

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

From Liturgy to the Concert Hall: Tracing the Evolution of the Requiem Genre into the 21st Century

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7330z424>

ISBN

9798265485670

Author

Barrett, Madeline

Publication Date

2025-12-10

Supplemental Material

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7330z424#supplemental>

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

From Liturgy to the Concert Hall:
Tracing the Evolution of the Requiem Genre
into the 21st Century

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Music

by

Madeline Marjorie Barrett

2025

© Copyright by

Madeline Marjorie Barrett

2025

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

From Liturgy to the Concert Hall:
Tracing the Evolution of the Requiem Genre
into the 21st Century

by

Madeline Marjorie Barrett

Doctor of Philosophy in Music

University of California, Los Angeles, 2025

Professor Ian Krouse, Co-Chair

Professor Richard Dane Danielpour, Co-Chair

This dissertation explores the evolution of the musical setting of the Requiem Mass from its origins in the Catholic Mass for the Dead to its transformation into a concert genre that reflects deeply personal, cultural, and philosophical perspectives on death and remembrance. Beginning with Mozart and extending through Brahms, Verdi, Fauré, and Britten, the study identifies five defining characteristics of the “Concert Requiem:” (1) text; (2) cyclic or arch structure; (3) symbolic tonal centers; (4) motivic unity; and (5) dramatic or theatrical narrative devices. These elements collectively form the framework through which later composers express individual viewpoints on mortality and transcendence.

The analysis then focuses on three 21st-century works—Richard Danielpour’s *An American Requiem* (2001), Ian Krouse’s *Armenian Requiem* (2015), and Sarah Kirkland Snider’s *Mass for the Endangered* (2019)—each examined through the lens of point of view: the emotional, narrative, philosophical, political, or cultural stance the composer takes toward the subject of death. Danielpour’s work merges the Latin Mass with American poetry to reflect a humanistic view of war and loss; Krouse’s, based on Armenian liturgical hymns and vernacular poetry, integrates a rich array of musical traditions to honor cultural resilience and collective memory; and Snider’s reimagines the Mass as an ecological requiem, lamenting the extinction of species and urging care for the natural world.

Together, these analyses demonstrate how contemporary composers engage the requiem tradition not as a static religious form, but as a living artistic language capable of addressing modern questions of identity, spirituality, and moral responsibility. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the practical application of these findings to my own composition, *The Sun in My Heart*, which draws upon the structural and philosophical principles of the Concert Requiem to create a personal reflection on renewal, interconnectedness, and the enduring human desire to find light within darkness.

Through this synthesis of historical analysis, contemporary study, and creative application, the project reveals how the requiem continues to evolve as a powerful medium for expression and remembrance in the 21st century.

The dissertation of Madeline Marjorie Barrett is approved.

Jenny Olivia Johnson

Kay Kyurim Rhie

Ian Krouse, Co-Chair

Richard Dane Danielpour, Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ix
VITA.....	xi
CHAPTER 1: HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF THE REQUIEM.....	1
1.1 Requiem Genre and Point of View.....	2
1.2 Early Evolution of the Concert Requiem from Mozart to Britten.....	3
1.3 Musical Characteristics of the Concert Requiem Genre.....	12
1.4 Other Influences on the Concert Requiem in the 21 st Century.....	20
1.5 21 st Century Case Studies: Framework for Analysis.....	23
CHAPTER 2: AN AMERICAN REQUIEM BY RICHARD DANIELPOUR.....	25
2.1 Relationship to the Tradition.....	27
2.2 Innovation and Evolution.....	44
2.3 Conclusion.....	52
CHAPTER 3: ARMENIAN REQUIEM BY IAN KROUSE.....	53
3.1 Relationship to the Tradition.....	54
3.2 Innovation and Evolution.....	69
3.3 Conclusion.....	84
CHAPTER 4: MASS FOR THE ENDANGERED BY SARAH KIRKLAND SNIDER.....	85
4.1 Relationship to the Tradition.....	86
4.2 Innovation and Evolution.....	94
4.3 Conclusion.....	109

CHAPTER 5: PRACTICAL APPLICATION AND CONCLUSION.....110

 5.1 Practical Application of this Investigation in *The Sun in My Heart*.....110

 5.2 Conclusion.....120

APPENDICES.....122

 Appendix A.....117

 Appendix B.....127

 Appendix C.....129

SCORES CITED.....134

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....135

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Analytical Framework Table.....	23
Figure 2.1. <i>An American Requiem</i> , Arc Diagram.....	31
Figure 2.2. Reduction of Chorus, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement I, mm. 18-23.....	33
Figure 2.3. Reduction of Chorus, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement VII, mm. 44-49.....	33
Figure 2.4. Reduction of Chorus, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement I, mm. 165-172.....	34
Figure 2.5. Reduction of Chorus, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement V, “Agnus Dei,” mm. 12-14, mm. 23-25.....	35
Figure 2.6. Reduction of Chorus, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement V, “Agnus Dei,” mm. 78-85.....	35
Figure 2.7. Mezzo-soprano solo, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement VI, mm. 155-162.....	42
Figure 2.8. Percussion, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement II, mm. 213-216.....	43
Figure 2.9. Reduction of Vibraphone & Harp, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement V, “Agnus Dei,” mm. 1-3.....	49
Figure 2.10. Reduction of Strings, <i>An American Requiem</i> , Movement VI, mm. 142-162.....	51
Figure 3.1. <i>Armenian Requiem</i> , Arc Diagram.....	56
Figure 3.2. <i>Armenian Requiem</i> , Movement 7, Arc Diagram.....	57
Figure 3.3. Db Double Harmonic Scale.....	59
Figure 3.4. <i>Armenian Requiem</i> , Movement 1, fourth phrase.....	60
Figure 3.5. <i>Armenian Requiem</i> , Movement 15, string quartet, Rehearsal Mark 253.....	60
Figure 3.6. <i>Armenian Requiem</i> , Movement 15, string quartet, Rehearsal Mark 260-261.....	61
Figure 3.7. Armenian tetrachords (top staff) and <i>Armenian Requiem</i> , Movement 11 tetrachords (bottom staff).....	71
Figure 3.8. <i>Armenian Requiem</i> , Movement 11, Rehearsal Mark 138.....	82
Figure 3.9. <i>Armenian Requiem</i> , Movement 11, Rehearsal Mark 142.....	83
Figure 4.1. <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Arc Diagram.....	88

Figure 4.2. Tenor/Bass Reduction, <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement 1, mm 23-24; mm 28-33.....	89
Figure 4.3. Tenor/Bass Reduction, <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement 6, mm 28-29; mm 33-38.....	89
Figure 4.4. Piano, <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement 1, mm 25-28.....	89
Figure 4.5. Piano, <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement 6, mm 30-33.....	90
Figure 4.6. Chorus, <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement 2, mm. 1-6.....	100
Figure 4.7. <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement 2, mm. 71-83.....	101
Figure 4.8. <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement 4, first statement of the ground.....	102
Figure 4.9. Woodwinds, Marimba, & Harp, <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement IV, mm. 25-32.....	103
Figure 4.10. <i>Mass for the Endangered</i> , Movement VI, mm. 53-58.....	107
Figure 5.1. <i>The Sun in My Heart</i> , Movement II, Fugue Subject, mm. 244-247.....	114
Figure 5.2. <i>The Sun in My Heart</i> , Movement II, central harmonic progression.....	114
Figure 5.3. Percussion, Piano, & Harp, <i>The Sun in My Heart</i> , Movement I, mm. 1-3.....	115
Figure 5.4. Percussion, Piano, & Harp, <i>The Sun in My Heart</i> , Movement I, mm. 84-87.....	116
Figure 5.5. Solo Soprano, Chorus & Strings, <i>The Sun in My Heart</i> , Movement II, mm. 29-32.....	117
Figure 5.6. Harp, Treble Chorus, & Strings, <i>The Sun in My Heart</i> , Movement III, mm. 61-64.....	118

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, thank you to my committee: Prof. Jenny Olivia Johnson, Prof. Kay Rhie, Prof. Richard Danielpour, and Prof. Ian Krouse. Your guidance and insight have been invaluable throughout this process and each of you has uniquely shaped my scholarly and creative perspectives. I am grateful for your generosity of time, thoughtfulness, and care every step of the way.

I'd like to especially thank my mentors, Richard and Ian, who have been constant sources support and inspiration throughout my time at UCLA. The past five years have been a period of artistic and personal growth, largely due to my time studying with each of you, and I will always look back fondly on our lessons. Thank you for teaching me to trust my musical vision, for guiding me through a deeper understanding of repertoire and lineage, and for your wisdom and compassion through it all.

Special thanks to Richard Danielpour, Sarah Kirkland Snider, and G. Schirmer, Inc. for permission to reprint excerpts from *An American Requiem* and *Mass for the Endangered*, respectively; and to Ian Krouse and Drazark Music for permission to reprint excerpts of *Armenian Requiem*.

Thank you to the World Premiere Orchestra of friends and collaborators that came together to premiere the third movement of *The Sun in My Heart*, "The Body A Tree," earlier this year: Natalie Fishman, Carrie Frymer, Aja Grooms, Morgan Moss, Abigail Torrence, Donella Demorest, Celina Kintscher, Jessamy Gloor, Grace Miedziak, Lilia Salido-Rico, Kaitlin Webster-Zuber, Alaina Stark, Xenia Deviatkina-Loh, Sam Chung, Makiba Kurita, Jamily Lee, Jason Chen, Johannes Eberhart, Erin Tsui, Nazanin Eliahoo, Matheo Irazabal, Brian Cheng, Laila Zakzook, Kris Rahamad, John Hollywood, Isaac Chan, Maksim Velichkin, Annabelle Lo, Tomas

Mazeika, Qinghong Shi, Igor Kogan, Luca Lesko, Aidan Neuman. This performance would not have been possible without each and every one of you; thank you for bringing my music to life in such a beautiful way.

Thank you to my friends and community in the composition department at UCLA. Your friendship and support have meant the world to me, and I have cherished every moment of this time with all of you. I look forward to the ways we will continue to grow together.

A special thank you to my “program brother,” Austin Ali; I can’t believe it’s been five years since we entered our master’s degrees together in the Fall of 2020. I could not have asked for a better friend, colleague, and collaborator to be on this journey with. Thank you for the endless phone calls, for embarking on crazy projects with me, and for always pushing me to be the best version of myself, as a composer and human being.

Finally, an immense thank you to my family, Mom, Dad, Sam, and Ang, my rocks. The four of you have been there with me every step of the way, and none of this would have been possible without your unwavering support and encouragement. Thank you for travelling to attend my concerts, for being a sounding board for brainstorming sessions, for always believing in me even when I didn’t believe in myself.

The Sun in My Heart is dedicated to my grandparents, Jack and Sharon Namie. I have never met such an embodiment of kindness and light as the two of you were. Thank you for helping me to become the person I am today.

VITA

Madeline Barrett is a composer of concert music seeking to evoke imagery of the natural world and illuminate shared human experience. In addition to receiving diverse awards, Madeline's works have been commissioned by ensembles such as the Texas State Symphony Orchestra and Fivemind Reed Quintet. She has received performances internationally and in the United States at prestigious venues and festivals such as the Accademia Musicale Chigiana, the Viena Summer Music Festival, and the Cortona Sessions for New Music.

Madeline grew up with various styles of music as an important part of everyday life, leading to her compositional language which derives from an eclectic group of influences. Raised in Phoenix, AZ, she draws inspiration from the world around her, whether it be the oceans of the North American coast, the deserts of Arizona, or the softly bustling streets of Boston. Madeline received her Bachelor of Music in Composition from Chapman University and completed her graduate studies at UCLA.

CHAPTER 1: HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF THE REQUIEM

Death is one of the few experiences shared by all human beings—inescapable, mysterious, and often feared. Across centuries, cultures have sought ways to confront, understand, and find meaning in mortality. In Western classical music, the requiem stands as a powerful artistic response to this universal inevitability. Emerging from the liturgical Catholic Mass for the dead, the genre evolved into a rich and varied tradition through which composers explore grief, remembrance, existential dread, and spiritual hope.

Despite its religious origin in the 15th century, “requiem” is a term most people in the Western world are familiar with. For example, Mozart’s “Lacrymosa” or Verdi’s “Dies Irae” appear often in Western popular culture, recognizable to many outside the field. Though I had long admired the depth of the great requiems, it was only after studying Verdi’s *Messa da Requiem* in detail that I began to grasp the genre’s singular significance. Why did each of these composers write only one requiem as opposed to many symphonies, string quartets, etc.? For the major composers who wrote requiems, why did their requiem become one of their most lauded and recognized of their works? It is no coincidence that the requiems of Mozart, Brahms, Verdi, Fauré, and Britten, among others, would ultimately become one of the most, if not *the* most, performed and recognized of their compositional output. Additionally, each of these five major works contributed to the evolution of the requiem genre and establishment of core characteristics, creating a foundation upon which later composers could innovate.

My curiosity went further: What does this mean for Western concert composers today? How has the evolution of the tradition impacted current expressions of the genre? From these thoughts emerged the central question driving this investigation: How has the requiem genre inspired composers to create significant and innovative works, and what does its evolution into

the 21st century reveal about its expressive and cultural significance? To answer these questions, I chose three 21st-century works to analyze: Richard Danielpour's *An American Requiem* (2001), Ian Krouse's *Armenian Requiem* (2015), and Sarah Kirkland Snider's *Mass for the Endangered* (2019). Each of these works both draws from the tradition and has something new to say from a personal and expressive artistic vision.

This dissertation will investigate each requiem through the lens of its point of view, defined as: the emotional, narrative, philosophical, political, or cultural stance the composer or piece takes toward its subject matter, communicated through musical choices such as form, orchestration, harmony, and text setting. The profound personal and philosophical themes inherent in the requiem genre invite a distinctly individual expression from a composer, drawing from a rich lineage of musical tradition while pushing artistic boundaries. Ultimately, this dissertation will show how the interplay of tradition, innovation, and personal perspective has influenced the evolution of the requiem into the 21st century.

