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A study of René Clausen's "A New Creation": A biography and brief analysis

W. Jerald Brabec

University of Nebraska at Omaha

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A STUDY OF RENÉ CLAUSEN'S A NEW CREATION:

A BIOGRAPHY AND BRIEF ANALYSIS

A Thesis Equivalent Project

Presented to the

Department of Music

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Music

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

W. Jerald Brabec

August 1993

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THESIS EQUIVALENT PROJECT ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Master of Music, University of
Nebraska at Omaha.

Committee

Name	Department
<i>Kenton Barks</i>	<i>Music</i>
<i>Eric Manley</i>	<i>Chemistry</i>

Lorraine M. (Cina) Cisario

Chairman

9/23/93

Date

Abstract

The body of A Study of René Clausen's a new Creation: A Biography and Brief Analysis is divided into two parts. In the first part an overview of Clausen's life is presented since biographical information about this composer has not been previously published. The second part consists of a brief analysis of Clausen's major choral work a new Creation. Since Clausen's works have not been the subject of previous writings, the resource material for this document is the personal interview, conducted by the author. Interviews were held not only with René Clausen, but also with several of his colleagues.

After the introduction to the paper, the biographical information about René Clausen includes family background, educational experiences, musical development and current professional status.

The analysis of a new Creation begins with a detailed index which presents the voicing, orchestration, key and text for each movement. A verbal analysis of each movement of a new Creation is then treated. Figures from the printed score are included in this verbal analysis to aid understanding.

An alphabetical and chronological listing of published works are included in appendixes following the summary.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

'Today's church choral director faces a dilemma in the selection of music suitable for worship. The choice exists between compositions that are trite, sentimental and emotional, or compositions which enhance the liturgy, teach the congregation and inspire religious practice. There are composers who seem content to produce banal sacred music. Rene Clausen regards himself "as a composer who encourages choral directors to select church music above the trite, sentimental and emotional."

During an interview with Clausen, he commented about the task of the church musician:

You are a church musician. You know how hard you have to work to make sure everything is right. There is plenty of 'Jezak' music out there...that's not what I want to write. I don't want to be known for that...I don't want to sell that!

This statement was precipitated by Clausen's view on the difficulties facing today's church musicians, particularly church choral directors. This view is common among church musicians whose standards place a high priority on increasing the musical vocabulary of their congregations. The task, although a lofty one, is not overwhelming if kept

in the correct perspective.

All church leaders, whatever their background and station, share the common task of furthering the musical awareness of their congregations. Recent currents in liturgical renewal in the churches have heightened and accented that task (Westermeyer 1). But too often musicians and the people they serve are unaware, not only of the newly heightened nature of the task before them, but also of the task itself and its importance.

It is necessary, then, for serious church musicians to establish and hold to some standard as they go about the selection and subsequent performance of music. For basic structures of worthwhile sacred music i.e., beauty of melodic line, integrity of harmonic design, and theologically sound text, choral conductors look to the compositional masterworks of classic choral literature - the works of Bach for example. "It is the contemporary sacred literature of today that is in question," stated Clausen.

Any choral director will attest to the overwhelming quantity of new publications that are available for perusal. The Mark Foster Music Company estimates that in the calendar year of 1993, twenty to twenty-five new publications will be printed. Multiply that number by the many legitimate publishing houses and the result is astounding. A current marketing strategy is to send packets containing new releases "sure to be the most loved by your choir", "sure to be a new

favorite of your congregation" or, in other words, "sure to sell". Clausen's reference to this "Jezak music" refers to the choral music which is sure to sell. The publishing houses use this common sales tactic to influence church choral directors. It is the task of choral directors to recognize this tactic and to determine the quality of the music that will enhance both the spirit of worship and the musical development of their congregations.

The compositions of Rene Clausen have made the responsibility of church choral directors easier. He has composed extensively for the SATB choir. Although most compositions are a cappella, some use the keyboard and other instrumentation to provide varied accompaniment. Clausen's current catalogue of published works includes twenty-eight titles.

With his major work, a new Creation, Clausen gives choral directors a work that is achievable by many volunteer church choirs. It also fulfills the necessary requirements that contemporary sacred choral music creates a reverential and musical atmosphere.

Since biographical information and discussions of his work, a new Creation, have not been presented in printed form, the information for this paper has been obtained through a personal interview with Rene Clausen and through several telephone interviews with his colleagues. This paper will treat his biography and then discuss a new Creation and

its role in the repertory.

Chapter 2

Biography

Born on the 17th of April, 1953, in Fairbow, Minnesota, René King Clausen was the oldest of three children. His father was an admirer of French tenor, René Maison, popular at the Metropolitan Opera during the late 1930's and 1940's. Although "René" is an uncommon name in the United States, Clausen relates with great delight his visit to Strasbourg, France. He discovered there the name "René" used with frequency. The middle name "King" resulted from his father's reverence for the great movie director King Vidor (1894-1985).

