

Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra - Florida Blue Masterwork Series
Friday & Saturday, November 14 & 15, 2014, at 8 p.m.
"Words on Music" one hour prior to each Masterworks concert
Robert E. Jacoby Symphony Hall, Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts

MOZART REQUIEM

Michael Buttermann, conductor
Mary Wilson, soprano*
Adriana Zabala, mezzo-soprano*
Javier Abreu, tenor*
Jason Hardy, bass*
Jacksonville Symphony Chorus*

Olivier
MESSIAEN

L'ascension: Quatre Méditations Symphoniques
1. Majesté du Christ demandant sa gloire à son Père
2. Alleluias sereins d'une âme qui désire le ciel
3. Alleluia sur la trompette, alleluia sur la cymbale
4. Prière du Christ montant vers son Père

Wolfgang Amadeus
MOZART

Requiem in D Minor, KV 626 (Beyer edition)*
I. Introitus: Requiem aeternam
II. Kyrie eleison
III. Sequentia (Dies irae; Tuba mirum; Rex tremendae; Recordare; Confutatis; Lacrymosa)
IV. Offertorium (Domine Jesu; Hostias)
VI. Agnus Dei
VII. Communio: Lux aeterna

Olivier Messiaen

French composer, organist, teacher, and ornithologist
Born: 1908, Avignon, France; died:1992, Clichy (a suburb of Paris), France

L'ascension ("The Ascension")

Composed in 1932-1933
Premiered on February 9, 1935, in Paris, conducted by Robert Siohan
Last J-Sym performance:
ca. 27 minutes (6', 6', 6', 9')

The illumination of the theological truths of the Catholic faith is the first aspect of my work, the most noble, and no doubt the most useful and most valuable—perhaps the only one I won't regret at the hour of my death. – Olivier Messiaen

Among 20th-Century church musicians none had a higher profile nor was more profoundly influenced by his faith than French composer, organist and teacher Olivier Messiaen. Even as a child Messiaen was an independent thinker and highly self-motivated, traits encouraged by his mother, a poet, and father, an English teacher and translator of Shakespeare's complete works. While his younger brother might ask for toys and sweets, Olivier limited his Christmas wish-lists to the opera scores he'd pore through at the piano, having taught himself to play. Although Messiaen said his parents "were not believers," when their 11-year-old son entered the Paris Conservatoire he already knew, quite on his own, that the Roman Catholic Church would be the guiding force throughout his long life.

Messiaen finished his coursework in 1930, and the following year was appointed organist at *La Trinité*; apart from internment during World War II, he remained at the Parisian church until his death. He also gained recognition as one of the century's most influential teachers, first at the Schola Cantorum de Paris, then at the Conservatoire after the War.

Completed in 1933, *L'ascension* ("The Ascension") uses neither an Asian-inspired rhythmic foundation nor the birdsong heard in Messiaen's later works. Still, there is no mistaking the composer's unique voice, with melodies and atmospheric harmonies colored by his "modes of limited transposition." These are seven musical scales that alternate distinctive combinations of whole- and half-tones, including the whole-tone scale previously exploited by Debussy, and the exotic octatonic scale favored by Rimsky-Korsakov and Stravinsky.

Each of the "Four Symphonic Meditations" includes a quotation that identifies the inspiration for its descriptive title:

1. **The Majesty of Christ Asking Glory of His Father** (*Father, the hour is come, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may also glorify Thee.* – John 17:1)
2. **Serene Hallelujahs of a Soul Yearning for Heaven** (*We beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we may in mind dwell in Heaven.* – Ascension Mass)
3. **Hallelujah on the Trumpet, Hallelujah on the Cymbal** (*The Lord is gone up with the sound of a trumpet, O clap your hands all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.* – Psalm 47)
4. **Christ's Prayer as He Ascends to His Father** (*I have manifested Thy name unto men ... And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee.* – John 17:6, 11)

Melody drives the musical forms, with several themes based on Gregorian chants or chant fragments “transposed” into Messiaen's modes. Much of the orchestration suggests organ registrations, and Messiaen later transcribed the first, second and fourth movements as a suite for organ solo, but composed a new third movement to replace the orchestral scherzo with a bravura toccata better suited to the keyboard.

The contemplative first meditation highlights the brass choir with woodwind reinforcement, while the rapturous second features woodwinds supported by strings. The third meditation resounds with fanfares as the full orchestra dances into a closing fugato; where the other movements aspire to a celestial timelessness, this one embraces earthbound celebration. For strings alone and with a final dominant 7th chord left hanging, Messiaen's concluding meditation slowly ascends like an immutable “amen.”

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Austrian composer and pianist

Born: 1756, Salzburg, Austria; died: 1791, Vienna, Austria

Requiem in D Minor, KV 626

Composed in 1791; completed by Franz Xaver Süssmayr (1766-1803); edited by Franz Beyer (b. 1922)

Premiered on December 10, 1791, for Mozart's memorial service in Vienna (likely the Introitus & Kyrie only)

First complete public performance on January 2, 1793, in Vienna

Last J-Sym performance:

ca. 54 minutes (6'; 3'; 2', 3', 6, 3', 4'; 4', 5'; 2', 6'; 4'; 6')

With all the cloak-and-dagger stories surrounding Mozart's Requiem, it's almost surprising none begins, "It was a dark and stormy night." Here's the thing: while the "cloak" is real, the "dagger" never was.