1.1 Requiem Genre and Point of View

Traditionally, a requiem is a Catholic Mass for the dead, with the intention of praying for the souls of the departed. In its earliest settings, the requiem reflected a liturgical and communal viewpoint: a collective prayer to God on behalf of the dead, formal rather than personal. These descriptors and perspectives evolved significantly over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, even beginning to shift in works as early as Mozart's requiem in the late 18th century. To determine the point of view of each requiem in this study, I asked the following questions:

- I. What perspective or worldview does the piece emphasize?
- II. How do musical decisions support or shape that perspective?
- III. Does the music speak to, speak for, or speak about someone or something?

This lens provides a compelling method by which to analyze the requiem's evolution and begin to understand how individual composers express a perspective on death, mourning, and the afterlife—not just as musical events, but as deeply personal statements.

1.2 Early Evolution of the Concert Requiem from Mozart to Britten

Each of the requiems of Mozart, Brahms, Verdi, Fauré, and Britten contributed to the evolution of the genre through their individual voice and cemented the central characteristics of the “Concert Requiem,” a Requiem Mass written specifically for the concert hall. This investigation uses the evolution and characteristics of these five requiems as a foundation upon which to analyze the 21st-century works.

1.2a W.A. Mozart's *Requiem*, K. 626, in D minor

Mozart's *Requiem in D minor* was the first major work to bring the requiem genre out of the religious context and into the concert hall, incorporating larger instrumental forces, dramatic narrative, and concert-like choral writing. This innovation established the Concert Requiem tradition. Additionally, Mozart's approach to form and symbolic tonal centers are two characteristics that would become central to the genre.

Wolfgang Marx explains in *Types of Mercy and Non-liturgical Dramaturgy: The Musical Requiem as a Concert Piece* that this requiem was written during the beginning of a period of “disintegration of genres,” as described by Carl Dahlhaus, which continued through the 20th century. Starting in the 17th century, the primary factors in determining genre became scoring and form, as opposed to function, text, and texture. Nevertheless, text and texture remained important elements for much longer in certain genres of sacred music, such as the requiem. “Whether we focus on functional or structural generic markers, it is interesting to look at a musical requiem as a work that follows genre conventions as they had emerged over the previous

three hundred years of the requiem’s development while at the same time providing individual musical ‘comments’ on the liturgical texts within those constraints.”¹

By his death on December 5, 1791, Mozart had fully completed the first movement, “Introitus” and “Kyrie,” as well as the vocal parts and basso continuo for much of the “Sequence” and “Offertorium,” including orchestration sketches for a portion of the “Lacrimosa.” The work was completed for performance by Franz Xaver Süssmayr, whose version remains the most performed. Baron van Swieten arranged a concert at Jahn’s Hall in Vienna on January 2, 1793, to support Mozart’s widow and his two surviving children. This was likely the first requiem performed in a concert rather than a liturgical setting.²

In a concert, a listener can ingest the chain of texts without the additional elements between movements that a funeral mass contains in a liturgical context. Thus, we experience the full text in its dramatic arc and the relationships between the movements, particularly the connection between the first and last movements, each focusing on “eternal rest” (“requiem aeternam”) and “perpetual light” (“lux perpetua”).

I. Introit: Requiem

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.

Grant them eternal rest, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them.
You are praised, God, in Zion,
and homage will be paid to You in Jerusalem.

Exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Hear my prayer,
to You all flesh will come.
Grant them eternal rest, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them

¹ Wolfgang Marx, “Types of Mercy and Non-Liturgical Dramaturgy: The Musical Requiem as a Concert Piece,” essay, in *Music and Death: Funeral Music, Memory and Re-Evaluating Life* (Boydell & Brewer, Boydell Press, 2023), 53–68.

² Marx, “Types of Mercy and Non-Liturgical Dramaturgy: The Musical Requiem as a Concert Piece”

VI. Communion: Lux aeterna

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.

Let eternal light shine on them, Lord,
as with Your saints in eternity,
because You are merciful.

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

Grant them eternal rest, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them,
as with Your saints in eternity,
because You are merciful.

Marx writes that “the framing texts are closely related yet also show a development that a listener may interpret as the result of what happened in the central texts / movements.”³ Further, the similarities in text and repetition of the lines “Requiem aeternum dona eis, Domine, / et Lux perpetua luceat eis,” suggest to the composer to utilize the same or similar music to set these movements. This is true for Mozart’s *Requiem*, in which the final movement references the opening in multiple ways. In this way, Mozart/Süssmayr establish a form which derives from the traditional Latin text and can be found in every requiem referenced in this paper: a dramatic, cyclical structure which refers to itself, but has evolved over the course of the piece.

Another core genre characteristic in this work is the use of symbolic key centers, especially D major and minor. This concept stems from the Doctrine of Affections, a Baroque-era theory that posited that music could represent specific emotions or “affections” through musical elements like modes, tonalities, meters, and rhythms, aiming to elicit a single, unified emotion in the listener⁴. Following the standards of the time, a large portion of the work, including the opening and closing movements, the “Dies irae,” and the “Lacrymosa,” are in the main key of D minor, a key often linked to emotions of sadness, melancholy, and reflection,

³ Marx, “Types of Mercy and Non-Liturgical Dramaturgy: The Musical Requiem as a Concert Piece”

⁴ J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014).

evoking a sense of tragedy or solemnity. Composers commonly employ this key to convey a somber or deeply dramatic mood.

The longest individual text of the requiem, the Sequence, contains the “Dies irae” and “Lacrymosa.” Use of the D minor key at the beginning and end of the sequence creates a cyclical form within the long text. Further, the “Dies Irae” and “Lacrymosa” are two of the darkest passages from the Sequence text, with the sense of tragedy further deepened by the use of D minor. Additionally, “Rex tremendae,” also from the Sequence, begins in the closely related key of G minor but modulates to D minor by the end of the movement, utilizing the home key for the text: “Salva me! Salva me! Salva me, fons pietatis!” which translates to “Save me, O Fount of Pity.” Here, D minor underlines the sense of fear present in the text, perhaps indicative of Mozart’s own fear of death.

The parallel key of D major appears in only one movement in the work, the “Sanctus.” The term “parallel keys” refers to two musical keys (a major and a minor) that share the same tonic note, in this case ‘D,’ grounding this movement in the central pitch center of the work. At the time, D major was considered the key of triumph, victory, and rejoice, resulting in the “Sanctus” being the most exalting and uplifting movement in the work.

Through the above characteristics of cyclic structure and symbolic tonal centers, Mozart established many of the central facets of the Concert Requiem framework. These characteristics also indicate the work’s point of view: still largely liturgical, but with hints of personal fear and resignation, especially in the context of his slow death during its composition. In this way, the point of view oscillates between the universal and intensely personal.

1.2b Johannes Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*

In February 1865, Johannes Brahms's mother passed away, a loss that caused him much grief and is likely to have inspired him to begin work on *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (*A German Requiem*). Written over a period of three years from 1865 to 1868, Brahms's requiem is significant in his output, not only for its importance to the requiem genre, but also as his longest composition and largest ensemble work. *Ein Deutsches Requiem* is one of his most frequently performed works and a standard of choral-orchestral repertoire, pushing the genre forward through the choice of text, approach to form, and economical use of symbolic motives.

As the title suggests, Brahms's requiem is in German, breaking from the long tradition of the Latin requiem, and is sacred but non-liturgical. By compiling the text himself from the Luther Bible, Brahms provides us a direct view into his own perspective while writing this work—allowing for a new kind of expression in both the text and music. Further, the choice to set the vernacular rather than the traditional Latin indicates that Brahms intended for the listener to understand the text. These factors suggest that he was speaking to the people through his requiem, rather than to God, to provide comfort to the mourning. Brahms told Carl Martin Reinthaler, director of music at the Bremen Cathedral, where the initial six movements of *A German Requiem* received their first performance, that he would have gladly called the work *Ein menschliches Requiem* (*A human Requiem*)⁵ All of this is indicative of his personal approach: while earlier settings of the Latin text focus on deliverance to the afterlife, Brahms writes from the human point of view, focusing on comforting the living.

⁵ Michael Steinberg, "Johannes Brahms: A German Requiem ..., Op. 45," essay, in *Choral Masterworks: A Listener's Guide* (Oxford University Press, 2005).

1.2c Giuseppe Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*

Giuseppe Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* was written over the course of many years and began initially after the death of Gioachino Rossini, a famous Italian composer of the time and an important contemporary of Verdi's, in 1868. At this time, all the foremost composers in Italy began working on a requiem in which each composer would write one movement, and it was for this purpose that Verdi wrote the "Libera Me." The project was never completed, and it was not until the death of Alessandro Manzoni, prolific writer and figure in Italian culture, in 1873 that Verdi revisited the requiem. He immediately began working on a full requiem to honor Manzoni, using the "Libera Me" he had already written for Rossini as the seed. The work premiered on May 22, 1874, in the church of San Marco in Milan as a part of Manzoni's funeral services. Though conceived for the concert hall, Verdi insisted on a church premiere to honor Manzoni's memory. An intriguing element of Verdi's choosing to write a requiem mass is that, to his contemporaries, the idea of him writing a Catholic requiem mass seemed very unlikely as he was an anti-religion and opposed to the dogma of the Catholic church.

Messa da Requiem takes a humanistic approach to the genre, considered "A Requiem for the Living:" he sets the traditional Latin text like an opera, a new, theatrical approach to the standard text, drawing out the inherent arc and dramatic narrative that the text contains through text setting, orchestration, and melodic and harmonic tendencies reflective of his operas. Since Manzoni was an important figure in Verdi's life, we can ascertain that this would have been a more personal work and an expression of Verdi's reckoning with mortality. Through intimate solo arias and evocative orchestration, the music also suggests an emotional and meditative perspective on God, death, judgment, and salvation, theatrically painting the scenes present in the text. The characters appear in their relationship to an entity who never sings but is present

nonetheless: death itself. The work conveys genuine terror, especially in the “Dies irae” with its explosion of percussion, winds, and voices, which returns three times after the initial “Dies irae.” This is partially due to the inclusion of the “Libera Me” text as the closing movement, rather than the traditional closing of “Lux aeterna.” Verdi’s *Messa da Requiem* adopts a theatrical, deeply human point of view, asking what it means to be human in front of the question of death and eternity.

1.2d Gabriel Fauré’s *Requiem in D minor*, Op. 48

“It has been said that my Requiem does not express the fear of death and someone has called it a lullaby of death. But it is thus that I see death: as a happy deliverance, an aspiration towards happiness above, rather than as a painful experience... As to my Requiem, perhaps I have also instinctively sought to escape from what is thought right and proper, after all the years of accompanying burial services on the organ! I know it all by heart. I wanted to write something different,”⁶

writes Fauré about his own requiem, leaning in the opposite direction as Mozart and Verdi toward lightness, compassion, and tenderness. Written over the course of three years from 1887 to 1890, and revised in 1900, it is often considered the most hopeful and uplifting of the major requiems. Michelle J. Clater writes, “Faure's personal faith tended toward the pragmatic and away from the tenets of the Catholic Church, which is quite remarkable, since Faure spent the majority of his adult life working as a musician at various churches.”⁷ This deep knowledge of church music gave Fauré a strong background from which to innovate. Biographer Jean-Michel Nectoux explains that “his religious output contains very little that is conventional. As in the rest

⁶ Robert Orledge, *Gabriel Faure* (London: Eulenburg Books, 1979).

⁷ Michelle J. Clater, “Interposed between God and Man: Agency in the Requiems of Berlioz and Faure,” *Interposed between God and Man: Agency in the Requiems of Berlioz and Faure* (dissertation, Indiana University, 2009).

of his works, compassion and tenderness are the dominant emotions and throughout we are made aware of his personal philosophy based on the possible, if not probable, existence of a better world.”⁸ In this work, Fauré innovates by creating a requiem that comforts and uplifts, reflecting his personal expression on death and afterlife.

Fauré set the traditional Latin text, but his was the first major requiem to omit “Dies irae” and include “In Paradisum.” It is based in D minor, the same key as Mozart’s requiem, though only two of the seven movements are in the home key of D minor; the rest of the movements feature major key centers and bright orchestration. All of this contributes to the sense of “happy deliverance” present in Fauré’s requiem, a musical expression of his own personal point of view.

1.2e Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem*, Op. 66

Benjamin Britten’s monumental *War Requiem* was commissioned for the consecration of the Cathedral of St. Michael at Coventry on May 30, 1962, and symbolized the resurrection of the bombed medieval church.⁹ Britten’s requiem is a deeply personal statement of the horror he—a pacifist and conscientious objector—felt toward war and its entanglement with organized religion in acts of violence. The conventional Latin text is interwoven with the poetry of Wilfred Owen, who died on the Western Front during World War I. Owen’s poetry exposes the futility of war and rejects any notion of glory, reflected in Britten’s setting. The inclusion of political commentary and secular texts is one of the major innovations of *War Requiem*.

Britten also highlights the juxtaposition of the two types of text through three spatially and instrumentally differentiated groups: (1) the Latin text is set for soprano, chorus, and orchestra; (2) Owen’s English poetry is set for tenor, baritone, and a chamber orchestra of 12

⁸ Jean-Michel Nectoux, *Gabriel Faure: A Musical Life*, trans. Roger Nichols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 111.

⁹ Malcolm MacDonald, "Preface" in *War Requiem*, Benjamin Britten (Boosey & Hawkes, 1997).

players, similar to the instrumentation of many of Britten's operas; (3) Latin hymns are set for boys choir and organ accompaniment. The separate ensembles, which require two conductors, were also inspired by the acoustical space of the cathedral in which the premiere was to take place, as the Coventry Cathedral juxtaposes a modern structure with the ruined remains of the original church. The choice of soloists at the first performance were also symbolically significant: Britten originally planned for the soloists to be Galina Vishnevskaya (Russian), Peter Pears (English), and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (German), symbolizing a spirit of international unity. However, shortly before the premiere, Soviet authorities refused to allow Vishnevskaya to travel to Coventry. With just ten days' notice, Heather Harper took her place as the soprano soloist. In the final movement, a British tenor and a German baritone portray Owen's *Strange Meeting*, where two soldiers from opposing sides, one having killed the other, encounter each other in the afterlife.¹⁰ By expanding the symbolism to the singers themselves and staging certain scenes, *War Requiem* took the practice of utilizing vocal soloists as symbols to a new level.

