
LaRouche on Immortality

Mozart's Motet 'Ave Verum Corpus'

Lyndon LaRouche spoke about the profound importance to him, personally, of Mozart's Ave Verum Corpus, following the performance of the motet at the Schumann birthday fest. Here is an excerpt.

This particular motet has long had a particular significance for me. It goes back decades in this matter, and I've always hoped to get it *right*. Because, what you're seeing here is something which is not in the score, but it's the intention which underlies the score itself, in this case, Mozart. Because it's not simply a repetition at the closing part of the chorus, here. It's a sense of true immortality.

Now, immortality is not simply something which is preached on at Sunday services. . . .

We think of ourselves as being in the flesh. We think of ourselves as being seen, or heard, or smelled, for our presence. But that is not really what we are as human beings. Animals do that. Human beings are not animals. They're something else. We think in terms of sense-organs, and, unfortunately, in society generally, people think only in terms of sense-organs as defining them, as defining them in the eyes of others, and defining them in the eyes of themselves, or the smell of themselves.

They don't realize that our senses do not show us reality. The senses show us the shadows cast by reality, the reality of the human mind. And all of our great principles, physical principles, for example, come from the practice of this understanding: That the truth lies not in the senses, or that which pertains to the senses as such. The senses give you the shadows of reality. Your job is to know how to interpret those shadows, to think of, and address specifically, the reality, which the shadows merely cast. . . .

And, in this music, in particular, that's exactly what's happening: It's a performance onstage, and these singers here, are singing—there's no question about

that. It's a question of sense-perception. You can hear them, you can't see them; if you turn the lights out, you can still hear them. But, what they're representing, is, they're representing a situation, a historical situation, pertaining to the death of Christ. And through this medium, of this particular piece of genius by Wolfgang Mozart, you're able to capture a glimpse of that moment, and how the people who observed, and mourned, the passing of Jesus—how we reach them. How you capture the moment in which they lived, capture *that* moment in which they lived.

The Power of Mozart's Insight

And you have to learn, therefore, when you have a great composer like Mozart, who was a genius, much underestimated, actually—much-appreciated, but much-underestimated—to appreciate his insight, the power of insight, to convey with this particular motet. There are many versions of the motet, apart from Mozart, before him. They're all rather trivial. They really don't convey the message. Mozart, in the artful way he composed this particular motet, when properly sung, conveys a sense of immortality. Because it captures a moment in real history, the moment at the time of the death of Christ.

And therefore, when it is properly sung, under the proper circumstances, with the proper prescience in the audience, they actually *live through*—the audience, with the chorus, lives through—that moment in past actual history. And it's a way of communicating a sense of the intrinsic immortality of the person—not in the flesh, but in the consequence of their lives for all mankind.

And this has a reciprocal feature: that it compels you, perhaps, if you're sensitive, to find your immortality, as you find immortality expressed on that occasion, after the death of Christ, over 2,000 years ago. You have a sense of immortality.

And that's what happens in all great art, all great Classical art, and all great Classical music, in particular. It's that thing that puts you at a distance from the present time, and gives you a relationship, an experienced relationship, which is more durable, which can take you back thousands of years, in terms of human art, that we know of. For example, from Homer and so forth, you get this sense of thousands of years of history, and *you are there, and they here*. And that is what this particular motet means for me.