

Chöre

LEIBHIA

An opera by Adam Klein

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Words by Adam Klein and J.R.R. Tolkien

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

NARRATOR (NARRATRIX) (7)	Spoken
BEREN, son of Barahir, a Man (25)	Tenor
LÚTHIEN, daughter of Thingol and Melian, part Elf, part Maia (27)	Soprano
DAERON, Minstrel of Doriath, enamoured of Lúthien (27)	Countertenor
THINGOL, King of Doriath, an Elf (41)	Bass
MELIAN, Queen of Doriath, a Maia (45)	Contralto
FINROD FELAGUND, Lord of Nargothrond, an Elf (53)	Tenor
CELEGORM, son of Fëanor maker of the Silmarils, an Elf (58)	Baritone
CURUFIN, son of Fëanor (59)	Countertenor
EDRAHIL, an Elf of Nargothrond (62)	Bass
SAURON, Chief Captain of Morgoth, a Maia ((64)	Baritone
HUAN, Hound of Valinor, a Maia in dog-form (77)	Baritone
A WOLF (81)	Baritone
DRAUGLUIN, Werewolf of Sauron's Isle (89)	Baritone
CARCHAROTH, Wolf of Angband, a Maia and huge wolf (129)	Baritone or Bass
MORGOTH, the Dark Lord, the Enemy, a Vala (134)	Bass
THORONDOR, Lord of Eagles, a Maia in bird-form (150)	Supernumerary or Machine
MABLUNG, servant of Thingol, an Elf (160)	Tenor
BELEG, servant of Thingol, an Elf (169)	Supernumerary
MANDOS, Keeper of the Halls of the Dead, a Vala (194)	Bass
DIOR, son of Beren and Lúthien (203)	Boy Soprano
AINUR, FOREST NOISES, ECHOES, ELVES OF DORIATH AND NARGOTHROND, ORCS, SPIRITS IN THE HALLS OF MANDOS (7)	SATB Chorus
	(SSATB in Sc. 2) (TTBB in Sc. 4) (SAATB in the Epilogue)

(Thingol, Morgoth and Mandos may be sung by the same person, as may Daeron and Curufin; Finrod and Mablung; Celegorm and Sauron; and A Wolf and Draugluin. Morgoth may also be sung by two or three basses at once.)

Time: the First Age.

Place: The northern lands of Middle-earth.

## SCENES AND INTERLUDES

("Narrator" in parentheses indicates Narrator lines for concert version. They may be used in staged version as needed. Other parts in parentheses indicate that that the characters don't sing in those scenes.)

Prologue: The Music of the Ainur— Orchestra and Chorus (Narrator)	7
Scene 1: A glade beside the river Esgalduin— Beren, Lúthien, Chorus, Daeron (Narrator)	25
Scene 2: In Menegroth— Chorus, Thingol, Lúthien, Beren, Melian	39
Interlude: Beren travels to Nargothrond— Narrator	52
Scene 3: The Halls of Nargothrond— Beren, Finrod, Celegorm, Curufin, Chorus, Edrahil	53
Interlude: On the way to Sauron's Isle—Narrator	63
Scene 4: Sauron's Chambers in Minas Tirith— Sauron, Finrod, Beren	64
Scene 5: Nargothrond, in Lúthien's prison chamber— Lúthien, Huan (Narrator)	73
Scene 6: The dungeons of Sauron's Isle— Finrod, Beren, A Wolf, Lúthien offstage (Narrator)	80
Scene 7: Sauron's Chambers; the bridge outside the Tower; the Dungeon— Lúthien, Sauron, Draugluin, Chorus, Beren (Narrator)	87
Scene 8: On the north marches of Doriath— Beren, Lúthien, Celegorm, Curufin, (Huan), (Narrator)	109
Interlude: Beren Leaves Lúthien Asleep— Narrator	117
Scene 9: The border of Anfauglith and Taur-nu-Fuin— Beren, Lúthien, Huan	118
Scene 10: The Gates of Angband; Morgoth's Throne; the Gate— Carcharoth, Beren, Lúthien, Morgoth, Chorus, (Thorondor)	129
Interlude: The Eagles bear Beren and Lúthien back to Doriath— Narrator	151
Scene 11: In Menegroth— Thingol, Mablung, Chorus, Beren, Melian	159
Scene 12: A dark valley in Doriath— Carcharoth, Huan, Mablung, (Beleg), Thingol, Beren (Narrator)	169
Interlude: The Death of Beren— Narrator	177
Scene 13: The Halls of Mandos— Chorus, Lúthien, Mandos, Beren	183
Epilogue: Tol Galen— Beren, Lúthien, Dior, Huan, Chorus (Narrator)	203