The requiem tradition anchors Britten's innovations, giving structure while allowing expressive freedom. The traditional Latin text is one part of this; there are also references to previous requiems, particularly the "Dies irae" passages of Mozart and Verdi. *War Requiem* also draws together many elements of Britten's work over the preceding quarter-century, even adapting music from his own earlier works. One example of this is a passage in the "Offertorium" setting Owen's re-telling of the story of Abraham and Isaac; Britten sets this to an adaptation of his own *Canticle II*, which sets the same story from the Bible. Another element is the use of twelve-tone rows, one of which occurs in the roots of the chords underneath the boys choir's "Te decet..." passage in the first movement.

¹⁰ Malcolm MacDonald, "Preface" in *War Requiem*, Benjamin Britten (Boosey & Hawkes, 1997).

From the lens of its point of view, *War Requiem* expresses not only Britten's own pacifistic perspective and deep sense of grief, but also the feelings of a people tired of war, especially considering the time and occasion of the premiere. The point of view is both inside the war (through Owen's voice) and above it (through the Mass), layering sacred vs. secular, eternal vs. temporal.

1.2f J.S. Bach

It is also important to recognize the significance of the work of J.S. Bach in this discussion. Though Bach never wrote a requiem, his masses and passions are undoubtedly influential on the evolution of the genre, as major sacred choral works. For example, Bach's *Mass in B minor* has many instances of symbolic key centers, such as a D major "Sanctus" movement. Other techniques established by Bach include: (1) the use of the golden ratio as a structural device, placing climactic points at the golden section point (around 61.8% of the piece's length) for perceived aesthetic impact; and (2) a practice of setting important passages of text to extreme counterpoint. All of these characteristics are significant to the evolution of the requiem tradition.

1.3 Musical Characteristics of the Concert Requiem Genre

The five major requiems discussed above establish and demonstrate characteristics which now form the framework of the Concert Requiem tradition. Each of these five works reframe the subject and point of view of the requiem to express a personal perspective, establishing this process of reframing as central to the genre. Beyond text and subject matter, four musical elements define the tradition: (1) cyclic or arch structure, including structural uses of the golden ratio and counterpoint; (2) symbolic key or pitch centers; (3) motivic symbolism and unity; and (4) dramatic or theatrical narrative devices.

1.3a. Cyclic or Arch Structure

Each composer approached the cyclic form differently; Brahms's technique in *Ein Deutsches Requiem* is similar to that of Mozart's requiem, bringing back elements of the music from the opening movement in the final movement and utilizing the same key centers of F and Db. This is particularly significant in that the German texts that Brahms sets in the opening and closing movements are much less similar than those of the traditional Latin, only sharing the first two words: "Selig sind" which translates to "Blessed are they." Brahms also established the seven-movement structure, creating an arc form which is now central to the requiem genre. Many of the individual movements are also built on an arc form, creating a connection between the micro and macro scales of the work. The seven movements can be divided into two smaller parts, each with its own dramatic arc. There is a sense of finality at the end of the third movement, with the triumphant fugue in D major, and a sense of new beginning with the peaceful and pastoral opening of the fourth movement in Eb major. This is further supported by the texts; movements 1-3 address the mourning process and experience, while movements 4-7 discuss comfort and eternal rest. Brahms creates a trajectory from mourning and suffering to joy and peace which occurs on both the macro and micro levels.

Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* also features a seven-movement form and brings back the opening "requiem" music in the final movement, though transposed up a minor second from A minor/major to Bb minor/major. Verdi changes the orchestration of these passages: firstly, the soprano soloist is included in this passage in the final movement. The passage is now a cappella, the chorus and soprano singing music which originally appeared in the orchestra. Verdi also furthers the cyclical structure by bringing back the "Dies irae" music periodically throughout the

requiem; it is not always the same length, depending on the text, but is always in the same key and similar orchestration.

Fauré's *Requiem* utilizes the same technique, but his choice of texts suggests a slightly different approach; like Brahms and Verdi, the work is in seven movements, but it leaves out the Sequence and instead includes the "In Paradisum" text as the final movement. The only music Fauré brings back is the introduction to the first movement, which he utilizes in the same key at the end of the "Agnus Dei" movement, when the same text returns. This serves as a return to the home key of D minor and a quasi-introduction to the "Libera me" movement. Fauré creates a palindromic arc through the choice of vocalists for each movement, as well as, on a larger scale, through the choices of key for each movement. This is another example of the narrative arc of the piece occurring on multiple levels, with a trajectory from darkness to light.

Finally, Britten's *War Requiem* also exhibits this framework, but only bringing back two small portions of music, as opposed to the larger scale recapitulations seen in the works of Mozart, Brahms, and Verdi. One of the two passages is the "Kyrie" chorale at the end of the first movement, which returns first at the end of the sequence for the "Pie Jesu" text, and second for the final line of text in the entire work, at the end of the 'In Paradisum' movement. Britten also brings back the "Dies irae" music, once within the Sequence movement, and again during the "Libera me" movement, though this time the music has changed, only referencing the original "Dies irae" in the orchestra. A 2-part analysis, like Brahms's requiem, can be applied to *War Requiem* with the first arch ending with the end of movement III, "Offertorium," and beginning the second arch with the annunciatory bells of the opening of the 'Sanctus' movement.

1.3b. Counterpoint and Golden Ratio as Structural Techniques

Another facet of the formal technique established in the works of Bach and these five major requiems is the use of golden ratio and counterpoint to highlight significant structural or textual moments. In Mozart's requiem, this occurs in the opening and closing movements, utilizing a fugue for the "Kyrie" passage of the first movement and the "Cum sanctis tuis..." passage in the final movement. This both emphasizes these important passages of text as well as creating a link between the opening and closing movements. Another important fugue in Mozart's requiem is in the Offertory movement, for the two "Quam olim abraham..." passages surrounding the "Hostias." This highlights the importance of this section of text.

Brahms utilizes fugues as a symbol of the transformation to the joy and comfort of eternal life in movements II, III, and VI. In movements II and VI, the movement begins in a minor key, Bb minor and C minor respectively, and transitions to the parallel major key for the fugue. A similar modulation occurs in the third movement, beginning in D minor and ultimately modulating to D major for the triumphant and joyful fugue, highlighting the final line of text in the movement: "Der Gerechten Seelen sind in Gottes Hand und keine Qual rühret sie an," which translates to "But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them." This fugue creates a climactic centerpiece for the work. Verdi utilizes counterpoint in a similar fashion, as seen in the "Sanctus" movement with an exultant and climactic double fugue in F major about two-thirds through the work.

Fauré's approach to counterpoint also reflects Brahms's, featured in the second movement. He establishes two-part imitative counterpoint in the opening of the movement, but the language is chromatic and tonally unsettled, creating a sense of anxiety and discomfort. Fauré modulates to D major for the Baritone solo passage that sets the "Hostias" text, beginning a

narrative transition to peace and comfort. He then brings back the counterpoint from the opening, now expanded to 4 voices and in the key of D major. Fauré employs counterpoint to create an arch structure within the movement as well as deepen the dramatic narrative.

Britten also features counterpoint as a dramatic and formal device in the offertory movement, building complex, imitative contrapuntal passages in mixed meter to highlight the “Quam olim abraham...” text. These passages surround the setting of Owen’s retelling of the Abraham and Isaac story, underscoring the text through the tension and discomfort created by the counterpoint. This also serves to create a dramatic arc within the movement.

1.3c Symbolism through Tonal Centers

Symbolic key centers are the second facet established by Mozart, especially relating to D minor and major in his requiem. This technique is present in Brahms’s requiem as well, in moments such as the D major fugue at the end of the third movement. The use of D major for this fugue supports the triumphant and joyful tone, accentuating the same feelings present in the text.

Fauré and Britten also utilize D major and minor as symbolic centers; Fauré’s requiem, like Mozart’s, is in D minor as an overarching key area. Though only two of the seven movements are in D minor, two of the middle movements are in F and Bb major, two closely related keys to D minor. The outer arcs of the three midlevel arcs, encompassing movements I–II and movements VI–VII, each begin in D minor and modulate to D major, reflecting the trajectory from mourning to comfort. The extramusical meaning of each key helps to deepen this narrative.

Britten’s use of symbolism through tonal centers is unique in that the overall musical language is neo-classical, without use of tonal harmonic progressions, so D appears more as a

pitch center than a key center, though with melodic or harmonic fragments that evoke D minor or major. One example is the “Dies irae,” in which the 7/4 ostinato, after the brass introduction, is a D pedal and the first phrase in the chorus is in D minor. The passage then moves through several pitch areas, but starting in D minor establishes a connection to Mozart and the symbolism of this key. Britten takes a similar approach for the “Sanctus” movement; the beginning of the “Hosanna” section, one of the brightest passages in the work, is placed solidly in D major. This passage moves through keys but periodically returns to D major; the same occurs in the return of this material after the “Benedictus” and the passage ends with a triumphant swell in D major, reflecting the standard practice of the tradition.

1.3d Motivic Symbolism and Unity

The technique of motivic symbolism and unity also appears in each of the five major requiems, creating continuity and helping to convey the narrative trajectory of each work. In Mozart's *Requiem*, this is achieved through the thematic transformation of motifs, such as the “Dies irae” melody being reinterpreted in a major key and developed for the “Sanctus.” The use of a descending minor second “sigh” motive is also pervasive throughout the work, especially as seen in the first and last movements, and the “Lacrymosa.” Additionally, the fugue subjects in the Offertorium are derived from earlier motifs, unifying the work’s overall melodic material.

Verdi also establishes central motives in the first moments of his requiem, the two most important being (1) a descending minor triad, and (2) a descending tetrachord. Both motives come from his original “Libera me,” the generating material for the entire work. This is especially seen in the transformation of these motives throughout the Sequence.

Motivic unity in Brahms’s and Fauré’s requiems occurs with the prevalence of specific intervals. In *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, the central motive is a major third plus a minor second,

established in the soprano voice of the chorus' first entrance. This motive appears throughout the work, a few examples being: (1) the first three notes of the march melody in movement II; (2) the first three notes of the fugue subject in movement III; (3) the first three notes of the soprano voice in the first chorus entrance of movement IV; (4) the first three notes of the fugue subject in movement VI, in inversion; and (5) in the chorus and orchestra in the end of movement VII. Fauré's requiem is less overt, featuring perfect fourths and fifths as central to most of the melodic material in the work. These intervals occur as well in the key relationships of the three middle movements: E♭ major, B♭ major, F major. The ubiquity of these intervals in Fauré's requiem symbolizes his perspective on death and afterlife: "an aspiration toward happiness above."¹¹

Britten synthesizes both motivic techniques; the C-F# augmented fourth (tri-tone) interval is present throughout the entirety of the work, symbolizing "two equally opposed and irreconcilable forces."¹² The tri-tone also undermines any tonal pull and is only resolved twice in the entire work. Britten also features three distinctive motives in the brass opening of the "Dies Irae," which continually reappear to represent the terror and wrath of war.

1.3e Dramatic or Theatrical Narrative Devices

Finally, Mozart, Verdi, and Britten all utilize characteristics of opera or theatre as dramatic narrative devices in their requiems, as discussed earlier in the chapter. This often occurs in symbolic solo passages, instrumentation or ensemble choices, and text painting in the orchestration. One example is the "Tuba mirum" passage in Mozart's requiem, which depicts the summoning of the dead to judgment through a musical instrument, often interpreted as a trumpet

¹¹ Jean-Michel Nectoux, *Gabriel Faure: A Musical Life*, trans. Roger Nichols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 111.

¹² Malcolm MacDonald, "Preface" in *War Requiem*, Benjamin Britten (Boosey & Hawkes, 1997).

or trombone, and is therefore typically led by the orchestra's brass section. Mozart introduces it with an unaccompanied trombone, an unusual choice for a Classical composer. Unlike other versions, his treatment is more lyrical, not marked *fortissimo*, and entrusted to the soloists rather than the choir, marking their first entrance in the sequence. The key shifts from D minor to Bb major. The resurrection of the dead is illustrated through musical imagery: both the trombone and vocal lines reach progressively higher notes in each phrase, with voice entries rising stepwise from bass to soprano. It feels as though Mozart seeks to offer comfort to the listener, where others might aim to instill fear.¹³

Verdi utilizes theatrical techniques throughout his requiem, but two examples stand out in particular. The first is the formidable "Dies irae" music, a terrifying expression of doom and judgment with thunderous percussion and *fortissimo* chromatic cries from the chorus. Each time this music returns, three times after the initial statement, it is a reminder of the inescapability of mortality. Another example is at the end of the "Lux aeterna;" this is the return of the music from the opening, now transposed up a half step to Bb and including the soprano soloist, representing the sinner asking for salvation. In the last two statements of the word 'requiem,' the soprano first leaps up a perfect fifth to F then up an octave to a high Bb. This leap up an octave is as if her soul is ascending, a foreshadowing that leads to the final "Libera me" ("Deliver me").

As mentioned earlier, one example of theatrical narrative techniques from Britten's *War Requiem* is the last passage of English text, setting Owen's *Strange Meeting*. The smaller ensemble which accompanies the tenor and baritone solo passages is evocative of Britten's operas and creates a sense of intimacy with the soloists. Britten also features dramatic devices in

¹³ Wolfgang Marx, "Types of Mercy and Non-Liturgical Dramaturgy: The Musical Requiem as a Concert Piece," essay, in *Music and Death: Funeral Music, Memory and Re-Evaluating Life* (Boydell & Brewer, Boydell Press, 2023), 53–68.

the orchestration, especially in the second movement, “Dies irae.” The four central motives of the movement are presented in the brass and are developed throughout the movement, representing the calling of the dead to judgment from the “Tuba mirum” text. This orchestration theatrically paints an image of the “day of wrath.”

Each of the above four central characteristics—structure, symbolic keys, motivic unity, and theatrical devices—in addition to text, forms the framework upon which 21st-century composers continue to build the genre. These foundations set the stage for contemporary reinterpretations explored in the following chapters.

1.4 Other Influences on the Concert Requiem in the 21st Century

Although the primary analytical framework established in this chapter grows out of the foundation built by Mozart, Brahms, Verdi, Fauré, and Britten, several later 20th-century works also played a significant role in influencing how composers of the 21st century approach the genre. Among these, the requiems of György Ligeti and Krzysztof Penderecki stand out as forward-looking contributions that expanded the genre’s expressive, sonic, and cultural horizons. Their innovations in texture, timbre, scale, and the intersection of sacred text with historical memory pushed the requiem forward and opened new possibilities for its continuation into the modern era. The impact of these works on contemporary composers is unmistakable, making them essential touchstones in understanding the broader landscape of the requiem’s evolution into the 21st century.

