



CRIMSON ROSES

Contemporary
American Choral Music

Joseph Turrin

Richard Einhorn

Gilda Lyons

Frederica von Stade,
Mezzo-soprano

Erinn Sensenig, Soprano

Musica Viva NY Choir
and Orchestra

Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez



Joseph Turrin (b. 1947)

And Crimson Roses Once Again Be Fair (2018)

41:27

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Crimson Roses

Contemporary American Choral Music

Joseph Turrin (b. 1947)

Joseph Turrin's music has been commissioned and performed by some of the world's leading orchestras, chamber ensembles and soloists. He is the recipient of several commissions from the New York Philharmonic, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Live from Lincoln Center and the National Endowment for the Arts. His works have been conducted by Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta, Erich Leinsdorf, Kent Tritle and Bramwell Tovey. He has also written works for Wynton Marsalis, Canadian Brass, Renée Fleming, Yo-Yo Ma, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Thomas Hampson, Sumi Jo, Hélène Grimaud, the U.S. Marine Band, U.S. Air Force Band and NY Philharmonic Principal Brass, among others. In 2006 he was awarded an honorary degree from the Eastman School of Music – University of Rochester. Many of his compositions have been recorded on the RCA, EMI, Teldec, Naxos, Summit, Klavier, Cala, Albany, and Crystal record labels. He is currently on the music faculties of Rutgers University, Montclair State University and Kean University. He is also the author of *Music in Film: Settling the Score* (Cognella Press, San Diego).

And Crimson Roses Once Again Be Fair (2018)

It was “The War To End All Wars” – a senseless slaughter that set the stage for the bloodiest century in human history. Yet, it was more than just a war between nations. It was a war between what was and what was to be. The “old world” was dying, and the new world had yet to be born. People of all classes and nations saw it as some great cleansing fire that would accelerate this battle and lead to a better world. But, when it was over, more than men had died in the mud of the battlefields. The naive dreams of progress, along with the innocence of the pre-war world, faith in God, and hope in the future all died in the trenches of Europe.

My first task in writing the work began with finding the appropriate texts. In my research I found an extremely voluminous amount of poetry, letters, and stories, written by the men and women who lived, fought and died during one of the most horrendous periods in our world history. I needed to find the right balance of texts that would dramatically flow throughout the piece. I literally spent months of intense research, reliving the pain, passion, and sadness that I found in many of these poems.

Once I selected the set of texts that I would use, I began the process of composing. I also refreshed my memory with two films: *All Quiet on the Western Front* and Stanley Kubrick's *Paths of Glory*, both of which I studied again.

The cantata title *And Crimson Roses Once Again Be Fair* is a line from the poem *Perhaps*, written in 1916 and one of the first poems I found by Vera Brittain, a nurse who served on the front lines. Her fiancé was killed in battle four months after his proposal to her. It was this poem that became the inspiration for the cantata.

Joseph Turrin

www.josephturrin.com

Richard Einhorn (b. 1952)

Richard Einhorn has written opera, orchestral and chamber music, song cycles, multimedia events, film music, and dance scores. *Voices of Light*, his opera/oratorio in celebration of Joan of Arc, has been hailed as “a great masterpiece of contemporary music” and “a work of meticulous genius.” The Sony Classical album of *Voices of Light*, featuring Anonymous 4, was a Billboard classical bestseller.

Additional works include *Red Angels* for New York City Ballet, *The Shooting Gallery*, a multimedia collaboration with filmmaker Bill Morrison, and *The Origin*, a 90-minute oratorio on Darwin (also with original films by Bill Morrison), and Pirjo Honkasalo's *Fire-Eater*, for which Einhorn won a Finnish Academy Award for best musical score.

Richard Einhorn graduated summa cum laude in music from Columbia University where he studied with Vladimir Ussachevsky, Jack Beeson, and Mario Davidovsky. Before turning his attention exclusively to composition, he worked as a record producer for numerous major artists including Isaac Stern and Glenn Gould. His production of the Bach cello suites with Yo-Yo Ma won a GRAMMY Award for Best Instrumental Performance.

