

RERSURRECTON (1987)

CHAMBER OPERA IN ONE ACT WITH PROLOGUE

It was in Liverpool in November 1975 that Peter Maxwell Davies (hereinafter referred to as Max) first told me of the opera, which was to be entitled *Resurrection* that was in his mind to write. We were in the first stages of my first Arts Council Contemporary Network Tour, as manager both of the ensemble The Fires of London (hereinafter referred to as The Fires) and as Max's manager. I was grappling with the seemingly overwhelming amount of difficulties that were facing me. I had been thrown in the deep with a gruelling tour for which I had absolutely no experience, or, indeed, qualifications. Max told me that he had been thinking about writing this particular opera since the days when he was on a Harkness Scholarship at Princeton in the United States between 1962 and 1964. But he felt that, at that time, he didn't have the compositional technique to undertake this project. However, his experience of writing the opera *Taverner* and the music-theatre works *Eight Songs for a Mad King* and *Miss Donnithorne's Maggot* had given him more confidence. He said that [Sir John Tooley](#), who was the General Director at Covent Garden, had been asking him to write an opera ever since 1972 and the success of *Taverner*, which had been staged at Covent Garden. But Max felt that he didn't want to write an opera for that house until it revived that production of *Taverner* and this did not appear to be forthcoming.

Over the next several years, I had many meetings with John Tooley which were always extremely friendly. We constantly went over the same ground again and again. He continued to ask for a new commission, and Max stuck to his position that this would not happen unless there was a revival of *Taverner*. But these were all exceedingly busy years for everyone concerned. The St. Magnus Festival of which Max was the founder and co-artistic director; had started in 1977. Max had also become the director of the Dartington Summer School of Music. There were new works for The Fires including the two chamber operas *The Martyrdom of St. Magnus* and *The Lighthouse*. There had also been the enormous two act ballet *Salome* for Copenhagen, as well as a large amount of touring for The Fires. Thus a potential new opera for Covent Garden was not at all high on Max's agenda.

Max had other reservations about his opera being mounted at Covent Garden. He felt that its decidedly conservative public might not be the right one for his vision of the opera he would eventually hope to write. The opera's theme and message, and manner of presentation might cause many hackles to rise in the Covent Garden public.

However, Covent Garden did revive *Taverner* in June 1983. Max agreed to write the libretto for *Resurrection*, which he insisted must be given to John Tooley to show to his board and to the Music Director, Colin Davis, for their approval. John Tooley, always a great Max supporter, said that he would accept whatever it was that Max wrote. However, Max felt that if he did not have the Board and Music Director's approval, the production would not have the whole-hearted support that any new production needs, and that the opera would suffer greatly as a consequence.

The reason why Max was anxious to get acceptance was because *Resurrection* was going to be controversial. The board did approve. However, Colin Davis did not. He called Max to a meeting to discuss the matter, and I went with him. Colin Davis felt that Max's libretto was old-fashioned, dated, and did not reflect current attitudes. He turned the opera down, much to John Tooley's great dismay.

At this point, Max was in the position of having an opera which he wished to write but he had nowhere to place it. Up to that moment, all concentration had been on Covent Garden. Now this was no longer the situation. After one or two discussions with various possibilities, the action moved away from the UK towards the continent. Max's chamber operas which he had written in the late nineteen seventies, had begun to be performed quite widely and, as a result, Max had a growing reputation for his theatrical works. One of the towns where Max's operas had been performed was in Bremen in Germany. By 1984, they had already performed *The Martyrdom of St. Magnus*, *The Lighthouse*, both directed by Peter Brenner, and the children's opera *Cinderella*. Peter Brenner, was about to leave Bremen to become the Intendant at the opera house in Darmstadt, near to Frankfurt. [Peter Brenner](#) had expressed substantial interest in bringing *Resurrection* to Darmstadt, and directing it himself. Max and I travelled to Bremen to discuss the matter with Dr. Brenner, and Max read his libretto to him. This was a virtuoso acting feat on Max's behalf, as he took all the many parts with all their various accents. Both Max and I were anxious that we were sure that Peter Brenner knew every word of the libretto and that he was sure he knew what he would be taking on.

