished German conductor, Maestro Othmar Maga, is the KBS Symphony Orchestra's Chief Conductor, while Maestro Vakhtang Jordania, of the United States, is the Principal Guest Conductor. Led by these eminent musicians, the KBS Symphony Orchestra is releasing a number of new CD recordings and is fast moving toward its goal of joining the ranks of the world's leading orchestras.



CONCERTMASTER

Bok-Soo KIM
Yong-Woo CHUN

1ST VIOLIN (16)

King-Hai QUAN*
Young-Ho BANG**
Mi-Yung BEAK
Eun-Rai CHO
Chun-He HAM
Mi-Ryong HWANG
Tae-Kyung HYUN
Hae-Eun KIM
Jong-Won KIM
Yoo-Sun LEE
Na-Ree LEE
Yun LEE
Jong-Hong PARK
Sang-Won SHIM
In-Soon SHIN
Hyun YANG

2ND VIOLIN (14)

Ju-Cheol KO*
Dae-Hoon KIM**
Byung-Ho BAE
Eun-Joo CHAE
Soon-Shim HAN
Sun-Min KIM
Mi-Youn KIM
Hye-Young LEE
Su-Mi LEE
Myung-Hee NOH
Jae-Ran SONG
Kyung-Sook SONG
So-Hyung YOO
Joo-Hyun YU

VIOLA (13)

Mee-Kyung LEE*
Neili KHAN**
So-Eun CHO
Jin-Mi CHOI
Jung-Un JANG
Jung-Shin KIM
Moon-Joo KIM
Sung-Tae KIM
Eun-Sook KO
Hyuk-Joon KWON
Hyung-Woo PARK
Se-Ran PARK
Hyun-Sook SHIN

CELLO (12)

Edwin Dong-Oo LEE*
Joo-Shim KIM**
Myung-Suk ANN
Hyun-Jung KIM
Soo-Jung KOO
Jae-Kyu LEE
Kang-Rai LEE
Wha-Jun LEE
Ji-Sook SHIN
Yun-Jeong YANG
Seung-Hee YOO
Sook WOO

DOUBLE BASS (8)

Yang-Kou OH*
Heung-Hee LIM**
Gong-Joon BAE
Rea-Ha KANG
Sang-Hoon KIM
Do-Young LEE
Back-Jun SEOUNG
Hyun-Ju YANG

FLUTE (4)

Young-Mi KIM*
Shin-Jung OH**
Cheol-Ho LEE
Ji-Young LEE

OBOE (4)

Hee-Sun LEE*
Eun-Hee LIM**
Young-Jong OR
Hae-Won YOON

CLARINET (4)

Woon-Dae JUNG*
Jeong-Min SONG**
Hyun-Gak SHIN
Hyung-Jik YOO

BASSOON (4)

Sang-Won YOON*
Sang-Don LEE**
Bong Rak CHOI
Sang-Ki KIM

HORN (5)

Chi-Chung CHOW*
Dong-Suk SONG**
O-Seong KWON
Chang-Kee LEE
Hyun-Seok SHIN

TRUMPET (4)

Pak-Fu CHONG*
Seung-Nam YOO**
Won-Taek HWANG
Si-Won LIM

TROMBONE (4)

Jeon-Sik YOO*
Hong-Bae PARK**
Yong-Suk KIM
Soo-Sung LEE

TUBA (2)

Chong-Il Yi
Moo-Young KIM

TIMPANI (1)

Kwang-Seo PARK*

PERCUSSION (3)

Young-Wan LEE**
Jong-Hwan KIM
Joo-Duk KIM

PIANO (1)

Young-Yi LEE

HARP (1)

Hyun-Sun NA

Personnel Manager

Jong-Won KIM
Bong-Rak CHOI

Librarian

Chung-Koon KIM

Stage Personnel

In-Bum RYOO
Ha-Jun YOO

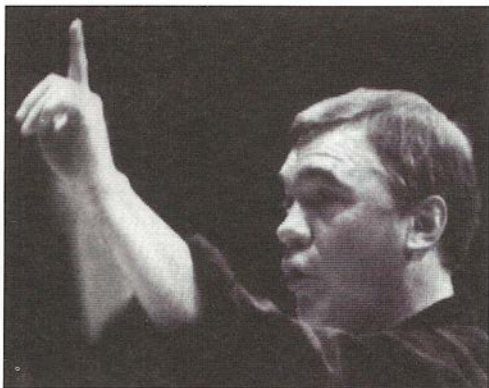
* Principal
** Associate Principal
(As of October, 1996)



Vakhtang Jordania's extensive musical career was formed by the best schools of the former Soviet Union. After graduating from the Tbilisi Conservatory he studied symphonic and operatic conducting at the Leningrad Conservatory, graduating with honors. A top prize in the 1971 Herbert von Karajan Competition catapulted him to the highest circles of Soviet artistry. From his assistantship with the legendary Yevgeny Mravinsky until his defection to the United States in 1983, Jordania held such celebrated positions as Music Director of the Leningrad Radio Orchestra, the Saratov Philharmonic, and the Kharkov Philharmonic, and achieved the title of People's Artist. Conducting more than 100 concerts a year, he regularly toured the USSR, collaborating with artists such as David and Igor Oistrakh, Leonid Kogan, Dmitri Shostakovich, Kiril Kondrashin, and Emil Gilels.

