



**MEX 77211**

# 200 Years Diabelli Variations: Dina Parakhina, piano

Métier proudly presents the release of Param Vir's double opera bill, featuring "Snatched by the Gods" and "Broken Strings," originally broadcast on BBC Radio 3's Hear and Now show in September 1996. These compelling one-act operas, performed by Almeida Opera with the London Sinfonietta under the masterful baton of Markus Stenz, showcase Vir's exceptional talent for both vocal and instrumental composition.

### Snatched by the Gods

Inspired by Tagore's narrative poem "Debatar Gras," this opera immerses the audience in a dramatic tale of devotion, fear, and divine retribution. Commissioned by Hans Werner Henze, "Snatched by the Gods" is the gripping first part of the double bill, where Vir's music vividly portrays the emotional and physical journey of pilgrims facing nature's fury and their own superstitions. The piece brilliantly echoes influences from Berg, Britten, and Messiaen, yet firmly establishes Vir's unique musical identity.

#### Scene I

At dawn, amidst the preparations for a pilgrimage, tensions arise as Moksada and her son Rakhal seek to join the journey. Despite initial reluctance, Maitra allows them to board, setting off a chain of events marked by maternal fear and communal panic. As the pilgrims embark, an orchestral interlude captures the serenity and anticipation of their voyage.

#### Scene II

The return journey turns perilous as a storm brews, leading to a climactic struggle against nature and fate. In a desperate bid to appease the gods, Rakhal is tragically sacrificed, his death prompting a devastating realization for Maitra, who plunges into the sea, enveloped in guilt and despair.

### Broken Strings

The second opera, also commissioned by Hans Werner Henze, draws from the ancient Buddhist tale "Guttill Jatak," delivering a story that intertwines musical mastery with profound moral lessons. Vir's enchanting score brings to life a rich tapestry of characters and mythical creatures, each vividly depicted through his inventive orchestration.

#### Synopsis

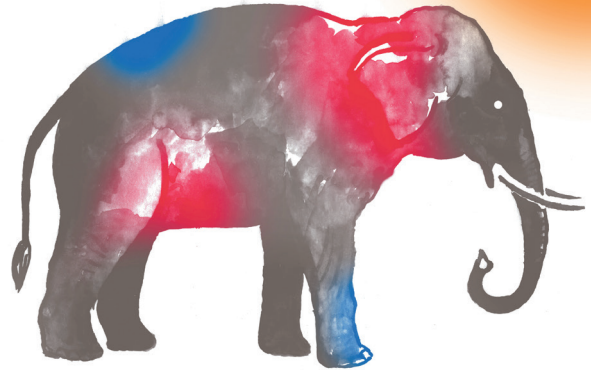
In a kingdom searching for its next Player to the King, the arrogant young musician Musil faces an unexpected challenge from the humble, nearly blind Guttill. As Guttill's instrument breaks string by string, his music grows increasingly extraordinary, conjuring magical beings and mesmerizing the court. Musil's attempt to replicate Guttill's magic leads only to his own downfall, highlighting the folly of envy and the true essence of artistic brilliance.

This tale, framed as a "play within a play," captivates not just the onstage audience but also the listening spectators, drawing them into a narrative where music and morality are deeply intertwined. The opera features notable performances, including the superb vocal talents of Susan Gorton, Ann Archibald, and Richard Lloyd Morgan, with Welsh tenor Wynne Evans, known as the moustached tenor in the Go Compare adverts, adding a familiar touch.

The London Sinfonietta, renowned for its dedication to contemporary music, brings Vir's complex and evocative compositions to life with precision and passion. Founded in 1968, the ensemble has a rich history of commissioning and premiering groundbreaking works. Its commitment to innovation and education ensures that each performance resonates deeply with both seasoned audiences and new listeners alike.

Experience the powerful storytelling and exquisite music of Param Vir with this landmark Métier release, a testament to the enduring impact and creativity of contemporary opera.

PARAM VIR  
*Snatched by the Gods*  
*Broken Strings*



A BBC recording

**RELEASE DATE Sept 20th, 2024**

### Marketing Points

- BBC Recording
- Release of recording originally broadcast on BBC Radio 3 in 1996
- A must for contemporary opera enthusiasts
- Critically acclaimed composer
- Strikingly accessible
- Available on CD and in HD Digital
- Album duration 52:15; 59:03



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**Artists:** Almeida Opera  
 London Sinfonietta  
 Markus Stenz, conductor

**Price Point:** standard full price (US SRP \$25.99)  
**Label:** Divine Art  
**Genre:** Classical/Opera  
**Format:** CD; digital download & streaming

## WORKS LISTING

Param Vir:  
Snatched by the Gods  
Broken Strings

**Preview Track: Broken Strings: III. Guttill enters**



[https://youtu.be/Fndb9yGI\\_2g](https://youtu.be/Fndb9yGI_2g)



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