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The New Sounds of Mourning: The Changing Role of the Requiem in the Late
Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries as Demonstrated by the Works of Giuseppe
Verdi, Johannes Brahms, Paul Hindemith and Benjamin Britten


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In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Art
in Music History and Literature

The University of Montana
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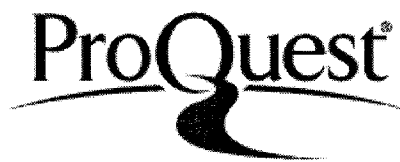


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Adviser: Fern Glass Boyd 

The Requiem Mass was originally a means by which the beliefs and doctrines of the Catholic Church were represented, but as the dominance of the Church began to diminish, its control over the interpretation of the Requiem gradually disappeared. By the middle of the Nineteenth Century composers began to insert their own personal beliefs and understanding into the history of the Requiem, and the gradual move towards a secular world influenced the Requiems composed in the late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.

The thesis will be limited to a brief history of the Requiem Mass to 1850, and a detailed examination of the Requiems of Giuseppe Verdi, Johannes Brahms, Paul Hindemith, and Benjamin Britten. The four major works of the thesis each provide examples of different possible interpretations of the Requiem Mass. Verdi's Requiem (1874), composed after the death of Alessandro Manzoni, provides an example of a dramatic setting of the traditional Latin text. Brahms's *German Requiem* (1868), written in response to the deaths of Robert Schumann and Christiane Brahms, demonstrates the possibility of composing a Requiem employing a text taken from the Bible but not related to Catholic liturgical text. Hindemith's *When Lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed: a Requiem for those we love* (1945), commissioned as a tribute to Franklin D. Roosevelt, is derived from the secular poem of the same name by Walt Whitman. Britten's *War Requiem* (1962), combines the traditional text of the Latin Mass with the poetry of Wilfred Owen to create a powerful anti-war statement. Each of the four compositions will be addressed in terms of text selection, interpretation, motivation, historical importance and compositional techniques. Though the four composers were motivated by different events, they each composed works that showed the possibilities for personal and powerful expression in the Requiems of the late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.

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The New Sounds of Mourning: The Changing Role of the Requiem in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries as Demonstrated by the Works of Giuseppe Verdi, Johannes Brahms, Paul Hindemith and Benjamin Britten

Introduction:

The one great universal and undeniable truth is that each of us will, at some point, cease to exist on this earthly plane. The need to gain understanding and acceptance of this unfortunate frailty of human existence has led each culture to a means by which understanding can be attained. In the Roman Catholic Church the need to understand death and to instill the doctrine of eternal life in the hereafter led to the development of the Requiem Mass. Once officially defined and codified by the Council of Trent (1545 – 1563) the *Missa pro defunctis*, or Requiem Mass passed from composer to composer with only minimal changes or alterations and remained a solemn Church work through the early part of the Romantic period (circa 1805). During the mid-nineteenth century the composer's need to create a more dramatic interpretation of the liturgical text, a setting more befitting the concert hall than the cathedral, led to changes in the Requiem Mass. The *Grand messe des morts* (1837) by Hector Berlioz helped shatter the traditional notion of the Requiem and gained freedom for the composer in the interpretation of the Mass. The Requiems of Giuseppe Verdi, Johannes Brahms, Paul Hindemith, and Benjamin Britten, which will be examined in detail, employed this newfound freedom, providing four different views, interpretations and understandings of the modern Requiem.

The shift from the cathedral to the concert hall marks a distinctive change in the history of the Requiem for it frees composers from the constraint of established Church doctrines and practices and allows for more personal freedom of expression. This change provided for a more dramatic interpretation of the established liturgy and gave the composer the ability to rework or even replace the text of the Requiem. The four composers selected for in-depth discussion in this presentation represent the major categories of the modern Requiem. Giuseppe Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* (1874) exemplifies the dramatic representation of the traditional Roman Catholic liturgical text. The Johannes Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, op. 45 (1868), while still religious in nature, can be seen as the Protestant equivalent of the Catholic Mass. The work of Paul Hindemith, *When lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed: a Requiem for those we love* (1945) is an example of a completely new, and non-religious text (in this case the text comes from the poetry of Walt Whitman) created to express the feelings associated with death. Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, written for the rededication of the Coventry Cathedral in 1962, combines the secular poetry with established liturgy to create a modified Requiem, one in which the traditional Catholic text is interpolated with the words of anti-war poet Wilfred Owen. The four works show the possibilities for personal and profound expression that the Requiem of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries presented.

A Brief History of the Requiem to 1850:

In the early days of the Catholic Church the religious ceremonies were as much a regional interpretation of the scriptures as a collection of codified edicts of a cohesive church. The burials, though mostly undocumented, would have most certainly been accompanied by singing and chants similar to that heard in the Jewish synagogues. Charles the Great of Gaul, who in 772 asked Pope Hadrian for a copy of the missal attributed to St. Gregory, advanced the push towards universal uniformity within the Church. The orderly mind of Charles saw to it that the “official” service of the Roman Church was implemented throughout his kingdom. While keeping to the main body of the services, he found that many of the established church services found in the *Antiphonal* were too stuffy for the Frankish people, so he supplemented the liturgy with some readings already in use by the people of France. Rather than take great offense to the changes instilled by Charles and the Frankish Catholic Church, the Roman Church Official implemented many of these changes within the Roman Church Service. By the tenth century the Mass and Offices of the Dead adopted by the whole of the Catholic Church were as much Franco-Galician as they were Roman (Cattin 54-56).

While the Council of Trent (1545-1563) in its twenty-fifth and final session (Dec. 3-4, 1563) officially codified the standardization of the Catholic service, evidence of the Mass for the dead already in existence leads one to believe that the Council was only giving its blessing to the previously established service. St. Odo, Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of Cluny, established the official date of November 2nd for the Mass

of the departed souls in 998. On this day Odo “ordered that the Office of the Dead be said in Choir, and public and private Masses be said” (Robertson 9) This order from Odo clearly shows that the established Mass for the dead, with choral participation, existed well before the Council of Trent created a universal service for the Requiem Mass. The early church fathers found that the Requiem Mass was far too solemn an occasion for polyphony, and early examples of the Requiem Mass were set in monophonic chant and remained that way longer than any of the other Mass settings. Unlike the standard liturgical text of the daily Mass, the Requiem came to include not only the musical setting of the Ordinary, but also the Proper of the Mass, and as dictated by the Council of Trent, contained the following sections:

<u>Ordinary</u>	<u>Proper</u>
Kyrie Eleison	Introit: “Requiem aeternam”
	Gradual: “Requiem aeternam”
	Tract: “Absolve Domine”
	Sequence: “Dies irae”
	Offertory: “Domine Jesu Christe”
Sanctus (Benedictus)	
Agnus Dei	Communion: “Lux aeterna”
	Reponsory (for Solemn occasions):
	Libera me, Domine
	(Poultney 175-176)

The title of the Mass for the dead is derived from the opening line of the Introit, “*Requiem aeternam*.” This section begins every Mass, and allows time for the celebrants of the service to move from the sacristy to the altar, and in the Requiem Mass establishes the solemn mood with an opening prayer for the faithfully departed. The text of the Introit of the Requiem Mass is comprised of an antiphon, taken from the Fourth Book of Esdras (2: 34-35), the psalm verse (65: 1-2) and a restatement of the antiphon:

*Requiem aeternam dona eis,
Domine, et lux perpetua luceat
eis V. Te decet hymnus, Deus,
in Sion, et tibi reddetur votum in
Jerusalem. V. Exaudi orationem
meam, ad te omnis caro veniet.*

Requiem aeternam, etc.

Eternal rest grant them, O Lord, and
let perpetual light shine upon them
V. Thou shalt have praise, O God,
in Sion, and to Thee let the vow be
paid in Jerusalem. V. Heed my
prayer! All flesh must come before
Thy Judgment seat.

While the normal Introit of the standard Mass usually contains the Gloria Patri (Glory be to the Father), also known as the lesser Doxology, this section is omitted for the Requiem Mass. The effect of the Introit is one of hope and solemn prayer for the dearly departed and is meant to set the overall mood of the entire Mass.

The ordinary of the Mass begins with the Kyrie eleison, a three-line text consisting of the following:

*Kyrie, eleison.
Christe, eleison.
Kyrie, eleison.*

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.

The section continues the overall mood of hope established in the Introit, and is a prayer that revolves around a central tenet of the Catholic faith: that of Grace. The second verse of the psalm used in the Introit introduces the idea of judgment involved after the end of the world. According to the Catholic Church all creatures will be judged by the creator, and the Kyrie part of the Mass instills the need for God's mercy in that final judgment. The frailty of human existence and the sins of those dearly departed, as well as those of the living participants in the service, require forgiveness, and the Kyrie serves as both a request for, and a celebration of that mercy. While the need for clarity in the Introit limits the possibilities in the setting, the shortness of the text in the Kyrie provides an opportunity for a melismatic setting, and the entire text is usually repeated three times.

The next section of the proper of the Mass is the Gradual that takes place after the reading of the Epistle. In the Requiem it is a reiteration of the Introit with the addition of Psalm 111:

<i>In memoria aeterna erit Justus,</i>	Men will remember that the just man
	is for ever,
<i>Ab auditione mala non timebet.</i>	No fear shall he have of evil tidings.

Since this section does not accompany any action in the service it provides for a section of pure musical setting where “all attention is fixed on the singers, and the florid nature of the Gradual, sometimes excessive, showed that virtuoso techniques were required” (Robertson 14). While it is technically a responsorial, in the plainchant version of the Requiem Mass only the first word, *Requiem*, is intoned by the cantor, with the chorus continuing with the rest of the Gradual text.

During the season of Lent, and in the Requiem, the *Alleluia* is replaced by the Tract, a section that originally followed the second reading. The text, which is not taken from the Bible, is a portion of a psalm designed to be sung straight through:

<i>Absolve, Domine, animas</i>	Lord release the souls of all the
<i>omnium fidelium defunctorum</i>	faithful departed from every bond of
<i>ab omni vinculo delictorum.</i>	Sin. <i>V.</i> By the help of thy Grace
<i>V. Et gratia tua illis succurrente</i>	enable them to escape avenging
<i>mereantur evadere judicium</i>	judgement. <i>V.</i> And to enjoy bliss in
<i>ultionis V. Et lucis aeternae</i>	everlasting light.
<i>beatitudine perfrui.</i>	

The Tract again addresses the subject of the need for Grace, this time in a much more direct and profound way. The prayer asks for forgiveness for the sins of the departed and the hope that through that forgiveness the dead will be accepted into heaven. The hope of “everlasting light” gained through Grace and the forgiveness of sin, is a continuation of the general mood of hope that has dominated the text of the Requiem to this point. While

there is a mention of “avenging judgment,” there is not yet that sense of fear and devastation associated with that final moment. This change in the characterization of the Mass would come in the next section, the *Dies Irae*.

It is the Sequence, *Dies irae*, where the first major shift in mood is found in the Requiem Mass. While the Sequence, a special type of trope that followed the *Alleluia*, was found in many forms before the Council of Trent, the decree of the Council eliminated all but four sequences from any setting of the Mass. The *Dies irae*, *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, *Veni sancte Spiritus* and *Victimae Paschali* remained the only Sequences to be used in the celebration of the Mass. The authorship of the text is in dispute, but the most likely candidate is Thomas of Celano, a friend of St. Francis. It is possible that the author drew from the responsory *Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna*, itself drawn from the Vulgate of Sophonias; and may also take ideas from the seventh century Advent hymn *Apparebit repentina dies magna Domini* (Robertson 15-16). Whoever the true author is, it is clear that the text disrupts the general mood of peace found in the earlier sections of the Requiem. The gloom of the world’s end is expressed in the text as follows:

<i>Dies irae, dies illa, Solvat saeculum in favilla: Teste David cum Sibylla.</i>	Day of wrath, O day of mourning, See fulfilled the prophets’ warning: Heaven and earth in ashes burning.
<i>Quantus tremor est futurus, Quando iudex est venturus, Cuncta stricte disussurus!</i>	Oh, what fear man’s bosom rendeth When from heaven the Judge descendeth, On whose sentence all dependeth!
<i>Tuba Mirum spargens sonum Per sepulcra regionum, Coget omnes ante thronum.</i>	Wondrous sound the trumpet slingeth, Through earth’s sepulchers it ringeth, All before the throne it bringeth.

*Mors stupebit et natura,
Cum resurget creatura,
Judicante respomsura.*

Death is struck and nature quacking,
All creation is awaking,
To its Judge an answer making.

*Liber scriptus proferetur,
In quo totum continetur,
Unde mundis judicetur.*

Lo! The book exactly worded,
Wherein all hath been recorded,
Therein shall judgement be awarded.

*Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latetm apparebit;
Nill inultum remanebut.*

When the Judge His seat attaineth,
And each hidden deed arraigneth,
Nothing unavenged remaineth.

*Quid sum miser tunc dicturus,
Quem patronum rogaturus,
Cum vix Justus sit securus?*

What shall I, frail man, be pleading,
Who for me be interceding,
When the just are mercy needing?

*Rex trenebdae majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva me, fons pietatis.*

King of majesty tremendous,
Who dost free salvation send us,
Fount of pity, then befriend us!

*Recordare, Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa tuae viae:
Ne me perdas illa die.*

Think, good Jesu, my salvation
Caused Thy wondrous incarnation.
Leave me not to reprobation.

*Quaerens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti Crucem passum;
Tantus labor non sit cassus.*

Faint and weary Thou hast sought
me,
On the cross of suffering brought
me;
Shall such grace be vainly brought
me?

*Juste judex ultionis,
Donum fac remissionis.
Ante diem rationas.*

Righteous Judge! For sin's pollution
Grant Thy gift of absolution.
Ere that day of retribution.

*Ingemisco tamquam reus:
Culpa rubet vultus meus;
Supp;icanti parce, Deus.*

Guilty, now I pour my moaning.
All my shame with anguish owning;
Spare, O God, Thy suppliant
groaning.

*Qui Mariam absolvisti
Et latronem exaudisti,
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.*

Thou the sinful woman savedst;
Thou the dying thief forgavest;
And to me a hope vouchsafest.

<i>Preces meae non sunt dignae:</i>	Worthless are my prayers and sighing;
<i>Sed tu bonus fac benigne, Ne perenni cremer igne.</i>	Yet, good Lord, in grace complying, Rescue me from fires undying.
<i>Inter oves locum praesta, Et ab haedis me sequestra, Statuens in parte dextra.</i>	With Thy favoured sheep O place me, Nor among the goats abase me, But to the right hand upraise me.
<i>Confutatis maledictis, Flammis acribus addictis, Voca me cum benedictus.</i>	While the wicked are confounded, Doomed to flames of woe unbounded, Call me with Thy saints surrounded.
<i>Oro supplex et acclinis, Cor contritum quasi cinis: Gere curam mei finis.</i>	Low I kneel, with heart-submission; See, like ashes, my contrition; Help me in my last condition.
<i>Lacrimosa dies illa, Qua resget ex favilla Judicandus homo resu:</i>	Ah! That day of tears and mourning! From the dust of earth returning Man for judgement must prepare him.
<i>Huic ergo parc, Deus.</i>	Spare, O God, in mercy spare him.
<i>Pie Jesu Domine, Dona eis requiem. Amen.</i>	Lord all pitying, Jesu blest Grant them Thine eternal rest. Amen. (Wolff 67-68.)

The stark reality of the final judgment provides ample drama for the concert settings of the Requiem; however the drastic change of mood found in the *Dies irae* seems out of place in the established liturgical setting of the Requiem Mass. While the fear of the opening stanzas of the Sequence are replaced by the hope that through Grace salvation may be achieved, the overall attitude of the *Dies irae* caused it to fall out of favor in the church. Vatican II finally removed this section of the Requiem in an attempt to free the Requiem of the tone found in the *Dies irae*.

The next section of the Requiem Mass is the Offertory, a part that allows the celebrants to deliver the gifts to the altar. The text used in the Requiem is of unknown origin, but it is clearly not of Roman origin. The text most likely entered the Roman liturgy from the Gallic rite, and, as the reference to the standard-bearer St. Michael suggests, originated in Egypt. (Robertson 21) The gifts delivered to the altar serve as a sacrifice to God for the dearly departed. The text demonstrates a transition from death to life that is a central tenet of the Christian faith.

*Domine Jesu Christe, Rex
gloriae, libera animas omnium
fidelium defunctorum de poenis
infernī, et de profundo lacu:
libera eas de ore leonis, ne*

*absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant
in obscurum: sed signifer sanctus
Michael repraesentet eas in
Lucem sanctum: quam olim
Abrahamae promisisti et semini
Ejus.*

*V. Hostias preces tibi, Domine,
laudis offerimus: tu suscipe pro
animabus illis, quarum hodie
memoriam facimus: fac eas,
Domine, de morte transire ad
vitam. Quam olim Abrahamae*

promisisti et semini ejus.

O Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory,
deliver the souls of all the faithful
departed from the pains of hell and
from the deep pit: deliver them from
the jaws of the lion, lest they fall
from

darkness and the black gulf swallows
them up. But let thy standard-bearer,
blessed Michael, bring them
into that holy light, which of old thou
didst promise to Abraham and his
Seed.

V. We offer unto thee, O Lord, this
sacrifice of prayer and praise: do
thou receive it on behalf of the souls
of those whose memory we this day
recall: make them, O Lord, to pass
from death unto life. That life to
which

Of old thou didst promise to
Abraham and his seed.

(Ibid)

The next two sections of the Requiem Mass, the Sanctus and the Agnus Dei, provide respectively a hymn of praise and a prayer for forgiveness and mercy. The Sanctus is one of the oldest sections of the established liturgy and offers possibilities for composers to show their ability for elaborate and complex setting of the text.

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,
Dominus deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli
et terra Gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.*

Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are
full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.
(Poultney 181)

In contrast the Agnus Dei is one of the newest additions to the *ordinary of the mass*, and serves as “a threefold invocation for forgiveness that derives from the Bible (John 1:29)” (Ibid 2). While the normal setting asks for mercy and peace for all celebrants, the Requiem text is focused on the faithfully departed.