During Mozart's final summer his financial prospects were looking rosy. He had two new operas nearing production, *La Clemenza di Tito* and *The Magic Flute*. Plus, while wishing *bon voyage* to a London-bound “Papa” Haydn, the previous December Mozart had received an offer to headline an English concert series of his own.

That July a stranger knocked at Mozart's door to commission a requiem on behalf of an anonymous benefactor. Mozart accepted, collecting a generous fee up front, but his operas took precedence, and his Clarinet Concerto and *Little Freemason Cantata* would interrupt in the fall.

Mozart fell ill while in Prague for the September premiere of *Tito*, most likely from failing kidneys. Returning home, the unusually cold Vienna autumn hastened his decline, and his symptoms included occasional delirium. Constanza, the composer's beloved *Frau* and confidante, never believed his delusions, but reported her husband sometimes had convinced himself he'd been poisoned, and that the mysterious stranger was a supernatural emissary of Death ordaining the Requiem for Mozart's own funeral. Mozart worked feverishly to complete his last masterpiece, but became bedridden on November 20. This time Death did knock. Uninvited, it entered just before one-o'clock in the early hours of December 5, 1791.

Mozart's physicians made clear foul play was not indicated. Even so, persistent rumors involving poison were widespread, and the favorite suspect became Antonio Salieri (1750-1825), Vienna's chief court musician. In 1830, Aleksandr Pushkin wrote *Mozart and Salieri*, a play Rimsky-Korsakov turned into an opera in 1897. Pushkin also inspired Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus* (play: 1979; film: 1984). Where the Russians portray Salieri as a murderer outright, Shaffer casts him as the cloaked stranger who commissions the Requiem hoping to present it as his own work—only the would-be murderer is thwarted when Mozart dies before it's finished.

Documents surfaced in the 1960s revealing the commission actually came from Count Franz von Walsegg, who wanted a memorial for his recently-deceased countess. Known to pass off others' compositions as his own, the Count had sent his valet to meet with Mozart.

With the commission unfulfilled, Constanza feared she would have to refund the payment. Fortunately, Mozart had finished the Introitus, and left a detailed short-score through the Hostias (except for a fragmentary Lacrimosa), together with instructions to repeat music from the Introitus and Kyrie for the final Communio. He also had discussed and sung through the score with Franz Süssmayr, among others. Although Süssmayr was not her first choice, Constanza ultimately solicited the 25-year-old to complete the Requiem.

Süssmayr had to work slapdash to fulfill the commission, and almost from the start his contribution was criticized for shoddy part-writing and clumsy orchestration. In 1972, German musicologist Franz Beyer prepared a new edition correcting the obvious problems. Beyer's edition repeats the closing "hosanna" phrases in the Sanctus and Benedictus to overcome the abruptness of Süssmayr's original, but otherwise allows us to share the same music heard by listeners of the first complete performances.

While reworking the Requiem in the mid-1980s for a different edition, Richard Maunder determined the Agnus Dei is paraphrased from Mozart's "Sparrow" Mass; others have noted similarities between the opening of Süssmayr's Sanctus with the Dies irae. How much, if any, direct guidance Mozart provided for these we likely will never know. But we do know Süssmayr deserves our thanks for bringing forward Mozart's last testament of undeniable genius.

I. INTROITUS (Chorus and Soprano solo)

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

Grant them an eternal resting place, O Lord,
and shine perpetual light upon them.
A hymn from Zion befits You, O God,
And to You shall be sworn a vow in Jerusalem.
Hear my prayer,
for unto You all flesh shall come.
Grant them an eternal resting place, O Lord,
and shine perpetual light upon them.

II. KYRIE (Chorus)

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

Lord, show mercy.
Christ, show mercy.
Lord, show mercy.

III. SEQUENTIA

1. Dies irae (Chorus)

Dies irae, dies illa
Solvat saeculum in favilla,
teste David cum Sibylla.
Quantus tremor est futurus,
quando iudex est venturus,
cuncta stricte discussurus!

The Day of Wrath, that day
the world will dissolve into ashes,
as both David and the Sibyl attest.
There will be a great earthquake
before the Judge comes;
everything will be crushed and scattered!

2. Tuba mirum (Solists)

Tuba mirum spargens sonum
per sepulcra regionum,
coget omnes ante thronum.
Mors stupebit et natura,
cum resurget creatura,
judicanti responsura.
Liber scriptus proferetur,
in quo totum continetur,
unde mundus iudicetur.
Iudex ergo cum sedebit,
quidquid latet, apparebit,
nil inultum remanebit.
Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
quem patronum rogaturus,
cum vix justus sit securus?