As an elementary educator, Clausen's father was employed as a teacher in the primary grades for the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. He also held the position of choir director and organist for the many churches he served. A sufferer of "wanderlust," Mr. Clausen would move his family throughout Minnesota, to Chicago, Illinois, to Adrian, Michigan, and back to Minnesota, and, finally, to Los Angeles, California. René Clausen stated, "I was always on the outside looking in at various cultures around the country."

One would assume that with a musical background in the family (his father was a self-taught organist and conductor), there would be study provided for the child

desiring it. On the contrary, his father's hopes for René were of a military career, perhaps a commission to the Air Force Academy. Saturday mornings would find René asking to play in the church basement while his father practiced. There was a piano in the church basement, and the young René often sat for hours experimenting on the keyboard.

Clausen recently learned of the earliest of his musical ventures from his mother. At the age of two he was insistent about viewing his favorite television program each day, but only sat and watched through the playing of the program's introductory theme song. He looks back at his fascination with making music and wonders if it began with that theme. At the age of six the desire to study piano was definite, although unheeded by his parents. His formal musical study would not begin until the summer of seventh grade, 1964.

For many youngsters a summer band program is an entry point for musical training. It was so for Clausen as he began to learn the saxophone, an instrument he still plays. Although the actual study time was short, it provided the needed impetus. When he arrived in California that fall, he found the focus on public school ensembles was different than that in the Middle West. The California system placed a high priority on instrumental stage bands. His capabilities on the tenor saxophone qualified him for placement in the school stage band. He soon found that to progress to the more advanced level, he would also need knowledge of the clarinet.

This motivation prompted him to acquire a school instrument and the necessary fingering charts. And so it went with the trumpet and french horn, all school instruments, all self-taught.

As his flexibility for playing instruments increased, his experimentation with composing began. During his sophomore year at Chadwick High School, a fascination with transposition and the wide variety of instrumental techniques and ranges led to his scoring the Herb Alpert release "This Guy's in Love with You" for the high school stage band. He recalled this first success:

It was a whole laboratory out there to learn about. So I just studied it and thought I'd write for it. I studied scores, studied stage band charts....How did they write for them?

That was my main concern. (Clausen 24 May 1993)

These experiments in composition were often created by need. During his junior year Clausen proceeded, at the request of friends, to arrange a set of three Baroque dance variations for bassoon, french horn and bass clarinet for an upcoming contest. The result was the "Wie zum Teufel Variations", translated "like the devil." The theme of these variations was a disguised "Come on Baby, Light My Fire." The judge who did not recognize this popular song gave the ensemble a top rating.

During his senior year, Clausen became more ambitious

and arranged half-time shows for the marching band. His inspiration for composition continued to be through score study and self-learning. Textbooks on theory, orchestration and instrumental techniques were never far from reach. It was a creative time that he fondly remembers.

Clausen also realized his interest in choral music during these formative years. It was while singing in the high school choir, under the leadership of Don Gustafson, that he was encouraged to attend a concert presented by a touring college choir from the Midwest. He and a friend went to the Dorothy Chandler Pavillion and were astounded by what they heard. The St. Olaf College Choir, under the direction of Kenneth Jennings, created sounds which were life-altering for them. The two friends, who were so inspired by what they had heard the evening before, made plans to attend the same concert on the subsequent evening in Pasadena and a concert in Bakersfield on the third night. As fate would have it, the St. Olaf ensemble would repeat this tour three years later with Clausen and friend as singing members.

In the fall of 1970, Clausen matriculated as a freshman with a major in music education at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. Finally able to study theory and piano formally, he would also complete hours which would qualify him for a double major in religion. His studies and the many performance opportunities consumed the majority of his time. About undergraduate life he reminisced:

Singers and instrumentalists, both, at the undergraduate level, tend to be used up by performance....If you have an interest outside of that, you don't get a chance to do anything, either as a conductor or composer. You take conducting your junior year in college, a two or three semester class. Who really knows what kind of a conductor they will be?...Who knows what kind of composer they can be? (Clausen 24 May 1993)

An important learning experience for Clausen was the knowledge of vocal pedagogy he gained during the study of voice. He was intensely interested not only in the problems occurring in his voice, but also in the voices of others. Why did sopranos have difficulties with tessitura at e"? Is there a reason to avoid tenor tessitura at f'? The familiarity with voices and their limitations was an important orchestration discovery for him.

Upon graduation from St. Olaf College in 1974, Clausen accepted a secondary teaching position in Crosby, Minnesota. In 1976, he took a temporary leave from teaching to pursue graduate study in conducting with Harold Decker at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. In the spring of 1978, while enrolled in a graduate conducting seminar, Clausen brought to class a choral arrangement of a Lutheran canticle he had recently completed for his church choir.