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata
mundi: dona eis requiem.
(repeated).
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata
mundi: dona eis requiem
sempiternam.*

O Lamb of God that takest away
the sins of the world, grant them
rest.
O lord of God that takest away
the sins of the world, grant them
eternal rest.
(Robertson 22)

The final section of the Requiem Mass is the Communion, in which the coffin is blessed one last time and at the end of the service is removed from the church for burial. It is within this section that the text of the *Dies irae* is most likely taken, and has some of the same tone. Yet the mood is one of peace and hope rather than fear. The Communion of the normal Mass would include a blessing to the congregation before the end of the service; however, in the Requiem the focus is on the dearly departed and thus the blessing is absent.

*Libera me, Domine, de morte
aeterna in die illa tremenda:
quando caeli movendi sunt et
terra: dum veneris judicare
saeculum per ignem.*

Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal
death in that awful day, when the
heavens and the earth shall be
shaken,
when thou shalt come to judge the
world by fire.

*V. Tremens factus sum ego et,
timeo, dum disussio venerit,
atque ventura ira. Quando
caeli movendi sunt et terra.*

V. I am seized with fear and trembling,
until the trial shall be at hand, and
the wrath to come: when the heavens
And the earth shall be shaken.

*V. Dies illa, dies irae, calamitastis
et miseriae, dies magna et
amara valde: dum veneris judicare
saeculum per ignam.*

V. That day, a day of wrath, of
calamity and misery, a great day
and exceeding bitter, when thou shalt
come to judge the world by fire.

*V. Requiem aterhan dona eis,
Domine: et lux perpetua luceat
Eis. Libera me, etc.*

V. Eternal rest grant unto them, O
Lord: and let perpetual light shine
upon them. Deliver me, etc.

The service has come full circle with the prayer for eternal rest, and the fear and gloom that is presented in the *Dies Irae* is conquered by Grace and faith. The Requiem Mass as described above served the Catholic Church from the Council of Trent to the decrees of Vatican II (1962-65), and in that time some of the greatest composers of music history masterfully set the Mass in accordance to the prescribed plan of the Church.

In the history of the church, the music of the Mass began as a collection of various monophonic works placed together in accordance with the needs of the service. It is not until Guillaume de Machaut (c. 1300-c. 1370) that the first single composer, polyphonic setting of the Mass was produced. The idea of setting a complete Mass soon became the test of a composer and the Mass as an artistic form flourished. "The Mass became, with [the Flemish] school, what the symphony was to be to composers in the eighteenth century, in the sense that it was the largest form for the exercise of their art; but whereas the symphony was intended to entertain and delight its cultivated audiences, the Mass was intended to interpret and adorn the liturgy" (Robertson 30).

The Requiem Mass stayed away from the elaborate and decorative polyphonic setting for more than a hundred years after the standard Mass had made the change. The polyphony of the Mass was found to be "a further means of festive adornment and elaboration of the ritual, and was felt to be out of place in the solemn circumstance of the Requiem" (Robertson 25). The first mention of the polyphonic Requiem Mass is that of Guillaume Dufay (c.1400- 1474). Though no actual copy of the Requiem has come to light, there is substantial evidence to acknowledge that the work was composed. In his Will the composer requested that on the day following his funeral a group of the most talented singers of the church choir perform a Sequence of their choosing and his *Missa de Requiem* (Robertson 27). If his will was followed, and there would be no reason to believe that his wishes were ignored, his Requiem would have been performed in the Chapel of St. Etienne in November of 1474. Since the work has never come to light, details of the Mass are not known, but the work remains the first known complete Requiem Mass composed by a single composer.

Johannes Ockeghem's (c. 1420-c. 1495) *Requiem* is the earliest known surviving example of a polyphonic setting of the Requiem. Ockeghem, who was possibly a student of Dufay in his youth, was connected with the Royal Chapel of France from 1452 until his death. His skills and understanding of composition lead earlier historians, like Cecil Grey, to label him a "pure cerebralist, almost exclusively preoccupied with intellectual problems [who] goes out of his way to create difficulties for the pleasure of overcoming them" (Robertson 30). This unfair evaluation of the Ockeghem has been addressed in recent years and his skills and power as a great composer have been well discussed. The Requiem of Ockeghem does not contain the *Dies Irae*, and uses a different Gradual and

Tract. The Gradual of Ockeghem, taken from the fourth verse of Psalm 22, maintains the hopeful spirit of the original (Robertson 34).

*Si ambulem in medio umbrae
motis non timebo mala?
Quoniam tu mecum es,
Domine V. Virga tua et
baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata
sunt.*

What though I walk with the shadow
of death all around me? I will not be
afraid of harm, for thou, Lord art
with me. V. Thy rod, thy crook are
my comfort.

The Tract employed by Ockeghem is very different then the traditional form used in the Requiem.

*Sictu cervus desiderat ad fontes
aquarum! Ita desiderunt anima
mea ad te, Deus. V. Sitivit
anima mea ad Deum vivum;
quando veneris, et apparebo
ante faciem Dei?
V. Fuerunt mihi lacrimae panes
die ac nocte, dum dicitur mihi
per singulos dies! Ubi est Deus
tuus?*

As a deer for running water my
whole
soul longs for Thee, O God. V. My
whole soul thirsts for the living God.
Shall I never again make my
pilgrimage
into God's presence? V. Morning
And evening, I have no food than
tears, daily must I listen to the taunt,
where is thy God now?

While it is clear that some of the text is considerably different than the traditional form of the Requiem the effect is still very similar, and it remains the earliest example of the polyphonic Requiem Mass that has been unearthed.

The first major Requiem to include the setting of the *Dies Irae* would come from a student of Ockeghem, Antoine Brumel (c. 1460- c. 1520). As a consummate church musician and composer Brumel would have come into contact with the first Missal containing the setting of the *Dies Irae* for use in the Mass of All Souls Day, which was printed for the first time in Venice in 1493. (Robertson 36.) The *Requiem Mass a4* is written in *cantus firmus* technique where the borrowed melody is found in the tenor in

long notes. While the Ockeghem *Requiem* seems distinctly modal to modern ears, "in Brumel's *Requiem*, and thereafter, the harmonic sound is to modern ears akin to that in our major scale system" (Robertson 37). Though in later years the exact opposite would be the norm, Brumel sets only the odd verses of the *Dies Irae* in polyphony with the plainsong melody found in the top voice. There is also considerable difference in the fact that Brumel repeats several of the odd verses, which would not be the case in later interpretations. With the addition of the Sequence in the Brumel *Requiem*, the Mass becomes more akin to the modern presentation of the traditional *Requiem Mass*.

Of the next generation of composers that stand out as magnificent writers of church music, Christ'obal Morales (c. 1500-1553) and Palestrina provide the most significant contributions. While both composers' settings of the *Requiem* are masterfully written, there are stark differences in the treatment of the text of the *Requiem*. Morales was in Rome as a member of the Pontifical Choir and would have performed under the famous and frightening *Last Judgment* of Michelangelo. The seriousness of the setting of Morales's *Requiem* has much the same attitude and atmosphere as the great painting. The feeling and stark gloom of the *Requiem* is described by A.W. Ambrose, noted historian and musicologist. "Before the face of death all colours fade, and all gaiety ceases. Morales, the Spaniard conceives death in all its terrible seriousness" (Robertson 42). The *Requiem a5* of Morales (he also composed one *a4* earlier in his life) is composed in a stricter *cantus firmus* style than was found in the composers of the Franco-Flemish school using the plainsong more exactly in the lowest part. The overall mood of the *Requiem* is much darker and more somber than had been composed in the generations before, and the seriousness of the occasion is expressed in the sounds of the *Requiem*.

In dramatic contrast to the Morales *Requiem* is what Ambrose referred to as the "ray of heavenly light," (Robertson 44) the *Requiem Mass a5* of Palestrina. Although he only sets the *Kyrie*, *Offertory*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei*, what he sets has more a feeling of hope and sweetness. "There is, indeed, nothing to disturb here - there are none of the stark dissonances we find in the Morales *Requiem*. As always in his music Palestrina prepares these to secure not only harmonic tension but sweetness in the succeeding consonances whereas Morales, it seems to me, uses dissonance 'as a means of poetic expression, as a symbol of the emotions'" (Robertson 44). Just as the composer did in his *Pope Marcellus Mass*, (the work that saved polyphony from the Council of Trent) the text is treated delicately with care taken for clarity of expression. Nothing in the Palestrina *Requiem* is out of place or extreme in its presentation and the poetic nature of Morales *Requiem* is replaced by balance and delicate treatment of Palestrina.

As the history of music moved from the Renaissance into the Baroque (c. 1600), the great changes in compositional techniques and practices saw an end to the central importance of the Mass. The newer style of the Baroque was looking for a fresh outlet for musical expression which found itself more in opera, cantatas, sonatas, oratorios, and the like. "Subjective expression, in ever-increasing measure, now invaded sacred music. The word would be the mistress of the harmony"(Robertson 58). The intention of the text and the attitude the Church restricted the composer of the Baroque from the experimentation taking place during this period of music. During this period the beginnings of the great shift from the cathedral to the concert hall took place, though it would be several centuries before this transition would be completed. "The flowering of original polyphonic Mass composition came to an end with the Renaissance, but the species

called forth a centuries-long more or less epigonal second blooming in the 'Palestrina style,' and from the beginning of the 17th century on there arose a sometimes dangerous competitor to it in the concertante Mass (the Mass with soloistic sections, instruments and thoroughbass" (Blume 59-60). Those who did compose either complete or partial Requiems seemed much more interested in the dramatic aspect of the text rather than appeasing Church officials. While there was not enough of a movement to change the Requiem as substantially as it would be in the Romantic period, the seeds of change were beginning to take hold.

The classical period (c. 1750) saw a return to the importance of the textual clarity over emotional expression. The most notable and infamous of all classical Requiems was that of Mozart, and though the mythology and pseudo-academic cloud of much of the early historical analysis still surrounds the work, its brilliance and importance cannot be denied. Mozart had begun the *Requiem Mass*, K. 626, as a secret commission from Franz Count von Walsegg for his beloved wife Countess Anna von Walsegg. Some of the early mystery of the *Requiem* stems from the fact the Count did not make himself known to Mozart because he had intended to replace Mozart's name with his own as he had done with other composers (Wolff 3). Though the commission was the original purpose of his beginning of the *Requiem*, Mozart's own health and personal situation became as important to the creation of the work as the unknown patron. "Clearly the terrible struggles and disappointments of the composer's last years, his rapidly declining health, and his preoccupation with death caused him to find a musical language that was intensely personal and yet, as a sincere interpretation of the sacred text, one far more widely understood than that of any other sacred work of the Classical era" (Pauly 226).

Still the text and interpretation of the Catholic Church was the dominating force in the creation of the Requiem Mass.

Mozart left much of the *Requiem* unfinished at the time of his unfortunate death, leaving the final work to be completed by friend and student Franz Xaver Süssmayr. However those closest to him "clearly understood that when the dying composer put aside the *Requiem* score, he knew that he had been writing a *Requiem* for himself" (Wolff 4). The work, or at least that which had been completed at the time of his death was performed for the funeral of the great master. The commission was completed by Süssmayr in due time, but the *Requiem* had already been performed as a fitting tribute to the composer rather than the Countess for whom it was composed.

Though there is some personal expression found in the Requiems up to this period of music history, it is still a form that is inherently confined by the beliefs and doctrines of the Catholic Church. The fact that the work was designed as a realization of the faith of the Catholic Church to be performed within its Cathedrals suggests that the form would always be written under the control and influence of the Church. Even the *Missa Solemnis* (1823) of Beethoven is "the direct continuation of an approach to sacred music which sought to perpetuate musical convention and symbolism from as far back as the Renaissance" (Drabkin 4). Beethoven may have been influenced by the text of the liturgy, but he and only he found a way above the Church's direction to create a work of personal expression. "There has been only one composer who could rise above the law and impose his commanding personality on the sacred text... [it] does not dwarf the liturgy, ... but proclaims throughout a personal belief so God-centered, so enriching and sublime, that it enters into the universal and deepens the belief of the worshipping community"

(Robertson 30). Though Beethoven could find a way to balance the desire for self-expression with the established form and interpretations of the Catholic Church, he remains the only composer that could find that middle ground. As the need and desire for personal profound expression through the music gained momentum in the Romantic Period (c. 1805- 1900), there became a need for a new freedom in the composition of the Requiem.

It was with the commission of Hector Berlioz to write a Requiem that the history of the Requiem began to make a distinctive change. "In 1836, Berlioz received one of the few official commissions of his career. The Minister of the Interior appointed him to compose a Requiem, and it was scheduled for performance on the day of the annual service commemorating the dead of the 1830 Revolution"(Schonberg 162). The commission was not for a traditional Catholic ceremony, but one more suited for a festival in celebration of a civic event. "French church music ... had taken on something of the pomp and grandeur of the revolutionary *fetes*; ... the multiple choruses and the expanded brass sections of the fervent republican days were now bent to a new purpose" (Plantinga 1984). The *Grande Messe des Morts* marks the great dividing line in the history of the Requiem, for in the work "liturgical considerations were not in Berlioz's mind. This work like Verdi's is essentially meant for the concert hall rather than the church; these are not functional Masses"(Robertson 88).

In the *Requiem* of Berlioz the distinctive break from the Church has taken place. No longer is the Requiem a vehicle for private mourning in a cathedral, but it is now meant as a public civic display. While the text remains the same as had served the church for generations, the control over context and interpretation has been taken from the hands

of the Catholic Church. In moving to the concert hall, using a secular setting, or writing for public display, the composer was freed from the edicts of Church officials.

Composers were now free to use the texts for the purpose of their own personal expression, and as shall be demonstrated, were given the freedom to use or not use as they desired. In the *Berlioz Requiem*, the extreme feelings of fear and despair found in the *Dies Irae* are free to find their fullest expression. The move from the Church to the concert hall that the *Berlioz Requiem* helped to create marked a new beginning in the history of the Requiem.

Giuseppe Verdi: *Requiem* for Manzoni

The idea of immortalizing someone's memory by composing a Requiem Mass originally came to Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) in November of 1868, when one of the leading Italian composers, Gioacchino Rossini, passed away. Though Verdi was in no way a devoutly religious man, he felt that the Requiem would provide a means by which a fitting memorial could be dedicated to Italy's leading musician. At the time of Rossini's death the country was having economic problems and had not done well in the war for Venice, "but if Italy's statesmen and military men were a source of humiliation, her artists were a source of national pride; in particular, her music still carries with honour the name Italy to every part of the world" (Rosen 1). For Verdi the death of Rossini was a blow to the Italian country and the country needed a fitting tribute to honor one of its greatest artists.

Verdi was one of the foremost nationalistic artists active in Italy at that time, and the death of Rossini was in Verdi's opinion a great blow to the Italian art. In a letter to his dear friend, Clara Maffei, he expressed his feeling of the great loss. "A great name has gone from the world! His was the most widespread, most popular reputation of our time, and was the glory of Italy. When the other one [Manzoni] who is still alive will no longer be with us, what will remain?" (Phillips-Matz 550) For Verdi the man who had brought the greatness of Italian musical style to the world needed some appropriate monument, and as such began discussing his plan to have the greatest musical minds active in Italy work together to create a Requiem as a national tribute to Rossini.

For Verdi the work was intended to be a nationalistic tribute and made the stipulation that only Italian composers would be assigned to work on the project, and in an attempt to include all the artistic community, other artists would be asked to help pay for the great production. The idea was quickly accepted and the work began in earnest. "A committee was duly formed, and in early June 1869 it promulgated a prospectus with the composers, their assignments, and - in an attempt to minimize the artistic anarchy entailed by the composite nature of the work - the resources, key, and tempo of each piece" (Rosen 3). The final movement, *Libera me*, was assigned to Verdi and he began work on his section almost immediately.

The idea of a composite Requiem Mass to immortalize the greatness of Rossini raised two major issues, the most obvious being that a work written by multiple composers would most certainly lack any real sense of unity. While the committee did its best to dictate key, tempos and instrumentation, this attempt only assured that there would be no major clashes as one movement would move to the next. There could be no true cohesion between movements, and the work would be at best a Requiem comprised of non-related ideas. Though in the Requiem for Manzoni, Verdi would take special care to create unity within the entire work, the purpose was far more important for the composers than the artistic merit. Verdi addressed this issue in a letter to his publisher, Ricordi, in which he first discusses the possibility of the Requiem. "The composition (however good the individual numbers may be) will necessarily lack musical unity; but if it is wanting in that respect it will serve nonetheless to show how great in all of us the veneration for that man whose loss the world mourns" (Rosen 2)

The bigger issue, and one that will be revisited in the discussion of the later Requiem for Manzoni, was the use of a religious setting for political tributes.

Verdi was anticlerical and, at least in this period, almost certainly an agnostic. Furthermore the period was one of intense conflict between church and State: in 1864 Pius IX had issued the reactionary Syllabus of Errors; two years later the Italian Parliament passed a law declaring 'that almost all the religious orders and congregations should have their houses dissolved and their goods confiscated' Most importantly perhaps was the State's continuing effort to wrest Rome from Papal power (Rosen 2).

The government had problems with the idea of using the Requiem with its obvious religious overtones, and the same might have been true for Verdi himself, however the idea of political and public monuments in the guise of a religious ceremony had already been put into effect in the Requiem of Berlioz. For Verdi the ceremony to honor the great Italian composer far outweighed any problems that might arise.

The performance of the Requiem for Rossini was scheduled for a year after the death of the composer, and all the composers contributing their skills to the ceremony finished their assigned parts without problem. Unfortunately the ceremony scheduled for the first anniversary of Rossini's death never took place, and the parts were returned to the various composers. For a while Verdi entertained the notion of finishing the complete Requiem himself, but that came to no avail. The world would have to wait until 1988 for the Requiem for Rossini to finally be performed. (Rosen 3) Verdi now had a movement that he could build on in the creation of a Requiem if the need ever presented itself. The death of "the other" (Manzoni) in his letter to Maffei caused Verdi to again entertain the notion of composing a Requiem.