1.4a György Ligeti’s *Requiem* (1963–65)

Commissioned in 1961 for a series of new music concerts on Swedish radio, György Ligeti’s *Requiem* marks a significant modernist contribution to the tradition, offering a highly personal response to the text that departs from tonal, melodic, and formal conventions. He originally intended to set the entire Latin Mass text but ultimately decided only to set about half:

“Introitus,” “Kyrie,” and portions of the “Dies irae” and “Lacrimosa,” with a duration of roughly thirty minutes. Ligeti treats the text with great seriousness, shaping a musical language that reflects the instability and anxiety of the postwar era. Featured in films such as *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and *Godzilla* (2014), the work is often described as expressing the sound of death itself.

Ligeti’s use of micropolyphony—closely spaced, continuously shifting contrapuntal lines—creates a dense sound world in which individual voices merge into large, evolving sound masses. One example of this is the well-known “Kyrie,” a complex, six-minute movement written over nine months, functions as a vast and slowly unfolding fugue featuring twenty vocal lines. This approach to texture is an element of Ligeti’s requiem that 21st-century composers continue to draw from. Richard Steinitz explains that the movement draws from the work of Ockeghem, “refracted and multiplied through the technique of micropolyphony,”¹⁴ a connection to the origins of the requiem genre. Further, the fragmented “Dies irae” emphasizes timbral tension rather than dramatic narrative, though still theatrically conveying imagery of wrath and doom from the text. In combining rigorous contrapuntal design with avant-garde sonic techniques, Ligeti offers a personal expression through a requiem that confronts the overwhelming and unknowable aspects of human mortality.

1.4b Krzysztof Penderecki’s *Polskie Requiem* (1980–2005)

In 1980, the Polish trade union Solidarity commissioned Krzysztof Penderecki to write a work for the unveiling of a monument at the Gdańsk shipyards, honoring those who died in the 1970 antigovernment protests. Penderecki composed the *Lacrimosa*, dedicated to Lech Wałęsa, and later expanded it into the *Polish Requiem*, adding additional movements to commemorate

¹⁴ Richard Steinitz, *György Ligeti: Music of the Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003).

various national and patriotic events such as the Katyn massacre and the Warsaw Uprising. Composed and revised over a span of twenty-five years, the majority of the work sets the traditional Latin Mass text with the addition of one hymn in Polish for the Offertory movement, “Święty Boże,” which is the Polish translation of the Trisagion, an ancient hymn traditionally used in the Divine Liturgy across most Eastern Orthodox, Western Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, and Eastern Catholic traditions. This hymn functions in the requiem as liturgical supplication and national outcry, blurring the line between sacred ritual and public testimony.

The *Polish Requiem* received its premiere in Stuttgart, Germany on 28 September 1984. Penderecki later revised and broadened the composition in 1993 and expanded it once more in 2005 with the addition of the *Ciaccona*, a chaconne for strings in memory of Pope John Paul II. Penderecki draws on both avant-garde sonorities and later neo-Romantic language, creating a sound world that is at once raw, lamentational, and spiritually resonant. This unique synthesis of old and new techniques, often called “pluralism,” is an expressive technique that continues to be relevant in the 21st century. The nationalist point of view and Penderecki’s personal approach to the genre transform the requiem into a vehicle for cultural remembrance and moral reckoning. He states, “I don’t write political music. Political music is immediately obsolete...The requiem is dedicated to certain people and events, but the music has a broader significance.”¹⁵

¹⁵ Philip Anson, “Krystof Penderecki Talks about the Polish Requiem,” *La Scena Musicale*, April 1, 1998, <https://www.scena.org/lsm/sm3-6/sm36pene.htm>.

1.5 21st Century Case Studies: Framework for Analysis

The seven preceding works highlight the evolution of the requiem tradition and characteristics that define the genre. The final section of this chapter outlines the analytical framework through which I examine the chosen 21st-century works in greater depth, highlighting how contemporary composers adapt inherited conventions while responding to modern social, cultural, and ecological concerns. This framework centers on five foundational characteristics identified above: (1) textual treatment; (2) structural design; (3) symbolic tonal centers; (4) motivic unity; and (5) theatrical devices. Together, these elements provide a consistent lens for comparing works that otherwise differ widely in purpose, aesthetic, and scope. The following table provides the reason for choosing the 21st-century works and the framework for analysis that applies to each work.

Piece	Composer	Reason for Inclusion	Requiem Characteristics
<i>An American Requiem</i>	Richard Danielpour	Represents an American perspective at the turn of the century and offers a compelling contemporary approach to the requiem tradition.	1. Partial Latin text; 2. Arc form; 3. Symbolic keys; 4. Motivic unity; 5. Dramatic devices
<i>Armenian Requiem</i>	Ian Krouse	Previous analytical relationship with the work and significance as the first full requiem mass set in Armenian, making it an important cultural and musical milestone.	1. Text compiled from hymns; 2. Cyclic form; 3. Symbolic keys; 4. Dramatic devices;
<i>Mass for the Endangered</i>	Sarah Kirkland Snider	Thematic resonance with my own interest in nature and because, while structured as a standard mass, it operates compellingly as a modern reinterpretation of the requiem form.	1. Partial Latin text; 2. Cyclic form; 3. Symbolic keys; 4. Motivic unity

Figure 1.1. Analytical Framework Table

The choice to focus on Danielpour's *An American Requiem*, Krouse's *Armenian Requiem*, and Snider's *Mass for the Endangered* arises from their ability to illuminate the requiem's contemporary resonance. Each engages with urgent 21st-century questions—national grief, environmental crisis, and cultural memory—while drawing on a centuries-old musical lineage. Additionally, all three works are by American composers, an artistic identity that resonates deeply with me and informs my own creative practice. Choosing pieces rooted in this shared cultural context allowed me to engage on a personal level with each work and to consider how their perspectives intersect with and illuminate my own. By examining these works through a shared analytical framework, this study demonstrates how the Requiem continues to serve as a dynamic medium through which contemporary composers negotiate mortality, spirituality, humanity, and hope.

CHAPTER 2: AN AMERICAN REQUIEM BY RICHARD DANIELPOUR

“to the memory of those who died in the wake of the tragic events of September 11, 2001; and in tribute to the American soldier”¹⁶ reads the dedication on the top of the first page of Richard Danielpour’s *An American Requiem*. Though composed over the course of a year, from September 2000 to September 2001, Danielpour’s interest to compose this work began much earlier. He expressed to me in an interview, “...throughout the seventies there was a question that people young and old were asking: ‘Why do we fight wars in which American Boys are dying?’ ...I was aware of the Britten *War Requiem*, but it’s a European requiem...so I thought to myself, ‘Why don’t we have an American requiem?’”¹⁷

With the work in mind, Danielpour initiated dialogues with American veterans of World War II, the Korean War and the war in Vietnam. In the program note, he reflects that it became immediately apparent he had been “separate from anything having to do directly with the experiences that had shaped, and in some ways, defined the lives of these servicemen,”¹⁸ despite being born shortly after WWII and living through the Vietnam War as an adult. He explained to me that “whether it was a war that had to be fought, like World War II, or a war that probably shouldn’t have been fought and couldn’t have been won, like Vietnam, the integrity of the soldiers remains the same.”¹⁹ Over the course of the interviews, Danielpour was left with two particular impressions from the veterans: (1) their integrity, vigilance, and inner resolve to sacrifice for others, even to the point of giving their lives for their comrades if necessary, and (2) belief in the absolute hellishness and insanity that exists in a state of war. Danielpour expressed,

¹⁶ Richard Danielpour, *An American Requiem*. (Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2001), 1

¹⁷ Richard Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

¹⁸ Richard Danielpour, “An American Requiem: Richard Danielpour – Programme Note,” Wise Music Classical, <https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/27128/An-American-Requiem--Richard-Danielpour/>.

¹⁹ Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

“I’m somebody who doesn't believe in wars as a way of solving the world's problems, but my heart was really aligned with [the soldiers].”²⁰

In late summer 2001, Danielpour had completed the requiem and was in the process of reviewing the engraved galleys before submitting the finalized work to his publisher, G. Schirmer. By early September, the score was finished, and Danielpour traveled to Aaron Copland’s house in Peekskill, New York, for a month-long residency. On the morning of September 11, as he began his first full day there, he called his editor, Deborah Horne, to confirm production details. During their conversation, Horne, speaking from Schirmer’s downtown Manhattan office, witnessed the second plane strike the World Trade Center. Danielpour later recalled watching the towers collapse on television, an experience that transformed his understanding of the work he had just completed. He perceived the attacks as a moment in which civilians shared a sense of collective vulnerability with American soldiers, stating, “...it was no longer soldiers and civilians, we shared in this.”²¹ In response, he dedicated the composition to both the victims of 9/11 and to the American soldier, an expression of national mourning and unity.

Premiered on November 13, 2001 by the Pacific Symphony Orchestra and Carl St. Clair, *An American Requiem* encapsulates Danielpour’s unique voice, recognized for its lyrical expressivity, dramatic intensity, and deep engagement with both personal and universal themes. His style is also known for bridging the traditions of Western classical music with a contemporary American sound world that is accessible to a broad range of audiences, epitomized in his requiem as well. Written at the onset of the 21st century, *An American Requiem* provides a

²⁰ Richard Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

²¹ Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

perfect case study for this exploration, connecting to and expanding upon the Concert Requiem framework for expressing a distinctive point of view: a deeply humanistic stance that seeks to honor the courage and sacrifice of soldiers while confronting the moral and emotional devastation of war.

2.1 Relationship to the Tradition

Danielpour draws from the rich tradition outlined in Chapter 1 through five characteristics: (1) text; (2) structure and counterpoint; (3) symbolic tonal centers; (4) motivic unity; and (5) dramatic and theatrical techniques.

2.1a Text

The first connection to the requiem tradition is through the text, in which Danielpour braids the traditional Latin with American poetry by Whitman, Emerson, Michael Harper, Hilda Doolittle (known as H.D.), and an anonymous African American spiritual. In choosing and placing these texts, Danielpour “sought to juxtapose the personal, private issues that arose out of these campaigns, with the more public, global and philosophical ones.”²² He also explains that,

“The Latin Requiem texts were used not only because they represent a spiritual dimension (involving man’s relationship to a Supreme Being in the face of death), but also because it is an archetypal language traversing both ancient and modern cultures. I also found the invoked images of the Apocalypse and the spiritual hell and fear of annihilation to be an appropriate reflection of the hell on earth that is experienced in war. In some sense *An American Requiem* is not only about our relationship to war, but also our relationship to death as a part of life”²³

²² Richard Danielpour, “An American Requiem: Richard Danielpour – Programme Note”

²³ Danielpour, “An American Requiem: Richard Danielpour – Programme Note”

Danielpour explained to me that he saw this dichotomy of heaven and hell in the Latin text, with the English text as the dividing line between the two extremes, representing what happens on Earth in history as a narrative that deals with both war and peace.²⁴ The practice of bringing political commentary into the requiem genre, relevant to all three 21st-century works in this case study, is a method by which Danielpour furthers the requiem's evolution.

The relationship between text, instrumentation, and soloist symbolism also links the work to the broader tradition. *An American Requiem* is scored for Mezzo-soprano, Tenor, Baritone; SATB chorus; 3 flutes (one doubling piccolo, one doubling alto flute), 3 oboes (one doubling English horn), 3 clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet), 3 bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns (two doubling Wagner tubas in F), 3 trumpets in C, 2 trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, 5 percussion, piano (doubling celeste), harp, string orchestra, and 6 offstage trombones. The Latin texts are usually given to the chorus (although sometimes sung by the soloists), while the American poems are always given to the soloists either individually or in ensemble. Danielpour explains that each of the soloists represents someone in mourning: the mezzo-soprano as the mother, the baritone as the father, and the tenor as the comrade or surviving soldier²⁵, which “indicates that the work is not only about soldiers but also about their families, and in essence the witnesses and survivors of such events.”²⁶ This broadens the scope of the work to include not just those who have physically fought, but all who bear the emotional and spiritual costs of war. The humanistic essence of addressing the living and comforting those in mourning is a way the work connects to Brahms.

²⁴ Richard Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

²⁵ Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

²⁶ Danielpour, “An American Requiem: Richard Danielpour – Programme Note”

The choice and placement of texts are one method by which *An American Requiem* exhibits a complex relationship with American identity, simultaneously honoring American soldiers and expressing a clear anti-war political commentary. By combining the Latin Mass text with American poetry, Danielpour expands the focus beyond any single conflict or nation. The Latin texts provide an archetypal dimension—a meditation on death and transcendence—while the American poems personalize and humanize that meditation, grounding it in lived experience.

2.1b Structure

The overall form of *An American Requiem* exhibits the point of view through a multi-level arc structure, following a narrative trajectory of profound mourning to anger and apocalypse to, ultimately, peaceful and reflective melancholy on both the macro and micro level. This arc structure reflects the emotional and philosophical journey of the work's humanist point of view, capturing the inner evolution from witnessing suffering to seeking reconciliation. The use of this structure on multiple scales creates unity and indicates the universal versus personal dimensions present in the work.

On the micro level, each movement is a self-contained arc, moving from one type of material to another, finally returning to the original material or dramatic sensibility in some way. This is reflected musically in Movement I with a large-scale rounded binary (A B ½A) form; this occurs even on a smaller scale within the movement, as the initial “Introit” passage is a rounded binary form as well. The final “Kyrie” section, the shortened return of the A material, also incorporates motives from the B section, providing a sense of unity and development. This occurs in the text as well; for example, the first movement begins with the Latin “Introit” text, moves to two Whitman poems, then returns to the “Kyrie eleison” text to end the movement. The proportion and placement of the texts pay homage to the first movement of *War Requiem*,

utilizing the “Kyrie” section as a short bookend. This form contrasts works such as Mozart’s requiem, which features a substantial fugue for the “Kyrie” section.