Maestro Jordania's Carnegie Hall debut was hailed by the New York Times as 'a confident and spirited performance. . . the full house leaped to its feet.' Success quickly followed in France, Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium, Japan, Korea, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, & South America. In the United States, he was appointed Artistic Director of the Chattanooga Symphony and later the Spokane Symphony, while his guest appearances in New York, Los Angeles, Denver, Minneapolis, and other cities brought more critical acclaim. In 1993, during his first tour back to the former Soviet Union, he was met with such overwhelming enthusiasm that he was immediately offered the position of Music Director for the new Russian Federal Orchestra.

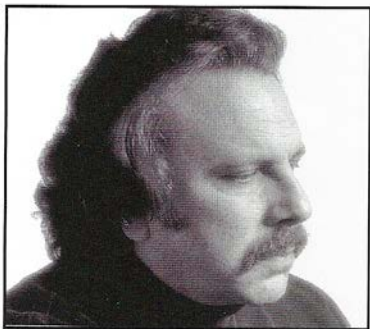
Equally known for his expertise in opera, Jordania had conducted regularly in the most prestigious Soviet opera houses, including the Bolshoi and the Kirov Theatres. He now serves as Artistic Advisor of the Kharkov Opera, Principal Guest Conductor of the Korean Opera, and is in demand as a guest conductor for major companies in the United States.



VAKHTANG JORDANIA

Recordings by Maestro Jordania date from his time in the USSR where he conducted many hours of music for radio and television. He also made many film soundtracks, including the award-winning *Dersu Uzala* with Akira Kurosawa, and many classical LP recordings on the label *Melodiya*. In the West, his recordings of new and unusual music are among the top-selling classical discs in the world, receiving Grammy nominations and being featured on National Public Radio.

Photo by Al Abrams



MICHAEL LONG

Michael Long began his musical studies at the Chicago Conservatory of Music and received advanced training on the guitar from the Romero family: Celedonio, Celin, Pepe, and Angel. He has appeared as a soloist and with ensembles throughout the world, with performances in Argentina, Equador, Peru, Uruguay, Russia, Poland, Germany, Sweden, England, France, Israel, Korea, and other countries.

The present disk is part of Mr. Long's projected series of the complete works by Hovhaness for guitar and orchestra. His first recording in this series, *Symphony No. 39*, also performed with the KBS Symphony Orchestra, has enjoyed widespread critical and popular success since its release in 1993. Yet to be recorded are two guitar concertos and the duo concerto for guitar, violin, and orchestra. Long's discography also includes recent recordings with Spanish soprano Ainhoa Arteta of the Metropolitan Opera.

Besides being a guitarist, Mr. Long is a playwright. Having served an apprenticeship under Robert Bolt, author of the play *A Man for All Seasons*, he has been involved in the production of documentaries and screenplays for feature-length films.



Executive producers: Todd & Kay Hallawell,
Frank & Leanne Koonce
Chief recording engineer: David Nichols
Production and digital editing: Todd Hallawell
Production assistance: Frank Koonce
KBS chief sound engineer: Bong-Ui KWON
KBS associate sound engineer: Jong-Gu WOO
KBS sound engineer: Jong-Sook KIM
Mastering: Jon Wyner & Todd Hallawell
Technical support: Lee Furr, David Shirk, John Wroble
Program booklet cover design: Tim Fisher
Program booklet design: Phyllis Brucher
Program notes: Kenneth LaFave
Color Photography: Al Abrams

With special appreciation to:
Suk-Heung KANG, Jin-Hong KIM, Seung-Jong KIM,
John Campbell & Randy Starace

Recorded: June, 1996, KBS Hall,
Soeul, Korea
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Scottsdale, Arizona 85254

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SYMPHONY No. 3, op. 148

TIME: 27:56

- 1** I. ANDANTE MAESTOSO-PRETO (9:24)
- 2** II. ANDANTE (7:39)
- 3** III. ALLEGRO MOLTO (10:53)

KHORHOORT NAHADAGATS, OP. 251

(MYSTERY OF THE HOLY MARTYRS)

TIME: 38:11

- 4** KHORHOORT KHORIN
- 5** KOVIA YEROOSAGHEM
- 6** NORAHRASH
- 7** SOORP, SOORP-(HOLY, HOLY)
- 8** DER VOGHORMIA
- 9** AMEN HAYR SOORP
- 10** YERK
- 11** OORAKH LER
- 12** TAPOR
- 13** KAHANAYK
- 14** I VERINN YEROOSAGHEM
- 15** YERK
- 16** HAYR MER
- 17** YERK
- 18** HRASHAPAR
- 19** KEREZMAN
- 20** HAROOTYAN

TOTAL TIME: 65:51




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Alan Hovhanness: Mystery of the Holy Martyrs & Symphony #3

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RECORDINGS



ALAN
HOVHANESS

**MYSTERY OF THE
HOLY MARTYRS**

(KHORHOORT NAHADAGATS)

FOR GUITAR
AND STRINGS
OP. 251

SYMPHONY No. 3
FOR ORCHESTRA
OP. 148

**KBS SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**

**VAKHTANG
JORDANIA**
CONDUCTOR

MICHAEL LONG
GUITAR

Total time: 65:51
Recorded June, 1996
KBS Hall, Seoul, Korea
Produced by Todd Hallawell
Engineered by David Nichols
Mr. Long plays a Mikhail Robert guitar

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Alan Hovhanness: Mystery of the Holy Martyrs & Symphony #3

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