

The Seven Circles of Life: A Subud Cantata

“Strengthen the bond between your inner feeling and the one who watches over you.” This statement is an excerpt from the receivings of the Indonesian spiritual guide and founder of Subud, Muhammad-Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo (known affectionately as Bapak), which were written down in the form of a poem entitled *Susila Budhi Dharma*. A simple statement informed with great profundity, it serves as the cornerstone of ***The Seven Circles of Life: A Subud Cantata***. The piece is written in ten movements, with the first three serving as an introduction to the last seven, which proceed to describe various levels (or circles) upon which mankind dwells during the daily routine and across the ages. Each circle is represented by a force, ranging from the material to the high spiritual, which either distract from or enhance one’s worship of God. The listener, during the course of the piece, encounters the lowest and darkest of forces, but by the end of the cantata is guided to the highest of possible forces.

There are three main musical elements to this work, the first of which is introduced in the first two measures. A five-note motive, representing Subud, is trumpeted first, only to be countered by another five-note motive representing the nafsu (lower forces). This conflict between the two motives is demonstrated throughout the cantata, with the nafsu loosening their figurative grip by the end of the work. Second, the solo cello is heard as the musical presence of Bapak, accompanying the words spoken by the narrator. The last musical element comes in the form of the Indonesian chants which were used to sing the entire poem, *Susila Budhi Dharma*. This chanting was recorded on tape for the Subud archives and made available to Richman by Lorenzo Music. The composer transcribed the chants and then incorporated them into the fabric of the cantata, sometimes in their full form

and sometimes in a truncated, simplified form.

This work came about as a direct result of conversations with Marston Gregory and Rifka Several. As its inception and subsequent premiere would not have been possible without these two unique and supportive individuals, *The Seven Circles of Life: A Subud Cantata* is dedicated, with much appreciation, to Marston Gregory and Rifka Several.

About the Musicians

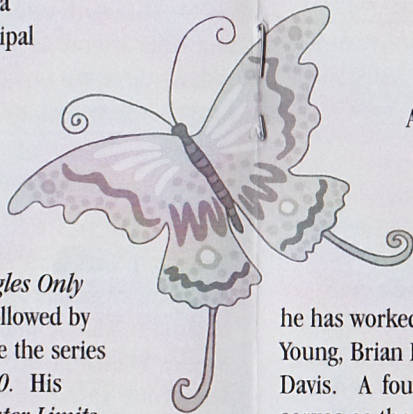
LUCAS RICHMAN has been Music Director and Conductor for the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra since 2003. Mr. Richman served as the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra’s Assistant and Resident Conductor from 1998-2004. Mr. Richman has appeared as guest conductor with numerous orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Baltimore Symphony, San Antonio Symphony, Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra, the SWR Radio Orchestra of Kaiserslautern (Germany) and the Zagreb Philharmonic (Croatia). As a composer, Mr. Richman has had his music performed by over two hundred orchestras across the United States in the last ten years. Dedicated to introducing young people to the power of music, he has composed a canon of orchestral works written specifically for children, information about which can be found through LeDor Group, Inc. at www.ledorgroup.com.

FELIPE AGUIRRE started his international career in 1998 at the Cape Town Opera, South Africa and, since then, he has performed as conductor and pianist in Colombia, Spain, the United States, Slovakia, Austria and Germany. Born in Bogota, Colombia in 1976, Felipe started piano studies at a very early age, guided by his father. From 1990-1997 he was a student of Tatiana Pavlova at the Bogota Conservatory, also studying conducting with Carlos Alvarado and composition with Blas Atehortua. Mr. Aguirre has received excellent reviews as a piano soloist while also having the opportunity to conduct

various orchestras such as the Colombia Symphony, Bogota Philharmonic, Musikverein Symphony Orchestra, the Bratislava Radio Orchestra and the Cuba Philharmonic. Since 2002 he has been Music Director and Principal Conductor for the Ibague Symphony Orchestra.

PETER MARK RICHMAN has performed on Broadway, off-Broadway, in Theaters across the country, and has been a guest star in over 500 Television Shows and Movies. Coming from the Actors Studio and the Broadway Theater, he has appeared in many films including *Friendly Persuasion*, *The Black Orchid*, *The Strange One*, *The Dark Intruder*, *For Singles Only* and *Naked Gun 2 1/2*. His television career began with live TV followed by his own NBC series *Cain's Hundred* as Nick Cain. After that came the series *Longstreet*, *Dynasty*, *Three's Company* and *Beverly Hills 90210*. His appearances on television also include the classic sci-fi shows *Outer Limits*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Star Trek : The Next Generation*. A serious and accomplished artist with numerous one-man exhibitions, Mr. Richman is also the author of two novels; *Hollander's Deal* and *The Rebirth of Ira Masters*, and has just completed his autobiography. His latest film is *Pool Hall Junkies* with Christopher Walken and Rod Steiger.

Soprano SHIRA ADLER has performed in a myriad of genres including Musical Theatre, Opera, Jazz, Jewish Folk, Contemporary and Liturgical music. Ms Adler has been guest artist with various orchestras including the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and received critical acclaim for her operatic and theatrical roles in productions of Mozart's *The Impresario*, Menotti's *The Medium* and *The Mikado*, among others. As a recording artist, she has produced and recorded *Pitchu Li—Opening the Gates of Healing* for her former congregation in Malibu, California and *Shirei Sinai—Songs of Sinai—A Celebration of*



Shabbat Songs for Temple Sinai in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Ms Adler received a Bachelors of Arts in music from UCLA and Masters of Fine Arts from UC-Irvine as well as Jewish Cantorial training from Master Chazzan Samuel Fordis.

