

Full Score

Commissioned by Fresh Squeezed Opera

GEMMA PEACOCKE

# Invocation

for amplified soprano, piano, and cello  
and fixed electronics

2018

**Text adapted from *Magical Hymns from Roman Egypt: A Study of Greek and Egyptian Traditions of Divinity*, by Dr Ljuba Merlina Bortolani**

**From "Hymn to Hecate-Selene" (p. 247) and "Hymn 13" (p. 300)**

I am spinning the magical wheel for you,  
I am spinning the magical wheel for you

Gaze at yourself, beauty of the lady  
Lady of the Nile,  
seeing which beauty  
in the mirror you  
You you

seeing which beauty  
in the mirror you  
You you

*You must not avoid what you must do.*

You start spitting dark light from your eyes.

Listen, you who observe and are observed;  
I look at you, and you look at me.

One piece of bread,  
a coral,  
blood of a turtle-dove,  
hoof of a camel and hair of a virgin cow,

**The sky will be deranged.**

The seed of Pan,  
fire of a solar bolt,  
holy vervain,  
spindle tree,  
acanthus,  
holy vervain,  
edder-wort,  
fat of a dead hind  
holy vervain,  
spindle tree,  
acanthus,

holy vervain,  
edder-wort,  
fat of a dead hind  
spinning

*You must not avoid what you must do.*

Tomorrow will not come, if what I want does not happen.

*All these things are the symbol of my magical power.*

Lentisk and myrtle  
Dark laurel  
Fat of a dappled goat  
An egg of a young ibis  
A vulture  
A vulture  
A sea-going falcon,  
A single onion

**The sky will be deranged.**

The opened out body of a bluish-shining woman,  
the pierced vagina of a black sphinx-ape:  
all these things are the symbol of my magical power.

One piece of bread,  
a coral,  
blood of a turtle-dove,

**The sky will be deranged.**

Sage, garlic, roses,  
a pip,  
salt.

*All these things are the symbol of my magical power.*

Tomorrow will not come, if what I want does not happen.

## Performance notes

The cellist triggers the electronics with a foot pedal. Trigger points are marked with a triangular play symbol.

You will need:

Microphones, a mixing desk and speakers to amplify the singer, cellist and pianist and to balance the electronics with the live audio.

An Apple laptop loaded with QLab and a small table for the laptop.

A MIDI foot pedal.

Set-up:

Connect MIDI foot pedal to the laptop to trigger cues in QLab.

Connect the audio from the laptop to the mixing desk.

Connect the instrument and vocal microphones to the mixing desk.

Send live and fixed audio to speakers.

## Programme Note

Invocation intertwines lines from two ancient Egyptian magical hymns. The original hymns are syncretic fusions of Roman-Egyptian polytheistic beliefs and rituals and early Christian and Gnostic beliefs.

One hymn is a supplication to Hecate, an ancient goddess of the night, moon, wilderness, liminal spaces, and protector of the newly-born. Pre-dating Greek mythology, Hecate was originally thought of as a powerful goddess and protector of women with her own cult of worshippers and eunuchs. The hymn is a paeon featuring expiatory offerings of foods and sacrifices.

The other hymn is startlingly threatening in tone. It demands that the supplicant's desires are met, and its lines form a curse. The focus is cold and commanding, and the tone is menacing. The singer insists that if his will is not done, "tomorrow will not come".

Over time, representations of Hecate shifted, and she eventually came to be a chthonic hag associated with evil, witchcraft, magic, and necromancy. Her name appears on surviving examples of stone tablets inscribed with curses.

While writing Invocation I was thinking about how a powerful pre-Hellenistic goddess could be reduced to a hag commanded by mortal beings. I also wanted to set the hymns' inverse power dynamics within and against each other.

With thanks to Jillian Flexner and Fresh Squeezed Opera for commissioning *Invocation* as part of *The Female Gaze*.



# Invocation

GEMMA PEACOCKE

♩ = 92

*taut*

Soprano

Piano

Violoncello

*p*

*p* *ped.*

3 5 *molto tasto*

13

S.