Einhorn has received numerous music awards and grants, and is also a well-known advocate for people with hearing loss.

The Luminous Ground (2023)

According to the great Buddhist philosopher Nāgārjuna, “The Luminous Ground” is that stage in a person’s progress towards enlightenment when “the pacifying light of wisdom dawns” and “attachment and aversion have thoroughly ceased.” It is a nearly unimaginable state of serenity, but one that is evoked, for me, by the extraordinary light sculptures of James Turrell. When Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez said that “light” was the theme of the concert for which he was kindly commissioning a new piece, it was Turrell’s work that immediately came to mind, specifically his stunningly beautiful installation at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City in 2013.

In *The Luminous Ground* I have sought to turn my experience of Turrell’s contemplative visual art into a slow, gradually changing soundscape that always remains still and hushed. A wordless chorus performs long, sustained, overlapping drones that interweave with the strings. The piano plays simple chords and fragments of melody that, in the final section become a soft, chiming chord whose repetitions grow farther apart.

Richard Einhorn

www.richardeinhorn.com

Gilda Lyons (b. 1975)

Gilda Lyons, composer, vocalist, and visual artist, combines elements of Renaissance, neo-Baroque, spectral, folk, agitprop, music theater, and extended vocalism to create works of uncompromising emotional honesty and melodic beauty. Her music – described as “hair-raising, yet elegant” (*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*), “like nothing you’ve ever heard before” (*NATS Journal of Singing*), and “masterly” (*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*) – is available on the Clarion, GPR, Naxos, New Dynamic, New Focus, Roven, and Yarlung labels. Laura Strickling’s GRAMMY-nominated recording of Lyons’ *Songs of Lament and Praise* was described by *Opera News* as “quietly devastating.” A fierce advocate of contemporary composers, *Opera News* praised Lyons’ “winning delivery, full of character” in her collaboration with Laura Ward (Lyric Fest: Naxos 8.559919). Of her recorded performance in *Shining Brow* (Buffalo Philharmonic/JoAnn Falletta: Naxos 8669020-21), *Opera UK* wrote, “Gilda Lyons’s clear soprano compels admiration.” Lyons received the Paris Film Awards’ Best Actress in an Indie Feature Film for her performance in Daron Hagen’s operafilm *9/10: Love Before the Fall*. She serves as co-chair of composition at Wintergreen Music Academy; chair of composition at The Hartt School; executive director of the Richard P. Garmany Chamber Music Series; and is on the board of advisors of Composers Now, the Steven R. Gerber Trust, and Sparks & Wiry Cries. Her music is published by Schott, E. C. Schirmer Music Company, and Burning Sled Media.

Momotombo (2022)

Nicaragua is home to a range of volcanic formations from young cinder cones and lava domes to calderas and steeply ascending stratovolcanoes. Of them all – observed throughout the ages by caciques, poets, first peoples, conquerors – the greatest may be Momotombo. Rubén Darío’s poem *Momotombo* embraces the eternal nature of the volcano, present through the rising and passing of epochs, while placing it in the context of an ephemeral moment approaching the volcano by train as a boy: “I was fifteen: a star in my hand!”

I was read Darío’s poetry since early childhood; my mother – born and raised in Diriamba, Nicaragua – had a deep and layered connection to his work, and she made a point of instilling in me an appreciation for his rich imagery, rhythmic drive, lyricism, and wordplay, and a love for the heart that fuels so much of his writing. In his *Momotombo*, Darío’s contrasting imagery is potent, with the train that keeps going, the volcano that stands seemingly unchanged for all time, and the soul that remains constant as the body changes and inevitably expires, all witness to accounts of and by people who have come and gone. I followed this shape in this new work for chorus, tracing a line from Darío to the sources he references in his poem – Victor Hugo, from *Les Raisons du Momotombo*, and E. G. Squier’s account of the old friars who went up the volcano and did not come back – and beyond, referencing Oviedo’s *History of the Indies* and a letter to court from Bartolomé de las Casas – all of which exist in the shadow of the eternal Momotombo, as the memory of a fifteen-year-old self flickers brightly, and as the train keeps going.