Coincidentally, on campus that day was James McKelvy, senior editor for the Mark Foster Music Company. By chance, McKelvy heard the piece as he walked through the hallway. Upon the conclusion of class, McKelvy discussed with Clausen the piece and its origin. The work, Thank the Lord, was subsequently published. The relationship between Clausen and the Mark Foster Company was established.

In 1978, with masters-level study successfully concluded, he accepted a college position as assistant professor of choral music at Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas. The duties assigned him included graduate-level choral composition and arranging. In 1984, Clausen accepted the position of Director of Choral Activities at Texas State University, Canyon, Texas. He returned to the University of Illinois for doctoral study in 1985. Currently, Clausen serves as Director of Choral Activities at Concordia College, Moorehead, Minnesota. His duties there also include conducting the Concordia Choir.

At the retirement of James McKelvy as senior editor of the Mark Foster Music Company, Clausen was asked to be the new senior editor. This position which he now holds has opened new horizons and challenges for the composer, and has also given him new insight into his own compositional art. About this passage of leadership, Mr. McKelvy related:

In essence, your job as editor is to make changes for the better--corrections in notes,

in harmonies, much like a magazine editor makes grammatical and punctuation corrections. As for René's work, I have never corrected a single note. He is a very talented young composer and arrangerA sensitive conductor and every bit a gentleman.

(McKelvy 3 June 1993)

Chapter 3

The Work

The following index of a new Creation is included to give an overview of the entire composition. For each movement the title, voicing, orchestration, key scheme and text is listed.

1. Prologue

Voice: STB soli

Orch.: Organ, bassoon, strings

Key : D major.

Text : In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In Him was life, and the life was the light of all. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not overcome it. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

(John I: 1, 4-5, 14)

2. All Flesh Is Grass

Voice: Divisi chorus with SATB soli

Orch.: Full orchestra

Key : d minor/D major

Text : All flesh is grass, and its glory as the flow'r of grass; the grass withers and flow'r fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

(I Peter 1:24-25)

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison. Lord, have mercy on my soul.

(Mass text)

3. O Be Joyful

Voice: SATB Chorus

Orch.: Full orchestra.

Key : D major/F major/A major

Text : O be joyful in the Lord, serve the Lord with gladness. Come before God with a

song. (Psalm 100: 1-2)

4. The Call

Voice: Divisi chorus with TB soli
 Orch.: Organ, harp, woodwinds, strings
 Key : f# minor/E major
 Text : The Lord called me from the womb,
 from the body of my mother he
 named my name. I am honored in
 the eyes of the Lord, and God has
 become my strength.
 (Isaiah 49: 1, 5)

Come, my way, my truth, my life:
 Such a way as gives us breath;
 Such a truth as ends all strife;
 Such a life as conquers death.

Come, my light, my feast, my
 strength:
 Such a light as shows a feast;
 Such a feast that mends in length;
 Such a strength as makes his
 guest.

Come, my joy, my love, my heart:
 Such a joy as none can move;
 Such a love as none can part;
 Such a heart as joys in love.
 (George Herbert, 1593-1632)

5. Lament

Voice: Soprano solo
 Orch.: Organ, solo woodwinds
 Key : g minor/Dorian Mode
 Text : I to myself have neither pow'r, nor
 worth, patience, nor love, nor anything
 right good. My soul is a poor land,
 plenteous in dearth. Here blades of
 grass, there a small herb, for food, a
 nothing that would be something, if it
 could. But if obedience in me grow I
 shall one day be better, better than I
 know.
 (George MacDonald, 1824-1905,
 from Diary of an Old Soul)

6. Agnus Dei

Voice: SSA chorus
 Orch.: Organ, solo bassoon
 Key : f minor
 Text : Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata
 mundi, miserere. (Mass text)

7. I Am the Bread of Life

Voice: Soprano solo
 Orch : Organ, flutes
 Key : G major
 Text : I am the bread of life. Who so comes to me
 shall never hunger, and who so believes in
 me shall never thirst. I am the living
 bread from heaven. If you eat this bread
 you shall live forever. (John 6: 35, 51)

8. A New Creation

Voice: Divisi Chorus
 Orch : Full orchestra
 Key : F major/G major/A major
 Text : Therefore, whoever is in Christ is a new
 creation. The old has passed away; you are
 a new creation. Behold the new has
 come! Alleluia. (II Corinthians 5: 17)

9. The Greatest of These Is Love

Voice: Tenor solo
 Orch.: Strings, harp
 Key : a minor/A major
 Text : If I speak in tongues of men and angels, but
 have not love, I am a noisy gong, or a
 clanging cymbal; and if I have prophetic
 pow'rs, and understand all mystery, all
 knowledge, and if I have faith to remove
 mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.
 Love is patient and kind; love is not
 jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or
 rude; love does not insist on its own way;
 love does not rejoice in the wrong, but
 rejoices in the right. Love bears
 all things, believes all things,
 hopes all things, endures all
 things. Love never ends.
 (I Corinthians 13: 1-2, 4-8)