# ORCHESTRA

Piccolo/Flute  
 Alto Recorder/Tenor Recorder/Flute (the recorders should be the loudest possible)  
 Flute/Bass Flute (Flute must have B-key)  
 Oboe/English Horn (play oboe with little refinement- more like a Bombarde in certain parts)  
 Clarinet in A/B-flat/Tenor Saxophone (play Single Reeds with vibrato where possible)  
 Bass Clarinet/Baritone Saxophone (Bass Clarinet should have low B; see note for Clarinet)  
 Bassoon  
 Contrabassoon  
 Alto/Tenor Saxophone  
 Horn  
 Piccolo Trumpet/Trumpet  
 Trumpet/Flugelhorn  
 Trombone (with F-key)  
 Euphonium  
 Tuba (Bbb, or capable of low B and Bb)  
 Bones (preferably made of bone)  
 Snare Drums (3, tunable, with removable snare)  
 Timpani  
 Vibraphone (preferably a tubular xylophone with the combined range of vibes and glockenspiel)  
 Guitar (a steel-strung dreadnought Martin or loudest available, but not an archtop)  
 Sitar (with total chromatic fretting)  
 Mandolin (a flatback A or F model, not a "taterbug")  
 Tenor Banjo/5-string Longneck Banjo  
 Organ/Electronic Keyboard  
 Harp  
 Piano  
 Violin 1, 8 (timbre-separated from Violin 2 if possible)  
 Violin 2, 8 (timbre-separated from Violin 1 if possible)  
 Viola, 8 (preferably oversized models)  
 Cello, 6  
 Bass Viol, 4 (preferably 5-string BEADG; at least C-ext. which must sometimes tune to low B)

I request that the strings be asked to play as if each player were a soloist, that is, to dig into the string and not give that weak, anemic sound too often heard in string sections. Played thus, I doubt that an increase in player numbers, which is impossible in most opera pits anyway, would be necessary to balance against the other sections. (A larger string section, if absolutely necessary, due to the nature of acoustics, would require 30-30-30-20-12 to appreciably increase the volume.)

## NOTES ON PERFORMANCE

**Conductor:** This is a theater piece, not an orchestra piece with vocal accompaniment. For those of you who already understand that, please forgive this lecture. For those of you who believe you are in complete control of the music, however, let it be known that it is the composer's wish that, even in a concert performance, the singers be followed at all times. This is not to say that during rehearsal they should not be forced to adhere to the directions in the score, as well as I have presented them: they should, no matter how hard they resist. But during performances they, more than the conductor, are who will bring the piece alive, if they meet the minimum requirements of singing actors. Just as in spoken drama each show is different because each sentence is said slightly differently, so in opera the singers will perform differently each time, especially on stage where timing is governed by space and the emotion of the moment, and the intensity thereof. Do not make them and yourselves look bad by being obstinate with the tempo. Likewise, do not allow the orchestra to overpower the singers at any time. Please have someone who doesn't know the text come to the sitzprobe or first orchestra dress rehearsal and check for word clarity. If that is lacking, the piece should not be performed.