Gilda Lyons

www.gildalyons.com

And Crimson Roses Once Again Be Fair

2 I. Let us remember Spring will come again – May 1915

Let us remember Spring will come again
To the scorched, blackened woods, where all the
wounded trees Wait, with their old wise patience
for the heavenly rain, Sure of the sky: sure of the
sea to send its healing breeze,
Sure of the sun. And even as to these
Surely the Spring, when God shall please
Will come again like a divine surprise
To those who sit to-day with their great Dead,
hands in their hands, eyes in their eyes, At one
with Love, at one with Grief: blind to the scattered
things and changing skies.

Charlotte Mew (1869–1928)

3 II. Rejoice, friends! That we are alive

Rejoice, friends! that we are alive
And that we're young and vigorous.
Never has there been a year like this,
And never has youth been so blessed.

For we can stand and we can march
Where the morning dawns and the evening sinks.
The greatest of all epochs
Puts its mark upon our young hearts.

And no matter what may befall any one of us
He shall have seen this proud year.

Bruno Frank (1887–1945)

English translation by Gordon A. Craig (1966).

Used with permission by the Estate of Gordon A. Craig.

4 III. Bombardment

Four days the earth was rent and torn
By bursting steel,
The houses fell about us;
Three nights we dared not sleep,
Sweating, and listening for the imminent crash
Which meant our death.
The fourth night every man,
Nerve-tortured, racked to exhaustion,
Slept, muttering and twitching,
While the shells crashed overhead.
The fifth day there came a hush;
We left our holes
And looked above the wreckage of the earth
To where the white clouds moved in silent lines
Across the untroubled blue.

Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967)

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of the Estate of George Sassoon.*

5 IV. Evening at the Front

Every evening an officer
Comes into the damp tent and tells us who has
fallen. Every hungry evening when we long lie
shivering. There are dead men among us who will
die tomorrow.
One had his head blown off,
There a hand is dangling,
Here someone without a foot is wailing,
A captain got it straight in the chest,
And the rain, the rain goes on dripping
incessantly.
Throughout the night the cannons go on echoing
away. In the distance, villages burn with little red
tongues. O God, how is this destined to end?
Oh questing bullet, when will you come for me?

Wilhelm Klemm (1881–1968)
English translation by Patrick Bridgwater (b. 1931)
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6 V. I am the Division Commander – A Lieutenant General Sings

I am the Division Commander,
His Excellency.
I have attained what is humanly possible.
A lovely consciousness.
In front of me
Important people and chiefs of regiments
Bend their knees,
And my generals
Obey my commands.
God willing, my next command will be
An entire military corps.
Women, drama, music
Do not interest me much.
Compared to parades and battles,
That does not amount to much.
Would that there were an endless war
With bloody, howling winds.
Ordinary life Has no charm for me.

Alfred Lichtenstein (1889–1914)
English translation by Robert Levine, Sheldon A. Gilman and Harry Radford
(2000). Used with permission.

7 VI. Soliloquy – The Last Meeting

I know that he is lost among the stars,
And may return no more but in their light.
Though his hushed voice may call me in the stir
Of whispering trees, I shall not understand.
Men may not speak with stillness; and the joy
Of brooks that leap and tumble down green hills
Is faster than their feet; and all their thoughts
Can win no meaning from the talk of birds.
My heart is fooled with fancies, being wise;
For fancy is the gleaming of wet flowers
When the hid sun looks forth with golden stare.
Thus, when I find new loveliness to praise,
And things long-known shine out in sudden grace,
Then will I think: “He moves before me now.”
So he will never come but in delight,
And, as it was in life, his name shall be
Wonder awaking in a summer dawn,
And youth, that dying, touched my lips to song.

Siegfried Sassoon
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of the Estate of George Sassoon.