The work comprises seven movements, a structure common to the requiems of Brahms, Verdi, and Fauré. The piece is then separated into two large parts, which each begin and end in Latin, and move through the emotional trajectory described earlier, with Movement IV, “Sanctus,” as the radiant centerpiece around which the rest of the work unfolds. The first part is an exposition of the three soloists, establishing their roles within the work as a mother, father, and comrade of the deceased soldier. In the “Pie Jesu” at the end of Part I, the soloists come together for the first time, collectively mourning the unknown soldier. Part II, in contrast, deals more specifically with issues of our time, centering the narrative around the evolution of American involvement in foreign conflicts.

On the largest scale, each movement in the first half maps to a movement in the second half, with the “Sanctus-Benedictus” movement in the center, creating a palindromic arc. The movements connect as follows:

- I. Introit maps to VII. Lux Aeterna;
- II. Dies irae maps to VI. Libera me / Not in our time;
- III. Vigil II-Lacrimosa-Pie Jesu maps to V. Lay this body down-Agnus Dei.

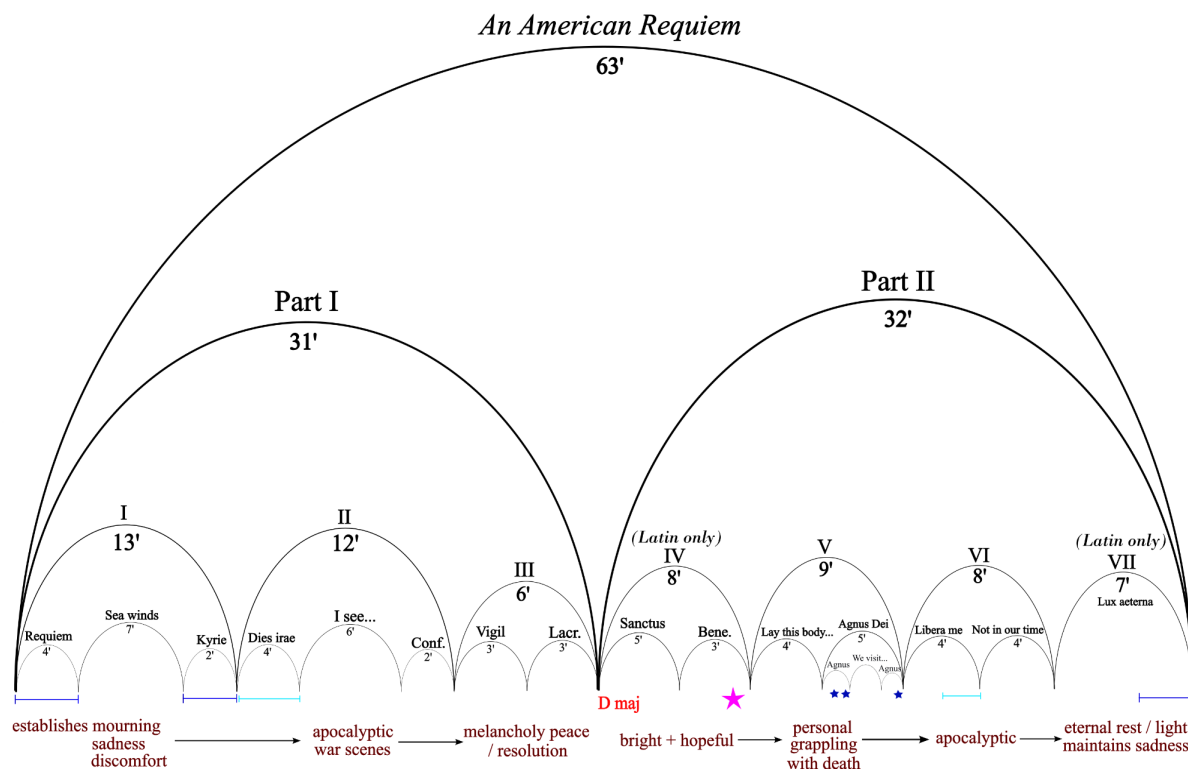


Figure 2.1. *An American Requiem*, Arc Diagram

The central movement, “Sanctus-Benedictus” is the only movement without darkness, functioning as a bright beacon of hope in the center of the work. This movement also includes the Golden section point in the work, at around thirty-eight and a half minutes in: the final, climactic setting of “in excelsis” (“in the highest”). This is also shown in the figure above with a pink star to indicate the exact spot. This is a crucial moment in the traditional requiem mass text, combining the Hebrew plea (Hosanna, “Save us”) with the Latin “In excelsis,” indicating a cry for salvation and referencing God’s highest place in heaven. Highlighting ‘in excelsis’ in particular shows the importance of a belief in a higher place and the hope for transcendence beyond human violence. The orchestration also contributes to the climactic sense with the entrance of two sets of chimes marked “*f con forza!*” on the final chord of the movement. The meaning of the text is reflected formally, as this is the highest point in the work. Simultaneously, the transition from this transcendent moment to the reality and intimacy of “Lay This Body

Down” in the opening of the following movement creates a juxtaposition between divine ideals and the reality of human experience.

The fugato in the opening of Movement VII is another formal way in which Danielpour indicates especially significant spots in the text. This sets the text “Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,” meaning “Let everlasting light shine upon them, O Lord.” This is another of the most essential lines in the traditional Latin text. Danielpour’s “Lux aeterna” fugato is quiet and chromatic, featuring a modulating subject, and completely a cappella. The fugato passage begins in F major, ultimately modulating to a final cadence in F# major. This is significant in relation to the palindromic form because the “Kyrie” passage that closes the first movement mirrors the opening in its softness, somber tone, and chromatic writing, with the choir playing a prominent role. The opening two bars of the “Kyrie” are completely a cappella, and the rest of the choral statements in this section are accompanied sparsely. Further, the “Kyrie” ends with a cadence in F major, mapping to the F major opening of movement VII. The score of these two passages can be found in Appendix A.

The palindromic form is also supported by the cyclical nature of *An American Requiem*. Like many of the works mentioned in Chapter 1, Danielpour’s requiem utilizes the same music in the opening and closing movements, exactly bookending the beginning and end of the work. The specific spots are shown with blue brackets in the arc diagram above. This is a clear choice considering the placement of and similarities between the “Requiem” and “Lux aeterna” texts. Danielpour does not repeat the music exactly; when the requiem material returns at the end, more colors are added to the orchestration, foregrounding the important motives and exhibiting the way the opening music has evolved over the journey of the work.

One example of this evolution is in the “...et lux perpetua” section; in the first statement of the material in movement I, the choir announces the text at a *fortissimo* volume, a stark contrast from the extreme quiet of the beginning, and transposed to Ab major, an enharmonic major third up from the established E pitch center. Both factors contribute to the unsettled, unresolved sense of the opening. When this material returns in Movement VII, the choir is marked *p sotto voce* and continues in the E key center. Additionally, the tenor and bass parts in the second measure of the phrase are altered slightly to lessen the level of dissonance.

Figure 2.2. Reduction of Chorus, *An American Requiem*, Movement I, mm. 18-23

Figure 2.3. Reduction of Chorus, *An American Requiem*, Movement VII, mm. 44-49

This allows the music to both remain settled as well as return to the requiem music easily. Where the first movement moves into “Te decet hymnus...,” the final movement moves immediately back to “Requiem aeternam” to bring the work to a close. These elements provide a sense of evolution and narrative, changing the material by the journey it has been on through the work, as

well as helping to illustrate the overall emotional trajectory, ending the work with peaceful melancholy rather than annunciatory anger.

The “requiem” music also appears in two other spots, which map symmetrically to each other in the palindromic form. The first is at the end of the first movement, for the “Kyrie eleison” passage. The transition into the “Kyrie” section out of the passage of Whitman poetry features the same C major/minor chord with E in the bass, as well as the three repeated ‘D’s of “requiem,” intoned in the horns and clarinet. The choir then sings the same “Requiem aeternam” melody in chorale form, a cappella, and is answered by the ascending, E minor ninth arpeggio figure in the harp and clarinets, which was a central motive in the Whitman passage. The chorus’ chorale returns with “Christe eleison,” now moving through ‘D’ and ‘Eb’ to push the tonality up to F minor, the harp/clarinet figure now up a half step. The chorus returns for the final “Kyrie eleison,” on ‘B’ and ‘D#’ instead of ‘B’ and ‘D,’ finally “resolving” to an F major seventh chord in third inversion. The ‘E’ in the bass voice connects the final chord to the opening of the work but creates a sense of instability leaving the seventh of the chord in the bass. The final F major/minor orchestral chord functions similarly; it connects back to the opening of the work with the major/minor sonority but is an unresolved sonority with duality of the major and minor third.

Figure 2.4. Reduction of Chorus, *An American Requiem*, Movement I, mm. 165-172

This final chorale of the first movement maps subtly onto three specific parts of the “Agnus Dei” movement, the second additional use of the central “Requiem aeternam” music.

original “Dies irae” in the orchestra. Danielpour’s requiem takes this one step further, utilizing different but motivically connected music for the “Dies irae” passage in the sixth movement. Main motives that connect the two “Dies irae” sections include a driving quarter note backdrop, the octatonic scale as a central melodic device, two against three or three against four polyrhythms, and use of the same chord voicings in the choir. These motives and use of percussion create a mechanistic feeling, representative of the military industrial complex or “War Machine.”

A central facet that contrasts the two “Dies irae” passages is the tempo; the first passage, in movement II, is marked “Sinister, (ben misurato, preciso) ♩ = 126,” while the second, in movement VI, is marked “Doppio movimento ♩ = 144.” Another contrasting characteristic is the approach to text setting. The section in movement II utilizes longer note values and an even setting, such as four quarter notes for “Dies irae,” while movement VI features short note values and a more disjunct setting, such as two eighths, quarter rest, two eighths, quarter rest for the same text.

Both elements are indicative of an overall difference in energy between the two sections; the passage in movement II is controlled and ominous, while the passage in movement VI has a sense of panic and anxiety. These contrasting expressions are illustrative of the multi-level form, as each passage is the climax of suffering and apocalypse within their respective movements and larger parts, but the “Libera me” (the first half of movement VI) serves as the peak of this within the work as a whole. The “Dies irae” passages are similar enough to create the connection between the two moments musically, but the contrasting characteristics allows the later ‘Dies irae’ to emerge as the climax of the form on the largest scale.

In short, the micro and macro arc forms function as a metaphor for the multidimensional emotional and spiritual journey of the requiem's point of view: an ascent from mourning into chaos, followed by a return to contemplative, compassionate understanding.

2.1c Symbolic Tonal Centers

An American Requiem also draws from the Concert Requiem tradition and exhibits its point of view through symbolic tonal centers. The clearest symbolic use of key in *An American Requiem* occurs in the "Hosanna in excelsis" passages of movement IV, which are rooted solidly in D major, a standard key to symbolize triumph, celebration, and majesty, especially as these adjectives relate to an expression of praising God, often utilized with the "Sanctus" text. This can be seen in the requiems of Mozart and Britten, as well as Bach's *Mass in B minor* and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*. This sense is further supported by the orchestration, as much of the orchestra joins the choir in its celebratory expression of "Hosanna in excelsis." Further, the bass voices of the orchestra feature parallel ascending triads within the D major scale, deepening the expression and text painting of "in excelsis" ("in the highest"). Additionally, the first pitch sung by the chorus in the work is 'D.' Within the context of the opening C major/minor sonority in first inversion, the 'D' is a foreign pitch that later becomes the key of deliverance in the "Hosanna" passage. This can be seen on the first page of the score in Appendix A.

The overall pitch center of E also contains symbolic meaning: E minor, featured prominently throughout *An American Requiem*, is a restless key of grief and longing. This is pertinent to the more personal side, the side which mourns the loss of a loved one on a real, personal level, of the two worlds that *An American Requiem* portrays, as grief pervades the work despite moments of resolution and peace. These two key centers illustrate the juxtaposition of the personal and philosophical perspectives and the emotions that arise from each.

2.1d Motivic Unity and Symbolism

The point of view is also indicated through the symbolic motives and motivic unity found throughout *An American Requiem*. One example is the “requiem” motive: three even repetitions of the same note or chord, with the third held longer, which represents grief and remembrance. This was discussed in detail in relation to the music of the opening and closing, but the motive appears throughout the piece. One example is at the end of each “Dies irae” passage second movement; the first time this occurs is at measure 99, where the motive is stated in the bassoons, trombones, tuba, cellos, and basses, and repeated twice in different registers. This aggressive and ominous iteration of the motive contrasts the motive in movement I, showing various forms of grief. A similar version of the motive occurs in the opening of movement VI as well. The motive also appears at measure 116 in the “Lacrimosa” passage of movement III; here, it is scored for 1 solo trumpet which accentuates the third beat of each measure and emerges over the rest of the orchestra, like a beacon. This contrasting version of the motive reflects the grief in the “Lacrimosa” text. Interestingly, these examples all appear during passages of Latin text.

Another central motive is the major/minor chord which appears often throughout the piece. This is one motive that is exemplary of the juxtaposition of two perspectives or worldviews that Danielpour discusses in his program note. The chromatic, blurry music, seen especially in the first and last movements, are a textural expression of this sonority. This motive also expands to moments of bitonality; two examples of this are measure 125 in movement I, which features a tutti orchestral chord of Ab major and A major, and the opening of movement II, in which the ostinato is presented simultaneously in Ab major and A major.

Other important motives include: (1) a descending half step, which represents death or doom as seen in movement I, the “Dies Irae,” and “Lay This Body Down,” among others; (2) the

ascending arpeggio “wave” motive, which is prevalent in movements I and VII but appears throughout the piece to symbolize a desire for reconciliation and peace; (3) two against three, three against four, and other polyrhythms representative of the tension between the two worlds of the work; (4) sixteenth plus dotted eighth “rocking” rhythmic motive, utilized for text painting nature or pastorale scenes; and (5) a minor third intervallic motive, which is representative of the overall humanity present in the issues discussed by Danielpour in the program note, often presented as a source of hope, peace, and comfort. Finally, there is a theme of expansion present throughout the requiem, one example of which is the melodic expansion over the course of the two statements of “...dona eis requiem” and final “...dona nobis pacem” in the “Agnus Dei” section. This theme occurs musically in various ways and will continue to be explored throughout the chapter.