Pno.

Vc.

*mp* *mf*

*ppp* *mp* *mf* *mp*

pizz. (ord.)

21

S.

Pno.

Vc.

*mf* *pp* *mf*

8<sup>vb</sup> 8<sup>vb</sup> |

24

A

27 *mf* ♩ = 100

S. I am spin - ning the mag-i-cal wheel\_\_\_\_\_ for you\_\_\_\_\_ I

Pno.

Vc.

B

33

S. am spin - ning the mag-i-cal wheel\_\_\_\_\_ for\_\_\_\_\_ you Gaze\_\_\_\_\_ at your self

Pno.

Vc. arco

38

S. beau-ty\_\_\_\_\_ of the la - dy La -dy of the Nile\_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

Vc.

43

S. *mf* See - ing — which beau - ty in the

Pno. *mf*

Vc. pizz. *mf* *f* *mf*

47

S. mir - ror you — you you

Pno.

Vc. *f*

52

S. See - ing — which — beau - ty in the

Pno. *f*

Vc.

C

54

S. *mir - ror you you you*

Pno.

Vc. arco (ord.)

*p* *f*

8<sup>va</sup>

58

S. You must not a- void what you must do

Pno.

Vc. pizz. arco

*p* *ff*

61.3

64

S.

Pno.

Vc. pizz.

*mp* *mp*



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81

S. *ff*  
and you \_\_\_\_\_ look at me

Pno. *mf* *ff*

Vc. *f* *ff* spicc. 87

88

S. E

Pno. *mp* *f* *mp*

Vc. *f* *mp* pizz.

91

S. *mf*  
one piece of bread a cor - al

Pno. *f* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf*

▶ 91

94

S. *blood of a tur - tle dove*

Pno.

Vc. arco pizz. arco

*f* *mf*

99

S.

Pno. *p*

Vc. pizz. *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

105

S. *hoof of a cam-el and hair of a vir -*

Pno. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

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125

S. ho-ly ver-vain ed-der-wort fat of a dead hind ho-ly ver-vain spin-dle tree

Pno.

Vc. ord.

131

S. a-can-thus ho-ly ver-vain ed-der-wort fat of a dead hind

Pno.

Vc.

TACET  
except electronics

137

accel. .. =108

S. spin - ning You must not a-void what you must do

Pno.

Vc.

10

143 ♩=100

S.

Pno.

Vc.

▶ 145

**G** *plaintive*

*threatening*

150 *mf*

S.

Pno.

Vc.

**H** TACET  
except electronics

162

S.

Pno.

Vc.

▶ 164

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184

S. *ff*  
A sin-gle on - ion

Pno. *ff*  
*f* 3 3

Vc. *f*

188

S.

Pno.

Vc.

192

S.

Pno.

Vc.



195

S.

Pno.

Vc.

198

S.

Pno.

Vc.

201

S.

Pno.

Vc.

J

204

S. *mf* the

Pno. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

208

S. sky will be

Pno. *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

211

S. de - ranged The

Pno.

Vc.

K

215 *f*

S. o - - - - - pened out bo - dy

Pno. *f* *8va*

Vc. *f* *mp* 217

218 *mf*

S. of a blu - - ish shin - - ing

Pno. *mf* *8va*

Vc. *mf* *mp* pizz.

221 *mp* *mf*

S. wo - - man the pierced va - gi - na of a black sphinx ape

Pno. *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf* arco 224

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238

S. Sage gar-lic ros - es a pip salt

Pno.

Vc.

M

244

S. all these things\_\_ are the sym - bol of my mag - i - cal

Pno. *f mf f mf*

Vc. *f mf f mf*

▶ 245  
pizz.

248

S. pow - er

Pno.

Vc. arco

TACET  
except electronics

▶ 248

N

256 *mp*

S. *mf*

To - mor - - row will not come if

Pno. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

262

S. *ppp*

what I want does not hap - pen

Pno. *ppp*

Vc. *ppp*

fall away from pitch

266

268

S. TACET  
except electronics

Pno.

Vc.