8 VII. Anthem for Doomed Youth

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles’ rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
The pallor of girls’ brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Wilfred Owen (1893–1918)

9 VIII. In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McCrae (1872–1918)

10 IX. Interlude

[not sung]

*Of them who running on that last high place
Leapt to swift unseen bullets, or went up
On the hot blast and fury of hell's upsurge, Or
plunged and fell away past this world's verge,
Some say God caught them even before they fell.*

Wilfred Owen

11 X. Poor Dogs

Round the pitiful villages,
round the burnt-out hamlets,
the dogs, the poor bewildered dogs, go mutely
padding to and fro among the shell-holes,
searching for the doorstep,
searching through the scattered rubble
and collapsed roofs,
stepping over charred beams,
sniffing uncertain scents.
The poor dogs' friendly eyes,
innocent and gentle,
implore the soldiers:
"Tell me, please tell me,
where's the rough and ready master,

the kindly mistress,
the little children who played with me?"
– those friendly amber eyes, questioning,
innocent and gentle ...
The poor lost dogs pad soundlessly like shadows
to and fro in villages of rubble,
like memories in madmen's heads.

Albert-Paul Granier (1888–1917)
*English translation by Ian Higgins, published by
Saxon Books (2014). Used with permission.*

12 XI. The Mortars

Juddering iron buckets clanging,
jerking dead-weight chains clanking,
the thunder lumbering caravan
labors on, a-long the baking roads and tracks,
all thunderous crash and clash.
The straining, weary horses
ponderingly nod,
as though to doubt
their on-ward slog will ever end ...
Wheels as thick as millstones
mill the crunching road.
And in towns and villages along the way
thunderstruck groups watch
the dead-weight cortege of death grind past,
the squat carriages, bolt-stubbed muscles bulging,
and, mute, menacing, brutal, the black barrels,
muzzled and bound like lunatics.

Albert-Paul Granier
*English translation by Ian Higgins, published by
Saxon Books. Used with permission.*

14 XIII. Perhaps

Perhaps someday the sun will shine again,
And I shall see that still the skies are blue,
And feel once more I do not live in vain,
Although bereft of You.
Perhaps the golden meadows at my feet
Will make the sunny hours of spring seem gay,
And I shall find the white May-blossoms sweet,
Though You have passed away.

Perhaps the summer woods will shimmer bright,
And crimson roses once again be fair,
And autumn harvest fields a rich delight,
Although You are not there.
Perhaps someday I shall not shrink in pain
To see the passing of the dying year,
And listen to Christmas songs again,
Although You cannot hear.
But though kind Time may many joys renew,
There is one greatest joy I shall not know
Again, because my heart for loss of You
Was broken, long ago.

Vera Brittain (1893–1970)
The text of Vera Brittain's Perhaps (1916) is used by permission of Mark
Bostridge and T.J. Brittain-Catlin,
Literary Executors for the Vera Brittain Estate 1970.

**15 XIV. Let us remember Spring will come again
(Epilogue)**

Let us remember Spring will come again
To the scorched, blackened woods, where all the
wounded trees Wait, with their old wise patience
for the heavenly rain, Sure of the sky: sure of the
sea to send its healing breeze,
Sure of the sun. And even as to these
Surely the Spring, when God shall please
Will come again like a divine surprise
To those who sit to-day with their great Dead,
hands in their hands, eyes in their eyes, At one
with Love, at one with Grief: blind to the scattered
things and changing skies.

Charlotte Mew

Momotombo

17 I. El tren iba rodando sobre sus rieles

El tren iba rodando sobre sus rieles. Era
en los días de mí dorada primavera
y era en mí Nicaragua natal.

El tren iba rodando sobre sus rieles.
yo tenía quince años: una estrella en la mano!
y era en mí Nicaragua natal.

El tren iba rodando sobre sus rieles.

De pronto,
Suddenly, between a canopy of trees, I saw

“Ô vieux Momotombo, colosse chauve et nu...”