2.1e Dramatic and Theatrical Techniques

As discussed in the beginning of the chapter, the soloists are symbolic in general, in that all the American poetry is sung by them, and hence they represent the personal, private issues that arose out of the wars, a central tenet of the work’s point of view. This symbolism is supported by specific moments with each soloist, creating a dramatic, theatrical element to the work, a practice beginning with Mozart and furthered by Verdi and Britten. Though it is a distinctly American work, *An American Requiem* contains many inferences to Italian music; this is no coincidence as the short score for the work was written in Italy at Lake Como. As a result, the work is closer in character to the requiems Mozart and Verdi, the two major requiems with more Italian characteristics than any other, and the operatic undertones are a large part of this connection. In our conversation, Danielpour reflected that many of his concert works function as “secret operas,” each containing its own dramatic arc and hidden narrative. He notes that,

although he mainly writes concert music, his approach is fundamentally theatrical; this quality is certainly present in *An American Requiem*, explaining the resemblance to Verdi's: an opera in disguise.²⁷

The first instance of this is in the opening movement, with the mezzo-soprano passage of Whitman and Emerson texts. First, the passage contrasts the preceding "Requiem aeternam" through brighter orchestration, lighter texture, and greater motion in the orchestra, especially with the use of the ascending "wave" motive. This sharp contrast establishes a deeper duality between the Latin and English sections, as this is the opening of the piece and immediately indicates to the listener a distinctive difference between the two. Second, the use of the "rocking" rhythm and ascending "wave" motive text paints the scene for "Sea winds blow..." in the first line of the Whitman text, bringing the music into a more relatable light for the listener with imagery they have likely experienced. Even before the mezzo soloist enters, the listener can tell that they are in a new emotional space. The mezzo's entrance amplifies this contrast, with soaring, expressive lines that float over the orchestral backdrop, but it is only at the end of the Whitman excerpt, with the line "I'll perfume the grave of him that I love," that the listener fully understands the meaning of this passage: a person grieving the loss of a loved one—in this case, a mother grieving the loss of her son. This symbolism carries particular weight given Danielpour's account, drawn from his interviews with veterans, that the most common words uttered by dying soldiers were calls for their mothers.²⁸ This passage establishes two important elements: (1) a real, personal sense of mourning and (2) use of solo voice passages as quasi-theatrical moments in the narrative arc.

²⁷ Richard Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

²⁸ Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

The “Pie Jesu” trio in the third movement is another example of theatrical, symbolic use of soloists. This is both the first time the soloists sing in Latin and the first instance in which they all sing together. By this point in the work, each has sung a solo passage which expresses pain and mourning toward someone who has died, and the two Whitman excerpts sung by the tenor and baritone, from *Dirge for Two Veterans* and *Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night*, establish the connection of these deaths to the horrors of war. The “Pie Jesu” passage, which occurs at the end of the movement and the end of the first part, solidifies the emotional trajectory of the movement and first part as a whole, creating a sense of solemn resolve and peacefulness. The text translates to “Merciful Lord Jesus. Grant them rest,” and featuring the soloists, who have each expressed deep grief for a departed person earlier in the requiem, provides a theatrical expression of the desire for eternal rest for the deceased. After the second statement of “dona eis requiem,” the major minor sonority and blurry, chromatic texture return, connecting this passage to the first movement, a subtle reminder of the fundamental juxtaposition of two worlds in the piece. Further, the ensemble of soloists for the “Pie Jesu,” and the emotional sense of “Lacrimosa” as a whole, contain undertones of Verdi’s “Lacrimosa,” deepening *An American Requiem*’s connection to the tradition.

The final solo passage of the piece serves as a symbolic culmination, turning from the external realities of war toward themes of reflection and human resilience. The tenor section transitions into the mezzo singing an excerpt from H.D.’s *The Walls Do Not Fall*; a deeply poetic reflection on war and devastation, it avoids politics and combat, turning instead to myth, memory, and inner strength. It reveals how timeless wisdom and poetic insight can sustain us through contemporary crises, reflecting the work’s overall point of view. The “Take Me Home” passage expresses this and other symbolic elements crucial to the overall narrative. The driving

quarter note rhythm central to the apocalyptic, war centered music dissipates with the entrance of the mezzo, creating a sense of calm and peace. The vocal writing echoes the mezzo passage in the first movement, with large ascending leaps and descending movement in thirds, connecting the passage to the symbolism of the mother and connecting the two sections thematically, supported by the nature imagery in both texts. Further, a descending scale permeates this passage, passed through different members of the orchestra. This descent mirrors the ascending “wave” motive in the first movement and gives a sense of finality, moving toward the final three “Amen” statements. These statements are also symbolically rich, beginning with the ascending minor third motive, which, as discussed earlier, symbolizes the human element of war and grief, expanding to a tri-tone in the second statement, and finally expanding all the way to a full octave leap up for the final moment of the movement. This leap, to the top of the mezzo’s comfortable range, symbolizes the soul’s ascent to heaven leading to the resolution of the final movement.



Figure 2.7. Mezzo-soprano solo, *An American Requiem*, Movement VI, mm. 155-162

The theatrical elements of *An American Requiem* are further supported by certain orchestration choices. For example, there is a large battery of on- and off-stage percussion in the second movement, “Dies irae,” established first by the widely recognized bass drum of Verdi’s “Dies irae.” The off-stage drums also provide a dramatic sense of wartime music, placing the audience into the narrative. For example, in the “I see a sad procession” passage of the second movement, there is a march in the off-stage drums that enters after the tenor sings, “On the pavement here, and there beyond it is looking, / Down a new-made double grave” The cadence in the drums is a faster version of the cadence that accompanied President Kennedy funeral

procession to Arlington. Danielpour explains that “to [him], that was the moment that our trust in government changed.”²⁹ The theatrical use of off-stage drums not only paints the scene in the poem, providing a sense of hearing a funeral procession in the distance, but also connects the passage to American history and identity.

The image shows a musical score for percussion instruments. It is divided into two main sections: Timp. (Tympani) and Perc. (Percussion). The Timp. section includes 'Sus. Cym., brushes' and 'B.D.' (Bells). The Perc. section includes 'Offstage T. Dr.', 'Offstage Field Dr.', and 'Offstage B.D.'. The score is written for five staves, numbered 1 through 5. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests, indicating the timing and dynamics for each instrument.

Figure 2.8. Percussion, *An American Requiem*, Movement II, mm. 213-216³⁰

Danielpour also utilizes a unique combination of glockenspiel, vibraphone, chimes, crotales, and piano for the opening tolls of the fourth movement “Sanctus.” This orchestration is certainly unique to Danielpour’s style but is reminiscent of the use of bells in the opening of Britten’s “Sanctus,” which features vibraphone, glockenspiel, antique cymbal, chimes, and piano. This sound world also pays homage to Stravinsky’s *Les Noces*, a ritualistic ballet depicting a Russian peasant wedding written for solo vocal quartet, chorus, four pianos, and percussion. All three works utilize the bells to indicate time and transition, marking important formal moments, in addition to creating an association to a ritual framework, like a religious ceremony.

²⁹ Richard Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

³⁰ Richard Danielpour, *An American Requiem*. (Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2001), 67

Further examples include the use of both off-stage trumpets and trombones. Trombones are symbolically significant in that, in the Classical era, it became considered as the “instrument of death, judgment, and resurrection” (as crystallized by its use in the works of Mozart, especially his requiem and *Don Giovanni*). Danielpour utilizes it as such, featuring six off-stage trombones. They first appear part way through the “I see a sad procession” section of the second movement, intoning the “dark taps” ascending minor third motive, text painting for the line “...full-key’d bugles” and building to a climatic, apocalyptic moment where all 6 trombones play a *fortissimo* chord with much of the rest of the orchestra. They are often joined by the off-stage drums, making up a large off-stage ensemble which places the audience into the wartime space. They also appear in the opening of the sixth movement, playing a rhythmically diminished version of the “requiem” motive in quick succession in an angular arpeggio. This is one of the darkest, most dramatic passages in the work, solidifying the sense of the horrors of war. The texture builds to a climax in which the six trombones play the descending second motive, now expanded to a major second. This is particularly significant in that the “death” motive is played by the trombone, the instrument of death. Finally, the off-stage trumpet appears on the last page of the score, playing the original “requiem” motive, a sad but peaceful farewell, and wish for rest.

2.2 Innovation and Evolution

Building on these connections to the requiem lineage, three aspects of *An American Requiem* expand and evolve the genre: (1) an American sensibility; (2) musical juxtaposition of two contrasting elements; and (3) Danielpour’s personal sense of harmony and orchestration. All three characteristics are crucial to understanding the work’s point of view.

2.2a American Style

The first element appears in the title itself: an American sensibility central to both Danielpour's style and the work's point of view. At its core is the American poetry Danielpour juxtaposes with the traditional Latin Mass text. The specific placement of these poems and their imagery throughout the work aid in creating an immediate sense of American identity. For example, the first three lines of English text in the work, "Sea-winds blown from east and west, / Blown from the eastern sea, and blown from the western sea, till there on the prairies meeting," from Whitman's *Memories of President Lincoln*, immediately placing the listener in the American heartland through distinctly regional imagery: prairies and seas in the east and west. Further, the excerpt is from a poem which pays homage to one of the most prevalent figures in American history, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln's important role in the American Civil War adds another layer of meaning. American history is also present in the off-stage drums from the *Dirge for Two Veterans* passage in the second movement, as described earlier in the chapter, which utilizes a faster version of the drum cadence which accompanied President Kennedy's funeral procession to Arlington.

In his personal style, Danielpour draws from a specific lineage of American composers, such as Leonard Bernstein, Samuel Barber, and Aaron Copland, as well as American popular and folk idioms—all of which shape *An American Requiem*. Three examples illustrate this; the first is the "Dies irae" sections in the second movement, which draw from American jazz.

Rhythmically, this is seen in the driving quarter note backdrop and syncopated punctuations. The major/minor sonority, derived from the blues scale and central to the entire requiem, is prevalent here with the flattened third in the melody over the major third in the harmonic field. The motive

of scale degree 1–b3–1–4 in the orchestra contributes to this, drawing from the minor pentatonic scale common in jazz, with muted brass evoking big band style.

Another crucial example is the first section of the fifth movement, with the texts of Michael Harper's *Last Affair: Bessie's Blues Song* and the African American spiritual, *Lay This Body Down*. Danielpour explains that though the text is from a spiritual, he wrote his own spiritual that lives within his personal style and sound world of the work.³¹ The mezzo-soprano's introduction adopts a blues-inflected style, creating a deeper dimension as Blues is often associated with melancholy subject matter. The melodies draw from pentatonic, modal, and blues scales, further placing it in a jazz context and bringing out the emotional struggle expressed by the text. Marked "Jazzy, with swing," the *Lay This Body Down* passage incorporates blue notes (flattened third, fifth, and seventh scale degrees), jazz chord voicings, a walking bass line, swung rhythms, and brass writing evocative of big band textures. The main melody in the orchestra derives from the minor pentatonic scale, frequently featured in jazz. Moreover, measures 73-76 feature Harmon mutes in the trumpets in the foreground, a timbre often associated with American jazz.

Further, in both passages mentioned, Danielpour combines the above jazz elements with the octatonic scale to create a new and evocative harmonic and melodic field. In the "Dies irae," this appears in the violins in measures 31-36, with an aggressive, syncopated ascending scale punctuated by muted trumpet. It also appears in the chorus for the passage, "Quantus tremor est futurus, / quando iudex est venturus / cuncta stricte discussurus," which means, "How great a terror there will be / when the Judge shall come / who will thresh out everything thoroughly." This weaving of octatonic material into the jazz texture creates angular dissonance and unease,

³¹ Richard Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

effectively painting the apocalyptic imagery, especially text painting the “Quantus tremor...” passage.

In “Lay This Body Down,” the octatonic scale appears mainly in the bass line, seamlessly combining the octatonic scale with a characteristic walking bass line. The combination of the walking bass and octatonic motion creates harmonic instability beneath the surface of the movement. The octatonic scale, with its symmetry and lack of pitch hierarchy, allows Danielpour to move seamlessly between key centers. This harmonic tension helps to convey the desire for freedom from life’s burdens present in the text. This is especially important for the line “I go to the judgment...” the subject matter of which connects this movement to the “Dies irae” passages. This line is also punctuated by sharp brass statements of the F major/minor sonority, further text painting the “judgment” and connecting to the heavy use of brass in the “Dies irae.”

The final example is the third movement, which begins with a folk-like, quasi-strophic song for the *Vigil II* text. Despite the complex and evolving harmonic progression, the song features triple meter and simple rhythmic and melodic patterns, common to American folk music. Danielpour molds the melody and phrasing to fit the text, creating a personal and natural sense which pulls the audience in in the same way a folk song can connect the performer and listener. The strophic form (a song structure in which different verses of text are sung to the same melody) also evokes this. Though it moves through rhythmic and melodic development, the entire movement is built upon the same repeating refrain.

These examples of American style and sensibility are central to expressing the work’s personal perspective. The American imagery and texts embody the personal dimension, a reflection of American humanity confronting loss, violence, and reconciliation. The American idioms root the work in a deep history of suffering and endurance, and the integration of varying

scales expresses the moral complexity, creating dissonance to express the “hellishness and insanity” of war.

2.2b Juxtaposition of Two Elements

A second innovative element is the juxtaposition of two perspectives central to the work’s point of view. This is illustrated beyond the dichotomy of texts and text setting, which is discussed earlier as well. This appears first in the shared material of “Vigil II” and “Lacrimosa.” The movement begins with the material in 3/4, giving it a folk sense and bringing it onto the personal level, and develops into 4/4 for the “Lacrimosa” passage, which has an angelic, detached sense which puts it onto the philosophical level, expressing the dichotomy inherent to the texts. This rhythmic development of the melodic motives provides enough difference to indicate a juxtaposition between the two versions of the material but connects them deeply in their mournful sadness.

This is clear when looking at the differences in phrase structure of the two passages as well; “Vigil II” unfolds in irregular, flowing phrases (six, eight, twelve, eight, and ten bars respectively), whereas the “Lacrimosa” features regular phrases of eight bars each, with an expansion to nine bars for the final phrase. Finally, The orchestration further emphasizes this dichotomy, as the “Lacrimosa” section features a timbrally lighter orchestration, using only treble voices, lighter bass activity, and an overall thinner orchestral texture, as can be seen in measures 95–103, the transition out of “Vigil II” and into “Lacrimosa.”

