



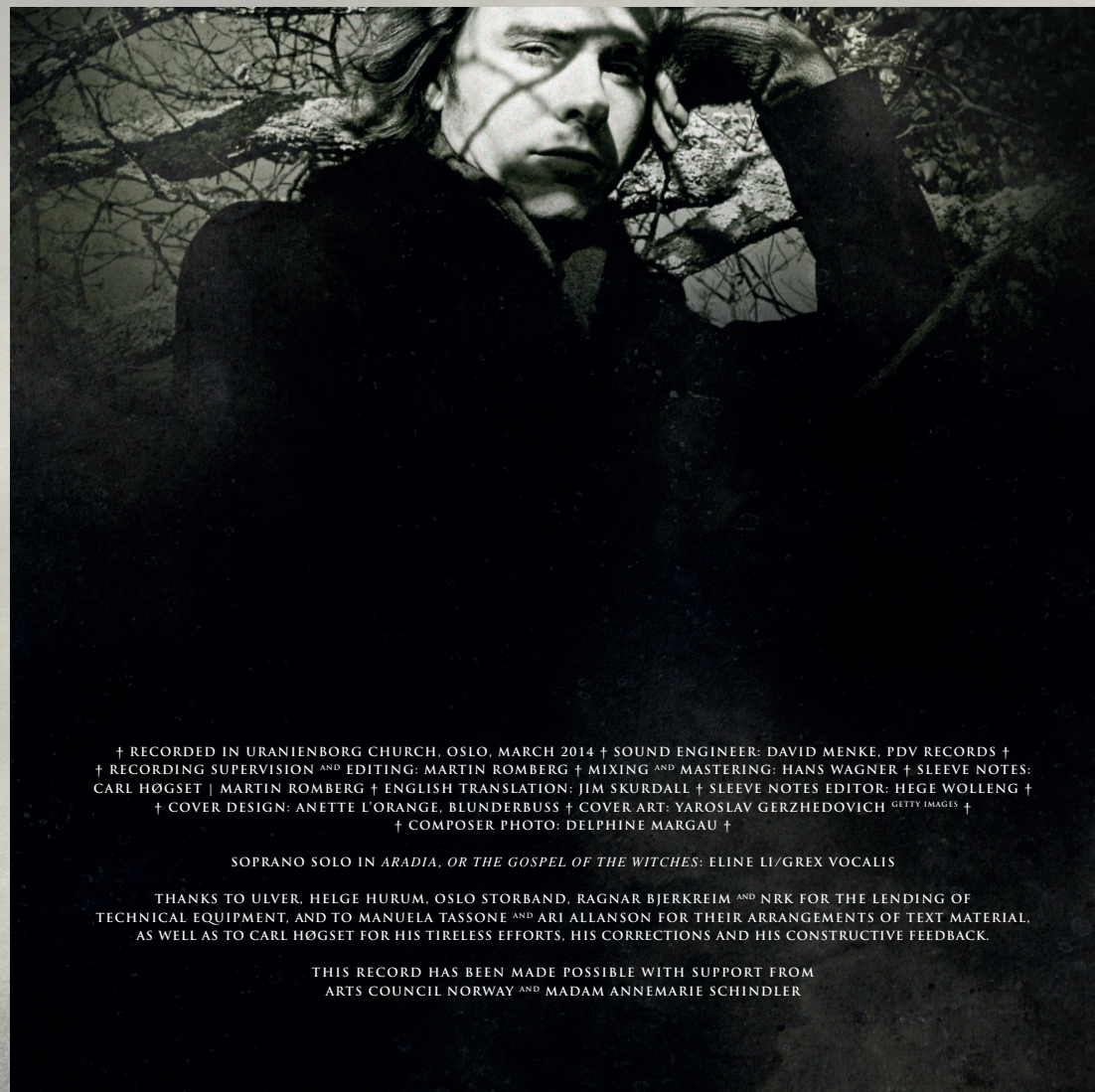
MARTIN ROMBERG

# WITCH MASS

ARADIA + STREGHE + RÜNATAL

GREG VOCALIS  
DET NORSKE JENTEKOR  
KAMMERKORET NOVA





† RECORDED IN URANIENBORG CHURCH, OSLO, MARCH 2014 † SOUND ENGINEER: DAVID MENKE, PDV RECORDS †  
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SOPRANO SOLO IN *ARADIA, OR THE GOSPEL OF THE WITCHES*: ELINE LI/GREX VOCALIS

THANKS TO ULVER, HELGE HURUM, OSLO STORBAND, RAGNAR BJERKREIM AND NRK FOR THE LENDING OF  
TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT, AND TO MANUELA TASSONE AND ARI ALLANSON FOR THEIR ARRANGEMENTS OF TEXT MATERIAL,  
AS WELL AS TO CARL HØGSET FOR HIS TIRELESS EFFORTS, HIS CORRECTIONS AND HIS CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK.

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## MARTIN ROMBERG † WITCH MASS

ARADIA † STREGHE † RUNATAL

### ARADIA, OR THE GOSPEL OF THE WITCHES

Aradia is an Italian moon goddess who has been worshipped and venerated by witches for at least two thousand years. She is the daughter of Diana, the foremost goddess of Tuscan witches, and Diana's brother, Lucifer. According to legend, Diana came to Earth disguised as a mortal, but her fondness for sorcery and her astonishing skill revealed her identity. She returned to her heavenly world, but charged that the training of witches was to continue. This was at a time when many lived under the oppression of serfdom and slavery, and the intention was in large measure to give humans the means to liberate themselves. She entrusted the task to her daughter, Aradia, whom she sent to Earth instructing her that she would "become the first of all witches."