Ô vieux Momotombo, «calvo y desnudo», and
full of ancient triumphal pride.

El tren iba rodando sobre sus rieles.
yo tenía quince años: una estrella en la mano!
I was fifteen: a star in my hand!

El tren iba rodando sobre sus rieles.

Rubén Darío (1867–1916), from Momotombo (1907)
Victor Hugo (1802–1885), from Les Raisons du Momotombo/La Légende
des siècles (1859)

18 II. The baptism of volcanoes

[The baptism of volcanoes] is an old practice ...
the ceremony was performed early after the Conquest
on all the volcanoes in Nicaragua,
with the exception of Momotombo.
The old friars who started for its summit
to set up the cross there
were never heard from again.

E. G. Squier (1821–1888), Special chargé d'affaires of the United States to
the Republics of Central America from Travels in Central America,
particularly in Nicaragua, 1853.

19 III. ¡Momotombo! – exclamé

A league and a half from the city of León is a very high mountain on the other side of the lake... from the highest peak rises smoke without ceasing...

There, no year passes without the earth shaking many times.

¡Momotombo! -exclamé- ¡oh nombre de epopeya!
¡Oh Momotombo ronco y sonoro!

I have been in that city fleeing to the streets

*I counted in a single night sixty or so, one after another ...
... it is a cause of much fear*

*Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés (1478–1557), from 1535 General and Natural History of the Indies, and Islands and Lands of the Oceanic Sea, part three, Volume IV (1855)
Rubén Darío, from Momotombo (1907)*

20 IV. Evocación

*Know your grace,
que este reino de Nicaragua es... un paraíso
...such abundance, such good health
and the gentleness of its people.*

Oh Momotombo... Te amo
Oh Momotombo... I love you
because at your evocation they come to me again,
porque a tu evocación vienen a mí otra vez,
perfumes de mí infancia, brisas de mí niñez.

pride...

*Bartolomé de las Casas (1474–1566), de una carta a un personaje de la corte, 1552
Rubén Darío, from Momotombo (1907)*

21 V. Yo tenía quince años

Momotombo stood lyrical and sovereign,
I was fifteen: a star in my hand!

El tren ...

Rubén Darío, from Momotombo (1907)

Texts translated and adapted by Gilda Lyons.

Frederica von Stade



Mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade continues to be extolled as one of the music world's most beloved figures, and has enriched the world of classical music for four and a half decades. Though she retired from full-time performances in 2010, she continues to make special appearances in concert and opera. Her career has taken her to the stages of all the world's great opera houses and concert halls. She has made over 70 recordings with every major label, and her recordings have garnered six GRAMMY nominations, two Grand Prix du Disque awards, the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik, Italy's Premio della Critica Discografica, and "Best of the Year" citations by *Stereo Review* and *Opera News*. In 1998 France appointed von Stade an officer of L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and in 1983 she was given an award at The White House by President Reagan in recognition of her significant contribution to the arts. In January 2024 she was inducted into the 2023 Opera Hall of Fame by OPERA America.

Erinn Sensenig



Soprano Erinn Sensenig is an ensemble singer and soloist focusing on Early Music and music by living composers. A native of Reading, Pennsylvania, she began singing as a young child in her father's Presbyterian church and continued to perform in choir and musicals throughout school. She earned a degree in music education from Westminster Choir College, where she developed a love for choral singing alongside solo performing, and began a career in professional solo and choral singing. After graduating from Westminster, Sensenig moved to Dallas, Texas, where she established a private voice studio and sang professionally as a soloist and chorister with Church of the Incarnation, Orpheus Chamber Singers, Victoria Bach Festival, and Vox Humana, among others. She then relocated to New York City, where she currently sings as a soloist and ensemble member with Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, All Souls NYC, Musica Viva NY, Musica Sacra, Clarion, Bard SummerScape, and other ensembles throughout the city. In addition to her work as a singer, Sensenig maintains a private voice studio. She has studied with Tamara Black, Zehava Gal, and Nancy Elledge.