Another example of this is the opening of the work. The central major/minor sonority inherently provides a sense of this juxtaposition, with the inclusion of both the major and minor third of the chord. One step further, the first entrance of the chorus’ “Requiem” emerges as a distinctive non chord tone, juxtaposing the choral statements with the orchestral backdrop which

opens the piece. As it evolves, the chorus pulls the orchestra into the same harmonic field; the orchestra returns to its original E major/minor sonority shortly after. This creates a magnetic push and pull between the two perspectives embodied in the work.

Danielpour also explores juxtaposition rhythmically through pervasive two against three and three against four polyrhythms. This creates a sense of two rhythmic planes occurring at the same time, the same way that two perspectives occur at the same time within the piece. This also occurs with the ostinato backdrop for the “Agnus Dei” music, which features a five-note melodic phrase repeated within a framework of triplets. This is another way of creating two planes of rhythm within the same moment of music. This rhythmic layering is especially significant in the “Agnus Dei” movements, which pair the Latin text with three English poems, two of which contrast the third. The first two explore death from the perspective of one grappling with their own death, while the third explores the grief of the living. The two contrasting planes of the same idea are illustrated musically through the ostinato backdrop of the “Agnus Dei,” which threads the movement.



Figure 2.9. Reduction of Vibraphone & Harp, *An American Requiem*, Movement V, “Agnus Dei,” mm. 1-3

Danielpour’s interplay of hemiola, layered rhythms, and unpredictability is central to his style, creating a multidimensional and emotionally complex backdrop.

2.2c Harmony

Much of *An American Requiem*’s harmony has already been discussed in relation to its connection to the requiem tradition, but the harmonic language also features specific

characteristics of Danielpour's style. One crucial aspect is the approach to harmonic progression, a distinctive and expressive aspect of this work, characterized by fleeting tonal progressions across a larger plane of shifting key centers and modal mixture. This is evident in passages such as "Was there no star that could be sent..." and "Take Me Home."

The "Take Me Home" passage of movement six is an important example of Danielpour's harmonic style, utilized similarly to further the text and perspective of the passage. This section's slower harmonic rhythm allows melodic lines to interact organically with shifting tonal centers. This pacing enables smooth key changes that feel natural rather than abrupt, and each key shift has a chromatic mediant relationship, connected to the previous key through mode mixture. This passage also features two shifts up by minor third, a large-scale expression of the minor third "humanity" motive, which creates a sense in the background level of consistently ascending. This is important in that the text is asking to be "taken home" to heaven or some other afterlife for peaceful rest. This upward motion is emblematic of Danielpour's style and reinforces the movement's spiritual subtext.



Figure 2.10. Reduction of Strings, *An American Requiem*, Movement VI, mm. 142-162

A similar harmonic framework appears in the second section of the mezzo-soprano solo in the first movement, with the text from Emerson's *Threnody*, a deeply personal expression of grief, as Emerson grapples with the profound sense of loss and sorrow that comes with the death of a loved one. Throughout the poem, he reflects on the fragility and impermanence of human life and offers a meditation on the nature of death and the human spirit, a central aspect of the point of view in *An American Requiem*. On a larger scale, the harmony ascends by minor third, while within each new tonal center it descends by half step, deepening the sense of sorrow. Each of these examples employs Danielpour's distinctive harmonic language to convey intimacy and emotional depth. These harmonic progressions express hope and resolution, and through the intimacy of the solo voice, humanize the meditation on death and transcendence by grounding it in lived experience.

2.3 Conclusion

In *An American Requiem*, Danielpour expands the Concert Requiem tradition into a humanist lament: an exploration of American identity and the shared suffering, courage, and hope that define humanity's response to war and death. He states, "All my life I've been trying to tell stories through my music that I feel passionately about, sometimes I feel I have the opportunity to tell stories for people who don't have the opportunity to speak for themselves"³² This is expressed partially through the elements of the requiem tradition (text, cyclic structure, symbolic tonal centers, motivic unity, and theatrical narrative devices), essential to the juxtapositions in the work's perspective: the universal and philosophical against the personal and intimate. Danielpour also contributes to the evolution of the requiem genre through the integration of American identity and musical styles, juxtaposition of contrasting elements, and his personal approach to harmony and voice leading, further expressing the point of view. *An American Requiem* exemplifies how these elements converge in the evolution of the requiem genre at the turn of the century.

³² Richard Danielpour in discussion with the author, October 2025.

CHAPTER 3: ARMENIAN REQUIEM BY IAN KROUSE

“When I first set eyes upon the impressive (and daunting) text in fifteen movements (!) I knew immediately that it was a masterpiece in its own right, and that I would need to muster a lifetime of experience to do it justice...”³³ writes Ian Krouse about his culminating and ambitious *Armenian Requiem*. Commissioned to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the 95-minute oratorio premiered at UCLA’s Royce Hall on April 22, 2015. Krouse explains that he “had always intended to write a ‘requiem’, but [he] had always assumed that it would be in Latin. The idea of composing the first ever polyphonic setting of the ancient Armenian liturgy was an idea that came spontaneously and easily over evening tea with [his] collaborator, and compiler of the text, Vatsche Barsoumian, and was the third work in the Armenian language commissioned by the Lark Music Academy of Glendale, California.”³⁴ Some have described Krouse’s music as “universalism” or “totalism,” drawing comparisons between Krouse’s music and that of Hungarian composer Béla Bartók, in that both composers draw heavily from folk, popular, and world music influences. Though certainly true in Krouse’s case, many of his works also build on Renaissance, Baroque and Medieval music. His music often engages with literature, history, and global traditions, reflecting an interest in bridging cultural narratives through sound.

Krouse writes at the top of the “Texts, Transliterations and Translations” section of the score: “(From the Armenian perspective, Requiem is not a mourning and grieving over the dead. It is an expression of hope for a new and eternal life through the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus

³³ Ian Krouse, “Armenian Requiem,” *Armenian Requiem*, 2015, 2019, <https://www.iankrouse.com/armenian-requiem>.

³⁴ Krouse, “Armenian Requiem”

Christ.)”³⁵ It is a collective reckoning with cultural trauma that not only memorializes, but also, by combining ancient chant with Armenian poetry, places Armenian memory at the center of the experience. Barsoumian writes,

“This utterly new Requiem – a stunning meditation on loss – expresses no feelings of vengeance, is without desire for retribution. Simply, it questions man’s inhumanity towards man. Against that backdrop, it depicts a resolve to live again, to regroup and move forward; it reminds that the Armenians are a people with deep roots connecting them across vast distances and through time, always carrying hope for new growth.”³⁶

With the point of view of both a meditation on loss and an expression of hope for the future, Krouse’s *Armenian Requiem* is a culmination of the interplay of tradition, eclectic influences, and contemporary techniques, cultivating a connection to and expansion upon the requiem genre.

3.1 Relationship to the Tradition

Armenian Requiem expresses this distinct point of view through a deep connection to the lineage of the genre with the following characteristics: (1) text; (2) structure; (3) symbolic tonal centers; (4) dramatic and theatrical techniques; and (5) influence of Bach and Britten.

3.1a Text

The full text contains fifteen movements in total: seven traditional liturgical chants (all the even movements), as well as interludes, a prelude, and a postlude built on texts by Armenian poets from the 10th – 20th centuries. The composition of the text connects to the requiem tradition through a relationship to Brahms’ *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the use of liturgical texts in the

³⁵ Ian Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), pg. 191

³⁶ Vatsche Barsoumian, "Introduction" in *Armenian Requiem*, Ian Krouse (Los Angeles, CA: Drazark Music, 2015), i

vernacular. There is also a connection to works like Britten's *War Requiem* that intersperse poems with traditional religious texts. In this way, *Armenian Requiem* and *An American Requiem* similarly blossom from the lineage of the genre.

3.1b Structure

Armenian Requiem is structured with a multi-layered form that expresses the overall trajectory of the work on the micro and macro levels. In this work, the emotional narrative evolves from mourning and anguish to hope and peace. This narrative arc unfolds on four levels, the largest spanning the entire work from beginning to end. The entire first part has a sense of anguish and mourning, beginning with a chant-style introduction sung by the baritone that is characterized by expressive chromaticism and a C–D_b minor ninth in the low register of the orchestra, setting the scene of pain and discomfort with sharp dissonance. This leads into the second movement, one of the most overt musical expressions of the collective mourning with sound mass textures and *ad libitum* passages. The rest of the first half features other expressions of this emotionality, ebbing and flowing with heightening tension and release. The large-scale shift to the sense of peace and hope occurs in movement 7, the centerpiece of the requiem. This sense becomes increasingly prevalent as the end of the work approaches, finally concluding with a definitive sense of hope for the future in the final movement.

The work is also divided into two parts, with the break occurring between movements 6 and 7, ending the first arch with the peaceful and reverent hymn, *Intercessions for the Living and the Dead (We Priests and People)* in the baritone solo, chorus, and organ, and beginning the second arch with a small motivic seed that grows into the enormity of movement 7.

Pain/mourning/anguish -----> hope/peace

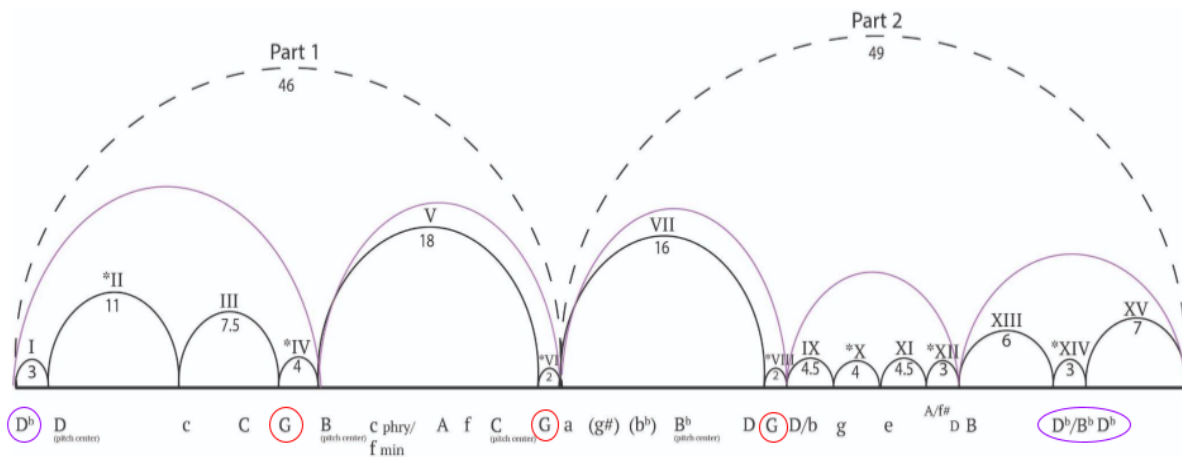


Figure 3.1. *Armenian Requiem*, Arc Diagram

The narrative occurs on two other levels: firstly, a five-arc structure, breaking Part I into two arcs and Part II into three arcs, as shown by the pink arcs in the diagram above. Each arc on this level follows the same trajectory as the overall form, with a building of tension and eventual peaceful release. These mid-level arcs are often connected motivically as well; one example of this is the final arc, containing the last three movements. Movements 13 and 15 each feature one distinctive melody, and these melodies relate, built from a similar contour and pausing on the same scale degrees at the same part of the phrase. These connected movements form most of this arc, with movement 14 as a brief middle section, linking to movement 15 through the same key center of D^b major.

Finally, this narrative occurs on the movement level, especially exemplified in movement 7, the centerpiece and pinnacle of the work. This movement marks the pivotal transition from despair to peace, serving as the work's emotional center.

7. Interlude 3
Book of Lamentations
Words Unto God from the Depths of the Heart
 St. Gregory of Narek

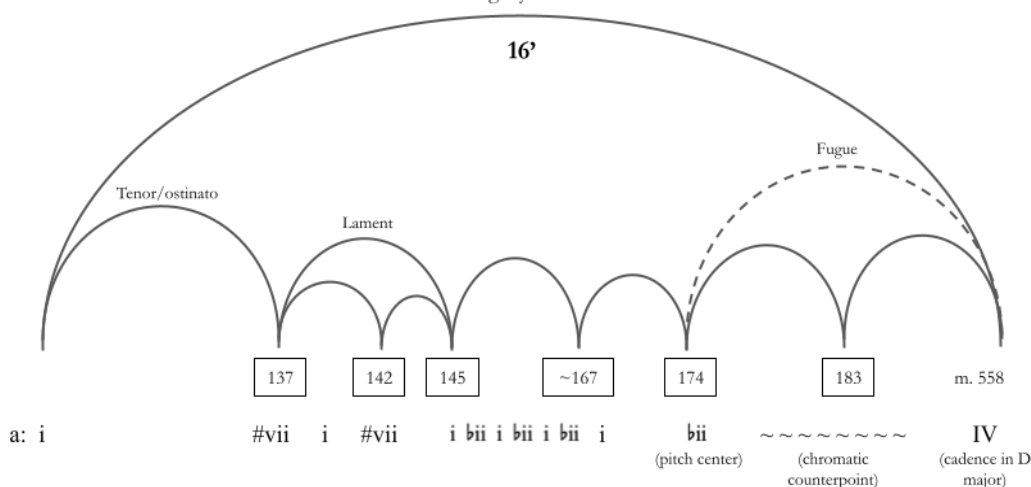


Figure 3.2. *Armenian Requiem*, Movement 7, Arc Diagram

The movement begins softly by establishing the central motive / ostinato, alternating iterations of this with slow, free chant passages in the tenor solo which set the first stanza of the text by St. Gregory of Narek, translating to:

“Why do you harden my heart, wretched that I am,
 to where I fear you not, most ineffable and awesome one?
 Let not this, my small effort, be fruitless
 like a futile tiller of barren land.”³⁷

This moves into the “Lament” section, which alternates between a minor, the central key center of the first half of the movement, and G# minor. The middle passage features a similar key construction, alternating between A minor and Bb minor, and is characterized by sections of “crying out” in the chorus, with a high, descending soprano melody, broken into groups of two notes that are evocative of wailing. This section continues to build with each of these “crying out” sections to a local climax at rehearsal mark 164. This quickly diminishes to a short,

³⁷ St. Gregory of Narek, “Words Unto God from the Depths of the Heart,” *Book of Lamentations*, trans. Vatsche Barsoumian

transitional passage leading to the final section: an extended fugue. Over the course of five and a half minutes, the fugue continually increases in tension and activity until the final release: a climactic cadence in D major.