10. Hymn

Voice: Divisi chorus
 Orch : A cappella
 Key : D major
 Text : Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal
 upon your arm, for love is strong as death.
 Many waters cannot quench love; neither can
 the floods drown it. (Song of Songs 8: 6-7)

11. The Spirit Helps Us

Voice: Divisi Chorus with SATB soli
 Orch : Full orchestra
 Key : d minor/E major/B major
 Text : The spirit helps us in our weakness, for we
 know not how to pray. The spirit pleads for
 us, with sighs too deep for words; and God,
 who searches us, knows the mind of the
 spirit. (Romans 8: 26-27)

A new heart I will give you, and a new
 spirit I will put within you. You shall be
 my people, and I shall be your God.
 (Ezekiel 36: 26, 28)

Praise the Lord; praise him in his
 sanctuary; praise him in his mighty
 firmament; praise him for his greatness.
 Praise him with a trumpet sound;
 praise him with harp and lute and timbrel
 and dance. Praise him with strings and
 pipe; praise him, laud him; praise him with
 sounding cymbal; praise him with loud
 clashing cymbal. Let ev'ry thing that has
 life praise the Lord! Alleluia.
 (Psalm 150)

Lord, now let thou thy servant
 depart in peace, according to thy
 word, for mine eyes have seen thy
 salvation, which thou hast
 prepared for all people. A light
 to lighten the Gentiles, a light
 to thy servant Israel, to the
 glory of thy people Israel.
 (Luke 2: 29-32)

Dona nobis pacem.
 (Mass text)

A composer is often asked to help mark significant events and ceremonies of a particular religion or congregation. Such commissions have brought about many classics of choral literature, for example Mozart's Requiem, Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass, Rossini's Stabat Mater, and Bernstein's Chichester Psalms. Clausen was commissioned by the Union Congregational Church of Rockville, Connecticut, to write a work in observance of the Church's 100th anniversary. About the work commissioned for his congregation, Clifford Wood, Director of Music for the Union Congregational Church, stated:

We decided in the fall of 1985 to have a work commissioned for our 100th anniversary. As we began to discuss the possibilities of composer, Dr. Clausen was the choir's choice. His work is thoroughly researched. We are a small, volunteer ensemble of thirty singers. Although not specifically designed for a small choir, the work is achievable. (Wood 4 June 1993)

Clausen was under no restriction as to the outcome of the piece. For some time he had collected favorite Biblical and theological references that he hoped someday to set to music. When the opportunity arose for him to compose an extended work without stipulation as to text or musical motif, he immediately began to arrange those references for his musical composition.

The common thread of the work is found in the text where the relationship between God and humanity is presented. When Clausen chose the order of the texts, he began to set the musical parameters of the work, deciding which movements would be for chorus and which for soloists. The orchestration necessary to support the vocal texture also took shape during this process.

Structurally, a new Creation is an eleven movement choral work scored with an orchestra of two flutes, oboe, bassoon, harp, timpani, strings and organ. Each movement functions as a separate entity and is built around a different Biblical or theological text. It progresses from the Gospel of John , "In the beginning" to the benediction of Simeon in the Gospel of Luke, "Lord, now let thou thy servant depart in peace." It also includes portions of the traditional Mass. To understand the totality of a new Creation, each movement must be viewed individually.

First Movement - Prologue

The first movement, entitled "Prologue," uses the Gospel of John 1: 1, 4-5, 14 as text. Musically, this movement gives the listener chant-like vocal glimpses of the calling of humanity by the Holy Spirit, both as individuals and as a corporate body. To achieve this effect of calling, Clausen has placed the solo line moving throughout the vocal registers, first from the tenor (Fig. 1), then to the soprano (Fig. 2) and bass (Fig. 3) and, finally, to a combination of

the three vocal lines (Fig. 4).

Musical score for Fig. 1. The top staff is a Tenor Solo, marked "Tenor Solo senza misura ad lib." with a tempo of "Sostenuto" and a metronome marking of "♩ = c. 52". The lyrics are "In the be-gin-ning was the Word, _____". The bottom two staves are for the keyboard, marked "Kybd." and "p".

Fig. 1. René Clausen. a new Creation, first movement.

Musical score for Fig. 2. The top staff is a Soprano Solo, marked "Soprano Solo" with a dynamic of "mf" and a circled measure number "10". The lyrics are "In Him was life, _____". The bottom two staves are for the keyboard, with the word "God." written below the first staff.

Fig. 2. René Clausen. a new Creation, first movement.

Musical score for Fig. 3. The top staff is a Bass Solo, marked "Bass Solo" with a dynamic of "mf" and a circled measure number "15". The lyrics are "The light shines in the dark - ness, _____". The bottom two staves are for the keyboard, with a dynamic of "f" at the end.

Fig. 3. René Clausen. A New Creation, first movement.

mong us, full of grace and truth. (s) rit.

and dwelt a-mong us, full of grace and truth. rit.

and truth, full of truth. (s) rit.

