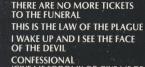


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(GIVE ME SODOMY OR GIVE ME DEATH)

HOW SHALL OUR JUDGEMENT BE CARRIED OUT UPON THE WICKED? (with excerpts from Revelations 19:11-14 and Revelations 16:12-16)

LET US PRAISE THE MASTERS OF SLOW DEATH CONSECRATION SONO L'ANTICHRISTO **CRIS D'AVEUGLE** 

LET MY PEOPLE GO

Live concerts were recorded on October 12th and 13th 1990 at The Cathedral of St. John The Divine, New York City

Live Recording: Record Plant Remote: Mobile Recording Engineer: Kooster McAllister; Mixed at the Living Room Studios Inc., NYC; Assistant Engineer: **Holly Duthie** 

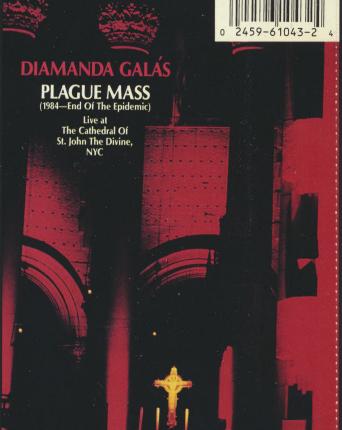
Produced by Kurt Munkacsi and Blaise Dupuy for Euphorbia Productions Ltd. **Executive Producer: Rory Johnston** 



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Musicians:

David Linton: drums, percussion Blaise Dupuy: electronic keyboards Ramon Diaz: electronic percussion Michael McGrath: tapes and electronics Diamanda Galas: grand piano

Live Recording: Record Plant Remote Mobile Recording Engineer: Kooster McAllister Technical Engineer: Paul Prestopino Audio Stage Manager: Chuck Cavanaugh

Live Sound Mix: Dan Dryden

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Excerpts from the 95 minute live performance have been selected, Job:10 and Lamentations have been omitted due to the time limitations of the CD configuration.

### I. WERE YOU A WITNESS text by Diamanda Galas

Were you a witness Were you a witness

And on that holy day And on that bloody day

Were you a witness Were you a witness

And on that holy day
And on that bloody day
And on his dying bed he asked me;
"Tell all my friends I was fighting, too."
But to all cowards and voyeurs:
There are no more tickets to the funeral

There are no more tickets to the funeral

Were you a witness Were you a witness

And on that holy day
And on that bloody day
There are no more tickets to the funeral
There are no more tickets to the funeral
The funeral is crowded.

Were you a witness Were you a witness

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they nailed him to the cross?
Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you a witness?

Were you there when they dragged him to the grave? Were you there when they dragged him to the grave? Sometimes it causes me to wonder, wonder, wonder Were you there when they dragged him to the grave? Were you a witness?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Sometimes it causes me to wonder, wonder, wonder Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

And on that holy day Any on that bloody day Were you a witness?

**Swing Swing Swing** 

I looked over Jordan and what did I see coming for to carry me home A band of Angels coming after me Coming for to carry me home

**Swing Swing** 

A band of Devils! calling out my name coming for to drag me to the grave

Swing

But I will not go
And I shall not go
I shall wake up and I shall walk from this room
into the sun
where the dirty angel doesn't run
where the dirty angel cannot go
and brothers in this time of pestilence do know
Each time that we meet we hear another sick man sigh
Each time that we meet we hear another man has died
And I see Angels Angels: Devils!

Angels Angels: Devils! Angels Angels: Devils!

Coming for to carry me home.

Swing Swing

Mr. Sandman makes a filthy bed for me But I shall not rest And I will not rest As a man who has been blinded by the storm

And waits for angels by the road while the Devil waits for me at night with knives and lies and smiles and straps me down and sings the swing low sweet chariot of death knells one by one like a sentence of the damned, and one by one they come to warn me of the perils of resistance, and one by one of my brothers die unsung unloved unwanted: Die! and faster please we've got no money for extended visits says the sandman

But we who have gone before Do not rest in peace We who have died Shall never rest in peace

Remember me?