Max was justifiably nervous about how the new opera would be directed, having suffered considerably from many productions which bore not the slightest resemblance to his own specific instructions as the librettist. But Max had attended the productions which Peter Brenner had directed, and he had liked them. He was therefore comfortable about entrusting this special project to Peter Brenner.

The commission contract was drawn up by my husband Michael as between Max and the City of Darmstadt. The premiere was to be in September 1987 – four years away. This was roughly the time scale for Max's commissions – some of them had an even longer time span. It was decided that the opera would be sung in German. At that period, the use of surtitles to be shown above the stage to translate into the language that the audience understood was only just beginning. It was felt that the German public would not understand an opera sung in English, even if a suitable synopsis was provided. Thus the necessity for a translation from English into German arose. This is always a tricky point. Nobody ever really likes anyone else's translation, and they invariably think that, given a chance, they could do much better. The job of making the German translation was given to a close friend of mine, [Iris Brendel](#), ex-wife of the pianist Alfred Brendel, who spoke German, English and Spanish fluently, and who had already translated Harrison Birtwistle opera *Punch and Judy* into German. The conductor was to be the General Music Director of the Staatstheater, [Hans Drewanz](#)

As is usual in virtually all commissions, there is a lot of excitement when both sides are getting together and agreeing that it should happen. Then there is a lengthy interim period when everything goes quiet, and the commissioners and the composer are each getting on with all the other matters they have on their plates at that moment. I wasn't

in touch with anyone in Darmstadt during all this period. However, In June 1986, Max's mother died after suffering for two years from the results of a severe stroke. Max was engaged in writing *Resurrection*, and one day he phoned me to tell me that he felt that at this moment he could not continue with it, and that he needed some space after his mother's death to settle down to write the work.

The idea that there would have to be a postponement was very difficult for me. Max was always the ultimate professional. He always delivered on time, which was in stark contrast to the many composers with whom I had professional dealings who were always late. This was a great blow, and I wondered how on earth I was going to break the news to Peter Brenner and his wife, Cato. I screwed up all my courage, and went to Darmstadt, and broke the news to them. Whatever the excuse was, the fact remained that Max was not going to have the opera ready for the 1987 premiere. Almost the second the words were out of my mouth, Cato suggested that they would have to programme *Dantons Tod* by the Austrian composer Gottfried von Einem. It would be impossible for there to be a hole in the schedule. It was a very sticky visit, although both Peter and Cato were very kind to me, I knew that they were bitterly disappointed. Being the manager means that I had to carry and absorb the blame, whilst Max himself was tucked away in Orkney and had no phone and could not be reached.

Max bounced quickly back from this uncharacteristic lapse in his professional standards, and delivered the completed work in time for its rescheduling one year later in September 1988. Some while after Iris Brendel's translation had been received in Darmstadt, I was told that they were not happy with it, and they asked for another one. Max was very surprised at this because he had read the translation and had been happy with it, and this was his point of view as someone who spoke fluent German, and knew what was required to make the translation tell. However, Gunther Bauer Schenk, a conductor who had both conducted several of Max's works and had made some translations, was brought in, and this second translation was sent. The usual differences of opinion as to the suitability of the translations quickly came to the fore.

Apart from this hitch and my personal visit to Darmstadt as the bearer of bad tidings, I had no contact with Peter Brenner. I began to think that this was somewhat strange, as it is perfectly normal for being engaged in a new work to contact the composer with various questions. There were no questions coming out of Darmstadt. I began to feel somewhat uneasy. What could be the reason for this total lack of contact? The reasons were explained shortly after Max and I arrived in Darmstadt to spend the last few days prior to the premiere.

