

STONE SONGS
By Howard Moody



Ancient time
Chant 1 - Tu es Petrus
Out of the Earth
Chant 2 - Nisi Dominus
Vision
Chant 3 - Tantum ergo
Building
Chant 4 - Tota pulchra es
In memoriam
Chant 5 - Jesu dulcis memoria
Legacy
Chant 6 - Ubi caritas
Truth

Ancient Time

Tu es Petrus.

Long still stone nights.
Long still stone days.
Stones buried under water and mud,
Millions of years to reappear and again to disappear
Only to re-emerge after unimaginable time,
A different time, in which a million years for us is a fraction of a second for a stone.
Stone time.

Silence is their lot, telling stories.
Memories from the beginning of the earth,
Messages from the past.

Respect the stones.
No two stones are the same.
The whole majesty of nature squeezed into the smallest space.
A masterpiece of creation.

Listen for their song.

Chant 1

Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram
Aedificabo Ecclesiam meam.

Out of the Earth

Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were dug.

Quarry out costly stones.
Tap them with a brass rod
And choose the ones that sing.

You, like living stones.
Lay the foundations of the house.
Turn the earth on its side.

Chant 2

Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum
in vanum laboraverunt, qui aedificant eam.
Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem
frustra vigilat, qui custodit eam.

Vision

The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached the heavens: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

Let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens: and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church: and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

Mark you the floor? that square and speckled stone,
Which looks so fine and strong.

Speak of your fellow's work with honest words, with the understanding God gave and assist him to improve it in any way that you can.

Find the symmetry.
Construct perfect proportion.
Satisfy our quest for balance by the placement of stones.

Chant 3

Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui:
Et antiquum documentum,
Novo cedat ritui.

Building

Nous ferons appel aux plus grands talents.

We will build
We will dream
We will work
We will wonder

Thousands of tonnes of limestone and marble,
Hundreds of tonnes of lead.
Three thousand oak trees from three thousand acorns,
An acre of glass.
Two master builders.
It will take longer to repair than to build.

Make it so beautiful that future generations will restore it
As the rain returns the stone back to the earth.

Build with the proportions of a capsized ark, floating on gravel and water.
Four feet of foundations will support four hundred feet of spire.

Aedificabo Ecclesiam meam.

Chant 4

Tota pulchra es, Maria
Et macula non est in Te

O Maria, O Maria.
Virgo prudentissima.
Mater clementissima.

In Memoriam

Who were the builders who died
Working against the elements?
Scaling the spire,
Clambering the walls,
Sacrificing their lives
To create harmony and proportion,
Never to see their life's work complete.

Whose was the power that found the gold to build it?
Who were the victims of their crusade?
They were the mortar that binds the stones together.

These are the stones that Orpheus softened with his music,
This is the church defined by song.

Lacrimosa dies illa
Qua resurget ex favilla
Judicandus homo reus:
Huic ergo parce Deus.

Chant 5

Jesu dulcis memoria
Dans vera cordis gaudia:
sed super mel et omnia
ejus dulcis praesentia.

Legacy

If I chance to hold my peace,
These stones to praise thee may not cease.

C'est notre cathédrale et plus encore.
C'est notre histoire, notre littérature, notre imaginaire,
C'est l'épicentre de notre vie.
Cette histoire c'est la nôtre.

Silent stones create a spire
To inspire you and me,
An acorn growing into a most magnificent tree.

Chant 6

Ubi caritas et amor,
Deus ibi est
Congregavit nos in unum
Christi amor.

Truth

It rises to the heavens and above the city,
A floating arc of harmony and proportion.
We, like living stones
Will make it sound again.

Ubi caritas et amor,
Deus ibi est.
Tantum ergo sacramentum veneremur cernui.
Tota pulchra es Maria tota pulchra es.
Tu es Petrus.
Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum
In vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam.

Ubi caritas et amor
Deus ibi est.
Caritas.
Amor.

Translations of the Latin Texts:

Chant 1:
You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church.

Chant 2:
*Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it.
Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*

Chant 3:
*Let us venerate such a great Sacrament with head bowed and let the old
practice give way to the new rite.*

Chant 4:
*Mary, you are all beautiful and without sin. Virgin most intelligent,
Mother most merciful.*

Chant 5:
*The sweet memory of Jesus gives true joy to the heart but his presence
is more than honey and all things.*

Chant 6:
Where there is charity and love, there God is.

Lacrimosa:
*The day when the ashes shall rise up will be full of tears.
The guilty man will be judged. Therefore spare him, O God,
merciful Lord Jesus and grant them eternal rest.*

Stone Songs Texts Influenced, Adapted and Quoted From:

Pliny: Liber xxxvii c.100 AD

Procopius: Of the buildings of Justinian c.530 AD

The Sarum Rite of 1078

The Regius Manuscript 1390

The Bible: mainly from the King James translation of 1611, but also other versions and adaptations from Genesis / Isaiah / Kings / Psalms / Peter / Matthew / Luke

George Herbert: 'The Altar' and 'The Church-floor' c.1630

Emmanuel Macron: from his speech during the fire of Notre Dame, 15 April 2019

Comments by a stone mason of Salisbury Cathedral, 7 November 2019

Howard Moody: writings 2019

Susan Berber-Credner: writings 2020