**Stage Director and Choreographer:** There are many moments in this opera where it may be physically impossible to represent on stage what happens in the story. For those moments I hope you can come up with event sequences which fit to the music as well as I have tried to fit the music to the events in the story. As for other times, it is my sincere wish that the original setting and character identities be used and that this piece not fall prey to so-called concept or update versions. The music was written with specific actions in mind, such as Lúthien's dancing at the end of Scene 1. On each new note of the english horn and sitar solos, Lúthien takes a step. Do not make the performers work against the music. Wagner's pieces were not at all helped by wrenching them out of mythical times. He intended the Walküre to ride horses; I intend Celegorm and Curufin to ride horses as well, as they did in the story. I believe it is not drudgery but a great test of skill for a director to faithfully reproduce on stage what the author has put forth in words. I believe it is vain and pretentious for a director to assume the right to reinterpret the intentions of the author. If one feels compelled to change plot and character concepts, especially in stories so thoroughly conceived as Tolkien's mythology, one probably doesn't understand what the author meant. This story is complete in itself; it doesn't need help to be presented successfully other than just telling it again the way it was originally told. Also, please be sensitive to the acoustic reality of the singers involved and your performance space, and don't stick your singers way upstage at times where the orchestra would drown them out. Sound level decreases by one half every ten feet, yet the orchestra never moves. This is not a ballet and the singers need to be heard. Your "stage picture" is not as important as the sound picture, yet the former affects the latter profoundly.

**Designers:** The note to directors applies to you also. Beren is in a glade beside a river, with the moon rising, not on a back street of Harlem with a streetlamp. In addition, I cannot too strongly stress the importance of walls and set placement. The singers are at a disadvantage in most opera houses, which favor the pit. Do not hamper the singers further by using scrims or placing the set deep upstage or doing away with walls, treetrunks and the like which are a vital reflective surface. In fact, the more the set is designed with acoustics in mind, the better. This piece should not be seen more than heard.

**Vocal soloists:** Do not audition for this piece if your diction is not clearly understandable at all times. If you cannot sing all ten-plus English vowels throughout your vocal range, if your "f" and "th" cannot always be heard at the back of the theater, you cannot sing this piece. If you are reluctant to act with your voice within the bounds of good vocalism, if you think line and tone are more important than words and drama, you may not sing this piece. If there are times when the orchestra is louder than you can comfortably sing over, don't force. The conductor should eventually strike a balance between stage and pit. If not, hope that the critics will realize that the conductor is at fault for any balance problems.

**Chorus:** the note to soloists about diction applies tenfold to you, with the added caution about precision. Please overexaggerate the consonants, and begin and cut off in synchronization. A dynamic of pianissimo does not indicate that the words must be lost. Consonants should always be at least forte.

**Narrator:** Please do not use amplification. Part of the magic of opera is that the singers are able to be heard over the orchestra without any help. If you can't do the same, you trained with the wrong people. I have tried to put the Narrator's lines in places where the orchestra is relatively quiet, but sometimes it wasn't possible and you may have to shout to make yourself heard. This is in the Plan.

### *Dedications*

To Patty, the first Lúthien.  
To Tami, the first one to create the role, and my Tinúviel.  
To my mother and father, without whom I would not have been possible.

### *Acknowledgments*

Each of the persons or organizations in the following list has somehow contributed to the creation of this piece. Some's contributions are obvious; the others know what they did, or at least I do.

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## NOTES ON PRONUNCIATION

It is strongly suggested that the singers, directors, chorus masters and conductors read the books by J.R.R. Tolkien containing the story, and pay special attention to the appendices thereof, which contain detailed information regarding pronunciation of the Elvish languages and the meaning of the words. For those who are not inclined to do the requisite research for their parts or who are unable to obtain copies of the books, here is a brief key to the pronunciation of the letters in the Elvish words used in this opera.

I know that many singers are not linguistically gifted; thus I have included, using the IPA system, examples from the Elvish words in this opera to try to illustrate the correct sounds. The non-IPA examples in quotes are based on a Northeastern North American accent, such as New York or Connecticut, but not the infamous Noo Yawk accent.

The Elvish in this opera, except for a few names like Fëanor, is Old Sindarin. It differs mainly from Third Age Sindarin in that double consonants are pronounced doubly long as in Italian (ammen, linnon).