Peter Brenner came pick us up from Frankfurt airport to drive us directly to his house in Darmstadt. As we were getting into the car he said "I am going to tell you what I have done". My heart immediately sank way beyond the bottom of my shoes. This sounded really serious. And it was. He had decided that virtually everything that had been specified and asked for in the libretto was either completely impracticable from a theatrical point of view, or that it broke accepted norms of what one could show on the stage, or, as he said quite frankly, he didn't like it. As we sat in the Brenner drawing room, there was nothing that either Max or I could say. The prospect of some perfectly horrible days rose before us.

It is at this stage that it is suitable to introduce exactly what happens in *Resurrection* and what the various performers do.

Resurrection is a black-comic opera in which the main protagonist of Hero, is a larger than life Dummy, who remains silent throughout. In the Prologue, the Dummy is continually harangued by members of his family and various pillars of society. A counter-tenor, two tenors, two baritones, bass and mezzo soprano between them sing the roles of Mam, Dad, Younger Brother, Elder Sister, Headmaster, The Reverend Minister and the Vicar.

Throughout the whole opera, both in the Prologue and in the Main Act, a giant television set dominates the scene. Television adverts interrupt the indoctrination of the Dummy. The music of the adverts is sung by an Electronic Vocal Quartet, whilst the adverts themselves are graphically danced at the same time by a group of Dancers. The important figure behind all these scenes is a domestic Cat, who gradually transforms into a Dragon during the course of the opera by a set of dances, and whose music is represented by a Rock Group. At the end of the Prologue, The Dummy's head explodes.

In the main act the Dummy is on a hospital bed and is being operated on by a team of four surgeons, who sing as they gleefully remove his brain (representing his intellectual life and his political history), his heart (representing his religious and emotional history), and his genitals (representing his sexual proclivities). As each of the organs is removed they are substituted by horrific replacements. Each of the Patient's histories is enacted by a series of fantasy scenes, representing what the pillars of authority feel needs to be exorcised. These scenes are again enacted by the same seven singers as in the Prologue, who variously sing and act the roles of the Four Surgeons, Zeus, White Abbot, Policeman, Hot Gospeller, Plato, Sir Croesus Wright, Judge,, Comrade Serbsky, Trade Union Leader, Phoebus Apollo, Antichrist, whilst the role of the Cat is sung by the vocalist of the Rock Group. In the Hot Gospeller scene, a Marching Band marches across stage playing their instruments. These fantasy scenes continue to be interrupted by the television adverts and by the actions of the surgical team, whilst the Cat dances and gradually transforms into the dominant Dragon. Following the surgery, the Dummy no longer has anything left of his own persona. He gradually rises from the hospital table upon which he has been operated, and inflates into a gigantic figure which fills to the whole of the height of the stage. The huge Dummy points his penis, which has now become a machine-gun, at the audience. As he does so, the head of the Cat/Dragon explodes from the barrel of the penis/machine-gun spitting fire into the theatre. At the same time a disco light-show flares up on the stage. The grotesque surgery has produced a monster that is ready to do the bidding of those who have created him, but who turns even on them

The full extent of what Peter Brenner had done immediately became evident at the rehearsal which we attended the following morning, and it was far worse than anything that we might have dreamt of in our worst nightmares. So what were all these liberties which Peter Brenner had taken to overturn what Max had written in his libretto and stage instructions? Here are a few of them:

- The Prologue is set in a room in the small house of the family of which the Dummy is a member. The Main Act is set in a hospital and the Dummy is on

the operating table. Peter Brenner set the opera throughout in a television studio. The actions which take place therein cannot possibly have any relevance to their location.