Verdi had been a long time advocate of a unified Italian nation, and helped in the struggle for that goal his entire life. The area now known as Italy was, in Verdi's youth,

nothing more than a collection of city-states under the control of various European powers (France, under Napoleon and the Austrian empire after the treaty of Vienna). During the middle of the nineteenth century a movement for a unified, independent Italy began to develop. One of the individuals who personified the struggle for Italian unity and the creation of an Italian art was the author Alessandro Manzoni. On May 22, 1873, at the age of eighty-nine, Manzoni, a longtime hero and friend of Verdi, died of injuries sustained after a fall. Though the author was quite old and his death had not come as a great surprise, Verdi was greatly affected and so upset by the loss that he could not attend the funeral. In another letter to his friend Maffei, the person who arranged a meeting of Verdi and Manzoni, Verdi stated: "Now all is over! And with him ends the most pure, the most holy, the greatest of our glories. I have read many papers. Not one speaks fittingly of him. Many words, but none deeply felt. There is no lack of gibes. Even at him? Oh what a wretched race we are" (Robertson 99). Though too distraught to attend the funeral, Verdi traveled to Milan to visit the grave of his much-admired friend and fellow artist. Immediately after his return he wrote to the Mayor of Milan and offered to compose a Requiem as a tribute to be performed on the anniversary of the Manzoni's death.

Verdi's admiration for Manzoni began at a young age when the composer read *I Promessi Sposi*, which he regarded as "not only the greatest book of our own time but one of the greatest books that ever came out of a human brain" (Martin 22). Though the work, as shall be shown, was influential in developing the nationalistic spirit that would be a major part of Verdi's writing throughout his life, part of the book's legacy is in what it did for the unification of the Italian language. At the time *I Promessi Sposi* was written, in 1827, the Italian language was nothing more than a set of related dialects, and people

of one area would have great trouble communicating with the people of another.

Manzoni's book was written in the Tuscan dialect, which he felt "was the richest and most beautiful" (Martin 23) of all the dialects floating around what was to become the Italian nation. The book of Manzoni was the first to break down the barriers of the multiple dialects, and helped create a codified language, based on the Tuscan dialect, that would help bring the idea of Italian unity into existence. It might be argued that without Manzoni's linguistic contribution the idea of an Italian language would not be possible.

The contributions of Manzoni to the Italian language were remarkable, and the artistry with which he wrote gave good reason for Verdi to idealize the author, but his contributions to the cause of Italian freedom and political unification were equally important. *I Promessi Sposi* subtitled "A tale of XVII Century Milan" had all the ingredients of nationalistic ideas found in the revolutionary works of other nations.

"There was the irresponsibility of the governing class, the simple honesty of the peasants who were its hero, ... the adaptability of human nature to disaster, and finally throughout, a devastating indictment of evil" (Martin 24). The work is filled with ideals that would lead Verdi to align himself with the patriotic party. The book "suggests that man should try to improve his lot in this world and that forms of government are important" (Martin 25). Though a quiet man, Manzoni's life was dedicated to the idea of a unified Italian nation, with its own artistic merit and free from the shackles of the external rulers that had controlled the peninsula.

Verdi and his compositions supported and fought for the ideals found in the works of Manzoni. The nationalistic tendency in Verdi's compositions is quite apparent. He felt that he was a member of the lineage that traced back to Palestrina, and that the art of the

Italian people could be as good as anything ever created. Verdi "was as strongly pro-Italian as Wagner was pro-German. Verdi lived in hope of a united Italy and he lived to see it" (Schonberg 251). The spirit of independence is displayed in the operas of the great composer. "Verdi and his librettists collaborated to introduce political and patriotic themes in opera during all the years of the Italian struggle for independence" (Plantinga 300). The ideas of freedom and oppression found in Verdi's works were seen as parallels to the Italian struggle. "There were political implications in *Nabucco*, and the opera made Verdi a symbol of the resistance to the Austrian domination" (Schonberg 251). So influential were Verdi's contributions to the spirit of the Italian people that after independence was gained, Verdi became a political figure and served as a representative in the national government.

It is clear that Verdi held Manzoni in the highest regard as both a patriot and an artist, and throughout Verdi's life his admiration never waned. In his youth Verdi "composed settings of Manzoni's Ode, *Il cinque maggio*, and several choruses from his tragedies, *Il conte di Carmagnola* and *Adelchi*" (Rosen 6).

Though a very skilled and popular composer coming off the success of his most recent opera, *Aida*, Verdi must have had some question as to whether his skills could provide a meaningful work for Manzoni. But in this Requiem, as was the case with the Requiem for Rossini, the success of the work was not to be the quality of the composition, but its ability to pay tribute to the man it meant to immortalize. In a letter to the mezzo-soprano, Maria Waldmann, whom he would use in the first performances of the Requiem, he explained the true importance of the work that he was in the process of writing.

You won't earn anything, either in money or in reputation; but because it is something that will be landmark - not because of the music, but because of the man to whom it is dedicated - it seems to me beautiful to have history say some day: "on 22 May there was a great Funeral Mass in [Milan] for Manzoni's anniversary, performed by ... etc. [so try to manage to be free at that time] (Phillips-Matz 605).

The tribute was the important thing to Verdi, and his contribution would pale in comparison to the occasion for which it was intended.

As history would attest, the tribute for the great author would become one of the most performed and most beloved works in the repertoire. The great Verdi historian, George Martin, even suggests that "Manzoni would have been bettered honored if Verdi had produced something less good; perhaps something really bad, so that the whole thing could be dismissed in a paragraph" (Martin 484). Instead, Verdi produced something incredible in tribute to his hero, and though the importance of the musical example has outlived the purpose for which it was produced, the name Manzoni will continue to be connected with the Requiem written for him.

No discussion of Verdi's Requiem would be complete without addressing the issue of the religious validity of the composition. It is clear from the letters describing the work that it was intended not as a religious ceremony for Manzoni's soul, but as a musical tribute to the great Italian author. The famous historian Francis Toye in his discussion of the Requiem warns: "It is of first importance when approaching the Mass to leave behind certain preconceived opinions as to what is or is not music suitable for ecclesiastical purposes" (Toye 443). Clearly the work by Verdi is not what would have been considered a traditional use of the Requiem, however that is not reason to dismiss the validity of the composition as a whole. As Berlioz did in his Requiem, the form was used as a means through which a public tribute could be paid to the subject of the work. Verdi, whose

adherence to the established text was stricter than Berlioz's, used the Requiem as a setting through which a fitting memorial could be paid.

One might be inclined to believe that the Requiem of Verdi was from its inception meant as a liturgical work, since the "*Messa da Requiem* was first performed in church as part of a liturgical ceremony - a curious hybrid in which the 'movements' of Verdi's Roman-rite Mass alternated with Ambrosian-rite plainchant" (Rosen 11). Though the work's first performance took place in San Fedele Cathedral, it is the only one of the first seven performances to take place in a Church, with the first three supplemental concerts taking place in La Scala. Many of the musical qualities that will be discussed leads one to believe that the work was not an ecclesiastical work but an extension of the secular style that dominated Verdi's writing. The Requiem "is the first of those...that was intended, from the start for the concert hall, not the church. This enabled the composer to deal more freely with the text than would otherwise have been the case" (Robertson 101). While the first performance was in the Church, its nature and intention clearly leads one to believe that the work was always meant as a secular tribute, rather than a centerpiece of a religious ceremony.

One might wonder as to the religious nature of Verdi himself. While he never proclaimed his agnosticism, he was by no means a devoutly religious man. During the early years of his life the composer had performed as Church organist (Plantinga 299), but even this position seems as much a means of income as a religious calling. Most believed his feeling to be at the very least anti-clerical (as his political beliefs would lead one to infer) and quite probably agnostic.

Regardless of his beliefs, it had been over thirty years since the opera composer had turned his pen to the writing of sacred music, with the exception of the *Libera me* written for the Rossini project (Rosen 8). While it is clear that Verdi was in no way an advocate of organized religion, his belief in God is at the very least suggested in a letter to his friend Giuseppe Piroli. "I've been here and haven't done anything but write notes upon notes for the greater glory of God" (Rosen 8). While this is not a direct statement of faith, it calls into question those who would accuse Verdi of being an atheist.

While the Requiem of Verdi was not what one expects from a Catholic interpretation of the Mass, it does not mean that the work is devoid of spirituality. The political situation in Italy during Verdi's life was one of constant struggles with the established Catholic Church leaders, and a spirit of distrust and anti-clerical sentiment might be expected. But for one of his librettists, Boito, there was a distinct difference between a Christian and a good Catholic. "In the ideal sense, moral and social, he was a great Christian: but one must guard against making him out to be a Catholic in the political and strictly theological sense of terms" (Robertson 97). Verdi's mind was such that traditional religious beliefs were too stifling, and his personal interpretation of his faith was far more important than that of the established Church order. This freedom from the traditional pitfalls of the Catholic Mass expressed themselves in the Requiem, and "what Verdi emphasized in the text was quite different from what other composers had done before him or from what, perhaps, the Church would ideally like to have emphasized" (Martin 485). One should be careful not to believe that the drastic difference in textual setting meant that the Requiem was devoid of spirituality, only that it was not necessarily the spirituality expressed by the Catholic Church.

As a composer not connected with organized religion, Verdi was free to reinterpret the Requiem text, and express the traditional text without interference from Church officials. Verdi was in his heart an operatic composer, and many of the techniques that made him one of the most successful composers for the theater are evident in the Requiem, and none more important than his dramatic interpretation of the text. Though the text of the Requiem by no means resembles a libretto with clear plot or character development, it presents ample opportunity for interpretation and personal expression. "The Requiem can surely be called 'dramatic' in the metaphorical sense of 'forcefully effective', but it would be difficult to consider it 'dramatic' in the more central and restricted sense of resembling a literary drama" (Rosen 92). Beginning with Verdi, the literary text became freed from historical implication and becomes "a poem hallowed by content and tradition, but still a poem at the service of the composer as material for his work" (Rosen 90). For Verdi the text of the Mass was open to his interpretation, and as was the case when preparing to write an opera, he spent considerable time studying the words to gain an understanding of the meaning. The historian Alec Robertson is not shy in his feelings toward Verdi's understanding of the text. "Verdi's Requiem is undoubtedly the most beautiful setting that had ever been, or ever will be, composed. The opening bars of the Introit, for muted strings, breathe the very spirit of the words *requiem aeternam* murmured by the chorus in a manner unapproached before" (Robertson 102). Throughout the Requiem, Verdi's freedom to reinterpret the text allows his view of the natural dramatic qualities of the liturgy to be fully expressed as the composer saw fit.

"The words of the Requiem Mass, in particular when the *Dies Irae* is included, appeal inevitably to the dramatic sense; otherwise, a composer such as Berlioz, who was

primarily interested in emotion and colour would never have set them to music (Toye 444). This inherent dramatic nature of the text must have been abundantly obvious to the great master of Italian opera. In many ways the Requiem for Manzoni can be viewed as a "sacred opera... on the subject of the Last Judgment, with Alessandro Manzoni's soul as the objective theme of the drama" (Ibid). While there are some obvious differences, the most notable being the lack of characters, the importance of expressing the underlying feeling of the text is for Verdi a similarity between the Requiem and his operatic compositions.

The text of the Requiem was, in Verdi's opinion, filled with dramatic possibility and ripe with emotional content. "Like most great composers Verdi was a simple man, intent on the expression of feeling rather than of abstract thought" (Toye 448). For Verdi, the words display not a series of prayers and hopes for the dead, but primal emotions and an underlying fear of death and the unknown.

[Verdi] did intend to involve [the listeners] emotionally in a drama which they all felt they knew backwards and forwards and need pay no attention to. He succeeded not only by the excellence of his music but by stirring in the audience the ancient feelings and fears of primitive man peering nervously into the night, trying to find his God and establish some sort of relationship with him. By the end of his Requiem Verdi has his singers and audience praying for peace and light, not for the dead, but for themselves, the living. (Martin 487)

For Verdi the text of the Requiem is no longer a dry set of readings handed down from one generation to the next with a long tradition of codified interpretation, but rather a work wrought with expressive possibilities and filled with the very essence of human drama.

Though the public reacted favorably to the innovative setting of the ecclesiastical text, the Church was upset by the growing trend at the end of the nineteenth century to

use liturgical text towards non-religious ends. "The Roman Church took an official stand in 1903 when Pope Pius X issued an encyclical *Motu proprio*, setting out the requirements for ecclesiastical music and by definition excluding many nineteenth-century Masses, among them the Requiem of Verdi" (Martin 485). While the dramatic interpretation employed by Verdi in his setting of the Requiem was not in line with the Catholic views of the ceremony and was more suited to the concert hall than the cathedral, it should not be seen as lacking in spiritual expression. As Alec Robertson so clearly and directly states: "If Verdi's Requiem is not the work of a truly religious and spiritually minded man then I do not know the meaning of those words" (Robertson 110).

The first anniversary of the death of Manzoni saw the first performance of the Requiem, and care was taken to make sure that he had the best soloists for the initial performances. Verdi had handpicked the people whom he felt could best perform his great masterpiece. The distinguished soloists were Teresa Stolz, soprano, Maria Waldmann, the mezzo-soprano for whom Verdi had to use political connections to free from contractual obligations, Giuseppe Capponi, tenor and Ormondo Maini singing the bass solos (Rosen 12). It might be noted that since the first performance did take place in San Marco Cathedral in Milan, special permission had to be gained for the use of women as soloists and in the choir. "This was eventually granted, providing that 'all possible precaution [be taken] that the women be hidden by grating, [placed] off to one side, or something similar. Indeed, at the San Marco performance - but not subsequent performances - the female choristers wore a full black dress with the head covered by an ample mourning veil" (Rosen 11). Despite the problems presented by the Church officials, and some political objections to having the work paid for by the government

and staged in a church, the first performance did take place and was received very favorably.

While the Requiem for Rossini had from its very conception the great disadvantage of lacking unity, the Requiem for Manzoni would prove that a sense of connection could add to the musical integrity of the work. Verdi, in his tribute to Manzoni, presents the dual emotional context of the Requiem setting as a means of creating a sense of unity. The two contrasting feelings found in the work pit the hope for salvation through God's Grace against the real fear of damnation. "Verdi dramatized two aspects of the prayer for salvation, the one purely piteous, the other fearful" (Toye 445). The Requiem contrasts the concept of a vengeful God of the *Dies irae*, punishing every evil deed, against the "direct appeal to a King whose prerogative is mercy" (Robertson 105) found in the *Salva me*. In addition the four statements of the *Dies irae* and the repetition of the *requiem aeternam* provide a melodic unity to the work as a whole. While Verdi does find a way to create large-scale unity, one should be careful not to expect "an organic unity that places every passage into a hierarchy or network, that derives everything from 'germinating cells' or regards every passage as a part of an all-encompassing teleological tonal or linear progression" (Rosen 87). In this respect Verdi's Requiem "is less like that of a Bach fugue or a Webern serial composition than that of a rondo, although a rondo with many recurring ideas: certain moments in the work are linked by these recurring ideas, while other moments are not drawn into any overreaching design" (Rosen 87-88).

In addition to the solo vocal quartet, the score calls for a full chorus to cover the vocal parts. The work also requires the traditional string groupings; three flutes, with the

third player doubling on piccolo; two oboes; two clarinets; four bassoons; four horns; eight trumpets, with four serving as an offstage group in the *Tuba mirum*; three trombones; ophicleide (a now obsolete brass instrument replaced by a tuba); timpani and bass drum. It should also be noted that at the time Verdi composed the Requiem he "insisted upon adopting a tuning where $a_1 = 435$ Hz, the *diapason normal* adopted legally in France in 1859, and would later express a slight preference for 432 Hz - rather than today's cruel 440 Hz or higher" (Rosen 17).

The first section of the Requiem is comprised of the Introit and the *Kyrie*, which while distinctive in design are performed without break. The opening of the *Requiem* is written for full chorus and muted strings, and takes on an ABA structure. The formal design is a natural division of the text, with the opening antiphon, and its repeat surrounding the inner psalm verse. The work opens in A minor, with the cellos providing an introduction to the first entrance of the *Requiem aeternam* by the chorus. The melancholy mood of the opening lines changes slightly with a shift to A major on the text "let perpetual light shine upon them." This mood returns to the minor as the first section closes. The second theme is written for solo chorus and is in F major. The imitative theme begins in the bass and the entrances of tenor, alto and soprano, respectively, are offset by two bars. Once all the voices enter the texture the strict imitation is abandoned and the section closes with an F major chord. The antiphon is repeated without the opening cello solo, and adds woodwinds and horns in the closing measures as a means of connecting the Introit with the *Kyrie*.

The *Kyrie* section of the work is divided into five statements of the text, rather than the traditional three. A tenor solo opens the movement with a countermelody

accompaniment found in the solo bassoon, and is followed by imitation by the bass solo. The first four statements of the text all begin with points of imitation in the solo chorus, however, the countermelody is only found in the first and third sections. The final statement is dominated not by the chorus, but by the countermelody introduced in the movement and abbreviates the text using only the *Christe eleision*. A final cadence in A Major brings the first section of the Requiem to a close. Music historian Tovey describes the *Kyrie* as “the most moving passage in all of Verdi’s works; unquestionably one of the greater monuments of musical pathos” (Rosen 20).

The second movement of Verdi’s Requiem is the *Dies irae* section of the text, which is divided melodically into nine separate and distinctive subsections. The first two stanzas comprise the *Dies irae*, the third stanza makes up the *Tuba mirum*, the fourth stanza is the *Mors stupebit*, the fifth and six creates the *Liber scriptus*, the seventh stanza is the *Quid sum miser*, the eighth stanza is the *Rex tremendae majestatis*, the ninth through the eleventh stanzas are the *Recordare* section, the twelfth through the fifteenth stanzas makes up the *Ingemisco*, and the final two stanzas comprise the *Lacrymosa* subsection. The nine divisions of the texts can be grouped in two groups. The first four subsections of the movement are written in third person in that “the first six stanzas are spoken by a narrator, albeit one emotionally caught up in the scene described” (Rosen 24). The remaining stanzas of the text are written in the first person and the tone shifts to a “fearful sinner who pleads for his own salvation” (Ibid).

The first section of the *Dies irae* is written for choir and full orchestra and begins in G minor. Julian Budden describes the opening theme eloquently, by stating that the section is “conceived as an unearthly storm: four tutti thunderclaps, later separated by

powerful blows on the bass drum, the skin tightened to give a hard dry sound (the Shakespearian “crack of doom”?); rapid scales in contrary motion: peremptory calls to attention on the brass and a chromatic choral line” (Rosen 25-26). The opening section of the movement depicts all the fear and chaos that Verdi envisions accompanying the final judgment. While the second stanza is more directly stated and loses much of the swirling movement of the first, the seriousness of the situation is intensified. As the subsection comes to end, the closure is avoided when the dominant of G minor progresses not to its tonic but to a C minor chord, which leads to the next section.