A trumpet will sound a tone that spreads
through the tombs of every region,
driving everyone before the throne.
Death and nature will be stupefied
when all creation is resurrected
to answer before the Judge.
A book will be proffered
in which is written everything
for which humankind will be judged.
Thus, once the Judge is seated,
whatever was hidden will be revealed:
nothing will remain unpunished.
What might a wretch like I assert?
What defender might be implored
when the righteous are hardly secure?

3. Rex tremendae (Chorus)

Rex tremendae majestatis,
qui salvandos savas gratis,

King of Tremendous Majesty,
Who freely saves the worthy,

salve me, fons pietatis.

4. Recordare (Soloists)

Recordare, Jesu pie,
quod sum causa tuae viae;
ne me perdas illa die.
Quaerens me, sedisti lassus,
redemisti crucem passus;
tantus labor non sit cassus.
Juste iudex ultionis,
donum fac remissionis
ante diem rationis.
Ingemisco, tamquam reus:
culpa rubet vultus meus;
supplicanti parce, Deus.
Qui Mariam absolvisti,
et latronem exaudisti,
mihi quoque spem dedisti.
Preces meae non sunt dignae,
sed tu, bonus, fac benigne,
ne perenni cremer igne.
Inter oves locum praesta,
et ab haedis me sequestra,
statuens in parte dextra.

5. Confutatis (Chorus)

Confutatis maledictis,
flammis acribus addictis,
voca me cum benedictus.
Oro supplex et acclinis,
cor contritum quasi cinis,
gere curam mei finis.

6. Lacrimosa (Chorus)

Lacrimosa dies illa,
qua resurget ex favilla
judicandus homo reus.
Huic ergo parce, Deus,
pie Jesu Domine,
dona eis requiem. Amen.

IV. OFFERTORIUM

1. Domine Jesu (Chorus and Soloists)

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae,
libera animas omnium fidelium
defunctorum de poenis inferni
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 sanctam.
Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.

2. Hostias (Chorus)

Hostias et preces tibi, Domine,
laudis offerimus.
Tu sucipe pro animabus illis,
quaram hodie memoriam facimus.
Fac eas, Domine,
de morte transire ad vitam.
Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.

save me, Wellspring of Mercy.

Remember, merciful Jesus,
that I am the reason for the paths You took;
do not abandon me that day.
You have sought me, faint and weary,
redeemed me by suffering upon the cross;
let not that great labor have been in vain.
Righteous Judge of Retribution,
grant me the gift of clemency
before the day of reckoning.
I cry out, as one accused:
my face flushed with guilt;
Spare this suppliant, O God.
You, Who absolved Mary Magdalene
and hearkened to the thief,
likewise give me hope.
My prayers are unworthy,
but You, Good Sir, can be merciful,
lest I burn in perennial fire.
Offer me a place among the sheep,
and sequester me from the goats,
stationing me at Your right hand.

When the wicked are condemned,
consigned to bitter flames,
summon me among the blessed.
I pray, pleading and prostrate,
my broken spirit scattered like cinders,
assume my final care.

Despairing will be that day
when up from embers shall arise
the guilty ones to be judged.
Therefore do spare them, O God,
merciful Lord Jesus,
provide them a place of rest. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, Glorious King,
Deliver the souls of all the faithful
departed from the pains of Hell
and from the fathomless lake.
Deliver them from the lion's jaws,
that they be neither devoured by the depths of Hell,
nor swallowed into darkness.
Thus, the holy standard-bearer Michael
may usher them into the sacred light.
As once was promised Abraham and his heirs.

Sacrifices and prayers to You, O Lord,
we offer in praise.
Accept them on behalf of those souls
whom today we commemorate.
Permit them, O Lord,
to pass beyond death into life.
As once was promised Abraham and his heirs.

IV. SANCTUS

1. Sanctus (Chorus)

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Domine Deus Sabaoth!
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria Tua!
Hosanna in excelsis!

Holy, holy, holy, O Lord God of the Sabaoth!
Heaven and earth are filled with Your glory!
Hosanna in the highest!

2. Benedictus (Soloists and Chorus)

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domine.
Hosanna in excelsis!

Blessed be Who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!

V. AGNUS DEI (Chorus)

Agnus Dei, qui tollis
peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis
peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis
peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem sempiternam.

Lamb of God, Who bears
the sins of humankind,
grant them a place of rest.
Lamb of God, Who bears
the sins of humankind,
grant them a place of rest.
Lamb of God, Who bears
the sins of humankind,
grant them everlasting rest.

VI. COMMUNIO (Chorus and Soprano solo)

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.
Requiem aeternum dona eis, Domine,
et Lux perpetua luceat eis,
cum Sanctus tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.

Shine eternal light upon them, O Lord,
among Your saints throughout eternity,
for You are merciful.
Grant them an eternal resting place, O Lord,
and shine perpetual light upon them,
among Your saints throughout eternity,
for You are merciful.

-- Notes and English translations ©2014 by Edward Lein.

Edward Lein produces Jacksonville Public Library's Music @ Main concerts and was a 2006 finalist in J-Sym's "Fresh Ink" Florida composers competition.