- Non-sing characters additional to those asked for by Max are introduced. In the main act two of these are sexy girls handing instruments to the surgeons as they perform the surgery.
- Complete change of the specified characters. One instance of this was the role of Zeus being presented as Kaiser Wilhelm with his helmet on.
- The television adverts were not live, danced by dancers. All the adverts had been shot in advance and projected onto the giant television set itself, and not enacted out on a specially elevated stage above the main action.
- There was not one ounce of humour throughout the entire opera. It is a black comedy, or satire pointing out what Max sees as the faults in society by exaggerating how the characters behave. In Peter Brenner's version, everything was played out on its face value, never showing what was behind it. Therefore it was just a grim condemnation, without making the audience laugh.

Max was devastated. We were only a few days from the premiere, and it was far too late to change things. The only possible changes would be superficial and wouldn't make any real difference. I was despatched to have a talk with Peter with a list of requirements. It was all very awkward and uncomfortable, to put it mildly.

On the whole, the musical standards, with one notable exception, were high. The General Music Director, Hans Drewanz was excellent. We found out that he had been having furious rows with Peter on the subject of the production and they were not on speaking terms, which had made for a very uncomfortable atmosphere even before our arrival. Hans directed the orchestra brilliantly, and all the singers had been well rehearsed by their American repetiteur, Shari Rhoads. There was no chorus in the opera.

The notable exception was that of the Rock Band. Of course the Staatstheater did not have their own band, and they had hired in a bunch of players at the last moment. This band was hopeless beyond any words of mine to describe. They couldn't play anything, and they certainly were not up to making any entry on cue. Many was the time that Hans gave his cue, and nothing whatsoever happened, and Hans was reduced to singing the missing music himself from the pit.

It was in this kind of atmosphere that I was sent by Max with a very long list of requirements to possible changes in the production. The underlying foundations could not be changed, but there might be some small improvements. I had several extremely difficult conversations with Peter. I asked him over and over why he had done this instead of that. He always argued his case, but the fact of the matter was that it was always in contradiction to what Max had written in his libretto. When it came to the great climax at the end, which was to have been controversial, Peter said "well, of course you can't do that". But these ideas were not ones which he had offered when Max had entrusted the opera to him at that read-through in Bremen. He had fully accepted the libretto as it stood, with all its controversial aspects. He accepted Bauer Schenk's translation, but he said that the next time something like this

occurred, he would do his own translation, as that was the only one he trusted. He had not realised that nobody is ever totally satisfied with a translation, but, at this point, it was a minor issue as compared with other more major and contentious problems

I managed to obtain a few changes. None of these altered the fact that there was no way that anyone viewing this production, in other words, the audience, would have any idea what it was all about and what was supposed to be going on. I endeavoured to keep the peace, or at least to keep holding talks between the warring parties, chiefly between Hans and Peter, but everyone stuck to their own sides. A pall of doom lay over everything. Max was totally depressed as he could see that the vision he had held for over twenty years, which it had seemed would have a chance of finally seeing the light of day, was going down the pan, and there was nothing he could do to stop it. Moreover, he knew that the drubbing that would inevitably come his way was going to be witnessed by a large number of highly influential people, because the world's operatic press was foregathering to make their comments.

The day before the premiere, Hanne Wilhelm Hansen, the proud owners of Chester Music, which published *Resurrection*, and who had come to Darmstadt from Copenhagen to attend the premiere, disappeared without a word. She had seen the way things were going and she did not want to be seen to be associated with what was going to be a resounding flop.

And so, the first performance of *Resurrection* duly happened, and Max received the biggest drubbing and the largest slap in the face of his entire career. It is right to lay all the blame for the lack of success of *Resurrection* at the hands of Peter Brenner and the way he had totally sabotaged Max's libretto. This was how it felt to Max.

The following day, we paid a visit to Heidelberg, which is close by, and quietly went up the mountain, hardly saying a word to each other. What Max did say was that he would never write another word for the stage again. I told him never to say 'never', because you never know what might happen. But that was how he felt, most strongly on that day.

