

CHRISTIAN JOST
PHOENIX RESURREXIT – ODYSSEE IN 4 PARTS
for Narrator, Soprano, Choir und Orchestra 2001
TEXTBOOK
PART I: TWILIGHT - CREATION
1ST SCENE

Narrator:

The time has come! And then the time came! On the morning of that day.
In front of me, above the clear horizon, a silver arrow rises into the sky: the Atlas rocket ready for take-off.

White clouds of smoke encircle her body which is encased in a wedding dress of frost.

She awaits me and I go towards her.

“Did you sleep last night?”

“Yes, I was able to sleep.”

“Really? Without drugs?”

“Yes, without any medication, but it was a terrible night.”

It is an incredible feeling sitting at the top of the Atlas when the scaffolding for the start is being removed. I can hear the whining of the pipe circuits, liquid oxygen flows into the tank ... and then the vibrating hissing noise. The hissing.

The Atlas is long and slim and sways lightly to and fro in the strong gusts of wind. I can make the entire construction rock back and forth by moving myself from side to side in my berth.

Ten! Nine! Eight! Seven! Six! Five! Four! Three! Two! One!
Ignition!

I sense, hear and feel the whole tremendous force being released beneath me.
The force of a slowly ascending rocket.

Then a moment of absolute bliss and total relaxation, causing tears to run down my face. It is as though I am leaving the earth for ever.

As though there is no power which can bring me back.

The expanse of sky with its swiftly expanding cloud masses rushes towards me in its entirety. Below me is the start ramp, miniature and still smoking, and I gaze far into the distance, far beyond the Cape, out to the Atlantic, along the route which I will be taking.

Once the last thrust chamber has been ejected, I fly further into the darkness ...

As a child, I often dreamed that I was running down the street, then leaped up high and was able to fly through the air unaided. This is what the sudden onset of zero gravity feels like and I am floating as if inside a soap bubble. First the stars become visible, then the rays of the sun shine into the space capsule and a stripe of violet light spreads across the firmament.

It was the evening, and then the following morning: the first day.

2ND SCENE

Chor:

Es ward Abend, und es ward Morgen. Erster Tag.

Narrator:

In the beginning there was space. The expanse of heaven – nothing but space. Only darkness pervaded and silence unified the whole – there was no light, no sound and no living entity.

Chor:

Es ward Abend, und es ward Morgen. Zweiter Tag.

Narrator:

There was no day, only the black night. Impenetrable dark silence. Out of the darkness, light appeared – and with the light, life evolved.

Chor:

Es ward Abend, und es ward Morgen. Dritter Tag.

Narrator:

And out of the light, a voice emerged. A voice.

Sopran:

Wie ein Falke tauche ich in maßlosen Himmeln.

Wie ein Phoenix gleite ich durch die Gebiete des Jenseits – wiederkehrenden Lebens.

Narrator:

Evening came, and then the following morning: the fourth day.
The fifth day.

Sopran:

Ich bin der Schöpfer, der selbst sich zeugt...

Chor:

Es ward Abend, und es ward Morgen. Sechster Tag.

Sopran:

...der selbst sich zeugt.

Narrator:

Thus heaven and earth became one!

3RD SCENE

Narrator:

The Eagle has landed. Touchdown in the Sea of Tranquillity. I have focused the camera on the exit ladder. The exit hatch is open. Now I am at the base of the ladder. The landing struts have only sunk up to one or two inches into the surface of the moon. It is almost like powder ...

The firmament is completely black. Against the dark background, the stars are brighter and more clearly visible.

The earth is encircled by a unique blue shimmer.

...OK, now I'm going to descend the ladder...
... one small step for a man ...

Light blue, blue, dark blue, violet and ultimately the black of the firmament.

One small step for a man, but one giant leap for mankind.

Part II: PHOENIX

4TH SCENE

Narrator:

Mountains, blue and high but far in the distance, are what I see in the morning.
At midday, a fine mist and a cragged rock face in shades of purple – the sharply jagged surface is what I see when the sun sets.
A faraway red light shines over this darkness in the mellow, warm night – and suddenly a gentle, mild wind touches my face.
It brings the strangest scents and aromas from the still, clear night.
It is a first distant breath which caresses my face:
Unfathomable. Beguiling. Bewitching. Where am I?

Unforgettable. A magic: a whisper. An infatuated promise. An augur. A breath of never known senses.

5TH SCENE

Sopran:

Ich bin das Gestern.
Ich kenne das Morgen.
Ich weiß den Namen der himmlischen Gottheit,
ich, Phoenix.

Narrator:

But a single bird, named by the Assyrians as Phoenix, renews itself.

Should this bird live its full lifespan which is five hundred years, it is fulfilled and gives birth to itself anew in the treetop branches of a swaying palm tree, then to live for a further five hundred years.

Sopran:

Ich bin der Hüter des Schicksalbuchs
von allem, was gewesen, was geschehen wird.

Narrator:

To die. To live. To give birth to oneself. Five hundred years. And another five hundred years.

Sopran:

Ich bin umringt von Liebe.
Ich zerstreue die feindlichen Geister,
und der Dämonen Waffen fallen in meine Gewalt.

6TH SCENE

Narrator:

Seagulls circling round a rock I spied,
Turning unremitting constant circles,
Gliding, hovering with their outstretched wings,
Marking out a shimmering pure white orbit;
And also in the mirror of the sea,
I spied around the same peak of this rock,
A pale flock in pursuit with outspread pinions,
Unremitting, glinting through the depths.
And the mirror it was of such clarity,
That the wings were raised in equal manner,
Both deep down in the sea and in the heavens,
So that illusion and truth were both as one.
It slowly overcame me as in horror,
This sight of essence and delusion thus entwined,
And I pondered, standing on the beach,
Staring at the spectre of the flight:
And you yourself, are really on the wing?
Or only painted and a mere reflection?
Do you flutter in circles with fabled creatures?
Or is blood really coursing through your wings?