The second section of the movement is the *Tuba mirum*; it maintains the instrumentation of full choir and orchestra and adds four offstage trumpets. The movement opens with an offstage fanfare that gradually builds from piano to fortissimo adding additional winds before the first entrance of the basses. The section continues to build adding additional voices, rhythmic intensity and increased tempo, to a cadence in Ab Major. Verdi’s use of the offstage instruments is reminiscent of the Berlioz *Grande messe des morts*; however where Berlioz was interested in representing the awe of the setting, Verdi seems more driven to depict the terror of the words (Rosen 26). The section closes with an A major chord, which acts as a respelled Neapolitan in Ab and as a dominant of d minor, the key of the next section. The *Mors stupebit* is an extension of that dominant chord with a pedal tone of A in the string basses providing a foundation upon which the bass soloist builds to a cadence on d minor.

The *Liber scriptus* is the fourth section of the *Dies irae* movement and is written for orchestra and mezzo-soprano soloist. The section opens on the prolonged dominant of d minor that began in the *Tuba mirum*, which finally cadences in the tonic midway

through the first stanza. The *Liber scriptus*' two stanzas are both extended by repeating the last line to extend the phrase, and after the statement of the second stanza, both extended stanzas are repeated. Between each of the stanzas the full choir intones *Dies irae*, which start quietly at first, but grow in intensity with each statement. After the final statement of the second stanza in d minor, the violins and choir begin a transition to bring the repetition of the *Dies irae* music that began the movement. The reprise ends with a dominant chord on D followed by an unexpected, unresolved silence, leaving the resolution to the next section of the movement.

The *Quid sum miser* begins with the clarinets providing an anticlimactic cadence to the *Dies irae* music that precedes it. This section, which is the beginning of the first person section of the text, is written for soprano, mezzo-soprano and tenor soloists, flutes, oboes, first bassoon, third horn, and strings. The text is repeated three times, the first by mezzo-soprano soloist, and the second two for vocal trio. After each statement of the text the clarinet cadencial figure accentuates the g minor center; however on the final statement the last line is repeated as a canonic two measure phrase passed from the tenor to the mezzo-soprano and finally to the soprano soloist. The section ends with a G in the soprano that serves not as the tonic to this section, but as a dominant of c minor, the key of the *Rex tremendae*.

The *Rex tremendae* section is written for full choir, all four soloists, and full orchestra, and begins with the resolution of the tonic in c minor established in the closing bars of the previous section. The section, though only one stanza long, contrasts the terror and majesty of the opening sentence with the plea for mercy in the end of the stanza. The text is repeated five times, each one moving to a more stable conclusion, until the section

changes the mode from C minor to C major. “Had the requiem ended here, the supplicants might well have been optimistic about the reception of their plea for mercy” (Rosen 37). The section closes with a three-note motive that will serve as the accompaniment for the *Recordare*.

The *Recordare* section is written for soprano and mezzo-soprano soloists, woodwinds, horn and strings. The opening section of the text begins with the mezzo-soprano solo, which is followed by the repetition in the soprano solo. The hopeful mood of the *Recordare* is continued in the first stanza but turns to the minor mode for the second stanza that describes Jesus’ pains on the cross. The final stanza is set to the music of the opening text; however, the cadence in F minor is avoided causing incredible tension. The *Ingemisco*, which is comprised of four stanzas, is written for the same instrumentation as the previous section and solo tenor. To get around the issue of length in this section the first and third stanzas are written in a declamatory style. The second and fourth stanzas, which are set in a much more lyrical style, serve as pleas of mercy. The final cadence in Eb Major with a hint of the second stanza serves as a transition to the *Confutatis maledictis*.

The *Confutatis maledictis* section maintains the same instrumentation as before, adding timpani and shifting the solo line to the bass. The text is repeated twice using similar music each time; however the second time through the final line of the first stanza adds a new musical section in the bass solo. The resulting form is an ABACB design with an additional coda serving as a final plea in Eb minor, before a second reintroduction of the opening *Dies irae* music. The repetition of the opening music allows a transition to Bb minor for the final section of the movement, the *Lacrymosa*. This section is written

for all four soloists, choir and full orchestra, and the principal melody is derived from a duet written for Verdi's opera *Don Carlos* (Rosen 43). The theme, which is repeated three times in the presentation of the first stanza, begins in the mezzo-soprano voice, before moving to the soprano in the second statement and is finally given to the tenor and bass together in the final statement of the theme.

The final stanza of the movement, the *Pie Jesu*, is begun by unaccompanied choir and builds to a final cadence in Bb major. If the performers of the Requiem follow the wishes of Verdi, there would be a slight intermission to help release the tension following the completion of the entire *Dies irae* movement.

The third movement of the work, the *Offertory*, is written for the four soloists and full orchestra. This section is divided into three text areas, the antiphon *Domine Jesu Christe*, the *Quam olim Abrahae*, and the verse *Hostias*. While most Requiem Masses repeat the *Quam olim Abrahae*, Verdi also adds a repetition of a section of the opening text. The additional text gives the movement an arch form of ABCBA. The beginning is in Ab major, the B sections move from F minor back to the home key, and the C area is dedicated to C major. The stability of the final statement of the A theme gives a sense of relief as the solo clarinet brings the theme to a quiet resolution.

The fourth movement of the Requiem is the *Sanctus*, which is a double fugue written for two choirs and full orchestra. The section opens with an eight-measure introduction with trumpet fanfare that builds to a half cadence in F major. The first subject of the fugue is found in the first choir with each additional statement offset by four measures. The second distinctive subject of the second choir begins one measure after the first choir and also offsets the individual entrances by four full measures. In both

choirs the entrances starts in the soprano with a melody that works its way down through the voice parts. After the exposition both choirs begin to share the same musical ideas. Though one would expect a full statement of a theme in the development section, a complete statement of subject one is never found, and the music of subject two is only hinted at in the instrumental parts (Rosen 50). Towards the end of the movement the two choirs shift to homophonic half note movement as the instrumental parts have running eighth-note chromatic passages, and the final cadence in F major brings the movement to a close.

The *Agnus Dei* is the fifth movement of the Requiem, and is written for soprano and mezzo-soprano soloists with full choir, woodwinds, horn and strings. The section is a series of variations on an ostinato theme for soprano and mezzo-soprano. The movement begins with unaccompanied solo voices presenting the thirteen measure, double period theme in C major. The *Agnus Dei* is made up of five variations on the theme presented by the soloists. The theme remains the same throughout except that the third and fifth repetitions use an abbreviated version of the theme and the second repetition is in the minor mode. The movement closes with a coda with the two soloists singing in unison solidifying the F major tonic.

The *Lux aeterna* is scored for mezzo-soprano, tenor and bass soloists with orchestra without trumpets. The mezzo-soprano solo sings the antiphon *Lux aeterna*, which, while in the home key of Bb major moves to Bb minor. The second section of the movement is a funeral march statement of the first line of the verse. A third theme is introduced for the three unaccompanied soloists in the key of Gb Major, however this statement blends into a repetition of the section in Bb minor. Verdi restates the second,

third, and fourth lines of the text of the verse with a new musical idea in the home key of Bb major. After three repetitions of this section of music the original theme is restated to bring closure to the movement, giving the section a ABCBDDDA form.

The final movement of the Requiem, the *Libera me*, is a fugue written for solo soprano, choir and full orchestra. The text was the section of the Mass that Verdi had been assigned in the Requiem for Rossini in 1869, and much of that composition was revised to provide a basis for the Requiem for Manzoni. The first section of this movement is a declamatory solo for soprano in C minor on the text of the first stanza. This section blends into the verse, the section of text upon which the *Dies irae* of Thomas of Celano is based. Again Verdi uses a reprise of the powerful music of the *Dies irae* movement, again in G minor, as a setting for the text. Verdi's third section of the movement is a reprise of the opening *Requiem aeternam* music in Bb minor. To bring about a climatic closing section the music of the *Requiem aeternam* cadences in Bb Major as a means of setting up the final fugue of the work. The fugue exposition is in C minor, with a traditional development section avoiding tonic as much as possible. The final section of the fugue brings back the home key, and moves the voices to homophonic writing for a final climax of this section. Verdi adds one last statement of the *Libera me* text, which decrescendos to a final authentic cadence in C major, bringing the entire work to a close.

While the reaction to the Requiem was very positive, there remains the one notable exception of Hans von Bülow's negative review of the first performance in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. His view of the work as "an opera in ecclesiastical costume" states: "Thus among other pieces, the final fugue, despite many things worthy only of a student,

of much that is insipid and disagreeable, is a work of such industry that many German musicians will experience great suppress at it," and that it exhibited "a style which a clever Viennese teacher of singing said that it was improved to its disadvantage" (Rosen 12). It was the great German composer Brahms that came to Verdi's defense claiming that "Bülow has disgraced himself for all time; only a genius could write such a work" (Ibid). The world seemed to agree with Brahms opinion and "Bülow soon found himself without an audience, an appalling situation for an egoist" (Martin 495). Bülow eventually realized his mistake and he retracted his negative review some years later.

The reaction of the crowd to the first performance as well as the many that have followed since that time was remarkable. "The climax was reached in the *Agnus Dei* where "the applause changed to roars which, though stifled, even broke out during the actual performance, so irresistible was the inspiration of the music" (Toye 165). There is no doubt that this setting of the Requiem, though not traditional, was well received by critics and audiences alike. "The Mass was a brilliant success, not only, it seems, because of its intrinsic merit but because of the exceptional excellence of the interpretation" (Toye 164). There were numerous performances that followed in the years after the first performance, and after the Verdi renaissance of the 1920's it became a regular part of the established repertoire.

The originality of the textual treatment of Verdi's requiem marks a distinctive change in the role of the Requiem in music history, and no longer is the musical setting of Mass controlled by the dictates of the Catholic Church. Though not intended for performance in a cathedral, Verdi's ability to express the human feeling regarding death within the work have made it a staple of the concert hall. "Acutely sensitive to the drama

and color of the words he had to set, animated by a passionate desire to honour the memory of Manzoni whom he idolized, Verdi produced... an interpretation of the hopes and fears of mortal men, could scarcely be more poignant and certainly not more sincere" (Toye 448). While his original intention was to pay tribute to a personal hero, the Requiem of Manzoni breathed new life into the long established form, and interjected his personal understanding and spirit into the Mass.

Johannes Brahms: *German Requiem*

While the traditional Latin text seemed the most appropriate to Verdi in the writing of his Requiem, the relatively young Johannes Brahms used a text of his own design employing the Lutheran Bible. The *German Requiem*, completed and performed in 1868, was his first masterpiece and helped him establish his professional reputation. The work, which is not actually associated with a burial ceremony, is tied to the deaths of two of the most influential figures in young Brahms' life, Robert Schumann and Brahms's mother, Christiane Brahms. While written several years before the Verdi Requiem for Manzoni, Brahms' Requiem exhibits many of the same significant differences from the traditional setting. Both compositions are designed for the concert hall, both composers have non-orthodox views of religion, and both composers are very closely connected to the people for whom the work is written. In addition, the Brahms *German Requiem*, as is true with Verdi's Requiem, remains one of the most performed and admired Requiems in the repertoire today.

The idea of a German language, non-liturgical Requiem Mass is not in itself an original idea, for it had been used by Heinrich Schütz as far back as 1636. Both Brahms and Schutz were brought up as Protestants and not Roman Catholics, a fact which has significant effect on the general outlook and design of the text. While it is not the purpose of this paper to pursue a deep religious argument, a basic understanding of the fundamental differences as it relates to the Requiem is necessary. "The Lutheran Reformers taught that souls are freed from sin by faith in Christ alone, without any works; and therefore if saved, go straight to heaven" (Robertson 171). For the Protestant

faith there is no Purgatory and thus no need for prayer to assist the faithfully departed. Salvation is determined by faith alone, and only through God's Grace could one enter heavens gates. A Mass to pray for the dead would undermine that central belief. The funeral service is therefore not an opportunity to help the dead gain God's favor, but a celebration of a life lived. The works of Brahms and Schütz both are directly influenced by this major difference in religious faith, and both exhibit the more uplifting view of death.

The Protestant funeral service includes a hymn, a sermon and ends with a *Trauerlied*, (funeral cantata). The *Musicalische Exequien* of Heinrich Schütz was composed for his friend, Prince Heinrich the younger, for his memorial service. In the final section of the service, Schutz combined the text of the burial sermon 'Lord, now lettest thou Servant depart in peace' with the text 'Blessed are the dead' in the form of a Concerto (Robertson 173). This work is truly a Requiem for a Protestant service. There is none of the fear within the text of Schütz's Requiem, and the overall attitude of the work exemplifies the difference between the two religions. In composing for the funeral Schütz said, "He pictures his friend joyfully singing in the heavenly choirs" (Robertson 172). The final text exemplifies the more positive view of the Protestant funeral service.

I die that I may set thee free and sin no more pursue thee.
My life hath choked the serpent death,
Rise up to heav'n with Me He saith,
Where God will ever bless thee.
(Robertson 174)

The Protestant view of death and resurrection is very much heard and expressed in both Schütz's and Brahms German language Requiems.

The main difference in the German language Requiem is that the text is not established by generations of Church edicts, but is chosen by the composer. For Brahms his selection of the text is in the tradition of the baroque Protestant church musicians, Schütz and J.S. Bach (Musgrave 3). The selection of the text of the *German Requiem* reflects a lifelong study of Martin Luther's Bible, and was chosen very carefully. As Florence May, a friend and the first English biographer of Brahms claims, "The texts culled from various books of the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha have been chosen... as part of the people's book of Luther's Bible, the accepted representative to Protestant Nations of the highest aspirations of man, and have been arranged so as to present the ascending ideas of sorrow consoled, doubt overcome, and death vanquished." (Robertson 176). Brahms hand-selected the text and used different sources within each movement to best express his personal feeling in the *German Requiem*.

The Brahms Requiem is also different from most settings, including that of Schutz, in that it is not written for either a specific occasion or directly dedicated to an individual. Even though Brahms was still a relatively young composer at the time, the subject of death often crept into his works, and would be a part of many compositions to come. Though there is some suggestion of the events that acted as a catalyst for the creation of the monumental *German Requiem*, there is no direct reference in the score to such events. "In absence of definitive evidence it seems just as reasonable to regard it [the *German Requiem*] as the most important of those musings that so often occupied Brahms's mind from the *Burial Hymn* of 1858 to the *Four Serious Songs* of 1896" (Latham 51). However, to assume that the two very traumatic events in the years that surrounded the composition had no impact upon its creation would be unthinkable. The

sickness and eventual death of his mentor and friend Robert Schumann in 1856 and the death of his mother in 1865 clearly affected the composer very deeply, and the two events have been associated with the *German Requiem* since its premiere.

The young Brahms's first meeting of Robert and Clara Schumann was arranged by the violinist Josef Joachim. Joachim and Brahms had toured together and almost immediately began a friendship that would last a lifetime, and knowing that the young composer could benefit from an association with Robert Schumann, Joachim urged Brahms to visit the Schumann family home in Düsseldorf, which he finally did in September of 1853. Brahms had enormous respect for the great master of German music, and Schumann seemed to be equally taken by the talent and potential that the young Johannes displayed. The two musicians became friends and Brahms took every opportunity to learn from the master. Clearly the meeting made a tremendous impact on Brahms's musical career, and "it determined both the outer and inner development of the young artist" (Gal 6).

The meeting also must have left quite an impression on Schumann, for he became not only a friend, but also a champion of Brahms's compositions. Though their friendship would only exist for several months before Schumann's mental breakdown (February 1854), Schumann used that little time to let others know of the talents of the budding composer. The "immediate sympathy with the musical ideas of the younger man led him to proclaim Brahms a 'young eagle ... a mighty Niagara ... the true Apostle'" (Reich 41). In his final article for the magazine that he founded, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, Schumann took the opportunity to announce the arrival of a true master of German music. "I thought that after these developments one would and must suddenly appear who

is called to embody the highest expression of the time in ideal fashion, one whose mastery would not unfold in slow stages, but like Minerva, spring fully-armed from the head of Cronus. And he has come” (Plantinga 411). While the article does mention other up-and-coming composers, Schumann singled out the young composer as the brightest young star of German music.

Unfortunately, Robert Schumann grew ill only several months into their friendship, and after complaining about a ringing in the ear, Schumann attempted suicide by throwing himself into the Rhine River. While the attempt to kill himself had failed, Schumann had to be institutionalized for the remainder of his life; after two years in the hospital Robert Schumann passed away in 1856. Though the death must have affected Brahms deeply, he took comfort in that “He had passed away very gently, so that it was scarcely noticed. His body looked peaceful, then; how comforting it all was” (Avins 142).

During the two years that Robert Schumann was institutionalized a deeply personal friendship developed between Brahms and Clara Schumann. During this time Brahms helped organize and see to the family books and acted as a supportive friend. “At the time of Schumann’s illness and death Brahms formed a strong attachment to Clara Schumann, and spent the years 1854-59 wandering restlessly between her home in Düsseldorf, his native Hamburg, the court in Detmold where he found temporary employment, and the cities where one or the other of them was appearing as pianist” (Plantinga 412). While there are those who will speak of a romantic relationship between Clara and Johannes, there is no real evidence to support such a claim, and any mention of such a relationship is nothing but grotesque speculation. During the years of hospitalization for Robert Schumann, Brahms and Clara helped one another through the

pain and grief they both felt, and even after the death of Robert the two remained close friends and supported each other throughout their lives.

The friendship between Clara Schumann and Brahms was always fundamentally based on the appreciation and respect that both had for the musical intelligence of each other. Clara had always been a talented and well-respected musician, and was from her youth surrounded by some of the most gifted musicians in Germany. She had given up a promising piano career when she married Robert, and after his illness she returned to touring to help support the family. In their marriage, Clara acted as adviser to Robert and her skill and understanding of composition was well known and respected. Throughout their friendship Brahms had counted on and trusted Clara's opinion and most of his work went to her for evaluation and comments. The two would often visit each other in various cities and maintained a correspondence until she died.

The relationship between Brahms and Clara began as one of mentor and student, and "in the early years she was mother, sister, friend, financial adviser, and musical colleague to him" (Reich 44). If Robert had changed the outer and inner musical being of Brahms, Clara helped keep him on the right track throughout his life. The support that each gave the other throughout their friendship no doubt started during Robert's illness and eventual death. In addition to helping her with the books, Brahms gave her the support, physical and emotional, to re-enter the world of the piano performer. The tragedy of Robert's illness must have affected both Brahms and Clara deeply, but their friendship deepened through their shared grief. They were brought together by their shared love for Robert, and from that shared respect and love they became very close friends. "They needed each other and they inspired each other. They also thought alike

about music, had much the same ideals and aspirations, and were, intellectually and emotionally, much closer than most husbands and wives” (Schonberg 294). If Brahms was truly writing his Requiem for those who mourn, it is very possible that he had Clara in his heart and mind during its creation.