Fig. 4. René Clausen. a new Creation, first movement.

The final chord, sung simultaneously by all three voices, signifies the unity achieved through the knowledge of the truth of God. This work is accompanied by strings and organ continuo.

Second Movement - All Flesh Is Grass

The second movement derives its text from the First Epistle of Peter 1: 24-25 and the "Kyrie" from the Ordinary of the Mass. It begins with a quarter note ostinato in the timpani followed by a melodic introduction by the bassoon. Clausen has created a mysterious pulse that is almost hypnotic in effect and serves as a musical reminder of the text, "the word of the Lord endures forever." A duality exists in this piece, not only in text, but also in vocal texture. This duality symbolizes the human necessity for forgiveness and the desire of God to forgive, a central theme peculiar to the Christian faith. This duality in the vocal lines is representative of the traditional responsorial aspect of worship found in Christianity. Harmonically, this movement extensively uses tonic and dominant pedal point

(Fig. 5).

The musical score consists of five systems. The first two systems are vocal staves with lyrics: "Ky - ri - e e - lei - son." The third and fourth systems are piano staves with lyrics: "grass withers, and the flow'r fades. All flesh is grass, and its glo-ry as the". The fifth system is a grand staff (piano and bass clef) with no lyrics. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Fig. 5. René Clausen. a new Creation, second movement.

As the vocal and orchestral texture thickens, the meter begins to shift causing new rhythmic interest (Fig. 6). A return to the calm of the opening tonic prolongation occurs before its climax. The movement concludes with a corporate cry of "Lord have mercy." The last five measures of this movement are included as a textual statement of conclusion and at the same time as a musical introduction to the next movement (Fig. 7).

(Soprano Solo) *mf*
 (Alto Solo) *mf* Chris - te, Christe e - lei - son.
 Tenor Solo *mf* Chris - te, Christe e - lei - son. *f esp.*
 Bass Solo *mf* Chris - te, Christe e - lei - son. *f esp.* Lord, have mer-cy on my
 Chris - te, Christe e - lei - son. Lord, have mer-cy on my

S
 flow'r of grass. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
 A
 flow'r of grass. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
 T
 flow'r of grass. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
 B
 flow'r of grass. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

(30) (Tenor Solo)
 soul, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - - - son.
 (Bass Solo)
 soul, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - - - son.

Sopr. Chor. *p*
 Lord, have mercy on my
 Alto Chor. *p*
 Lord, have mercy on my
 Lord, have mercy on my
ap

Fig. 6. René Clausen. a new Creation, second movement.

But the word
But the word of the Lord en - dures for - ev - - - er.

But the word
of the Lord en - dures for - ev - - - er.

But the word of the Lord en - dures, en - dures for - ev - - - er.

But the word en - - dures for - ev - - - er.

Fig. 7. René Clausen. a new Creation, second movement.

Third Movement - O Be Joyful

A setting of Psalm 100: 1-2 is the textual basis of the third movement. The words "O be joyful" are interpreted in a dance-like 6/8 meter with the tempo marking indicating "lilting." Its attaca entrance is scored for harp, which gives the beginning of the piece a playful but restrained character. In its harmonic structure this movement is relatively static, with a fluctuation between the tonic key of D major and its subdominant chord of G major. Midway through the piece Clausen affects a key change to F major, and the vocal texture becomes that of a canon (Fig. 8). Another key change to A major occurs with the first four part choral statement of the text (Fig. 9). The piece ends with

the same sense of joyful restraint with which it began.

Figure 8 is a musical score for the third movement of René Clausen's *a new Creation*. It features four staves: two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and two piano staves. The music is in 3/8 time and D major. The vocal parts have lyrics: "glad - - ness. O be joy - ful." The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines. A circled number 20 is above the first vocal staff. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Fig. 8. René Clausen. a new Creation, third movement.

Figure 9 is a musical score for the third movement of René Clausen's *a new Creation*. It features four staves: two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and two piano staves. The music is in 3/8 time and D major. The vocal parts have lyrics: "God with a song, with a song, with a song." The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines. A circled number 37 is above the first vocal staff. Dynamics include *f* (forte).

Fig. 9. René Clausen. a new Creation, third movement.

Fourth Movement - The Call

A statement from the Book of Isaiah 49: 1, 5 is used in combination with The Call, a poem by George Herbert. Both serve as the textual construction of the fourth movement. After a vocal jazz-like a cappella introduction, a free-flowing tenor solo conveys the image of a cantor delivering a scriptural reading. With the entrance of the orchestra, the piece becomes more metric. The accompaniment of the harp arpeggios in combination with the staggered entrances of the divisi chorus continue the free-flowing mood previously established (Fig. 10).