As a text, *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches* is a composite of stories and incantations related to rituals and performances of witchcraft originating in Northern Italy. The verses were collected by the American ethnologist Charles G. Leland (1824-1903) and published in 1899. This musical adaptation for choir, originally commissioned by the Vestfold International Festival and premiered by Grex Vocalis in Tonsberg Tunnel in 2012, is a work of seven movements. The text has many parallels to the Catholic Eucharist.

/ CARL HØGSET

### STREGHE, IL LIBRO DEGLI INCANTESIMI


Leland spent a good portion of his professional life in Northern Italy, where he devoted himself to folk culture and old Etruscan culture. Like the original text of *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches*, he reproduced in *Etruscan Roman Remains in Popular Tradition* (1892) a large number of other hymns and magic spells passed down from pre-Roman times. The texts consist mainly of poetic verse, coined to teach supplications and homages to nature spirits and to teach about love and how to gain help in winning the object of one's affection. The work of seven movements, each describing a spirit, was commissioned and premiered by Det Norske Jentekor in 2012.

### RÛNATAL, RUNE SONG OF ODIN

Stanzas 139-145 of *Hávamál* are an account of Odin's transformation and of how he discovered the runes that bestow eternal wisdom. By sacrificing an eye and hanging himself for seven days and seven nights on Yggdrasil, the world tree, he became the master witch in Norse mythology. The work, commissioned by Sjøbodkoret in Tønsberg, is sung by Kammerkoret NOVA in the Old Norse of the original edition as one continuous movement.

/ MARTIN ROMBERG





MARTIN ROMBERG was born in Oslo, Norway in 1978. He studied classical composition with Michael Jarrell and film music with Klaus Peter Sattler. Romberg composes music in a post-Romantic tonal language, based primarily on themes from fantasy literature, the visual arts, the world's mythologies, and comic books. He endeavours above all to find expression in the borderland between popular culture and classical music. From his base in France he has worked with close to twenty orchestras throughout Europe, together with numerous choirs and soloists the world over. He has also worked extensively as orchestrator across genres with, among others, Ulver on its *Messe I.X-VI.X* and on the arrangement of Ingolf Wunder's paraphrases of orchestral works by John Williams, released by Deutsche Grammophon in 2012. The French editor Editions Gérard Billaudot began publishing a selection of Romberg's works in 2010.

GREX VOCALIS was founded by Carl Høgset in 1971 and soon established itself as one of Norway's leading chamber choirs. Høgset's ideal sound was shaped by Continental influences, and the choir was moulded in the cultivation of the Early Music tradition, in which homogeneity, purity, lines, vocal timbre, and focus on textual content and expression are utterly essential. These same qualities are indispensable in the choir's work with other musical epochs. Besides performances in Norway, Grex Vocalis has toured throughout Europe and has visited Japan and Cuba. The choir has won first prizes in national and international competition, has released ten recordings and contributed to numerous others, and three times has been awarded the Spellemann Prize, the Norwegian Grammy.

DET NORSKE JENTEKOR (The Norwegian Girls' Choir) is a choir with a proud tradition and a reputation for performing at the highest artistic level. The singers come from around the southeastern part of Norway and are selected on the basis of auditions. The choir originated in 1947 as the girls' choir of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK). It continues to play a prominent role in Norwegian cultural life and has fostered a number of notable Norwegian singers and artists. It has made contemporary music and Norwegian traditional music its trademark. The standard repertoire of Det Norske Jentekor also includes commissioned works written for the choir. Of the four choirs, with members ranging in age from six to twenty-two, it is the eldest singers known as *Studiokoret* (The Studio Choir) who have made this recording conducted by Anne Karin Sundal-Ask.

KAMMERKORET NOVA (NOVA Chamber Choir) was founded in 2001 and is known for its homogeneous sound and its ability to convey musical moods. The choir has won a number of prizes, national and international. In the autumn of 2009 NOVA won two first prizes at the Grieg International Choir Festival. That same autumn it also won the adult choir category at Let the Peoples Sing, the European Broadcasting Union's international competition for amateur choirs. Kammerkoret NOVA appeared in 2012 in a performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 in Oslo Concert Hall and Mozart's *Requiem* in Stavanger Cathedral — this in addition to a number of larger concerts and performances of commissioned works by Ola Gjeilo, Henrik Ødegård, Andrew Smith, and Torbjørn Dyrud, among others. Vivianne Sydnes conducted this recorded performance.



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ARADIA

- I. Introduction [04:00]
- II. The Sabbath [05:42]
- III. The Charm of the Stones [03:30]
- IV. Diana and Endymion [04:09]
- V. The Invocation of Love [04:11]
- VI. Incantation of the Wine [05:05]
- VII. Laverna [07:18]

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STREGHE

- VIII. Aplu [02:25]
- IX. Pomo [02:10]
- X. Bella Marta [03:28]
- XI. Attilio [02:57]
- XII. Lo spirito dello scaldino [03:06]
- XIII. Pano [03:23]
- XIV. Ra [02:59]

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XV. RÚNATAL [07:46]



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