



A Never-Before-Heard Version of “Nevermore”!

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The Raven by Edgar Allan Poe
Narration by Michael Douglas Jones
Music composed and performed by Donald Knaack
Duration: 00:10:47

Moo Records, a division of The Moo Group, LLC announces the release of the new realization of The Raven, the famous poem by Edgar Allan Poe. The Raven has amassed a huge fan base. It's taught at most schools and universities worldwide, yet there has never been an extended-orchestral musical composition created to accompany the vocal performance of the poem - until now. The single is available on CD as well as through all major digital distributors worldwide in multiple formats.

“The Raven is the first entry in my new POE PROJECT, in which numerous Poe stories and poems will be set to a very diverse group of my music compositions.” said Knaack. The Raven is ripe for live performances and plans are under way for touring, including stops in clubs and venues, as well as collaborations with full symphony orchestras, especially their Pops Series.

ABOUT THE POEM:

First published in January, 1845, this brilliant narrative poem became widely known for its melodic, rhythmic, and dramatic qualities, its other-worldly atmosphere, and Poe's omnipresent use of alliteration (dreaming dreams, whispered word, ghastly grim, et al). This complex and carefully crafted work actually has a simple story line: A raven pays a mysterious visit to a distraught lover. As the poem progresses, the Raven's constant repetition of the word 'Nevermore' coincides with the lover's painful lament over his undying love for the lost Lenore, which gradually engulfs the lover into a state of madness.

Poe's goal for the poem was to construct a logical and methodically constructed work that would appeal to both critical and popular tastes. In Poe's essay of 1846, entitled *The Philosophy of Composition*, he reveals how he began work on the poem: I composed this stanza, at this point, first that, by establishing the climax, I might the better varying graduate, as regards to seriousness and importance, the preceding inquiries of the lover, and secondly, that I might definitely settle the rhythm, the meter and the length and general arrangement of the stanza, as well as graduate the stanzas which were to precede, so that none of them might surpass this in rhythmic effect.

“Prophet” said I, “thing of evil-prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bonds above us-by that God we both adore.
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore.
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.
Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

Poe chose the Raven as he wanted the air of a *“non-reasoning creature capable of speech that would cast an air of mournful and never-ending remembrance.”*

The structure of the poem is five distinct sections with a total of 18 stanzas. Each stanza consists of six lines. The meter is trochaic octameter - eight trochaic feet per line in which each foot has a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable. The rhyme scheme is ABCBBB. In all stanzas, the “B” lines rhyme with the word “Nevermore” and are catalectic - placing an extra emphasis upon the final syllable.

According to Poe, *“The death of a beautiful woman is unquestionably the most poetic topic in the world.”* There is also a general belief that Poe was inspired by events in his own life as well - the death of his actress Mother when he was very young, and the long illness and passing of his beloved wife, Virginia.

Artist Biographies:

Michael Douglas Jones made his professional debut at the New York City Opera. From there he went on to sing many traditional roles at regional companies throughout the US and Canada. Running parallel to this traditional work, he began working and creating new work with living composers. Through this work he explored extended vocal techniques, physical movement, improvisation, and experimentation. He won a Canadian Jessie Richardson Award for outstanding performance by an actor in a leading role for his performance of Marquis in *120 Songs for the Marquis de Sade*, written by Peter Hinton and Peter Hannan and co-produced by Modern Baroque Opera and Vancouver New Music. In recent years, he focused on creating and performing this experimental music and collaborating with composers worldwide, including, but not limited to John Metcalf, Charles Wuorinen, Donald Knaack and Anthony Braxton. Sadly, the world lost a celestial voice when Michael passed away November 4, 2018.

Donald Knaack is a classically trained composer/percussionist who, some 25 years ago, stopped using traditional music instruments and began using junk and re-used materials exclusively. He has built an international reputation for his Junk Music™ and he is known as The Junkman™. His music has been featured on CBS News, CBS Sunday Morning, NPR, Conan O'Brien, and the BBC. He has composed two critically acclaimed works for choreographer Twyla Tharp, and has toured worldwide, including the Sundance Film Festival, Summer Series Dubai, Seoul Drum Festival, World environment Day at the United Nations, The Van's Warped Tour, concerts with

Phish, and more. His HOP (Help Our Planet) environmental education program has won awards of excellence from the Federal Republic of Mexico, the State of Vermont and the United Nations. He currently resides in Bristol, UK on a Tier One Exceptional Talent Visa. www.junkmusic.online