www.erinnsensenig.com

Musica Viva NY



Photo: Jack Colver

Critically acclaimed Musica Viva NY was established nearly 50 years ago in New York City. Today, its mission is to bring world-class music to a widening community through its annual concert series, an active community engagement program, and an ambitious artistic vision. Under the baton of artistic director Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez since 2015, Musica Viva NY's superb chamber choir and world class collaborating instrumentalists make their concert home in Manhattan's historic All Souls Church. Musica Viva NY regularly combines its presentation of the classical repertoire with less widely known works, as part of its commitment to perform the works of living American composers, female composers and composers of color, including works that address social, racial or environmental issues. Committed to new music, Musica Viva NY is paving the way for exciting and daring collaborations with guest

artists and organizations. Musica Viva NY has commissioned and premiered numerous works by contemporary composers, including Bora Yoon, Seymour Bernstein, Elena Ruehr, Joseph Turrin, Bruce Saylor, Jean-Louis Petit, Eugenio Toussaint, Gilda Lyons, Richard Einhorn, Trent Johnson and Trevor Weston.

www.musicaviva.org

Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez



Photo: Alejandro Ibarra

Esteemed conductor and pianist Dr. Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez is artistic director of Musica Viva NY and director of music at the historic Unitarian Church of All Souls in Manhattan. He is also artistic director and co-founder of the New Orchestra of Washington, and artistic director of the Victoria Bach Festival. He has been recognized as a conductor with the incisive clarity of someone born to the idiom. Since taking the helm at Musica Viva NY in 2015, Hernandez-Valdez has presented an exceptionally broad and innovative repertoire in each of the choir's seasons, engaging and inspiring audiences with remarkable interpretations of familiar and new works, and exploring the acoustical capabilities of the historic sanctuary of All Souls Church and other venues in New York City. A passionate advocate of new music, Hernandez-Valdez has commissioned and premiered works by a significant number of remarkable composers. He is the recipient of a 2016 Shenandoah Conservatory Alumni of Excellence Award. He resides in New York City.

www.alejandrohernandezvaldez.com

CRIMSON ROSES

Contemporary American Choral Music

- 1–15** Joseph Turrin (b. 1947)
And Crimson Roses Once Again
Be Fair (2018) **41:27**
- 16** Richard Einhorn (b. 1952)
The Luminous Ground (2023) **6:28**
- 17–21** Gilda Lyons (b. 1975)
Momotombo (2022) **12:18**

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

Frederica von Stade, Mezzo-soprano **14**

Erinn Sensenig, Soprano **7**

Musica Viva NY Choir **2–9 11 12 15–21**
and Orchestra **1–16**

Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez,
Artistic Director and Conductor

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.
The sung texts and English translations can be found
inside the booklet, and may also be accessed at
www.naxos.com/libretti/559944.htm

Recorded: **5 1–16** and **6 17–21** December 2023
at the Concert Hall of The Performing Arts Center,
Purchase College, State University of New York, USA
Producer, mixing engineer and editor: Steven Epstein
Recording engineer: Rick Jacobsohn
Booklet notes: Joseph Turrin, Richard Einhorn, Gilda Lyons
Publishers: Joseph Turrin Music (ASCAP) **1–15**,
Richard Einhorn Music (ASCAP) **16**, Burning Sled Music **17–21**
Cover photograph by Zuzanna Rudas Photography



AMERICAN CLASSICS

The three world premiere choral recordings on this album represent the enduring commitment of Musica Viva NY's artistic director, Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez, to perform new works by living composers. Richard Einhorn's *The Luminous Ground* is a deeply reflective and spiritually engaging work, while Gilda Lyons' brilliantly written *Momotombo* is inspired by the spectacular volcanic landscape of Nicaragua. Joseph Turrin's *Crimson Roses Once Again Be Fair* is a moving cantata that marks the centenary of the First World War Armistice in November of 1918 – the piece is dedicated to those who bravely fought and died, forever enshrined in history.

WWW.NAXOS.COM

Playing
Time:
61:20