Part III: APOCALYPSE

7TH SCENE

Narrator:

What is it that I hear? Do you not hear it? All around me is a murmuring, a muted roaring emanating from the darkness.
The roaring of an upcoming wind.
It feels to me as though the house is about to collapse and the heavens will fall down on me.
I remain motionless for a while; then I look up.
A black bank of fog impedes my visibility;
I glance up at the overcast sky.
I gaze with my eye to the utmost ends of the earth,
as though I were sitting at the centre of a heart – the heart of an unfathomable darkness.

Horror! Terror!

8. BILD

Sopran:

Wie ein Falke tauche ich in maßlosen Himmeln.

Chor:

Es ward Morgen.

Sopran:
Es ward Morgen.

Narrator:
We lay there in extreme tension at the crack of dawn;
it was virtually impossible to recognise who was lying next to whom.
It lasted ten seconds, but those ten seconds were the longest I had ever experienced.

Before the fireball made contact with the ground,
it expanded almost symmetrically ...,
except for a few blisters and several sharp points
protruding and shooting like rays from below the equator line of the ball.
The contact with the earth comes after five thousandths of a second.
The ball swiftly flattens out and, just after the protrusions touch the ground, after
approximately two-thousandths of a second,
a wide skirt of dirty material appears ...
Now the fireball has achieved a diameter of 290 metres;
immediately after the shock wave, a dark front appears
composed of absorbent material which leaks out slowly and then becomes invisible.
Now the fireball has reached a diameter of 460 metres.
It expands to a diameter of 610 metres until completely enveloped in its own
cloud of dust emanating from the surrounding skirt.
After two seconds, the top part of the ball begins to rise again.
After 3.5 seconds, a neck evolves surrounded by a vortex ring.
The neck grows longer and the vortex ring with its swiftly expanding material
propels itself into the sky in the form of a new violent cloud of smoke.

Suddenly there was a tremendous flashing thunderbolt! The brightest light ...

Sopran:
Wie ein Phoenix gleite ich durch die Gebiete des Jenseits – wiederkehrenden Lebens.

Chor:
Es ward Morgen.

Narrator:
... the brightest light I have ever seen.
It explodes. Gouges right through me and burns into me;
it then diminishes, and I can see the place where the bomb has made an impact.

Chor:
Es ward Morgen.

Narrator:
At this moment, something new was born. A new power.
A new self-conception of man which humans had won over nature.
For a moment I had thought – although I knew this to be impossible – that the
whole world was about to explode. I knew that this was not possible. Knew that this could not
be possible!?

9TH SCENE

Sopran und Chor:

Ich bin umringt von Liebe.

Sopran:

Ich zerstreue die feindlichen Geister,
und der Dämonen Waffen fallen in meine Gewalt.

10TH SCENE

Narrator:

The lovers. The dexterous lord. The intoxicated maiden;
they made love through the metal of the bells.

Through the silken hair of the lute. Through the clamour of the tambours.

On the back of a tiger of hollowed wood.

In the ecstasy of peacocks in full cry.

The cranes with their brief calls – and the cry of the phoenix with unheard tones.

Chor:

Ich bin umringt von Liebe.

11TH SCENE

Sopran:

Das Licht, das ich sehe, ist nicht räumlich begrenzt.

Es ist sehr viel leuchtender als eine Wolke,

welche die Sonne in sich trägt,

und ich kann weder seine Höhe, Länge,

Breite genau betrachten.

Als sein Name wird mir genannt:

Chor:

Schatten.

Sopran:

„Schatten des lebendigen Lichts“...

Chor:

Es ward Abend. Es ward Morgen.

12. BILD

Narrator:

We are approaching the end of our expedition.

Only a few minutes remain until our return.

Sopran:

Wie ein Phoenix gleite ich durch die Gebiete des Jenseits wiederkehrenden Lebens.

Narrator:

To think that I will maybe never repeat all this ever again:

this intoxicating feeling of weightlessness, the earth shimmering through the porthole,
illuminated by the rays of the sun, the fantastic flickering of thunderstorms

and the luminous spiders' webs of great cities against the background
of the charcoal black of the planet by night!

We re-enter the atmosphere. The gravitational force increases and I am pressed deeper and deeper into my seat. No more thoughts. The heat increases; and increases; and increases. Faster and faster, as if she could hardly wait, the earth wants to reclaim me. Her force crushes, presses and squeezes! It pulls me down. The orange-tinged light of orange-tinged plasma appears through the porthole. I am flying into a fireball! Impact.

Quellenhinweis:

den Quellennummern 1 - 7 sowie 19 u. 20 liegen Zitate aus verschiedenen
Interviews und Reiseberichten folgender Astro- und Kosmonauten zugrunde:

John Glenn, Jr. - USA
Aleksandr Wolkow - UDSSR
Dumitru Prumariu - Rumänien
James Irving - USA
Wallerij Rjumin - UDSSR
Shugderemijn Gurraytsche - Mongolei
Robert Gibson - USA
Swetlana Sawizkaja - UDSSR
Anatolij Beresowoj - UDSSR
Die Bibel
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Ägyptisches Totenbuch, Phoenix Mythos
Neil Armstrong; Apollo 11, Mondlandung 1969
Gagarin an Bord der Wostok1, 1961
Ovid, Metamorphosen
Hildegard von Bingen, Mythische Texte der Gottesordnung
Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, Möwenflug
Joseph Conrad, Das Herz der Finsternis
Richard Rhodes, Trinity oder Der Montag, der die Welt veränderte.
Victor Segalen, Klangstein