Unburied I am screaming in the bloody furnaces of hell And only ask for you

to raise your weary eyes into the sun

until the sun has set

for we who have gone before do not rest in peace

We who have died

shall never rest in peace

There is no rest

until the fighting's done.

And I see Angels Angels Devils!
Angels Angels Devils!
Angels Angels Devils!
coming for to drag me to the grave.

### II. THIS IS THE LAW OF THE PLAGUE

### Leviticus, Chapter 15. from the Old Testament

When any man hath an issue out of his flesh.

Because of that issue he is unclean.

Every bed whereon he lieth is unclean and everything whereon he sitteth, unclean.

And whosoever toucheth his bed shall be unclean, And he that sitteth whereon he sat shall be unclean.

And he that toucheth the flesh of the unclean Becomes unclean.

And he that be spat on by him unclean Becomes unclean.

And whosoever toucheth anything under him shall be unclean.

And he that beareth any of those things shall be unclean.

And what saddle soever he rideth upon is unclean. And the vessel of earth that he toucheth, unclean.

And if any man's seed of copulation go out from him, he is unclean.

Every garment, every skin whereon is the seed, unclean.

And the woman with whom this man shall lie shall be unclean.

And whosoever toucheth her will be unclean.

This is the law of the plague:

to teach when it is clean and when it is unclean.

And the priest shall look upon the plague

for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot.

And the priest shall shut up he that hath the plague.
He shall carry them forth to a place unclean.
He shall separate them in their uncleaness.

This is the law of the plague: To teach when it is clean and when it is unclean.

#### excerpt from Psalm 22

Many bulls compass me, Lord
Strong bulls of Baashan do beset me round.
They gape upon me with their mouths
as a ravening and a roaring lion.
But thou, O Lord, shall bring them down.
Thou shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction
greedy and deceiful men shall be exposed as vermin
And their days as iniquity.

### excerpt from Psalms 58 and 59, and text by Diamanda Galas

Deliver me from mine enemies, O My God Deliver me from the workers of iniquity and save me from bloody men.
For lo, they lie in wait for my soul
The mighty are gathered against me not for my transgressions, not for my sin, O Lord
They run and prepare themselves without my fault
Awake to help me and behold:
Swords are in their lips, for who, say they, doth hear.
But thou, O Lord, shall laugh at them
The God of my mercy shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies
And at evening, let them make a noise like a dog. and go around about the city
Let them walk up and down for meat

and grudge if they be not satisfied.

Break out the great teeth of the young lions, Oh My God, and when they laugh at the trial of the innocent Let them be cut as in pieces! Bring them down, O Lord, our shield.

#### text by Diamanda Galas

The Devil is an impotent man
He says it nice and plays himself off as the friend.
He tries to make you uncertain
so your hands shake
and then he tells you you're insane
when you call him by his rightful name:
Impotent homophobe and coward!
So you will miss when you aim at this evil man
who cannot get it up
except
in the T.V. public operating room
of another man's misfortune!

#### III. I WAKE UP AND I SEE THE FACE OF THE DEVIL... text by Diamanda Galas

### IV. CONFESSIONAL text by Diamanda Galas

In that house there is no time for Compassion there is only time for confession And on his dying bed they asked him Do you confess?

And on his dying bed the dirty angels flying over him like buzzards asked him Do you confess?
Do you confess?...

# V. HOW SHALL OUR JUDGEMENT BE CARRIED OUT UPON THE WICKED

excerpts from Revelations and Psalms with text by Diamanda Galas

Psalms 50:3, 97:3

How shall our judgement be carried out upon the wicked?
"By any means necessary"
We shall not keep silent
A fire shall devour before us
A fire shall devour before us
And burn up our enemies round about

Thou shalt not labor in vain
For thou art the true priests of the Lord...
Thou shalt eat the fattest of the devils,
the fattest of the hypocrite,
the fattest of the beast,
And in this glory shall ye boast yourselves.