While the *German Requiem* is not directly dedicated to Robert Schumann, his illness and death greatly affected Johannes Brahms. It was during this time that work began on the music that would make up the Requiem. “The second number, *Behold all flesh is but as grass*, had its origin in a slow movement for an abortive symphony begun at the time of the Schumann tragedy” (Robertson 176). By 1866 Brahms had completed the six movements that would comprise the Requiem as performed at its premiere. The loss of such a great friend and mentor, and the pain that Brahms saw Clara experience must have weighed heavily upon his soul, and to believe that these feelings would not have found their way into a work whose primary focus was death would be ludicrous. Even though there is no mention in the work of Robert Schumann, a letter to Clara made it clear how important he was in the composition. “You ought to know how much a work like the *Requiem* belongs to Schumann. Thus I felt it quite natural in my inmost heart that it should be sung for him” (Musgrave 12). The deep emotional impact that the tragedy of Schumann had on Brahms’s life can be seen in the *German Requiem* and for that reason the work will always be associated with the great German composer.

While the tragedy of Schumann played a part in the shaping of the *German Requiem*, Brahms also was influenced by the other great loss, that of his mother, Christiane Brahms, in 1865. Fortunately, Johannes was able to be at his mother’s side when she passed away after suffering a stroke. Brahms had been very close to his mother

throughout his life, and the loss, which must have been enormous, found its way into his composition. “He did have tender feelings for his mother, whose death in 1865, even though it may not have been the immediate incentive, no doubt helped to inspire his *German Requiem*” (Gal 41). The death of two of Brahms’s central influences greatly affected the composer, and “Brahms could master his deep sorrow only by concentrated work, and a long-cherished plan was now slowly assuming tangible shape. His grief at Schumann’s death...and now the shock of his mother’s death spurred him to work out this immortal composition” (Geiringer 104). His work on the *German Requiem* was a means of gaining understanding and acceptance of the tragedies that had befallen Brahms’s life.

In a letter to Clara Schumann, only days after the loss of his mother, Brahms says, “may it at least be a consolation to you that God made the farewell from mother as gentle as possible” (Avins 317). Brahms also mentions at another point, “God took my mother away as mercifully as possible. She has not changed at all and looked as sweet and kind as when she was alive” (Swafford 296). It is interesting to note that Brahms makes a point to mention both here and in his letter describing the death of Schumann referred to earlier, that death came to both Schumann and his mother peacefully. The Protestant attitude towards death is exemplified in both of Brahms’s letters and rather than death being accompanied by fear and anger, he mentions the peaceful rest and calm that death brings. This attitude is heard in the *German Requiem*, and a light of hope and peace can be found in the composition that is lacking in that of Verdi.

Though the majority of the movements for the work had already been composed at the time of the death of Brahms’s mother, one movement is directly connected with

this grievous loss. Although the first performance of the *German Requiem* had already taken place, Brahms added the fifth movement to the score before sending it out for publication. “According to Florence May, Brahms told Hermann Dieters that ‘ when writing [the movement] he had thought of his mother’” (Musgrave 9). The work on this movement was completed quickly and the addition is one of the most beautiful sections of the entire work. “It was added almost immediately, in May, a quick out-pouring from what must have been a joyful heart, rather than one needing comfort” (Keys 59). The question must be raised as to why Brahms would not have included the movement for the premiere of the composition. “The most convincing view is that the content was too personal for him to give it public exposure until the rest of the work was an accomplished success, that it possesses a degree of intimacy both musically and in its text that he was at first reluctant to expose publicly” (Musgrave 12). Whatever reasons Brahms may have had for not including it originally, the addition of the movement adds depth and meaning to the *German Requiem*.

While the *German Requiem* is not explicitly dedicated to a person, and its composition was not designed for a specific occasion, the deaths of Robert Schumann and his mother played a role in the shaping of ideas within the composition. For Brahms the Requiem was a means through which understanding could be gained, and the acceptance of the tragic events achieved. “The composer, under the impression of the majesty of death, undergoes a process of catharsis and purification. Brahms recognized for the first time the conflicting energies of his creative genius” (Geiringer 105). Through his composition of the *German Requiem*, Brahms had found an outlet through which an acceptance of tragedy could be attained. Though the theme of the work is not the death of

the two influences on Brahms, “the commemoration in the work would always be of both: Christiane Brahms, and his tragic mentor Schumann” (Swafford 298).

Just as was the case with Verdi, the topic of religious devoutness is a major issue in the life of Brahms. While he was raised and baptized in the Lutheran Church, and though he makes numerous references to God in his correspondences, Brahms was not religious in a strictly orthodox sense. “Nothing made [him] more angry than to be taken for a conventional believer on the basis of his religious compositions, and he liked in later years to point to the ‘heathen’ character of some of his preferred text” (Musgrave 2). Brahms was a freethinker in his religious outlook, and this would often upset some of his more orthodox friends. Antonin Dvorak said in reference to Brahms, “Such a great man! Such a great soul! And he believes in nothing!” (Schonberg 296). This opinion is not completely fair to Brahms, and though his ideas may not have been traditionally Christian, to say that he did not have strong beliefs would not be correct. “Deeply held thoughts and sentiments which emerge repeatedly in his works predominate: the bleak reality of the transience of life, the need of comfort, the hope of some ultimate happy resolution, the reward for effort” (Musgrave 2). Just as was the case with Verdi, a freedom from the conventional traditional expression of religion is an important influence in the works of Brahms, and is a central issue in the *German Requiem*.

While Brahms chose the words of the Lutheran Bible as the text for his Requiem, he always maintained that the title could have been a Human Requiem just as easily as a German Requiem. His goal was not to compose a work that offered solace to just Christians, but for all mankind. It has been argued that “though, as he said, it was for all humanity, it might have crossed his mind that it was for all mankind, past, present, and

future, that Christ died, and in so doing conquered death” (Robertson 177). However, Brahms specifically omitted the traditional text of John, Chapter 3, verse 16, “for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son,” and selected others which better suited his artistic needs. In a letter to Karl Martin Reinthaler, who was preparing the choir for the premiere, Brahms claimed that he chose the text “because I am a musician, because I need them,” rather than for any religious significance (Musgrave 2). While Christian dogma was not his goal, a personal sense of spirituality and human understanding guided Brahms arrangement of the text. “The sequence of ideas, developed in seven partly lyrical, partly epic movements, is expressed in words of the Scriptures unsurpassed in the annals of religious music as to meaningfulness and graphic power” (Gal 186). The *German Requiem*, while not intended to serve a single religion, remains one of the most spiritual and powerful compositions that deals with death in the history of music.

The performance history of the *German Requiem* begins on December 1, 1867, in Vienna, when the first three movements were performed as part of a concert. While the reaction was not what Brahms may have wanted, in part due to a poor performance by the players (Geiringer 110), he pressed forward with great anticipation of the first complete performance. The premiere was scheduled for April 10, 1868 in Bremen, under the baton of the composer himself. Karl Reinthaler had helped secure the cathedral in Bremen and prepared the choir and orchestra for the first performance of the Requiem. When the day finally arrived Brahms was surrounded by the people whose opinion mattered most to him, including “his father, Clara Schumann with her eldest daughter Marie, Joachim and his wife...and many others” (Geiringer 111). This premiere, as stated earlier, did not

include the fifth movement, which was added shortly after the first performance, but even without that movement the work was a unanimous success.

In writing the *German Requiem*, Brahms employs significant forces in the orchestra. The score calls for a baritone soloist for the third and sixth movements, and a soprano soloist for the fifth movement in addition to a full chorus. The piece requires two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and at least two harps. In addition Brahms writes a contrabassoon and an organ part that may be omitted if not available. As a whole the work may be said to be in F major, as that is the key of both the first and seventh movements. “The *Requiem* resembles many solo songs, where the structure and accentuation of the poem are generally apparent in a rounded musical form, though in the *Requiem* the metrical freedom and length of the biblical text presupposed a much larger formal space and more expansive musical processes” (Musgrave 35). Brahms’s choice of text gave him complete control over the formal attributes of each of the movements of the *German Requiem*.

The first movement of the *Requiem* is written for full choir and orchestra, and establishes the mood of the work immediately. “Comfort breathes in every measure of the lovely tranquil melody (cello, violas) in the orchestral introduction to the first movement” (Robertson 179). For his text, Brahms uses lines from the Gospel of St. Matthew, and Psalm 126, both of which serve to praise the sorrowful.

Selig sind, die da Lied tragen
denn sie sollen getröstet werden.

Blessed are they that have sorrow,
they shall be comforted.
Matthew 5:4

Die mit Tränen säen,
werden mit Freuden ernten.

They that sow in tears
shall reap in joy

Sie gehen hin und weinen
und tragen edlen Samen,
und kommen mit Freuden
und bringen ihre Garben.

They go forth and weep
and carry precious seed
and come with joy
and bring their sheaves with them.
Psalm 126.5-6

[Selig sind...]

[Blessed are they...]
(Musgrave 15)

Brahms establishes the text to create an ABA form for the first movement. The first section, based on the text “Blessed are they that have sorrow” is written in F Major with an orchestral introduction. For the B section, “They that sow in tears” Brahms moves the listener to Db Major, (bVI of the tonic). He reintroduces the A theme back in the home key of F major to bring the first movement to a quiet close.

The second movement of the Requiem written for full orchestra and choir discusses the inevitability of death contrasted with eternal joy of the hereafter. The text is taken from the first letter of Peter, the Letters of James, and the book of Isaiah.

Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras
und alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen
wie des Grases Blumen.
Das Gras ist verdorret
und die Blume abgefallen

For all flesh is as grass
and the splendour of man
is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers
and the flower falls.
First Letter of Peter 1:25

So seid nun geduldig, liebe Brüder,
bis auf die Zukunft des Herrn.
Siehe, ein Ackermann wartet
auf köstliche Frucht der Erde
und ist geduldig darüber,
bis er empfahe
den Morgenregen
und Abendregen

So be patient, dear brother,
Until the coming of the Lord.
See how the farmer waits
for the precious fruit of the earth
and is patient for it
until he receives
the Spring rains
and the Autumn rains.
Letters of James 5:7

[Denn alles Fleisch...]

[For all flesh...]

Aber des Herrn Wort
bleibet in Ewigkeit.

Yet, the word of the Lord
Stands for evermore.
First Letter of Peter 1:25

Die Erlöseten des Herrn
werden wieder kommen
und gen Zion kommen mit Jauchzen;
ewige Freude wird über ihrem Haupte sein,
Freude und Wonne werden sie ergreifen
und Schmerz und Seufzen wird weg
müssen.

The redeemed of the Lord
shall return
and come to Zion with rejoicing;
eternal joy shall be upon their heads,
they shall obtain joy and gladness
and pain and suffering shall flee
away.

Isaiah 35.10
(Musgrave 15-16)

The opening text “For all flesh is as grass,” is treated as a somber march in $\frac{3}{4}$ time based in Bb minor. The movement continues with a trio in Gb Major (bVI of tonic) on the second section of the text, “So be patient, dear brother.” The opening section is repeated musically in the original key. The two sections can be combined giving this area a form of ABA. The third text area “Yet, the word of the Lord,” moves to 4/4 and serves as a transition to the fourth movement in Bb Major. The final section, “The redeemed of the Lord,” also in 4/4 time uses a fugal texture to express the text. With the final section seen as a musical entity, the overall form of the movement can be expressed as A-transition-B, with the third section acting as a transition for the two larger sections (Musgrave 40).

The third movement of the Requiem uses a solo baritone with full choir and orchestra. The text is based upon Psalm 39 and the book of Solomon, and describes the insignificance of earthly existence in contrast with the eventual reward for the righteous soul.

Herr, lehre doch mich,
daß ein Ende mit mir haben muß,
und mein Leben ein Ziel hat,
und ich davon muß.

Lord, let me know
that I must have an end,
that my life has a term,
And that I must pass on.

Siehe, meine Tage sind
einer Hand breit vor dir,
und mein Leben ist wie nichts vor dir.

See, my days
are as a hand's breadth before you
and my life is nothing before you.

[Herr, lehre doch mich...]

[Lord, let me know...]

Ach, wie gar nichts sind alle Menschen,
die doch so sicher leben.
Sie gehen daher wie ein Schemen,
und machen ihnen viel vergebliche
Unruhe;
sie sammeln und wissen nicht,
wer es kriegen wird.
Nun Herr, wes soll ich mich trösten?

Truly, all men that still walk the
earth
are hardly as anything.
They go hence like a shadow
and their noise comes to nothing,
they heap up their wealth
but do not know who will inherit it.
Now, Lord, how shall I find
comfort?

Ich hoffe auf dich.

I hope in you.
Psalm 39:4-8

Der Gerechten Seelen sind in Gottes Hand,
und keine Qual rühret sie an.

The righteous souls are in the hand
of God,
And no torment touches them.
Wisdom of Solomon 3:1
(Musgrave 16)

The movement is divided into two major sections corresponding to the two different textual sources. The first section is interplay between the solo baritone and full choir in D minor, with the final line, "I hope in you," acting as a transition to the B section in D Major. The second section again employs fugal techniques, just as in the second movement, but is considerably shorter than the previous movement.

The fourth movement for chorus and orchestra is one of two movements that are based on a single text source. The words are taken from Psalm 84, and are an expression of God's glory.

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, Herr Zebaoth! Meine Seele verlangt und sehnet sich nach den Vorhöfen des Herrn; mein Leib und Seele freuen sich in dem lebendigen Gott. Wohl denen, die in deinem Hause	How lovely are your dwellings, Lord of Sabaoth! My soul longs and faints for the courts of the Lord. My body and soul rejoice in the living God. Blest are they that dwell in your house;
Wohnen, [Wie lieblich..] die loben dich immerdar. [Wie lieblich...]	[How lovely...] They praise you evermore. [How lovely...] Psalm 84:1,2,4 (Musgrave 17)

The movement, based in Eb Major, seems more interested in instrumental development than the other movements (Musgrave 47). While there are numerous ways to describe this movement formally, it seems easiest to view this as an ABA form, with the first section based on the text "How lovely are your dwellings, and the restatement of the first line of text delineating the separate musical sections. However the brevity of recapitulation of the A section, and the fact that the sections all share the same key center are unusual for an ABA form.

The fifth movement, the one added after the premier of April 1868, and the one associated with the death of Brahms's mother, is written for soprano solo, choir and orchestra. The text is derived from the Gospel of St. John, Ecclesiasticus, and the book of Isaiah.

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit;
 aber ich will euch wieder sehen
 und euer Herz soll sich freuen,
 und eure Freude soll niemand von
 euch nehmen.

You now have sorrow,
 but I will see you again,
 and your heart shall rejoice,
 and your joy shall no man take
 from you.

John 16:22

Sehet mich an:
 Ich habe eine kleine Zeit
 Muhe und Arbeit gehabt
 und habe groben Trost funden.

Look on me:
 For a short time I have had
 sorrow and labour
 And have found great comfort.
 Ecclesiasticus 56:27

Ich will euch trösten,
 wie einen seine Mutter tröset.

Thee will I comfort
 As one whom a mother comforts.
 Isaiah 66:13

[Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit...]

[You now have sorrow...]

The movement is in a direct ABA form, contrasting the soprano solo with the rest of the chorus. The first section, in the home key of G major, combines the text “You now have sorrow,” and the “Look on me.” The second theme is based on the text “Thee will I comfort,” and moves to Bb major (bIII of tonic), and modulates back to the home key for the recapitulation of the first theme.

The sixth movement of the Requiem is written for baritone soloist, choir and orchestra. The text of this movement, the longest and most involved of the work, is taken from a letter of Hebrews, the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians, and the book of Revelations.

Denn wir haben hie keine bleidende
 Statt,
 sondern die zukünftige suchen wir.

For we have no abiding city
 But we seek one to come.
 Hebrews 13:14

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis:
Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen werden;
Und dasselbige plötzlich, in einem
 Augenblick,
zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune.

Denn es wird die Posaune schallen,
und die Toten werden auferstehen
 unverweslich,
und wir werden verwandelt werden.
Dann wird erfüllet werden
das Wort, das geschrieben steht:
Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg.
Tod, wo ist dein Stachel?
Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg?

Herr, du bist würdig
zu nehmen Preis und Ehre und Kraft

denn du hast alle Dinge geschaffen,
und durch deinen Willen haben sie das
 Wasen
und sind geschaffen.

Behold, I tell you a mystery:
We shall not all sleep,
and that quickly in a moment

at the sound of the last trumpet

For the trumpet shall sound,
and the dead shall be raised
 incorruptible,
And we shall be changed
Then shall be fulfilled
the word that is written
Death is swallowed up in victory
Death where is your sting?
Hell, where is your victory?
Corinthians 15:51,52,54,55

Lord, you are worthy
to receive praise and glory and
power,
for you have created all things,
and by your will were they created

And have their being.
Revelations 4:11
(Musgrave 17-18)

The movement is divided into two large sections (AB), and is designed similarly to the third movement of the work. The first section (A) is based on the texts “For we have no abiding city,” and “Behold, I tell you a mystery,” contrasting the solo baritone with full choir sections. The first section in C minor modulates to C major for the Fugal section (B) of the movement based on the text “Lord, you are worthy.”

The final movement of the Requiem is written for orchestra and choir, and brings the home key of F major back to the listener. The text for the seventh movement is taken exclusively from Revelations.

Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herrn
sterben
von nun an,
Ja der Geist spricht daß sie ruhen von
ihrer Arbeit
denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach.

Blessed are the dead which die in the
Lord
from now on,
Yes, says the spirit, that they rest
from their labours
and their works follow after them.
Revelations 14:13
(Musgrave 18)

The movement is divided into an ABA form in F major, with the major sections based on the two sections of the text. The entire work comes to a close with a recapitulation of the initial theme of the first movement serving as a coda to the seventh movement.