The musical score for Figure 10 consists of six staves. The top two staves are for vocal parts, with lyrics 'strength.' and 'ah.' written below the notes. The third and fourth staves are for a tenor solo, with lyrics 'Come, come, come.' and dynamic markings 'mp' and 'sim.'. The fifth staff is for the keyboard (Kybd.), with a dynamic marking of 'mf'. The bottom staff is for the harp, with arpeggiated figures. The score is in E major and 4/4 time.

Fig. 10. René Clausen. a new Creation, fourth movement.

The extensive use of a tonic pedal point in E major is also incorporated by Clausen in this movement. It serves as a

cohesive bridge between the verses of the text. The movement ends with an a cappella setting of the fourth verse of Herbert's poem. The same vocal jazz-like harmonic treatment used for the introduction to the movement now closes it.

Fifth Movement - Lament

Entitled "Lament", the text for the fifth movement is taken from George MacDonald's Diary of an Old Soul. The stark scoring for solo mezzo soprano with soli woodwinds and organ continuo reflects the bleakness of the text. Describing this attitude, Clausen stated, "What I was searching to do was not to fall into any diatonic expectations. There is a sense of harmonic tension throughout the opening and the oboe helps that feeling with its Copeland-like ambling. At D [But if obedience in me grow], it becomes optimistic." With MacDonald's statement, "My soul is a poor land, plenteous in dearth," Clausen suggests this image by using the orchestra sparingly. The entire movement is set in a recitative for voice and solo instrumental lines.

Sixth Movement - Agnus Dei

A setting of the "Agnus Dei" from the Ordinary of the Mass serves as text for the sixth movement. Although not marked, the sixth movement seems to flow directly from the previous movement both in musical spirit and melodic structure. With the close of the fifth movement in F major and with support from the dominant C major of that key, the

link to the sixth movement sounds quite natural where the Lydian mode is employed by Clausen (Fig. 11).

The musical score for Figure 11 consists of two systems. The first system includes vocal parts for Soprano (S) and Alto (A), and piano accompaniment for organ and bassoon. The lyrics are "re-re, mi-se-re-re." and "mi-se-re-re." The second system continues the piano accompaniment. The score is in 3/4 time and features a Lydian mode.

Fig. 11. René Clausen. a new Creation, sixth movement.

Texturally a three part treble chorus, this movement is accompanied by solo organ with solo bassoon. The main text is sung only once, while the "miserere" is intoned with repetition and great insistence. From the structure of the choral line, one may infer that Clausen suggests the need to ask for God's mercy both corporately and individually (Fig. 12).

mi - se - re - re, mi - se - re - re, mi - se -

mi - se - re - re, mi - se - re - re, mi - se - re - re,

re - re, mi - se - re - re, mi - se - re - re, mi - se - re - re,

Fig. 12. René Clausen. a new Creation, sixth movement.

Seventh Movement - I Am the Bread of Life

The seventh movement is set for solo soprano with the familiar Biblical text from the Gospel of John 6: 35, 51. Its gently reassuring message, "I am the bread of life," is underscored by the use of two flutes with organ. Clausen gives the flutes a more active melodic and harmonic role as the second phrase is sung and brings the movement to a conclusion with a restatement of the opening melodic theme (Fig. 13).

(15)

thirst. I am the liv - ing bread from

(20)

dolce hea - - - - - ven; - - - - - If you eat this bread you shall

Fl.

Fig. 13. René Clausen. a new Creation, seventh movement.

Eighth Movement - A New Creation

The eighth movement is a divisi choral setting of Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians 13: 1-2, 4-8, from which comes the title of the entire work. With its canonic choral and instrumental entrances and large divisi chords, it is, after the eleventh movement, the second most demanding movement for the chorus. The opening polyphonic statements from the orchestra and voices function as a fanfare to the

homophonic statement "whoever is in Christ is a new creation"
(Fig. 14).

The image shows a musical score for voice and piano. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are for voice parts: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The bottom staff is for piano accompaniment. The music is in 3/4 time and F major. The lyrics are: "There - fore, who - ev - er is in". The piano accompaniment features a polyphonic fanfare in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* and *fz*.

Fig. 14. René Clausen. a new Creation, eighth movement.

The polyphonic fanfare repeats itself with its next statement leading toward a modulation from F major to G major. The explosive chords occurring simultaneously with the text "behold the new has come" are created bi-tonally (Fig. 15).

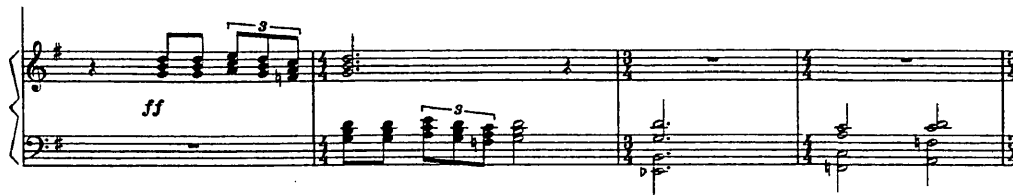


Fig. 15. René Clausen. a new Creation, eighth movement.