Welcome to the Holy Day Welcome to the Holy Day

### Revelations 19:11-14 and text by Diamanda Galas

And I saw heaven open and behold a white horse and he that be sat upon him was called faithful and true and in Righteousness he doth judge and make war.

His eyes were as a flame of fire and on this head were many crowns, and

3,000 of his armies swept down upon the hypocrite with fearful carnage, and they were clothed in a vesture dipped in Blood.

Welcome to the Holy Day

#### excerpts from Revelations 16:12-16

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouths of the false prophets and they were the spirits of Devils, working false miracles which went forth unto the kings of the earth and unto the whole world, and the Lord of Armies gathered them into the battle of that great day of God Almighty, and he gathered his armies into the battle of that great day into a place called Armagedon, and they were clothed in a vesture dipped in Blood.

Welcome to the Holy Day

And on that holy day And on that bloody day Were you a witness Were you a witness

Welcome to the Holy day

## VI. LET US PRAISE THE MASTERS OF SLOW DEATH text by Diamanda Galas

What Sympathy in Death discloses, we who fester here are very *much* alive,

and watch unmanned compassion flee, to safer zones...
Let us praise the masters of Slow Death...

#### VII. CONSECRATION

Hoc est signum corpus meum Hoc est signum sangre meum

This is my blood This is my blood

### VIII. SONO L'ANTICHRISTO text by Diamanda Galas

Sono la prova. Sono la salva.

Sono la carne macellata

Sono la sanzione.

Sono il Ragno Nero

Sono il scherno.

Sono la Santa Sede. Sono le feci dal Signore.

Sono lo segno.

Sono l'Antichristo.

Soy la muestra.

Soy la salvacion.

Soy la carne magullada.

Soy la sancion. Soy el sacrificio. Soy la araña negra.

Soy el azote.

Soy la tonta sagrada.

Soy la mierda de Dios.

Soy la seña. Soy la plaga. Soy l'Antichristo.

I am the token.
I am the salvation.
I am the butcher's meat.

I am the sanction. I am the sacrifice. I am the Black Spider.

I am the scourge.
I am the Holy Fool.
I am the shit of God.

I am the sign.
I am the plague.
I am the Antichrist.

#### IX. CRIS D'AVEUGLE: BLIND MAN'S CRY text by Tristan Corbiere (1873)

L'oeil tue n'est-pas mort Un coin le fend encor Encloué, je suis sans cercueil On m'a plante le clou dans l'oeil L'oeil cloué n'est pas mort Et le coin entre encor

Deus misericors
Deus misericors
Le marteau bat ma tete en bois
Le marteau qui fera la croix
Deus misericors
Deus misericors



Les oiseaux croque-morts Ont donc peur a mon corps Mon Golgotha n'est pas fini Lamma lamma sabacthani Colombes de la Mort

> Soiffez apres mon corps Rouge, comme un sabord La plaie est sur le bord

Comme la gencive bavant
D'une vielle qui rit sans dent

La plaie est sur le bord Rouge, comme un sabord

Je vois des cercles d'or Le soleil blanc me mord J'ai deux trous perces par un fer

Rougi dans la forge d'enfer
Je vois un cercle d'or
Le feu d'en haut me mord

Dans la moelle se tord Une larme qui sort Je vois dedans le paradis Miserere de profundis

> Dans mon crane se tord Du soufre en pleur qui sort

Bienheureux le bon mort, Le mort sauvé qui dort

Heureux les martyrs les elus Avec la Vierge et son lesus

> O bienheureux le mort Le mort juge qui dort

Un chevalier dehors Repose sans remords

Dans le cimetiere bénit Dans sa sieste de granit

L'homme en pierre dehors A deux yeux sans remords Ho, je vous sens encor Landes jaunes d'Armor Je sens mon rosiare a mes doigts Et le Christ en os sur le bois A toi ie bave encor.