American cellist REYNARD ROTT started playing the cello at the age of three and became the youngest pupil ever of renowned cello pedagogue Bonnie Hampton at the age of eight. He was accepted into the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia at the age of 16, and received his BA from the Juilliard School in New York at age 20. Since earning his MA in Contemporary Music Performance from the University of California in 2002, he has worked with many leading figures of the New Music movement, including La Monte Young, Brian Ferneyhough, Milton Babbitt, Krystoff Penderecki, George Lewis, and Anthony Davis. A founding member of the London-based Chamber Domaine, Reynard also serves as the principal cellist for the Hanover State Orchestra. His work appears on labels as diverse as ASV, ATP, and Southern Records.

The TIROLER KAMMERORCHESTER INNSTRUMENTI, a 35-piece professional ensemble comprised mostly of students and graduates of the Mozarteum Conservatory, began performing concerts in the summer of 1997, and since then has become a very important feature of the Tyrolean cultural scene. The ensemble presents a diverse program of works from the Viennese Classical Period to current compositions, and supports the music of contemporary composers by providing commissions with the financial support of the Province of Tyrol. The Orchestra has performed in cooperation with institutions, concert agencies, choirs and singers, as well as established instrumental soloists including those from the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra such as Ernst Ottensamer, Peter Schmidl, Wolfgang Schulz, and Martin Gabriel.

THE SEVEN CIRCLES OF LIFE: A SUBUD CANTATA

*Text adapted from Susila Budhi Dharma as
received by Muhammad-Subuh Sumobadiwidjojo*

Music by Lucas Richman



I. Orchestral Prelude

II. Awakening

NARRATOR: "Begin..."

III. Soprano, Chorus:

Strengthen the bond between your inner feeling
and the One who watches over you, so that you may readily
obtain all that you truly need. And doing that will signify that
you really are high creatures of God.

NARRATOR: If a comparison is made with a lamp, the burning flame
is its character — while the oil is the force that fills the inner feeling and empowers your heart
and mind to work. Clearly, then, the brightness or dimness of the lamplight depends entirely
on the oil. Likewise, whether your heart or mind work well or badly, rightly or wrongly,
depends entirely on the quality of the force that is the content of your inner feeling.

IV. Rob Raiwani

MEN'S CHORUS: A man must not be willing to become the slave of the material force. As a
human being he should master it and not be mastered by it.

WOMEN'S CHORUS: The master of one's life is not the mind, but the jiwa, the human inner
force.

MEN'S CHORUS: Once a man has sunk down into the material realm his feelings are not valid.

He no longer feels the difference between what is right and wrong.

WOMEN'S CHORUS: The master of one's life is not the mind but the jiwa, the human inner force.

V. Rob Nabadi

NARRATOR: The power of plant life is another force that also accompanies human life on earth.
Without it, human beings would have no strength — nor a body like their present earthly one.
When the essences of food from plants enter a human body, to form and nourish it, their entry
is a joining with the essences already there. Truly, then, this is a meeting between the outer life
and the inner. The difference between the material and plant forces is that the material force
acts as a participant in human thinking — while the forces of plant essences act in parallel with
the feelings throughout the human body.

VI. Rob Chewani

CHORUS: Who is enthroned in your inner self for the time being? One who is filled with the
animal force follows the greed of one's heart. The heart serves forces unknown to you;
inhuman powers the weak pursue. Who is enthroned in your inner self for the time being?

NARRATOR: Wrong behavior in human beings provides the animal forces a free reign to do what
they want. The longer this goes on, the more the animal forces thrive. If it continues human
beings are sure to forfeit their glory as beings who were created to excel. My children, for this
reason, never neglect your latihan, your spiritual exercise, so that you may soon be able to feel
and understand correctly how the forces within you are made up and how they differ.

VII. Rob Jasmaniah

NARRATOR: Through the influence of the human force, the essentials for human life become
more complete, because it enables people to bring into being other creatures like themselves.
For this purpose, there exists two different natures, one being man and the other, woman.

CHORUS: Human force combined with human force, the essences of man and woman being
shared. Human force combined with human force, the union of the jivas when paired...

VIII. Rob Rochaniab

NARRATOR: My children, do realize that you must be able to distinguish all the forces and what

the content is within everything you do, so that you may find a fitting path for your life. And do not go on being led by your heart and mind, filled as they are by desires, which care only for what pleases them — and regard the life of the soul as boring. But in fact, it is a necessity — even the main necessity — in order for your life to be happy.

IX. Rob Rachmaniah

SOPRANO: Empty yourself of heart and mind. Empty yourself of thoughts and fancies. Empty yourself and you will find a state coming from within, a vibration waiting to begin that feels like the touch of a power never felt before.

NARRATOR: This receiving will certainly progress in the course of time, until eventually you can recognize the content of your inner feeling and also know the character, use, and activity of that content.

X. Rob Rabbaniyah

CHORUS: It has been so willed in life. That man should occupy the highest place. Thus has God willed life to be.

NARRATOR: If you do not reach your true level — meaning the level at which you are good at managing the life structure of your companion forces according to their natures — you will not be able to rise higher; that is, to the greater, noble life meant for humanity.

CHORUS: We can set our course towards perfection. If we find our true inner purpose. Thus has God willed life to be.

NARRATOR: It is most necessary for people to seek knowledge — both outer and inner. This is necessary in order that, with this knowledge, you can reach the level of perfection — and understand the true use of knowledge in relation to your own human self.

CHORUS: We can become instruments for receiving understanding. To benefit human life on earth and hereafter. Thus has God willed life to be. Strengthen the bond between your inner feeling and the One who watches over you, for doing that will signify that you really are high creatures of God.

NARRATOR: Finish...