So this is how matters lay for several years. The critical opinion had been crushingly negative, No further interest in the work arose out of those first performances. Let sleeping dogs lie.

And thus it remained until a different set of circumstances arose. In 1992 Max had become the Composer/Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra in Manchester, which was a position he very much enjoyed. It was Trevor Green, who was in charge of the whole BBC Music in Manchester, and Brian Pidgeon, who was the manager of the orchestra, who suggested to Max that for his sixtieth birthday in 1994, they would like to mount a performance of *Resurrection* in Manchester, using their own orchestra. Max was happy to go along with this idea. It meant that he would conduct the work himself, although there had been no serious complaints about the musical aspect in Darmstadt, apart from the truly impossible Rock Band. It also meant that there could be consultation as to how the different musical elements, other than the orchestral musicians, would be recruited. And of course it would be a chance to demonstrate at least the music that Max had written, standing, as it would be, entirely separate from any kind of visual aspect. The date of Max's actual birthday, 8th

September 1994 was agreed upon, and the venue was to be, not in the BBC's own studios in Oxford Road, but in Royal Insurance Concert Hall in the Royal Northern College of Music.

And so we set about putting everything together. What was needed was

- Pit Orchestra – to be drawn from the orchestral musicians
- Marching Band – to be drawn from the orchestra musicians
- Rock Group, with its own Rock Vocalist
- Seven Singers portraying the actors in many different roles
- Electronic Vocal Quartet to sing the songs for the 24 television advertisements
- Tap Dancers, to dance out the tap dancing scene

The Pit orchestra and Marching Band presented no problems. The BBC Philharmonic had those on the spot. However, I anticipated that there would be many considerable difficulties with all the other aspect of mounting this special performance. I knew that Brian was brilliant at putting all his concerts together, but I equally knew that the demands for this particular performance were going to go way beyond what he would have the time and the patience for. So I suggested that I might do all the spade work for him and that I would refer back to him in every instance, and he readily agreed. We had an extremely good working relationship.

From my own previous experience I had learnt that whichever singers you start off with, these never turn out to be the ones you end up with, for any number of different reasons. There were going to be twelve singers in total, and so, right from the start, I contacted Chester Music and asked them to prepare thirty-six vocal scores to be sent out on request., to always have them ready - just in case. At that point the vocal score had not yet been published, and special scores had to be made up for each new occasion.

The first set of singers that needed to be recruited was the Electronic Vocal Quartet. What Max had in mind was always a group called The Electric Phoenix directed by Terry Edwards, which he had heard perform at the Dartington Summer School of Music. Brian suggested that the local singers from the Manchester area who had sung in adverts and who could, he claimed, read anything. I was not so sure. I suggested that four of them should be called in as an audition just as a try out to see if they could manage Max's tricky rhythms. I said we didn't want to arrive on the day of the first rehearsal and find that they were not up to it. When the audition took place, the four singers did not even get past the first song. As I had suspected, it was way beyond their capabilities. Although the adverts might sound as if they were any old usual thing, they were very subtle and full of Max's intricacies. It was a very good thing we had taken this precaution. And so on to the next stage of the search for suitable singers. Max still hoped for the Electric Phoenix, which had the sound and the experience in microphone vocal techniques that he wanted. But Brian said that this would be complicated and suggested we go for reliable singers individually. And this we did, and one by one these came on board.

As far as the several principal singers were concerned, I opted for those with whom Max had either worked directly himself in *The Fires of London*, or others who had had experience in performing Max's music. It took a considerable while. There was a mix up with one of the agents who had assumed that only one day of rehearsal was going to be the requirement for this date, whereas there was going to be a full number of rehearsals for an opera with piano only, and so a couple of those singers had to drop out. But eventually, after the despatch of many of those vocal scores which I had requested to be ready on stand-by, the team was ready and in place.