A toi je baye encor, O ciel defunt d'Armor

Pardon de prier fort Seigneur, si c'est le sort Mes yeux deux beniners ardents Le diable a mis ses dogts dedans

Pardon de crier fort Seigneur, contre le sort

J'entends le vent du nord Qui bugle comme un cor C'est l'hallali des trepasses l'aboje apres mon tour assez

J'entends le vent du nord I'entends le glas du cor

#### text by Diamanda Galas

Dios, porque me has condendado? mavpes apakvuthes! lamma sabacthani! Esta es mi sangre Este es mi cuerpo Estas son mis venas Estoy siego Dios, no puedo ver! mavpes apakvuthes! lamma sabacthani! Aves de la muerte Quiten me la vida! lamma lamma sabacthani!

The murdered eye is not dead
A spike still splits it
Nailed up I am coffinless
They drove the nail in my eye
The nailed eye is not dead
And the spike still splits it

Deus misericors Deus misericors

The hammer pounds my wooden head The hammer that will make the cross

> Deus misericors Deus misericors

The undertaker birds Are thus afraid of my body

My golgotha is not over

Doves of Death Be thirsty for my body

Red as a gun-port
The sore is on the edge
Like the drooling gum

Of a toothless laughing old woman
The sore is on the edge

Red as gun-port

I see circles of gold
The white sun bites me
I've two holes pierced by an iron bar
Reddened in the forge of hell

I see a circle of gold The sky's fire bites me

In the marrow twists
A tear which comes out
I see inside paradise

Miserere de profundis In my skull twists A sulfur tear which comes out Blessed the good dead man
The saved dead man who sleeps
Happy the martyrs the chosen
With the Virgin and the Jesus

Oh blessed the dead man The judged dead man who sleeps

A knight outside Reposes without remorse

In the hallowed cemetery
In his grantic siesta

The man of stone outside Has two eyes without remorse

Oh, I feel you still Yellow moors of Armor I feel my rosary in my fingers And Christ in bore on the wood

I gape at you still O dead Armor Sky

Pardon for praying hard Lord, if it is fate

My eyes two burning holy-water fonts The devil put his finger inside pardon for crying loud Lord against fate

I hear the northwind
Which bugles like a horn
It is the hunting call for the kill of the dead
I bay enough on my own

I hear the northwind I hear the horn's knell

Translation by Kenneth Koch & George Guy

### X. LET MY PEOPLE GO text by Diamanda Galas

The Devil has designed my death and he's waiting to be sure

that plenty of his black sheep die before he finds a cure.

O Lord Jesus, do you think I've served my time? The eight legs of the Devil now are crawling up my spine.

The firm hand of the Devil now is rocking me to sleep
I force my blind eyes open, Lord But I'm sinking in the deep.

O Lord Jesus, do you think I've served my time?
The eight legs of the Devil now are crawling
up my spine.

I go to sleep each evening now dreaming of the grave and see the friends I used to know calling out my name.

O Lord Jesus, do you think I've served my time? The eight legs of the Devil now are crawling up my spine.

O Lord Jesus, do you think I've served my time? The eight legs of the Devil now are crawling up my spine.

O Lord Jesus, here's the news from those below: The eight legs of the Devil will not let my people go.

#### The Cathedral Of St. John The Divine, NYC



"Do not churchgoers ask for the Second Coming, and do not business concerns distribute to their shareholders profits from merchandise of death, and do not superstates together with "developing nations" live in anticipation, and is not the morbid disconcern but a rejoicing in such anticipation?"

—Immanuel Velikovsky, from "The Age of Terror," MANKIND IN AMNESIA (1982)

On December 10, 1989 Diamanda Galas was arrested with ACT UP at St. Patrick's Cathedral for disorderly conduct, disrupting a religious service, resisting arrest, and criminal trespass. On October 12-13, 1990 she performed the Plague Mass at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the second largest cathedral in the

world. The epic proportions of this performance cannot be overstated.