Though Schumann had seen potential in the works of a young Brahms, it was still as a student with much to learn, but with the completion of the *German Requiem* Brahms had become one of the foremost composers in Germany. Brahms must have known that the work had special significance in his output, and “that in the *German Requiem* he had transcended all his previous achievements” (Musgrave 7). Whatever weaknesses may have existed in Brahms’s compositions before the Requiem seemed to disappear with the success of the work. “With the experience gained in the *Requiem*, Brahms had overcome his last remaining difficulties in handling an orchestra” (Gal 192). Brahms may have entered the *German Requiem* as a successful young composer, but he emerged as a musical master. “The Requiem made a big difference to his fortunes. He became a famous, even popular composer, and it was soon possible for him to do as he had always wished and make his writing the main source of his livelihood” (Latham 54). The positive reaction of the premiere must have meant more to Brahms than just financial gains. “Brahms, at the age of thirty-five, experienced for the first time, the joy of complete success and even though many such experiences were to be his, he could rarely have enjoyed any of them as he enjoyed this first triumph” (Geiringer 111). While

Brahms may have received his first major success with the *German Requiem*, the world received one of the most powerful and original Requiems ever produced.

Paul Hindemith: “*When Lilacs last in the dooryard bloom’d: A Requiem for those we love*”

As World War II was drawing to a close, the president who had seen America through the difficult period and helped rid the world of the tyrannical fascist regimes of Europe, Franklin D. Roosevelt, died while in office. Robert Shaw and the Collegiate Chorale decided to commission a work for chorus and orchestra to commemorate the tragic loss, and selected the German composer-in-exile Paul Hindemith to fill their need. The composer, who would become a naturalized citizen before he began work on the project, saw an opportunity to give back to the country that had provided him a home during the troubles in Germany, and an opportunity to pay tribute to a president who was greatly respected. Hindemith decided to set a poem of one of the most American of all poets, Walt Whitman. The poem “When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom’d,” which commiserated the loss of Abraham Lincoln immediately following the end of the Civil War, seemed a perfect fit for Hindemith’s purpose. The parallels between the death of Lincoln and the death of Roosevelt help make the words of Whitman as relevant as if they were written for the latter occasion, and the resulting Requiem by Hindemith served as a fitting tribute to the fallen president.

In the 1920’s the arts’ movement was flourishing in Germany, and the young Paul Hindemith was an innovative driving force behind the changes taking place in German art. The environment that surrounded Hindemith provided him with confidence and the artistic freedom to grow in his own personal direction. “In the 1920’s he was to German music what Prokofiev was to Russian music – a young revolutionary, impatient with the post-romantic tradition, who was composing music that was regarded as the last word in

acid dissonance and atonality” (Schonberg 244). During this period of his life Hindemith must have seen endless possibilities for his musical development as his music was being performed frequently, and he was appointed to a teaching position at the Berlin Musikhochschule. By 1930 Hindemith had codified his musical aims, and according to musicologist James Paulding, he was continuing the “Austro-German symphonic tradition by achieving a balance between strong linear writing and a new expansion of the traditional tonal system” (Kater 33).

Even though Germany experienced an economic depression after World War I, there was no shortage of artistic developments taking place, and only Paris could rival the powerful movement of new and experimental art in Germany during this period. Unfortunately, “all this came to a sudden end with the victory of the Nationalist Socialist party in the 1933 election and the subsequent appointment of Adolf Hitler as chancellor” (Morgan 220). With the rise of the new Nazi party, everything new in German art was considered degenerate and fell out of official favor. “The anti-intellectual and anti-artistic attitudes of the National Socialists, along with their brutal suppression of the Jews, had a fatal impact upon the country’s cultural life” (Morgan 221). While many artists began to flee Germany in the early 1930’s, Hindemith hoped that the situation was only a temporary shift in political thinking. Even after many of his close Jewish friends and colleagues were forced from their teaching positions, Hindemith believed that “the National Socialists’ assumption of power to be a democratic change of government that would be short-lived and took it for granted that all those dismissed from their jobs would be reinstated as soon as a new party came to power” (Schubert 528). Unfortunately Hindemith was wrong, and the rise of the Nazi party marked the beginning of a conflict

between the composer and the government that would eventually lead Hindemith to leave his homeland.

Hindemith, whatever his musical contributions to Germany might have been, would have been under suspicion because of his marriage. Paul Hindemith's wife, Gertrud née Rottenberg, was half Jewish. Her father was the Jewish director of the Frankfurt opera, and though her mother was not Jewish, Hindemith's marriage was still looked down upon by party officials. In addition, Hindemith's best friend, a Jewish executive with the Berlin radio *Funkstunde*, was under constant scrutiny by the Nazi party and a target of their hostilities even before they had acquired power (Kater 34). For Hindemith to remain active in Germany, he would have been forced to betray his Jewish family and friends and leave his beloved wife, who was declared a "non-Aryan" by the party officials (Kater 42).

In addition to the problems of his personal life, Hindemith the artist was in opposition to the ideological views of the National Socialist policies. The Nazi party had begun to put together a list of music that was inappropriate for listening, and "in April 1933, Hindemith's publisher, Willy Strecker, had reason to believe that half of the composer's works were blacklisted by the Kampfbund nationwide as those of a 'cultural bolshevist'" (Kater 34). Hindemith began to create a number of political enemies who believed that his music was not in accordance with the artistic aims of the party. "Hans Hinkel, one of the up-and-coming architects of Nazi culture, advised [party members] that Hindemith's compositions were 'hardly in accordance with what we mean by art in our present National Socialist state'" (Kater 35). While he maintained that he had no intention of leaving Germany, Hindemith began to withdraw "into a state of inner

‘emigration’” (Sadie 528), and as his problems continued to grow, Hindemith must have understood that it was inevitable that he would eventually have to leave the country.

During this time of political unrest, Hindemith began to work in earnest on the opera *Mathis der Maler* (1933-35), the story of “a great artist in conflict with a fickle mob” (Austin 402). The work, based on a libretto written by the composer himself, centers around a sixteenth century painter who decides to abandon his artistic work to join the fight in the Peasants’ Rebellion. After being betrayed by his political friends, Mathis discovers that he has abandoned his most precious gift, his artistic expression. Through the opera Hindemith expresses his feelings toward his own political dilemma, and his belief that “the artist who betrays his genuine gifts is socially irresponsible, however hard he tries to quiet his conscience through political activism” (Sadie 528). The work, which had great trouble being premiered in Nazi Germany, surely infuriated the party leaders. “The opera is a refutation of the totalitarian dogma that the artist must be a political animal, subservient to the State, and proclaims as its chief message that for an artist to serve any other master but himself is to forfeit his moral and intellectual integrity and to deny his true mission” (Cooper 334).

The political pressure continued to mount following the completion of *Mathis der Maler*, and the attempt to rid Germany of ‘cultural bolshevism’ grew in intensity. By October of 1936, “the Reich Music Chamber, [prohibited] any and all of Hindemith’s works from performance anywhere in the Reich” (Kater 42). Hindemith, because his music was not being performed in Germany, took every opportunity to tour other countries, and eventually emigrated with his wife to a small town in the Alps of Switzerland. As war began in Europe, Hindemith decided to move to the United States

for safety, hoping that he could return to a peaceful Europe after a short period. While in America, Hindemith was invited as a guest lecturer at Yale University, where he would eventually be appointed to a permanent position. In America, Hindemith found the freedom that had been usurped under the Nazi party, and his work in composition and music theory reached a level that it had not enjoyed since 1930.

Though Hindemith believed that he would have trouble composing outside his homeland, his reputation began to flourish during his years in America. “His success as a composer and teacher, as well as the feeling that he was needed and could contribute something useful to American musical life, helped him grow away from his German origins and ties relatively painlessly, so that eventually he began to regard himself as provincial” (Sadie 531). Though Hindemith had been apprehensive about moving to the United States initially, he was accepted immediately as a great musician. He described his treatment in a letter following the war, “both professionally and personally we were treated with a friendliness that probably no other country would have shown with a war going on – and even towards enemy foreigners! .. Everyone is filled with the best intentions and there is no trace of any hostilities, although the war has cost the lives of many young people” (Kowalke 137). During the war years Hindemith began to feel completely at home in America, and in January of 1946 he became a naturalized citizen, and bought a home in New Haven, Connecticut. Hindemith was grateful to America for providing him with a home after his problems in Germany, and hoped that he could find a way to repay the kindness that he was afforded by his new country. That opportunity presented itself with the commission of the Requiem.

Americans and Europeans alike were grieving the loss of the great leader who had helped steer the country through not only the Depression but also World War II, and it was that tragic loss which prompted the Collegiate Chorale to commission a piece to pay tribute to Franklin D. Roosevelt. Hindemith agreed to the one thousand dollar commission and began work on the composition early in 1946, and the Requiem received its premiere on May 14, 1946, in New York City. The commission, for a large work for orchestra and choir, seemed the perfect opportunity to repay the country that he had come to call home. In addition to paying “tribute to the only president a generation of young Americans and grateful European émigrés had ever known” (Kowalke 135), the Requiem also was “a testimony of gratitude to the country that had given him shelter and safety at the time of his emigration” (Sadie 531).

In order to meet his goal, Hindemith turned to the poet Walt Whitman and selected one of his most powerful poems, a tribute to Abraham Lincoln, “When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom’d.” Whitman, the most-often set American poet (Kowalke 134), was already known to Hindemith long before his decision to set his poem as a basis for his Requiem. “Hindemith claimed to have taught himself English by reading *Leaves of Grass*” (Kowalke 135) in 1919, and had already set some of the text of “When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom’d” in his *Drei Hymnen von Walt Whitman für Bariton und Klavier*, Op. 14 (1919) (Kowalke 135-136). Hindemith had deep admiration for the American poet, and Whitman’s powerful tribute to the Lincoln seemed the most appropriate to memorialize the great leader of Hindemith’s generation.

The loss of President Lincoln, on Good Friday, 1865, left the nation mourning the senseless assassination of the man that had seen the country through its most difficult

period. No one felt that loss more deeply than the poet Walt Whitman. Though he never met the president personally, he maintained that he knew Lincoln intuitively. Much of Whitman's political poetry during the Civil War praised Lincoln as a powerful leader helping the country realize the promise of freedom for all men. "Whitman discovered in Abraham Lincoln a flesh-and-blood figure whose life and death appeared to confirm the historic order of democracy. As such he was 'Dear to the muse-thrice dear to Nationality-to the whole human race-precious to the Union-precious to Democracy-unspeakably and forever precious-the first great Martyr chief'" (Erkkila 239). "When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd" served as Whitman's personal tribute to the great president, and "it was Whitman's passion for the president as the redeemer of the Union and its democracy that makes the poem so successful as a national elegy, turning a monologue into a dialogue with the American reader" (Loving 288-289). In creating a dialogue with America, Whitman hoped to help the country deal with the death of Lincoln and the numerous losses brought about as a result of the Civil War, so that Americans might continue the work for which Lincoln had fought and died. "Whitman's attempt to reconcile himself with Lincoln's death becomes as well a reconciliation to death on a personal, national and global plane. More specifically, Lincoln's death becomes an occasion for the poet wound-dresser to grieve publicly in an effort to make a poetic and heroic sense out of the seeming waste of the Civil War" (Erkkila 228). Hindemith hoped that his Requiem could provide the same type of cathartic healing for Americans needed as they grieved the loss of Roosevelt.

The sixteen stanzas of "When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd" "is symphonic in structure [centering] round three symbolic themes, 'lilacs, star and bird,' all linked in

Whitman's mind with the dead President and the American Civil War of 1861" (Robertson 253). The lilac is meant to represent Whitman's love and admiration for Lincoln, the fallen star is the representation of the President himself, and the bird represents death. The three themes are woven together throughout Whitman's depiction of passing of the funeral procession of President Lincoln. The work is an attempt to help Whitman come to terms with the tragic loss of the Civil War and most importantly with the senseless assassination of the great emancipator. It is worth noting that Lincoln's name never appears in the poem as it was assumed that the traumatic events would have been the most important thing on every American's mind.

"When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd" is in its very nature made to be set musically. "It is one of the most musical of poems, as the very act of singing structures the text from within. Three leitmotivic images of loss, mourning and death - the fallen western star, the sprigs of lilac, and the singing of the hermit thrush - recur and transform (in what some critics have called sonata fashion) before coalescing in 'deaths outlet song' in the swamp" (Kowalke 141). The singing quality found in Whitman's poem greatly affected Hindemith's setting of the poem in his Requiem. The "poem had called forth a warmer lyricism, a more spiritual feeling than had been found in his work before. His craftsmanship ... serves him well in tackling the difficulties presented by lines packed with images and symbols and finding an intelligible form for setting them" (Robertson 253).

The Hindemith Requiem is quite different than any of those discussed thus far in that it contains no reference to any religious ideology. "The *Lilacs* poem could serve as the basis for a musical requiem in only the loosest, most secular sense, as comfort for the

living rather than a religious service for the dead” (Kowalke 137). The Requiem is not only absent of the Latin liturgical text, but makes no pretenses about any religious implications or understanding. The Requiem of Hindemith is a purely secular one, a public display of grief without connection to any religious belief. This does not make the text of Whitman any less spiritual or important, and the themes of death and dying remain the central figure. According to literary critic Algernon Swinburne, Whitman’s “dirge over president Lincoln [is] the most sweet and sonorous nocturne ever chanted in the church of the world” (Hindus 9). While the text is different from what one has come to expect in a Requiem, the attempt to gain understanding and acceptance of death still remains the primary purpose of the composition.

Hindemith places his own musical identity into the beautiful and powerful poem, and his neo-baroque style comes through masterfully. In his Requiem, Hindemith “tried to synthesize the great linear tradition with a kind of chromatically accented tonality; in doing so he created an individual style with its unmistakable sound of major and minor seconds, fourths and fifths. Everything moves, everything works, everything is under perfect control; the music lies well for the instruments, and within its narrow rhythmic compass, it swings along” (Salzman 73).

Hindemith takes the 16 stanzas of Whitman’s text and divides it into 11 separate movements and begins with an instrumental prelude. The Requiem can be further divided “into four larger, and temporally almost equal units” (Kowalke 141) by combining the prelude and first three movements as the opening section, the fourth through the seventh movements as the second section, the eighth and ninth movements as the third section and the tenth and eleventh movements as the final section. Hindemith’s work calls for

baritone and mezzo-soprano soloists with mixed choir, and a sizeable orchestra including piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet in Bb, bass clarinet, bassoon, contrabassoon, three horns in F, two trumpets in Bb, one army bugle for an offstage part, two trombones, tuba, timpani, three percussionists, organ, and strings.

The first large section of the Requiem, which is comprised of the first three movements, begins with an instrumental prelude, based on a four-note theme A-C-F-E placed above a pedal C#. The theme gradually builds to three statements by the brass over string tremolos, and then dissolves into the opening of the first movement. The opening movement, for baritone soloist chorus and orchestra, is based on the first three stanzas of Whitman's poem and introduces the first two images, the lilac and the star.

Baritone:

When Lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
And the greatest star early droop'd in the western sky in the night,
I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.
O ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
And thought of him I love.

Chorus:

O powerful western fallen star!
O shades of night – O moody, tearful night!
O great star disappear'd – O the black murk that hides the star!
O cruel hands that hold me powerless – O helpless soul of me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul.

Baritone:

In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the white-wash'd paling,
Stands the lilac-bush tall growing with heart shaped leaves of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I
love,
With every leaf a miracle – and from this bush in the dooryard,

With delicate – color'd blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
A sprig with its flower I break. (Jones 6)

The movement, filled with a profound statement of grief closes by stacking an E minor chord and a C# minor chord. The third image, the hermit thrush, is introduced in the second movement, a short arioso for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, based on the fourth and fifth stanzas of Whitman's text.

Mezzo-soprano:

In the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.
Solitary, the thrush,
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
Sings by himself a song.

Song of the bleeding throat,
Death's outlet song of life (for well dear brother I know,
If thou wast not gifted to sing, thou would'st surely die.) (Jones 7)

This movement introduces a motif, played by the woodwinds in the opening measures, which will represent the hermit thrush throughout the Requiem. The third and final movement of the first section is a somber funeral march for baritone, chorus and orchestra. The movement depicts the actual funeral procession of Lincoln that Whitman describes in the sixth and seventh stanzas of "When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd."

Chorus:

Over the beast of the spring, the land, amid cities,
Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the violets
peep'd from the ground, spotting the gray debris,
Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lane,
passing the endless grass,
Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from its shroud
Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
Night and day journeys a coffin.

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,
 Through day and night with the great cloud darkening the land,
 With the pomp of the inloop's flags, with the cities draped in black,
 With the show of the States themselves, as of crape-veil'd women
 standing,
 With processions long and winding and the flambeaus of the night,
 With the countless torches lit, with silent sea of faces and the unbarred
 heads.
 With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the somber faces,
 With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices
 rising strong and solemn,
 With all the mourning voices of the dirges pour'd around the coffin,
 The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs – where amid these
 you journey,
 With the tolling bells' perpetual clang,

Baritone:
 Here coffin that slowly passes,
 I give you my sprig of lilac.

(Nor for you, for one alone,
 Blossoms and branches green to coffin all I bring,
 For fresh as the morning, thus would I carol a song for you,
 O sane and sacred death.
 All over bouquets of roses,
 O death, I cover you over with roses and early lilies,
 But mostly and now the lilac that blooms first,
 Copious I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes,
 With loaded arms I come, pouring from you,
 For you, and the coffins all of you, O death.) (Jones 7-8)

Hindemith stops the musical momentum of the march for a brief second as the baritone presents his first two lines, and then begins his dirge again. The first large section of the Requiem finally comes to rest on C# in the orchestra, the note that served as the pedal for the instrumental prelude.

The second section begins with the fourth movement for baritone soloist, choir and orchestra. The movement, which expounds on the tremendous grief that Whitman is experiencing over the loss of the great president, is based on the eighth stanza of the poem.

Baritone and chorus:

O western orb, sailing the heaven,
 Now I know what you must have means as a month since we walk'd,
 As we walk'd up and down in the dark blue mystic,
 As we walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,
 As I saw you had something to tell, as you bent to me night after night,
 As you droop's from the sky low down, as if to my side (while the other
 stars all look's on),
 As we wander'd together the solemn night (for something, I know not
 what, kept me from sleep),
 As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of west,
 Ere you went, how full you were of woe,
 As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze,
 in the cold transparent night,
 As I watch'd where you pass'd and was lost in the netherward
 black of the night,
 As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where you, sad orb,
 Concluded, dropt in the night, and was gone. (Jones 8)

The powerful image of a falling star brings the movement to a close as the unaccompanied choir repeats the last line of the text and ends with octave Eb's descending to octave Bb's. The fifth movement, which reintroduces the symbol of the bird, is written for mezzo-soprano and orchestra. This movement, the shortest and one of the most beautiful, is taken from the ninth stanza of Whitman's masterpiece.