A fugal "alleluia" stated by the chorus and reinforced with orchestral scoring moves the piece toward a recapitulation of the fanfare-like opening and modulation to A major. After a series of changing meters, the movement comes to a stunning conclusion with large divisi chords from each tonal center, F major, G major and A major reiterated by the orchestra in the final two measures (Fig 16).

Musical score for Figure 16, showing a vocal setting with lyrics "hold the new has come!" and a fermata over the final measure.

Fig. 16. René Clausen. a new Creation, eighth movement.

Ninth Movement - The Greatest of These Is Love

The ninth movement is a setting for tenor solo with string orchestra. Clausen incorporates the text from Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians 13: 1-2, 4-8. The movement opens with a statement of the thematic material from the

violas and celli. This thematic idea is developed within the solo vocal line. In the text "love is patient," a definite change of mood is created by a pattern of a fluctuating tonal center based on the harmonic movement upward. This compositional technique appeared in the previous movement.

Tenth Movement - Hymn

The text for the tenth movement is derived from Solomon's Song of Songs 8: 6-7. This movement was written at a time of great personal crisis for Clausen. During the last months of pregnancy, an expected child was lost to the Clausens. He stated that much comfort was obtained through the composition of this movement.

In form, it is a simple A B A setting. The vocal texture is altered in the B section, "many waters cannot quench love," by the use of divisi soprano and alto lines (Fig.17). The concluding phrase is given harmonic strength with the restatement of the text, "strong as death" set as an authentic cadence (Fig. 18).

Ma - y wa - ters can - not quench love; neither can the floods drown it,
 Ma - y wa - ters can - not quench love; neither can the floods drown it,
 Ma - ny wa - - - ters neither can the floods
 Ma - ny wa - - - ters can - not quench love,

Fig. 17. René Clausen. a new Creation, tenth movement.

arm; for love is strong as death. *rit.*
 seal up-on your arm; love is strong as death, is strong as death. *rit.*
 arm; love is strong as death, is strong as death. *div. rit.*
 arm; love is strong as death, is strong as death. *rit. div.*

Fig. 18. René Clausen. a new Creation, tenth movement.

Eleventh Movement - The Spirit Helps Us

The eleventh movement has a performance time of nearly eleven minutes. Proportionally it is one-fifth of the entire work. Four different textural sources are used in this lengthy movement. Therefore, it can be understood by an analysis of the individual textural sections. The first section is taken from Paul's Letter to the Romans 8: 26-27. A bass solo follows the theme introduced by solo bassoon. Clausen suggests the pleading of the spirit with the meandering organ line (Fig. 19).



Fig. 19. René Clausen. a new Creation, eleventh movement.

He remarked that "the elliptical ostinato was composed purposely to search for new optimism. This optimism begins with the shift of tonality in measure 43."

The second section begins with a contralto solo statement of the Ezekiel 36: 26, 28. The vocal texture begins to shift with the addition of the three remaining solo lines. Clausen's use of this textural painting implies that all "shall be my people." This section firmly establishes the tonic key of E major which will remain until the fourth section.

A divisi choral setting of Psalm 150 makes the third section the most vocally demanding. The changing meters from 3/4, to 5/8, to 6/8 set an ever shifting pattern of dance rhythms (Fig. 20).



Fig. 20. René Clausen. a new Creation, eleventh movement.

Tenors lead the canonic choral entrances depicting a trumpet call with a series of open fifths which all parts follow. As the chorus sings of "strings and pipe" the orchestra responds with full strings and woodwinds. The addition of auxiliary percussion occurs with the suspended cymbal echoing the setting of "sounding cymbals." The third relationship which has played an important part throughout the work is especially evident in the "alleluia" section as sung in unison by the first soprano and first tenor (Fig. 21).

The image shows three staves of musical notation for the 'alleluia' section. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The first staff is marked with a circled '150' and a dynamic marking 'mf'. The second staff is marked with a circled '155'. The third staff is marked with a circled '160'. The lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia,' are written below the notes. The music consists of a series of open fifths in a canonic setting.

Fig. 21. René Clausen. a new Creation, eleventh movement.

An a cappella choral transition which is joined by full organ brings the third section to a restrained ending. As the motion seems to cease there is a sudden shift of tonal center to B major wherein the "Dona nobis pacem" text begins (Fig. 22).

The musical score for René Clausen's 'a new Creation', eleventh movement, is presented in a multi-staff format. It includes parts for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Piano. The Tenor part features a solo with lyrics: 'Lord, now let thou thy' and 'Do - - na, na,'. The piano accompaniment includes a 'roll.' and a 'p' dynamic marking. The tempo is marked 'c. 60 Sustained'.

Fig. 22. René Clausen. a new Creation, eleventh movement.

During this final divisi chorus all soloists make their last entrances, reiterating the chorus text. The movement and the work conclude with a subdued B major chord on the word "pacem."