Diamanda emerged in front of the altar. stripped to the waist. Behind her was a lit crucifix. Her introit, "Were You A Witness", contains text from spirituals such as, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?", and exhortations to action ("We who have died do not rest in peace. There is no rest until the fighting's done"). Her multi-octave voice sings of angels (devils) who warn of the perils of resistance, while attempting to persuade PWAs (persons with AIDS) to proceed politely into death. In the anti-Kyrie, "This is the Law of the Plague" on a stage lit by candles, she excoriates those who condemn PWAs with judgement and moral hysteria. One of her voices (that of a judge without mercy) courses out a mocking "Unclean" over the Cathedral as red light and smoke fill the apse. This piece from Leviticus (the Christian "Old Law"), refers to a society based in judgement and not the compassion of salvation. Diamanda's work has been interpreted by some as "Satanistic." Here, however, she is not raging against a loving, compassionate deity. It is a meanspirited, malevolent God of the unjust and petty against whom she rails. She identifies with the "Enemy" (as the devil is sometimes called) of this God. Diamanda has recaptured and reveals the original meaning of the Hebrew word "satan", that of accuser and opponent.

One message of this mass is that in a world without redemption, the person who is unjustly accused should rebel. This message is present in the Gospel, "I Wake Up and I See the Face of the Devil...", and a Confiteor, "Confessional", which confronts judging clerics

who want to "purify" the PWA. Diamanda's Epistle, "How Shall Our Judgement Be Carried Out Upon The Wicked", is a call to arms against those who would slaughter, burn, or intimidate PWAs. In texts from Revelations and words from Malcom X she sings of a bloody Armageddon ("How shall our judgement be carried out upon the wicked? By any means necessary").

During the Consecration, while bathed in red light, Diamanda chants, "Hoc est signum corpus meum" (This is my body), "Hoc est signum sangre meum" (This is my blood). She covers herself with ceremonial blood as bells ring. The consecration portrays the PWAs as the Christ, the sacrificial lamb through which the evil clerics seek salvation.

"Sono l'Antichristo" (the anti-pater noster) spits venom and bile in the eyes of the God of the false accuser. She claims all epithets and turns them on the accuser ("I am the plague, I am the Antichrist") and calls upon the disempowered to turn back the power of all such accusations.

"Cris D'Aveugle: Blind Man's Cry" is a spiritual communion in which the audience is brought into the experience of the suffering of the dying. The recessional, "Let My People Go", cries for respite from this endless torment.

The voice of the oppressed resonates throughout the Plague Mass. Father Conrado Balweg (a Philippine guerilla priest) has said liberation from oppression is, "the essence of the Mass." This angry Requiem is an exorcism of false and unjust spirits, a cry for liberation from meaningless death and a prayer for power over our enemies. Whenever great suffering has been caused by adversity (whether man-made

or "natural"), a voice appears which decries the suffering and opposes the adversity. Now, as the number of persons dead from AIDS (in the U.S.) approaches the number of U.S. soldiers killed in World War I, Diamanda Galas' Plague Mass is our anguished voice (much as Britten's War Requiem was the voice of World War I). The rightful place for this voice is in the sanctuary of the Cathedral and in our raging hearts.

—Michael Flanagan President, Documentation of AIDS Issues and Research Foundation, San Francisco, January 1991

Death, like life, has its own music and in the convulsive Plague Mass of Diamanda Galas, all that is holy and unholy, pure and defiled. beatific and profane is woven together on the loom of daemonic celestial hymnody and incandescent hate. Galas' unearthy instrument—her own spectral multi-octave voice—is fueled by febrile seething hatred and brutal compassion. Hatred for the genocidal disease-AIDS—and the homophobic power-elite who would deny the dying the simple dignity and humanity accorded the arteriosclerotic and the cancerous. In her Plague Mass, Galas gives voice to an army of tortured souls, the ones who can no longer sing for themselves: the infirm, the insane, the dead who will not rest in peace.

Galas' work has been called Satanic, and, in fact, it is. Not the piddly cartoon Satanism of puerile metalloids, but rather the heroic outlaw devil-conjuring of Milton's *Paradise Lost*: Lucifer the bringer of light, defyer of "God,"

pariah, outsider, martyr. Galas' Satan is not unlike the crucified outlaw, Jesus, murdered by the religious order of the day. Denounced in Italy last August by members of the government for committing blasphemy against the Catholic Church during her performance of the mass at the Palace of the Medici's, Galas makes no apologies, offers no simple explanations. The Plague Mass is a rite that sanctifies the outcast, scourges the bigoted and braindead, and vilifies the sanctimonious. The Plague Mass is an act of war, and girded for battle, Galas performs it swathed in blood.