Mezzo-soprano:

Sing on, there in the swamp,
 O singer bashful and tender, I hear your notes, I hear you call,
 I hear, I come presently, I understand you,
 But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detain'd me,
 The star, my departing comrade, holds and detains me. (Jones 9)

The solo movement concludes with the violins playing harmonics on the A string, and the violas playing the tritone of F and B. The baritone solo and chorus reenter the work in the sixth movement, which is based on the tenth and eleventh stanzas.

Baritone:

O how shall I warble myself for the dead on there I loved?
 And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that is gone?
 And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

Chorus:

Sea-winds, blown from east and west,
Blown from the Eastern sea, and blown from the Western sea,
till there in the prairies meeting.

Baritone:

These, and with these and the breath of my chant,
I perfume the grave of him I love.

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

Chorus:

Pictures of growing spring, and farms, and homes,
With the Fourth-month eve at sundown,
And the gray smoke lucid and bright,
With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent,
sinking sun, burning, expanding the air, (Jones 9-10)

Hindemith uses a folk-like melody in the baritone to raise the question of how best to memorialize the fallen president, and uses the full choir to provide an answer for the soloist. The movement draws to a close with a picturesque image of the American countryside that will be continued, after a brief flute solo, in the introduction to the seventh movement. After the choir concludes painting the ideal countryside, Hindemith begins a fugal section based on the twelfth stanza of Whitman's poem.

Chorus:

With the fresh sweet herbage under foot,
and the pale green leaves of the tree prolific,
In the distance the flowing glaze, the beast of the river,
with a wind-dapple here and there,
With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against the sky,
and shadows,
And the city at hand, with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys,
And all the scenes of life, and the workshops,
and the workmen homeward returning.

Lo, body and soul! – this land,
 Mighty Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and hurrying tides,
 and the ships,
 The varied and ample land, the South and the North in the light,
 Ohio's shores and flashing Missouri,
 And ever the far-spreading prairies, cover'd with grass and corn.

Lo, the most excellent sun, so calm and haughty,
 The violet and purple morn with just-felt breezes,
 The gentle, soft-born, measureless light,
 The miracle spreading, bathing all, the fulfill'd noon,
 The coming eve delicious, the welcome night and the stars,
 Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land. (Jones 10-11)

The fugue, which describes the American city as a promise of the nation's potential, builds to a large homophonic section for choir and orchestra, and the second large section is brought to a thrilling conclusion in E major.

The eighth movement, which is the longest and most involved section of the Requiem, is based on the thirteenth and fourteenth stanzas of Whitman's poem.

Mezzo-soprano:
 Sing on, sing in. you gray-brown bird,
 Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the bushes,
 Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.
 Sing on, dearest brother, warble your reedy song,
 Loud human song, with voices of uttermost woe.
 O liquid and free and tender!
 O wild and loose to my soul – O wondrous singer!
 You only I hear – yet the star holds me (but will soon depart),
 Yet the lilacs with mastering odor holds me.

Baritone:

Now while I sat in the day and look'd forth,
 In the close of the day, with its light and the fields of spring,
 and the farmer preparing his crops,
 In the large unconscious scenery of my land, with its lakes and forests,
 In the heavenly aerial beauty (after the perturb'd winds and the storms),
 Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing,
 and the voices of children and women,
 The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships, how they sail'd,
 And the summer approaching with richness,
 And the fields all busy with labor,
 And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on,
 each with its meals and minutiae of daily usages,
 And the streets, how their throbblings throb'd, and the cities pent –
 lo, then and there,
 Falling upon them all and among them all, enveloping me with the rest,
 Appear'd the cloud, appear'd the long black trail,

Hymn "For those we love"

And I knew death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge of death.
 Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of me,
 And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,
 And I in the middle, as with companions, and as holding the hands
 of companions

I fled forth to the hiding receiving the night that talks not,
 Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in dimness,
 To the solemn shadowy cedars and ghostly pines so still.
 And the singer so shy to the rest received me,
 The gray-brown bird I know receiv'd us comrades three,
 And he sang what seem'd the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.

From deep secluded recesses,
 From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still,
 Came the carol of the bird.

And the charm of the carol rapt me,
 As I held, as if by their hands, my comrades in the night,
 And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird: (Jones 11-12)

The movement opens with a mezzo-soprano solo, again reintroducing the imagery of the hermit thrush, and quickly shifts into a solo baritone recitative. A new melodic idea, introduced by the strings, is labeled *Hymn* "For those we love," and is based upon the

hymn “For those we love within the veil,” taken from the *Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States*. Originally the music was a traditional Jewish melody that was transcribed for use in the Episcopal Church in 1919. Hindemith’s harmonization of the hymn for orchestra and baritone soloist is an example of a musical quote, a musical device found in some of Hindemith’s compositions. It is believed that the inclusion of the music in this section is the reason for the work’s subtitle “A Requiem for those we love” (Kowalke 150=151). The movement ends with the baritone and mezzo-soprano singing music based on the movement’s opening melodic material, and closes as the baritone introduces the symbolic bird’s death carol that is found in the ninth movement.

The ninth movement of the Requiem is based on the fourteenth stanza of Whitman’s text, and states the hermit thrush’s morbid, but beautiful song.

Chorus:

Come, lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later, delicate death.

Prais’d be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love – but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

Dark mother, always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly

Approach, strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them, I joyously sing the dead,
Lost in the loving, floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss, O death.

From me to thee, glad serenades,
 Dances for thee I propose, saluting thee, adornment and
 feasting of thee.
 And the sight of the open landscape and the high-spread sky are fitting,
 And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.

The night in silence, under many a star,
 The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
 And the soul turning to thee, O vast and well-veil'd death
 And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
 Over the raising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields
 and the prairies wide,
 Over the dense-pack'd cities all, and the teeming wharves and ways,
 I float this carol with joy, wit joy to thee, O death. (Jones 12-13)

The movement is written for homophonic choir with instrumental interludes between each of the groupings of text. The powerful choral writing builds to the last line of text, which is then presented subito piano and dies away, as the third large section of the Requiem comes to end on an F minor cadence.

The penultimate movement, the beginning of the final large section of the Requiem, is the setting of the fifteenth stanza of Whitman's poem.

Baritone:
 To the tally of my soul,
 Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,
 With pure deliberate notes spreading, filling the night.

Loud in the pines and cedars dim,
 Clear in the freshness moist, and the swamp perfume,
 And I with my comrades there in the night.

While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,
 As to long panoramas of visions.

I saw askant the armies.
 And I saw, as noiseless dreams, hundreds of battle-flags,
 Borne through the smoke of the battles and pierced with missiles,
 I saw them,

Chorus:

And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and bloody,
And at last but a few shreds left on the staffs (and all in silence),
And the staffs all splinter'd and broken.

Baritone:

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
And the white skeletons of young men, I saw them,
I saw the debris, and debris of all the dead soldiers of the war,
But I saw they were not as was thought,

Chorus:

They themselves were fully at rest, they suffer'd not,
The living remain'd and suffer'd, the mother suffer'd
And the wife and the child and the musing comrades suffer'd
And the armies that remain'd suffer'd. (Jones 13-14)

This movement is “a battle-piece for baritone and chorus” (Robertson 258). The opening is for solo baritone reciting the first two text groups, followed by an instrumental interlude for solo trumpet. The baritone and chorus then begin to trade off sections of text, each interrupted by the march music in the orchestra. During the final restatement of the March, an offstage bugle plays “taps” as the orchestra decrescendos. The movement comes to a final conclusion on a D held by the timpani and cello.

The final movement, which begins with a brass chord accompanied by orchestra bell, is based on the final stanza of Whitman's poem. The text describes the poet finally coming to grips with the tragic events of his poem.

Baritone:

Passing the visions, passing the night,
 Passing, unloosing the hold my comrades' hands,
 Passing the song of the hermit bird and the tallying song of my soul,
 Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying, ever-altering song,
 As low and wailing, yet clear notes, rising and falling, flooding the night,
 and yet again bursting with joy,
 Covering the earth and filling the spread of the heaven,
 As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses.
 Passing, I leave thee, lilac with heart-shaped leaves,
 I leave thee there in the door-yard blooming, returning with spring.

I cease from my song for thee,
 From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west communing with
 thee,
 O comrade lustrous with silver face in the night.

Yet each I keep and all, retrievements out of the night,
 The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,
 And the tallying chant, the echo arous'd in my soul,
 With the lustrous and drooping star, with the countenance full of woe,
 With the lilac tall, and its blossoms of mastering odor,
 With the holders holding my hand, nearing the call of the bird,
 Comrades mine, and I in the midst, and their memory ever I keep,
 for the dead I loved so well,

For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands – and this
 For his dear sake.

Chorus:

Lilac and star and bird, twined with the chant of my soul,
 There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim. (Jones 14-15)

The movement proper begins with the interplay between a solo flute, which begins the melodic idea, and the baritone soloist, who recites the text in a declamatory style. The final line of the baritone solo is set simply and beautifully as one of the most important statements of the entire Requiem. After the brass restate their opening tones, the chorus comes in with the final line of the poem, as the two vocal soloists repeat the opening line “when lilacs last in the dooryard bloom’d.” All the musical forces come to rest on a C#,

the pedal from the prelude that started the Requiem. After almost an hour, Hindemith returns us to a single C# to bring the work to an emotionally powerful conclusion.

The Hindemith Requiem, "*When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd*," marks the most decisive departure from the church-controlled Requiem Mass. Rather than using a traditional religious text, Hindemith employs Walt Whitman's secular tribute to the death of Lincoln, and while it contains no religious ideological references, the work's power and spirituality are never undermined. Just as Whitman had done with his poem, Hindemith hoped that his Requiem could help the nation deal with the loss not only of a well-loved President, but with the costly war. Hindemith's choices in text and compositional techniques provide the material that he felt best suited his personal musical needs, and the resulting work, "*When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd*," a Requiem for *those we love*, is as powerful and relevant a Requiem as any written.

Benjamin Britten: *War Requiem*

In Coventry, England, on the site of the Church that had been bombed during World War II, work was being completed on a new Cathedral. The committee responsible for the dedication ceremony, wanting to promote the rebuilding of England after the War, approached Benjamin Britten to write a large-scale work suitable for such an important occasion. Britten began work immediately on the work that would express his feelings toward the futility of War. The *War Requiem* would become one of his most significant compositions and would serve as a statement of the pacifist beliefs that Britten held his entire life. Britten's Requiem would combine the traditional Latin text of the Mass juxtaposed with the poetry of World War I soldier Wilfred Owen. The combination of Owen's words, which depict the horror of modern warfare, with the Catholic setting provide a heartfelt tribute to all the victims of war, while at the same time serving as one of the most significant anti-war artworks.

Britten could scarcely have found a better poet to express his anti-war ideals in the *War Requiem* than Lt. Wilfred Owen. While Owen was a member of the generation that fought the First World War, and Britten represented the generation of World War II soldier, each had come to a similar conclusion regarding the futility of war. Owen "left behind him a small body of poetry, the finest examples of which – written during the last two years of the long and bloody war – make a passionate and eloquent outcry against man's inhumanity to man as he had witnessed it played out on the mud-drenched fields of Flanders" (Cooke 1). The poetry of Owen not only depicts the stark reality of the horrific scenes of the fighting in the trenches of France, but also expresses his feelings towards

the senseless waste of human life that surrounded him. The emotions found in poetry of Owen's mirrored Britten's own deeply felt convictions, and depict the central theme of the *War Requiem*.

The stark reality and vivid imagery that are exhibited in the poetry of Owen could only come from one actively engaged in the bloody conflict. Owen had volunteered for active duty in 1915, and though his poetry does discuss his hatred of war, he "had been prepared to fight in the name of defense and liberation, but not to further the aggression of [his] own nation" (Cooke 6). While he would never believe in war as a mean of expansion of England's territory, the defense of his country and the destruction of the Prussian military machine were justifiable, even if regrettable. Owen had performed his duty admirably and his "courage on active service was officially recognized by the award of the Military Cross for 'conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in the attack on Fonsomme Line on 1st/2nd October 1918" (Cooke 9). His service in the war gave his poetry insight and for him added credibility to his anti-war beliefs. In a letter to his mother, Owen describes the conflicting ideas of fighting a war as a pacifist. "As for myself, I hate washy pacifists as temperamentally as I hate whiskied prussianists. Therefore I feel that I must first get some reputation of gallantry before I could successfully and usefully declare my principles" (Cooke 7). The first-hand experience of Owen adds validity to the horrific images presented in his poetry, and the power of his anti-war sentiment is strengthened by his personal experiences in battle.

The commission of the *War Requiem* provided an opportunity for Britten to fulfill a long-time goal to set Owen's beautiful poetry to music. In the same regard it fulfilled Owen's desire to have his own words set to music. Owen had loved music since his youth

and hoped that “there may be found a sympathetic tuned soul who will discover the melodies in my words and give them back to me” (Robertson 267). While Owen had never known a composer, and never lived to hear his poetry sung to him, Britten’s use of his text in the *War Requiem* shows how perfectly suited Owen’s poetry is to music. Within the music of the Requiem the painful beauty of Owen’s words truly find their powerful expressive possibility.

For Britten, the works of Owen fit his needs as a composer trying to express his feeling towards the futility of war, and in the *War Requiem* Britten used the words to serve as a warning to future generations. In the score Britten quotes the introduction to Owen’s first collection of poems “Disabled and Other poems,”

My subject is War, and the pity of War
The Poetry is in the pity (Cooke 10)

Just as Owen had intended his words to serve as a warning, Britten too hoped that the *War Requiem* would help the future generations see the horrors of modern warfare. If Britten wanted to portray a realistic picture of the evils of war, he had found his ideal match in Owen. Edmund Blunden described Owen as a poet who speaks “as a soldier, with perfect and certain knowledge of war at grips with the soldier; as a mind, surviving the whole process of wasted spirit, art and blood in all its instant and deeper evils; as a poet, giving his readers picture and tone that whenever they are reconsidered afford a fresh profundity, for they are combinations of profound recognition” (Robertson 267). In addition to his words, Owen also provided the ultimate symbol of the senseless destruction of war, because the great poet had been killed in action on the morning of November 4th while helping his troops to cross the Sambre Canal near Ors in northeast

France (Cooke 1). One week before the end of World War I, the war had taken another great artist from the world.

Britten had been a pacifist his entire life, and when the situation in Europe heated up he knew that his views would set him apart from the rest of England. In May of 1939 Britten went to America where he hoped he would be able to avoid the coming war. Where Owen had been a soldier with pacifist views, Britten believed that all war, even that for defense and liberation was wrong. In America Britten began to express his feeling toward the War, and the certain horror that it would bring to England. “The strongest musical expression of Britten’s anxieties during his American years is to be found in the *Sinfonia da Requiem*, a work of complex significance, being partly an official commission, partly a personal *envoi* to the composer’s deceased parents and partly an anti-militaristic statement” (Cooke 14). The *Sinfonia da Requiem*, an orchestra setting of three of the movements of the Latin Mass, provides a preview of what would come in the *War Requiem*, and shares not only the title “Requiem” with the later work, but also the idea of expressing anti-war sentiment in music.

Though Britten was safely away from the fighting in England while in America, he decided to return to his homeland in 1942. Britten returned to England “in order to register as a conscientious objector, thereby publicly declaring his pacifism and at the same time providing a tangible artistic and community service to his home country” (Cooke 14). His return was not to be easy, and to register as a conscientious objector would require that Britten explain his beliefs to a Local Tribunal. Fortunately Britten received a favorable review and was allowed to remain outside of active duty as a soldier during the war years. However, as an objector to the war, Britten was ostracized by most

of England. The isolation was part of the inspiration for his opera *Peter Grimes* (1945), and in an interview with Murray Schafer he described his feelings during this dark period of his life.

A central feeling for us [Britten and compatriot Peter Pears] was that of the individual against crowd, with ironic overtones for our situation. As conscientious objectors we were out of it. We couldn't say we suffered physically, but naturally we experienced tremendous tension. I think it was partly this feeling which led us to make Grimes a character of vision and conflict, the tortured idealist he is, rather than the villain he was in Crabbe. (Cooke 17).

Though he would experience isolation as a result of his feeling toward the war, he maintained his high ideals throughout the war years, and for the rest of his life.

Though Owen saw his service in the war as a way of validating his artistic experience, Britten never retreated from his pacifistic idealism. "Britten saw no need to 'get some reputation of gallantry' in order for his compassion for his fellow man to acquire public credibility; yet his pacifism was a consistent lifelong commitment, and the sincerity and intensity of its expression in the *War Requiem* can never be in doubt" (Cooke 19). The same intense hatred of the destructive quality of war that kept him from actively participating in battle is at the heart of the *War Requiem*'s anti-war sentiments.

The commission for a large-scale work for the cathedral at Coventry provided Britten the opportunity to express his pacifistic views in music. The new cathedral was in clear view of the old bombed-out building, which served as a dreadful reminder of the destruction caused by World War II. The *War Requiem* "represented not only an effort to mark worthily a triumphant recovery from the ashes of war, but also a conscious resolve on the composer's part to put the experience of his entire creative activity to that date at the service of passionate denunciation of the bestial wickedness by which man is made to

take up arms against his fellow” (Evens 450). The dedication ceremony would express the rebuilding of England, and the ability for man to move beyond the destructive power of hatred. Britten “fully realized the importance of the occasion, for it would mark not only the phoenix-like resurgence of the new Cathedral at the side of the shattered shell of the old, but also the healing of many wounds” (White 92). In his *War Requiem*, Britten intended a tribute not only for the Englishmen who died in war, but for all men whose lives were tragically cut short by bloody conflict.

At the heart of the Requiem is Britten’s feelings toward the senseless loss of human life that results from war, and as such the *War Requiem* is in a sense dedicated to all the dead. “Britten’s idea was to make a statement about war’s futility and, at the same time, express his sympathy with man’s self-inflicted suffering” (Headington 104). While the spirit of the Requiem is dedicated to all men lost in war, Britten includes a dedication to four friends in the score:

In loving memory of

Roger Burney,	<i>Sub-Lieutenant</i>
	<i>Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve</i>

Piers Dunkerley,	<i>Captain</i>
	<i>Royal Marines</i>

David Gill,	<i>Ordinary Seaman</i>
	<i>Royal Navy</i>

Michael Halliday,	<i>Lieutenant</i>
	<i>Royal New Zealand Naval Volunteer Reserve</i>

All of these men were personal friends of Britten, and represented specific examples of the lives wasted and destroyed by war. Burney, Gill and Halliday all died in action, and Dunkerley, who had been wounded in battle, committed suicide in 1959 (Carpenter 404).