In the musical score Clausen wrote:

The various movements are attempts to characterize, through music, various aspects of the human/God, God/human relationship. Awe and wonder, unworthiness and doubt, mercy and forgiveness, love, joy, and peace, are all wrapped together in our daily lives. The thematic and artistic credo of this work, which serves both as the title overall and of the central movement - a new

Creation - is representative of the composer's belief that the unwrapping of all these elements in the progression of our lives - sometimes with joy, sometimes with pain - is worth the effort.

(Clausen 2 May 1989)

Chapter 4

Summary

The musical composition of a new Creation can be attributed to René Clausen's background. Since his father served as organist and choral director for many Lutheran churches, and since his formal musical education was at St. Olaf College, it was only natural that the thrust of his musical compositions would be sacred music. From his first published work Thank the Lord to his current commission for the Nebraska Choral Arts Society, a setting of the "Gloria" from the Ordinary of the Mass, he has immersed himself in this genre. René Clausen's command of this genre has been recognized by Cornell Runestad, Professor of Music at Wayne State College, Wayne, Nebraska, who frequently programs Clausen's compositions for his sixty voice touring choir. In an interview he remarked, "René reminds me a lot of John Rutter; both write very melodic, conservative, traditional sacred music. He is a composer of the first rank."

(Runestad 11 June 1993)

With a new Creation, Clausen has produced a work which can be performed by a wide variety of ensembles. This composition provides the church musician with a contemporary sacred work that enhances the liturgy and inspires religious practice. Runestad recognizes that this composition succeeds for church choirs. He attributed Clausen with "an unerring

feel for what works." (Runestad 11 June 1993)

Clausen is concerned with the art of contemporary sacred choral music. With a new Creation it becomes evident that Clausen does not want to create "the piece"--that which is trite and sentimental. He concluded an interview with:

I am at a rather dangerous point right now. I think in terms of my own compositional future. I still feel relatively young and I have to be careful because in this country the way we have supported and developed choral composition as a serious pursuit has been unhealthy....We can look at case after case of choral composers who have found 'the piece', for lack of a better phrase, and then write those pieces over and over again. It becomes an enterprise, not art. (Clausen 24 May 1993)

Appendix A

Alphabetical Listing of Published Works by René Clausen

(All works available from Mark Foster Music Company)

- All That Hath Life and Breath; SATB a cappella
- At the Name of Jesus; SATB with organ; optional brass septet
- Clap Your Hands; SATB divisi a cappella
- Cold December Flies Away; SATB with two flutes and finger cymbals
- Communion; SATB divisi, Alto solo, with french horn, harp and organ; optional orchestra
- Deep River; SATB a cappella
- Hosanna; SATB divisi a cappella
- Hymn of Praise; SATB with organ
- Jubilant Song, A; SATB a cappella
- Laudamus Te; SSA with Orff instruments
- Magnificat; SATB divisi a cappella
- new Creation, a (major work); SATB, SATB soli with keyboard; optional limited orchestra
- O Vos Omnes; SATB-SATB a cappella
- On the Mountain Top Blows the Wind Mild; SATB a cappella
- Peace I Leave With You; SATB a cappella
- Prayer of St. Francis, The; SATB with keyboard
- Psalm 100; SSA with two pianos; piano and percussion
- Psalm 148; SATB divisi with organ
- Seek the Lord; SATB divisi a cappella

Set Me As A Seal (from a new Creation); SATB a cappella

Sigh No More Ladies; SATB with piano

Simple Gifts; SATB divisi a cappella

Sweet Was the Song; SATB a cappella

Thank the Lord; SATB a cappella

Three Whitman Settings; SATB a cappella, A/B soli

Tonight, Eternity Alone; SATB divisi a cappella

Water Is Wide, The; SATB divisi with piano;
optional clarinet, cello, french horn

Whispers of Heavenly Death; SATB divisi with orchestra

Appendix B

Chronological Listing of Published Works by René Clausen

(All works published by Mark Foster Music Company)

1976	Thank the Lord
1980	On the Mountain Top Blows the Wind Mild
1981	All That Hath Life and Breath,
1983	Cold December Flies Away
1984	Hymn of Praise
1985	Psalm 148
1985	Sweet Was the Song
1986	O Vos Omnes
1986	Psalm 100
1987	Simple Gifts
1988	Clap Your Hands
1988	Hosanna
1988	Magnificat
1988	Seek the Lord
1989	Laudamus Te
1989	Set Me As A Seal (from <u>a new Creation</u>)
1990	At the Name of Jesus
1990	a new Creation (major work)
1990	Deep River
1991	Communion
1991	Peace I Leave With You
1991	Tonight, Eternity Alone

1992 The Prayer of St. Francis
1992 Sigh No More Ladies
1992 Three Whitman Settings
1993 A Jubilant Song
1993 Whispers of Heavenly Death

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