In the late 1970's, Galas began to create her glossolalic grammar, performing in mental institutions. "I developed an extreme technique to ride the outer limits," she has said. "The outer limits of the soul."

Galas' work fell on the ears of Yugoslavian avant-garde composer Vinko Globokar, who, soon afterwards, cast Galas in the lead role of Un Jour Comme Une Autre, an opera based on the true story, published by Amnesty International, of a Turkish woman arrested and sentenced to death for political "crimes." The next year, she began a series of solo performances of her original work in Europe. During this period, she performed American and Central American premieres of works by lannis Xenakis and Vinko Globokar with L'Ensemble Intercontemporain, Musique Vivante, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

By the beginning of the last decade, Diamanda Galas was performing her heretical pieces, "Wild Women With Steak Knives", and, "Tragouthia apo to Aima Exoun Fonos (Song from the Blood of Those Murdered)", at the Theatre Gerard Phillipe Saint-Denis in Paris.

The themes of her work—claustrophobia, schizophrenia, stigma, extremity, cathartic obsession, psychic violence—were already in place on her first recording, "The Litanies Of Satan" b/w "Wild Women With Steak Knives", in 1982.

In 1984 Galas began work on Masque of the Red Death, an ongoing work dedicated "to people who are HIV-positive, PWArcs and PWAs, who fight to stay alive in a hostile environment that tells them on a daily basis, that they shall most certainly die: an environment that offers disgusting pity and pacifying lies to persuade the diseased man to desist from fighting, and participate instead in his own burial; that offers the constant threat of mandatory testing, reporting and quarantine; and that offers slow torture and continuing design of death, or genocide, through a failure to act responsibly in a medical emergency". The Masque of the Red Death trilogy has been documented on a series of albums for Mute Records (1986, 87, 88), Since 1986, Galas has performed the work in over 25 cities internationally.

The Plague Mass at hand is culled from two spirit-filled performances held at the Cathedral of St. John The Divine in New York on October 12-13, 1990. Bathed in flickering votive light, swaddled in light-shifted gore, Diamanda Galas bookended her Plague Mass with quavering skull-piercing spirituals. "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?," she demands (the equation of Jesus and the Christ-withinthe suffering) spitting the litany, "were you a witness?", every head in every pew confronted with personal responsibility. These are Plague Years; there is a war within the very cell-walls of our human family, and each citizen is either

a member of the resistance or a collaborator. Like the cross at Golgotha, Diamanda Galas is a conduit between heaven and hell, a place of no middle ground.

The Plague Mass is the sound of that place. The apse awash with crimson light, like a chalice filling with blood. Galas offering the sacrament of self and song. Nervous-system shattering, harmonic shards echoing through the vaults, choirs of Diamanda's blathering demons and madonnas. "What time is it?," the brain stabbed by the scalpel, the fracture of the linear, the horror of dementia. She mounts the pulpit, the harangue of a truth beyond metaphor and the revelation of the truly Satanic: the same pious fucks who strung Jesus up the tree two thousand years ago are using his name to justify the deaths of-and deny mercy to-our brothers and sisters who now lie crippled, insane and withering from within, seared by an uninvited virus, so insidious, it steals the body's biological right to defend itself against disease. "Give me sodomy or give me death!," Galas spits in the face of the priest at confession.

At the end of her journey through the torments of the damned, Diamanda Galas asks God and man, like the Old Testament prophets and the slaves in the field, to "Let My People Go." Authentically liturgical and truly blasphemous, the Plague Mass is a convocation of souls and an invocation of energy. AIDS is the whimpering apocalypse; the real horror is when we turn away. We are all shrouded in the Plague and this is war. The only thing worth dying for is each other.

—Tim Holmes New York City December 1990



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