As a conscientious objector, no one felt the sting of loss more deeply than Britten, and the *War Requiem* provided an outward expression of the grief that Britten as well as all of Europe went through as a result of World War II.

While the writing of a Requiem seemed in direct conflict to the non-orthodox view of religion held by both Verdi and Brahms, Britten's more traditional religious beliefs make his decision to compose a Requiem much more natural. Britten "possessed, like Handel, Elgar and Vaughan Williams, the capacity to evoke a genuinely religious response within a framework of established Christianity" (Caldwell 431). Britten's beliefs that all men's actions would eventually be judged, a theme central to the *Dies irae* section of the Requiem Mass, had been displayed in his earlier works. The fourth song of the *Serenade*, Op. 21, for tenor, horn and strings (1943) contains the "grim underlying message: the inevitable passage of all humankind towards a day of final reckoning" (Morgan 273). Though Owen found "dissatisfaction with the mechanisms of liturgy and ritual" (Cooke 2), Britten successfully includes his poems in such a way as to avoid the complacency of the traditional setting by adding additional significance to the occasion with Owen's words. The result is a work of both pure religious sentiments and deeply moving social relevance.

Britten decided that the *War Requiem* would use the traditional text of the Latin Requiem Mass, and add the text of Owen as a narrative of the horror of war. "The poems of Wilfred Owen are like a modern trope to the liturgical text" (Caldwell 431), adding personal commentary to the established text of the Mass. In this way the liturgical text would serve the purpose of memorializing the fallen victims of war, and the words of Owen would give the anti-war sentiment to the composition. Britten also decided to

divide his musical forces for effect. The idea was a threnody for the dead of all wars, taking place on three planes: a setting of the Latin Requiem Mass for soprano, ~~chorus and~~ orchestra; a number of settings for male soloists and a chamber orchestra of twelve players, of poems by Wilfred Owen; ... and as a timeless background to both these, an image of innocence unstained by war, a separate choir of boys' voices" (Oliver 174). *The War Requiem*'s two texts and three separate musical forces all combine in a single work of religious and social significance.

Since the *War Requiem* was intended as a memorial to all people who have died in all wars, Britten had the hope that the three soloists would each come from different countries. He had hoped that the premiere would include Peter Pears, an English ~~tenor~~ and very dear lifelong friend, Fischer-Dieskau, a German baritone, and Galina Vishnevskaya, a Russian soprano. The trio was chosen because they represented not only some of the most talented voices possible, but also how far the world had come since the ends of the war. Unfortunately the relations between England and Russia were not as developed as an optimistic Britten might have liked to believe. According to Vishnevskaya, "Ekaterina Furtseva, the minister of culture, asked her: 'How can you, a Soviet woman, stand next to a German and an Englishman and perform a political work'" (Carpenter 407). The soprano, Heather Harper, would, after only ten days notice, perform in place of the Russian who was not allowed to perform because of political tensions between Russia and the West. This simple incident, while not a one of war, showed how necessary the message of warning that is found in the *War Requiem* was, and how delicate the balance between war and peace remains.

The *War Requiem* divides the Latin text into six separate movements: the *Requiem aeternam*, the *Dies irae*, the *Offertorium*, the *Sanctus*, the *Agnus Dei* and the *Libera me*. The traditional text of the Requiem is set for mixed chorus and full orchestra which includes in addition to the traditional strings, three flutes (the third flute doubling for the piccolo part), two oboes, English horn, three clarinets (the third player doubling for the Eb and bass clarinet part), two bassoons, a contrabassoon, six horns in F, four trumpets in C, three trombones, tuba, piano, organ, timpani, and four percussionists to play side drums, tenor drum, bass drum, tambourine, triangle, cymbals, castanets, whip, Chinese blocks, gong, bells (in C and F#), vibraphone, glockenspiel and antique cymbals. The settings of Owen's poetry, which are in addition to the traditional text, are written for tenor and baritone soloists who are accompanied by a chamber orchestra comprised of a flute (doubling on piccolo), an oboe (doubling on English horn), a clarinet, a bassoon, a horn in F, a percussionist (playing timpani, side drum, bass drum, cymbal and gong), a harp, two violins, a viola, a violoncello, and a double bass. Britten also employs a boy's choir in the *Requiem aeternam*, the *Offertorium*, and in the closing section of the *Libera me*, which is accompanied by minimal instrumentation and organ.

Britten begins the *War Requiem* with a pedal A establishing the dominant of D minor for the opening section of the *Requiem aeternam*. The choir intones the opening lines of the text establishing the tritone of C and F# that will play a significant part throughout the Requiem. Britten changes mood with a rapid *accelerando* to bring us to the section for boys' choir with the text "*Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion.*" The section for boy's choir, meant to sound as though off at a distance, away from the evils of war, dovetails into an abbreviated restatement of the opening material. Britten then moves to

Bb minor for the first presentation of the poetry of Owen for tenor solo. The poem pits the hopelessness of the soldier in the field against the plea for grace found in the Latin text of the Requiem.

“Anthem for Doomed Youth”

What passing bells for these who die as cattle?
 Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
 Only the shattering rifles’ rapid rattle.
 Can patter out their hasty orisons,
 No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,
 Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, -
 The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells,
 And bugles calling them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
 Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
 Shall shine the holy glimmer of good-byes.
 The pallor of girls’ brows shall be their pall;
 Their flowers the tenderness of silent minds,
 And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds. (Cooke 92)

Again the tritone plays a significant role in the tenor solo, and the section ends with the presentation of the F# (respelled as Gb in this section), serving as a transition to the *Kyrie Eleison* section of the movement. The section is written for choirs accompanied only by the tritone played in the bells. The first two statements of the text end with the tritone, but the final restatement moves to an F Major chord to bring the first movement to a close.

The *Dies irae* begins with a fanfare for trumpet, horn and trombone, building to the entrance of the choir with the first four stanzas of the text. The opening section climaxes with the text “*Tuba mirum*” and then slowly dissolves away to make room for the first statement of the baritone solo. The text contrasts the sorrowful sounds of the bugles on the battlefield with the sounds marking the final judgment described in the first four stanzas of the Latin text.

Untitled

Bugles sang, ~~saddening the evening air,~~
 And bugles answered, ~~sorrowful to hear.~~

Voices of boys were by the river-side.
 Sleep mothered them; and left the twilight sad.
 The shadow of the morrow weighed on men.

Voices of the old ~~despondency~~ resigned,
 Bowed by the shadow of the morrow (Cooke 93).

The baritone solo comes to a conclusion on an A major chord as the soprano prepares for her first entrance. The soprano solo, accompanied at times by the choir, sings the next four stanzas of the traditional text. The section comes to a close on an A pedal in the tympani. Britten then increases the tempo for the tenor and baritone duet on another poem of Owen.

“The Next War”

Out there, we’ve walked quite friendly up to Death;
 Pardoned his spilling mess-tins in our hand.
 We’ve sniffled the green thick odour of his breath, -
 Our eyes wept, but our courage didn’t writhe.
 He’s spat at us with bullets and he’s coughed
 Shrapnel. We chorused when he sang aloft;
 We whistled while he shaved us with his scythe.

Oh, Death was never enemy of ours!
 We laughed at him, we leagued with him, old chum.
 No soldier paid to kick against his power.
 We laughed, knowing that better men would come,
 And greater wars; when each proud fighter brags
 He wars on Death – for life, not men – for flags. (Cooke 94)

This section, which seems to bring to light the victory of life over death in the resurrection, continues in the key of A. The full chorus once again enters, in imitation starting in the bass, to finish the last seven stanzas of the *Dies irae* text, which surge into

a baritone solo. One of the most harsh texts of the work, it is in effect the image of a soldier cursing God and threatening Him with canon.

Sonnet: "On seeing a Piece of Our Artillery Brought into action"

Be slowly lifted up, thou long black arm,
Great gun towering toward Heaven, about to curse;

Reach at that arrogance which needs thy harm,
And beat it down before its sins grow worse;

But when thy spell be cast complete and whole,
May God curse thee, and cut thee from our soul (Cooke 95).

Britten returns to the opening theme of the *Dies irae*, which transitions to the *Lacrymosa* section for choir and soprano solo. The soprano solo sets up the final tenor solo of the movement, taken from the Owen poem "Futility."

"Futility"

Move him into the sun –
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields unsown.
Always it woke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow
If any might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know.

Think how it wakes the seeds, -
Woke, once, the clays of a cold star.
Are limbs so dear-achieved, are sides,
Full-nerved – still warm – too hard to stir?
O what made fatuous sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all? (Cooke 95-96)

The tenor solo ends with the re-emergence of the C-F# tritone, which leads to the choral conclusion on *Pie Jesu Domine*. The closing section is sung to the music that accompanied the ending of the *Requiem aeternam* movement, and ends on the same F major chord.

The third section, the *Offertorium*, opens with the boy's choir stating the opening text "*Domine Jesu Christe*," in C#, describing the possibility of avoiding hell with Jesus' help. The opening section of the movement gives way to the full chorus and orchestra. The text "*Sed signifer sanctus Michael*" is set fugally in G major, and establishes the promise to Abraham, which the poem that Britten chose to set so ironically depicts. The tenor and baritone retell the story of Abraham as seen by Owen.

"The Parable of the Old man and the Young"

So Abram rose, and clave the wood, and went,
And took the fire with him, and a knife.
And as they sojourned both of them together,
Isaac the first-born spake and said, My Father,
Behold the preparations, fire and iron,
But where the lamb for this burnt-offering?
Then Abram bound the youth with belts and straps,
And builded parapets and trenches there,
And stretched forth the knife to slay his son.
When lo! An angel called him out of heaven,
Saying, Lay not thy hand upon the lad,
Neither do anything to him. Behold,
A ram, caught in the thicket by its horns;
Offer the Ram of Pride instead of him.
But the old man would not so, but slew his son, -
And half the seed of Europe, one by one. (Cooke 96-97)

The solo section, which ends in E major, seems to make the claim that Abraham's inability to follow the angel's instruction and sacrifice the ram of pride is the cause of the continual destruction of his sons. The repetition of the last line of the solo section acts as a transition to the return of the boy's choir singing "*Hostias et preces*." The movement ends with an abbreviated restatement of the fugal section by the full choir, this time ending in E minor, rather the G major as earlier.

The fourth movement, the *Sanctus*, opens with accelerating tremolos in the percussion, which introduces the first line of text in the solo soprano. The full choir is

divided into first and second parts for all voices. Each group enters separately to chant the text “*Pleni sunt caeli et terra Gloria tau.*” The trumpets, firmly establishing the key of D, enter for the “*Hosana in excelsis.*” The music dissipates to make room for another statement by the solo soprano, this time to the “*Benedictus.*” The soprano solo ends with the restatement of the “*Hosana in excelsis,*” which leads to the section for solo baritone. The text questions the possibility of a return to life, marking the darkest moment of the *War Requiem*.

“The End”

After the blast of lightning from the East,
The flourish of loud clouds, the Chariot Throne;
After the drums of Time have rolled and ceased,
And by the bronze west long retreat is blown,

Shall life renew these bodies? Of a truth
All death will He annul, all tears assuage? –
Fill the void veins of Life again with youth,
And wash, with an immortal water, Age?

When I do ask white Age he saith not so:
‘My head hangs weighed with snow.’
And when I hearken to the Earth, she saith:
‘My fiery heart shrinks, aching. It is death.
Mine ancient scars shall not be glorified,
Nor my titanic tears, the sea, be dried.’ (Cooke 97-98).

Britten brings the movement to a close with an instrumental coda of descending lines coming to conclusion on a low F# in the harp and double basses.

In the fifth movement, Britten makes his most direct plea for peace in the Requiem, by combining the Christ in the battlefield dying to atone the sins of man described in the poetry of Owen, with the three statements of “*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem sepiternam.*” The entire movement is based upon the figured bass that begins in the opening section for solo tenor. The blending of the three

stanzas with the three statements of the Latin text into a single musical idea shows how perfectly the poetry fits this section of the Requiem.

“At a Calvary near the Ancre”

One ever hangs where shelled roads part.
 In this war He too lost a limb,
 But His disciples hide apart;
 And now the soldiers bear with Him.

Near Golgotha strolls many a priest,
 And in their faces there is pride
 That they were flesh-marked by the Beast
 By whom the gentle Christ's denied.

The scribes on all the people shove
 And bawl allegiance to the state,
 But they who love the greater love
 Lay down their life; they so not hate (Cooke 98).

The final line “*Dona nobis pacem*,” sung by the tenor, brings the movement to a close in C minor, and serves as Britten's personal plea for peace.

The final movement of the *War Requiem* opens with a funeral march for the text *Libera me*. The march begins slowly, but gradually builds in tempo and intensity to a restatement of the *Dies irae* music in G minor. The music continues to build to the ultimate climax marked with the entrance of the organ for the first time with full orchestra. The music then slowly dies away on a sustained G minor chord to introduce the final moving poetic statement of Owen. The poem, “Strange Meeting,” depicts the meeting of two opposing soldiers after death, coming to grips with the reality of war. The tenor solo plays the part of the English soldier, meeting the German soldier, sung by the baritone soloist, whose life he had taken.

“Strange Meeting”

It seemed that out of battle I escaped
 Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
 Through granites which titanic wars had groined.
 Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
 Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
 Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
 With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
 Lifting distressful hands as if to bless.
 And no guns thumped, or down the flutes made moan.
 “Strange friend,” I said, “here is no cause to mourn.”

‘None,’ said the other, ‘save the undone years,
 The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
 Was my life also; I went hunting wild
 After the wildest beauty in the world.

For by my glee might many men have laughed,
 And of my weeping something had been left,
 Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
 The pity of war, the pity of war distilled.
 Now men will go content with what we spoiled.
 Or, discontent, boil bloody and be spilled.
 They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress,
 None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.
 Miss we the march of this retreating world
 Into vain citadels that are clogged their chariot-wheels,
 I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
 Even from wells we sunk too deep for war,
 Even the sweetest wells that ever were.

I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
 I knew you in the dark; for so you frowned
 Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
 I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.’

‘Let us sleep now ..’ (Cooke 100)

After the tenor solo comes to a conclusion, the baritone laments the senseless loss that war has created, and introduces himself as the man that the English soldier had killed. The two men finally reconcile as they sing together “Let is sleep now,” ending in D

Lydian. Their ending leads to the boy's choir chanting of the text "*In paradisum*." The full chorus and soprano, and full orchestra join the boy's choir in an extended setting of the text. The work is brought to a close with two phrases of the "*Requiescant in pace*," based musically on the *Kyrie* section of the first movement. A final cadence in F major brings the work to an end, but is far too tonally removed to be completely resolved for the listener. The unsettling conclusion to Britten's powerful testament to the evils of war may show that there is still work left undone in the quest for a lasting peace.

The reaction to the *War Requiem* was phenomenal, with music critics, performers, other composers and the public all proclaiming the work a remarkable success. William Mann, music critic for *The London Times* referred to the work as "the most masterly and nobly imagined work that Britten has ever given us" (Carpenter 408). The composer Michael Tippett, who himself was placed in prison for his refusal to fight in the war, called the piece, "the one musical masterwork we possess with overt pacifist meanings" (Ibid). One of the most glowing reviews comes from Peter Shaffer of *Time and Tide* who stated "I believe it to be the most impressive and moving piece of sacred music ever to be composed in this country ... the most profound and moving thing which this most committed of geniuses has so far achieved, it makes criticism impertinent" (Ibid). Even the baritone, Fischer-Dieskau, was so moved by the premiere that he said, "I was completely undone; I did not know where to hide my face. Dead friends and past suffering arose in my mind" (Ibid).

The ability to express his feelings to the masses, not to achieve the praise of the critics in attendance, was Britten's goal. In addition to the critical acclaim for the *War Requiem*, he found a method of communicating with the audience that had been lacking

in most modern compositions. “Few composers of our time have recognized as he has, an obligation to simplify their utterance so as to re-establish communication with those in the audience who have too readily withdrawn from the musical explorations undertaken by the contemporaries” (Evens 466). Britten saw to it that the expression of his ideals was the most important role of his musical setting, and the communication of those ideals, not the musical abstraction, was the deciding factor in musical decisions. While he may have simplified his “musical utterances,” Britten did not compromise the complexity, and as such the *War Requiem* is overwrought with the “complication of emotional response, sorrow for the victims of war and anger and despair at the human folly and wickedness which [comes] from war” (Ibid).

The Britten *War Requiem* combines the traditional Latin setting of the Requiem Mass with the powerful poems of Wilfred Owen to create one of the most important and socially significant works of the twentieth century. The work serves as both monument to all soldiers whose lives were cut short in battle and as Britten’s personal pacifist statement against war. In his writing of his war poetry, Owen claims, “all a poet can do today is warn. That is why the true Poets must be truthful” (Robertson 285). As a truthful depiction of war’s horrors, Britten’s *War Requiem* serves as a warning to all future generations.

Summary

As the Requiem changed from a church form under the direct control of the dogmatic idealism of established tradition, to a composition intended for a public, secular performance, composers found a new freedom to reinterpret or create anew the text in accordance with their personal needs. For Verdi, the traditional liturgical text more dramatically interpreted, provided a fitting tribute to his friend and compatriot Manzoni. Brahms's personal grief over the loss of his mentor, Robert Schumann, and his mother, Christiane Brahms, inspired him to create a new text employing the Lutheran Bible. Hindemith completely removed any religious connotation by setting a secular poem by Walt Whitman in his memorial to the beloved president Franklin Roosevelt. Britten combined Verdi's dramatized setting of the traditional text with Hindemith's use of secular poetry and interpolated the two ideas to create his powerful anti-war statement. Though each of the four composers discussed in this thesis were motivated by different circumstances, and selected quite different texts, they each created works that expressed deeply personal feelings that allowed them to explore the understanding and acceptance of death. In their powerful and moving musical tributes, Verdi, Brahms, Hindemith and Britten help listeners to come to terms not only with the inevitability of death, but also to experience the beauty that is life.

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