There were some discussions about using some of the local dancers, but in the end this didn't happen either. There is always a question about including aspects of what the score requires if the listeners to the radio can't hear what is happening, as, after all, this performance was being mounted for transmission over the radio. In this case, there was only one section of the dancing episodes where a full sound was necessary, and that was the tap-dancing scene. None of the dancers who were looked at was up to performing at the speed and brilliance that Max asked for in the music. And it was decided that, Paul Patrick, the principal percussionist in the orchestra, would do the honours in this instance.

However, it was the Rock Group which caused by far the biggest and long lasting headache. Max had written the music for the Rock Group as a sketch, to be filled in and embellished with ornamentations in different ways according to each individual group that would perform the music. . In other words the group could decide how many players it wanted to have, and they would compose their own flourishes and ornamentations according to their own predilections. Brian had recommended that the composer Steve Martland should be the person in charge of this. Steve had worked a great deal in Manchester and had his own group. Max agreed to this but insisted that Steve should present him with some of the music that he would be using. It would require Steve to compose his own riffs and ornaments for his own group.

But the score which Max was hoping to receive didn't arrive. As I was the person who was in touch with the group through its manager, Alex Poots, it was up to me to keep chasing. This became a nightmare. Not even one single page of any kind of score was forthcoming, either from Martland or from Poots. I resorted to phoning Sally Groves, at Schott Music, who were Martland's publishers. She spoke to Martland every day, and every day I asked her if there had been any mention of the requested score, and on every day she said that nothing had been said. I was getting desperate. The day of the performance was growing perilously near. The BBC has six weeks to withdraw from an pencilling agreement with an artist or ensemble where they are not liable to keep to their contract and the date for these six weeks was almost upon us. Brian was loath to withdraw, but the situation was such that it became crucial that he did. And so he did. He contacted Alex Poots and informed them that because Max had not received even the smallest part of the music that was to be played, the BBC was ceasing the agreement with Martland. Within ten seconds of Brian making that call to Poots, Poots was on the phone to me. Here, for the first time, there was a sign of life. He fulminated long and hard, and said that it was completely illegal for Brian to do what he had, and that they were going to sue the BBC. He said that he had booked all twelve players - Max had suggested six- in good faith and now they were going to lose this work.

So be it. We needed to have a Rock Group for the performance. I asked Brian if I could approach Mark Glenworth, who had been our percussionist in The Fires, and who had long experience of creating music of the sort Max had in mind for Steve Berkoff's plays. Brian gave me the nod to go ahead, and so I contacted Mark. From that moment on, things moved swiftly and easily. Mark knew exactly the musicians he needed. One of these included Gregory Knowles, who had been Mark's predecessor in The Fires. Max was overjoyed. Mark auditioned several singers for the Rock Vocalist, and told me that far and away the best was Mary Carewe, who was in fact the daughter of John Carewe, who had also conducted The Fires for a considerable time. It was all within the known and trusted family. Mark sent Max his own arrangements for the group, and we were finally all set.

Except that was not the end of the matter. Alex Poots did go ahead and sue the BBC Philharmonic. To my astonishment and great upset, Brian and Trevor Green said they were going to accede to what Poots had said, and were not going to fight the matter and that they were going to pay. I thought that this was ridiculous, and I persuaded them to fight the case. A date was set for the hearing. I was very upset for poor Sally Groves, who I told would have to be a witness at the hearing, because she was the one who had been constantly in touch with Martland and knew that he was not complying with the terms of the agreement which the BBC had with him. She said that she knew she would have to be a witness, and that she would testify as to the facts, even though she was most distressed to do this because of her relationship with Martland as his publisher. We came to within days of the hearing, but suddenly Brian phoned me in jubilation and said that Martland had pulled out and was not going ahead with suing the BBC Philharmonic. We had won. Moreover Max had got the group that he had wanted in the first place.