Stress in multisyllabic words is penultimate when the penultimate syllable's vowel is long, ultimate when the ultimate syllable's vowel is overlong, in bisyllabic words initial if the second vowel is not long, and in trisyllabic words, initial if neither of the last two vowels is long (Carcharoth, Felagund). A vowel is considered long when it is í (díriel), ú (Lúthien Tinúviel), a diphthong (Maedhros), or before a double consonant (ammen, Orodreth, Dungalef). Overlong vowels are denoted with a circumflex (annûn: notice this cancels out the double n's stress effect). When in doubt, use penultimate stress. There are decent pronunciation guides on the Web. I have tried with the prosody to make the stress clear, but I didn't get it all correct (Serech, for example). I only learned in 2006 that the probable pronunciation of "Noldor" includes an initial "ng" sound, but without the hard g pronounced.

a— as in “ah”:	ɑ	Huan= <sup>l</sup> huan Arda= <sup>l</sup> arda
ae— diphthong: “ah—eh”	æ	Maedhros= <sup>l</sup> maeðros
ai— diphthong: “eye”	ai	Ainur= <sup>l</sup> ainur
au— diphthong: “ow” in “cow”	au	Sauron= <sup>l</sup> saurɔn
b—b	b	Beren= <sup>l</sup> bɛrɛn
c—k	k	Celegorm= <sup>k</sup> ɛlɛgɔrm Curufin= <sup>l</sup> kurufin
ch— the rear fricative, as in German “bach”	χ	Carcharoth= <sup>l</sup> karχarɔθ Telchar= <sup>l</sup> tɛlχar
d—d	d	Daeron= <sup>l</sup> dæɾɔn Noldor= <sup>l</sup> nɔldɔr
dh— the “th” in “the”, not in “think”	ð	galadh= <sup>l</sup> galað
e— “e” as in “bed”	ɛ	Menegroth= <sup>l</sup> menɛgrɔθ Eru= <sup>l</sup> ɛru Elu= <sup>l</sup> ɛlu
ë— “e” as in “werewolf”	e	Fëanor= <sup>l</sup> feanɔr - this is a Quenya name.
ei— diphthong as in “feint”	ei	Teiglin= <sup>l</sup> teiglin
f—f	f	Finrod= <sup>l</sup> finrɔd
g— g as in “go”, not as in “gee”	g	Gilthóniel= <sup>l</sup> gil <sup>h</sup> θɔ:niel SEE ALSO ng.
h—h	h	Hir= <sup>l</sup> hir
i— between the “i” of “hit” and of “heat”	i	linnon= <sup>l</sup> linnɔn
l— a European “l”, especially after ‘	l	(IPA has just one symbol for these ls.)
m—m	m	Morgoth= <sup>l</sup> mɔrgɔθ ammen= <sup>l</sup> ammen
n—n	n	Neldoreth= <sup>l</sup> neldɔrɛθ
ng-tricky. As in “sing” or “anger”.	ŋ	Thingol= <sup>l</sup> θiŋgɔl Angband= <sup>l</sup> angband Angrist= <sup>l</sup> angrist Thuringwethil= <sup>l</sup> θuriŋ <sup>l</sup> gwɛθil Mablung= <sup>l</sup> mablun
o— “o” in “boy”	ɔ	Valinor= <sup>l</sup> valinɔr
p—p	p	
“r”—always flipped or rolled	r,ɾ	Beleriand= <sup>l</sup> bɛ <sup>l</sup> ɛriand Ilúvatar= <sup>l</sup> iluvatar Arda= <sup>l</sup> arda
s—s	s	Silmaril= <sup>l</sup> silmaril
t—t	t	Taur-nu-Fuin= <sup>l</sup> taur nu <sup>l</sup> fuin
th—the “th” in “thick”	θ	Thangorodrim= <sup>l</sup> θangɔrɔdrim
u— “oo” in “cool”	u	Tinúviel= <sup>l</sup> tin <sup>u</sup> :viel
v—v	v	Varda= <sup>l</sup> varda
w—w	w	Wethrin= <sup>l</sup> wɛθrin
y— only initially, as in “yes”	j	Yavanna= <sup>l</sup> javanna