The rehearsals for the singers were to take place in London at our beloved Craxton Studios in Hampstead which we used to use for the Fires. As I approached the room, I heard sounds of mirth. When I entered, I saw all the singers rolling around in helpless laughter. This was the first get-together, and they were experiencing the humour in the opera. To me this was all perfectly evident when reading the libretto, but up until that moment, it had not ever been a factor and had been lost in the mire of all the production troubles in Darmstadt. I was most heartened. The singers had instantly got the message and would be able to project that in their own performances. My own circumstances during these days were difficult. I was rushing about here, there and everywhere for all the many celebrations of Max's sixtieth birthday. On one of these, I fell heavily from the wall in Chester, and broke my ankle. After a while of not being able to walk at all, I graduated to crutches, and was able to hobble about, and it was in this condition that I approached the days leading up to the performance of *Resurrection* in Manchester on 8 September.

An additional factor in the mix was that Collins Classics, with whom Max had a recording contract, had decided that although a recording of *Resurrection* was not in the list or the number of recordings in the contract of Max's works to be issued, they would add this one, and they would have their own microphones and producer at the performance. This meant that Max would himself be conducting the concert performance of this opera, which after the debacle in Darmstadt, had seemed as far away as flying to the moon.

The day duly arrived. The rehearsals had gone well, and, after all the troubles, particularly with Martland, all was calm. It was a great and meaningful birthday celebration. A few months later Collins released the CD. At least one element of Max's dream had been realised. The critical reception to the *Resurrection* this time was entirely different to that in Darmstadt. Many enthusiastically welcomed it. All had not been lost.

A couple of years later I was in Vienna and arranged to meet up with a small company which specialised in music-theatre works. The group was called Taschen Oper. I had misheard the name over the phone and thought they were called Passion Opera. I met three or four of them over coffee and I wanted to speak more about other of Max's smaller-scale theatrical works. But Peter Bergamin, who was the conductor and musical director, kept latching on to *Resurrection*. I was rather alarmed. *Resurrection* requires enormous forces and resources, even if there is no chorus. I did my best to try to move Peter off the idea of mounting a production as I thought that it was not fair on Taschen Oper or on the work itself. But he was not to be moved. He had made up his mind that this was exactly what he wanted to do. He joined up with another small-scale music-theatre company in Antwerp called Transparant, which had likewise done some of Max's works. Between them they managed to pool their resources to be able to mount a production, in April and May 1997, first in Vienna and then in Antwerp, Amsterdam, and ultimately at what turned out to be the final May Fest in Glasgow. This production certainly had at least the spirit of the work, but still did not have the visuals which Max had in mind.

The last outing for this opera took place in Budapest under the unlikely auspices of the biggest rock festival in Europe – The Pepsi Sziget. How could such a thing happen? Roderic Dunnett, a musical journalist and friend both of Max's and of mine, had introduced me to Balázs Kovalik, a Hungarian opera director who was making great strides both inside his own country and elsewhere. Balázs had come round to my flat and I had played him some suitable works. I had never thought in terms of *Resurrection*. But he did, and between that money put forward by the festival and the Budapest State Theatre, it became possible to mount a production. This was firstly at the rock festival and then later in the year at the Thália Színház. (Budapest Opera House).

And so it was that on 1 August 2001, I found myself sitting on a mound on an island in the Danube on the outskirts of Budapest listening to and watching *Resurrection*. The production itself was lively, and certainly in every respect better than Darmstadt. As is the custom at such rock festivals, people who attend wear coloured bands around their wrists. These bands indicate into which happenings you are entitled to enter. I had one which enabled me to go anywhere and everywhere. I watched people wandering in and out, and I must say that almost all of the audience opted to stay for the entire duration, which I thought was most promising. They almost certainly had absolutely no idea as to what was going on, but the music had not driven them away. So there we leave it, on a small island in the Danube being listened to and watched by an audience who have just wandered in. To this day, I still feel that there has not been a production of *Resurrection* which fulfils Max's vision, but at least there is one outstanding recording of the music.