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, the Golden section highlights a significant moment in the form, and *Armenian Requiem* utilizes this technique. The Golden section of the work is in this extended fugue passage when the double fugue, the climax of the piece, begins, utilizing a four-note, B \flat -A-C-B (B-A-C-H) motive, which Bach extracted from his own name. The placement of the passage here and use of extreme contrapuntal writing highlights the importance of this moment formally and textually, with the last stanza of the poem:

“O life-giver of the universe,
Who alone has true glory unto yourself,
And who is borne witness by all that exists in infinite perpetuity.
Blessed and glorified thrice in eternity,
And beyond the limits of all conceivable eternities.
Amen.”³⁸

This reverent text is not only important as a religious faith but also to drive home the central message of the work: to be an expression of hope for a new and eternal life, lifting those in pain and mourning up into peace and hope.

The influence of the genre also appears in the relationship between the opening and closing of the work. Like most of the requiems discussed so far, *Armenian Requiem* has a cyclical sense of connection between the beginning and end of the work, but in a much different way from all the other works. Krouse does not explicitly connect the two passages motivically, as the other requiems do, but rather relates them subtly through three ways: (1) a D \flat pitch center; (2) use of the D \flat double harmonic scale; and (3) baritone solo passages.

³⁸ St. Gregory of Narek, “Words Unto God from the Depths of the Heart,” *Book of Lamentations*, trans. Vatsche Barsoumian

these musical moments with orchestration, texture, and register to highlight this distinct color, further bridging the opening and closing of the piece.

I am an orphan and a rebel, may you stay well, I go in search of those I've lost!

yes vorb men em yev em-bost me, me-nas bar-yav, ko-rus-yal - ne - res pant - re - lu ker - tam!
 ես մոռնալիկ եմ երեւոյս զոհըս, մե, մե-նաս Բար-յավ, Կորուսյալ - նե - ռէս քան-րէ-լու կեր-տամ!

Figure 3.4. *Armenian Requiem*, Movement 1, fourth phrase⁴¹

Figure 3.5. *Armenian Requiem*, Movement 15, string quartet, Rehearsal Mark 253⁴²

⁴¹ Ian Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 2

⁴² Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 176

260 Quasi una cadenza - rubato a tempo

261 A tempo ma più lontano

Vln. 1 Solo

Vln. 2 Solo

Vla. Solo

Vc. Solo

Figure 3.6. *Armenian Requiem*, Movement 15, string quartet, Rehearsal Mark 260-261⁴³

Finally, the baritone soloist is featured in the opening movement, the first half of movement 14, and the last section of the final movement, further solidifying this connection and bookending the work with the same textural and timbral soundscape. Krouse's new approach to the cyclical requiem form is one way that *Armenian Requiem* expands upon the genre.

A cyclical structure can also be seen in the use of the G major key center for movements 4, 6, and 8, all settings of traditional Armenian hymns. These spots are circled in red in the arch diagram. Each of these movements also provides the comforting release of the first three midlevel arches. The key center and similarity of emotionality create a cyclical sense for the middle of the work.

3.1c Symbolic Tonal Centers

Krouse, like Danielpour, features symbolic keys in *Armenian Requiem*. He explains that C is the key of Earth, featured especially in Movement 3: Interlude 1, which sets the text *Naze's Lullaby* by Avetis Aharonian. This movement, utilizing C as a general pitch center, brings the piece into a grounded, personal sense of the human experience as the mezzo soloist is a mother singing to her child. The first section is in C minor, shifting toward C Phrygian with the occasional appearance of D \flat . At rehearsal mark 50, the key modulates to C major, with orchestration choices to text paint the earthly imagery in the text: "The gale moans through the

⁴³ Ian Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 183

black forests...” Here, the water gong blends seamlessly with the moaning violins to create the aural imagery of the text. The shift to the brighter parallel major key contrasts the tragedy in the text, deepening the effect of the text with the bittersweet shift to a major key.

Another movement which features C as a pitch center is Movement 5: Interlude 2, *Moon of the Armenian Tombs* – “The Flood;” much of the movement centers on ‘B’ but shifts up to ‘C’ at rehearsal mark 122 to end the movement, solidified by the C pedal tone in the low voices. The sudden shift creates a sense of brightness for the orchestral coda, connecting the movement symbolically to earth and aiding the narrative trajectory.

Krouse also features the significant key of D major, which he considers the key of God⁴⁴, in a similar way to the other requiems discussed in this investigation. Movement 2 utilizes D as a pitch center, establishing it as an important pitch center early in the piece. This is also significant when considering the text for movement 2: *Hymn of Vesting (Mystery Profound)*, which discusses the creation myth and focuses heavily on divine power. This forms the connection between D as a pitch center and the presence of God in the text. The most significant use of D major is in the chord that concludes movement 7 and the fugue that occurs at the Golden section of the work, mentioned earlier in this chapter. The final D major chord solidifies the presence of God in this passage as well as exhibiting the immense shift out of the pain and mourning earlier in the movement to the triumphant hope for new life. This is further supported by the orchestration of the final chord; most of the orchestra releases their note at the end of the penultimate measure, leaving only the brass and organ sounding in the last measure, echoing gloriously as the final sonority of the movement.

⁴⁴ Ian Krouse in discussion with the author, October 2024

The key of D \flat is another symbolic key in *Armenian Requiem*. Nestled between the centers of D, the key of God, and C, the key of Earth, D \flat is the key that pulls God down to earth, bridging humanity and divinity. This is crucial when considering the significance of the postlude; the text, *Blessing of the Land* by Daniel Varoujan, who was a victim of the Armenian genocide, expresses a prayer for all parts of the world to be blessed. It is like a benediction, a brief prayer seeking divine assistance, blessing, and guidance, typically delivered at the conclusion of a worship service. The use of the D \flat major key brings together divinity and earth in a final expression of hope for the future, profoundly supporting the statement of the text through the music.

The use of G key centers is also symbolic in this work. Movement 8: I Verin Yerusaghem, *Intercessions for the Dead (In Supernatural Jerusalem)* features G major for the entire movement. Firstly, this is a natural choice following the D major chord at the end of movement 7, creating a strong sense of dominant to tonic arrival at the beginning of movement 8. G major is a rustic, idyllic, and lyrical key, creating a calm and settled sense of stability. Movement 8 also features the treble (children's) choir, text painting the line, "...in the residence of angels,..." as angels are often depicted as young children. Further, the treble choir is placed in the balcony above the audience, bringing this imagery to life. These factors position movement 8 as a peaceful arrival, supporting the text as it discusses heavenly imagery and asks for mercy for the souls of the deceased. This also supports the narrative arc as a hopeful and peaceful coda following the tumultuous journey of movement 7.

3.1d Dramatic and Theatrical Techniques

Armenian Requiem also connects to the requiem tradition in the use of soloists as symbols. This is essential enough to the work that Krouse explicitly denotes what the soloists

symbolize: soprano as The Angel, mezzo-soprano as The Mother, tenor as The Prophet, and baritone as The Sage/Priest. The symbolism of these roles is crucial to understanding and analyzing the narrative trajectory and overall message of the work.

The most essential movement featuring the soprano soloist, the angel, is Movement 9. Angel symbolism centers on divine messengers, embodying hope, protection, love, and wisdom. Angels represent guidance and act as intermediaries between the spiritual and human realms. Movement 9 is part of the transitional arch of the work (movements 9-12) to lead to the final section of the requiem which focuses eternal life, hope, and peace. The soprano as the angel acts as a guide here, bringing the souls of the deceased to their eternal rest in heaven, as it is presented in movement 8.

The mezzo-soprano as The Mother is most prominent in Movement 3. In this movement, based on Avetis Aharonian's text *Naze's Lullaby*, a mother sings a lullaby to her child, wishing her child to sleep but expressing horrors and pain of the genocide, each stanza of the text ending with "I have cried too much." The mezzo-soprano soloist as the mother is a clear choice to sing this text as the speaker of the text is a mother, but the symbolism also brings forward deeper themes of the text and *Armenian Requiem* as a whole. Across cultures and religions, mothers are seen as the foundation of the family, embodying sacrifice, compassion, and an enduring, protective love. The mother also symbolizes the origin of life, expressed in this text by the presence of her child. This symbolism brings out the hope and strength that lies beneath the anguish and pain of this text, expressed in Krouse's setting of this text by the transition to C major and E major key centers. It is simultaneously heartbreaking and uplifting, another arch on the movement level that is exemplary of the overall arch of the piece. Additionally, the mother symbol allows the audience to connect with the mezzo-soprano, bringing the listener into the

experience of the work and allowing them to truly feel deep pain that she is experiencing. The movement before, movement 2, expresses horror and anguish on a larger-scale, communal and cultural level; this movement creates a contrast, bringing the audience into an intimate expression of this pain through the mother symbolism.

The tenor as The Prophet is most significant in three movements of *Armenian Requiem*. A prophet is a person who speaks on behalf of a deity, interpreting the divine will to people, often through divine inspiration, and sometimes foretelling future events. In contrast to the soprano and mezzo, the tenor is featured prominently on two of the even movements, those based on liturgical Armenian chants. One example is movement 10, based on *Litany for the Repose of Souls (Lord, Have Mercy)*; the tenor soloist sings two lines of the text in conversation with a soloist from the treble chorus. This is significant in that the treble chorus represents angels in heaven, suggesting the tenor is in conversation with divinity. Each time the tenor sings, he is accompanied by the tenor and bass voices from the chorus, supported by the community he speaks to. The first line is “Lord, have mercy,” intoned in the way a cantor would to a congregation. The second line translates to “Arise to help your servants: Protect the Armenian nation.” Utilizing the prophet symbolism for the tenor here suggests that it is divine will to protect the Armenian people, supporting the sense of hope that encapsulates the second half of the requiem.

The baritone as The Sage / Priest appears most often of all the soloists throughout the score, most importantly in movements 1, 6, 11, and 15. The Sage as a symbol is a profoundly wise man, especially one who features in ancient history or legend, and The Priest as a symbol includes their role as a mediator between God and humanity, and their sacred role as a representative of Christ, particularly in Christian traditions. The appearance of the baritone and

Sage or Priest at these structurally important moments in the work positions him as a spiritual guide through the piece. An embodiment of wisdom and reflection, the baritone represents the voice of calm, leading the community through grief to transcendence. This symbolism offers a powerful anchor on the emotional journey of the work, hence the baritone's recurrent appearance.

In the first movement, the baritone sings alone, chanting out of time and accompanied only by strings and organ. This creates a timelessness which almost feels as if the baritone is a narrator, recounting and reflecting on the narrative of the work. In the sixth movement, a short coda for the first part, the baritone is accompanied only by organ and the alto, tenor, and bass voices of the chorus. Similarly, this texture of voices and organ can be traced back centuries and has a timelessness that also provides this sense of reflection. The baritone embodies the spiritual journey of Part I: establishing the mourning and pain of the beginning of the emotional narrative with the text *I Want to Die Singing* by Siamanto, a prominent Armenian author, poet, and national leader of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, who was killed during the Armenian Genocide. The harmony and text setting is expressive and fraught, establishing the pain. In contrast, the sixth movement provides a peaceful close to the first half with the *Intercessions for the Living and the Dead (We Priests and People)* text by St. Nerces Shnorhali. The text brings together priests and congregations, asking to be received mercifully by God, which is shown musically through the setting for baritone and chorus. The harmony throughout the movement is largely consonant, supporting the baritone's modal melody. Notably, both texts reference singing, developing a theme of reconciliation through voice and music.

Finally, movement 15, the Postlude, is particularly important in relation to the baritone as a symbolic soloist. In addition to connecting the opening and closing of the entire requiem, the

baritone's passages at the beginning and end of this movement are symbolically and emotionally significant. The baritone sings the paraphrased melody of Bach's *Mache dich mein Herze rein*; the text from which this melody originates is "Mache dich, mein Herze, rein, / Ich will Jesum selbst begraben," meaning "Make yourself pure, my heart, / I want to bury Jesus myself."⁴⁵ This aria offers a moment of deep reflection and serene acceptance following the crucifixion narrative, embodying a sense of peace and a deep connection to Jesus. This reinforces the same sense of peace and hope that pervades the final movement.

The baritone is the final soloist to sing the main melody of the movement, beginning at rehearsal mark 261, guiding the people to the end of the piece with the core musical material which is the ultimate expression of peace and hope in the requiem. Moreover, the baritone is joined by the treble chorus in the final statement; as the passage goes on, the baritone moves into the upper registers of his voice, switching to falsetto at the end of measure 52 for the expressive ascending sixth jump to B \flat 4. Krouse writes, "Under no circumstances should this be attempted in full voice (!) – rather a beautiful falsetto should be used."⁴⁶ The baritone falsetto is a new and expressive timbre, a symbol for the ascension to the peace and hope of eternal life, leading the rest of the community on the journey. For the final line, translating to "May there love-singing be.", the baritone ends at F4, joined by the treble choir. Krouse writes here, "This final note may be sung falsetto, and should be held as long as possible."⁴⁷ The register and note to hold as long as possible, combined with the angelic treble choir, indicates to the listener that the requiem has finally reached the hope of eternal life in heaven.

⁴⁵ Translation © Pamela Dellal, courtesy Emmanuel Music Inc.

"Mache Dich, Mein Herze, Rein [Text & Translation]," Cataloguers Corner RSS, <https://www.vmi.org/bwv-244-matthaeus-passion/65-mache-dich-mein-herze-rein>.

⁴⁶ Ian Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 186

⁴⁷ Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 187

3.1e Influence of Britten and Bach

One aspect of Britten's influence on *Armenian Requiem* are the orchestration and instrumentation choices, utilizing smaller groups such as a treble choir or string quartet for specific passages, though Krouse employs this technique in a less strict manner than Britten. Finally, Krouse pays homage to Britten in Movement 11: Interlude 5 – AIR (*after Benjamin Britten*), with a note at the bottom of the first page of the movement which reads, "This movement is based very freely upon a motive from the 'Agnus Dei' of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*..."⁴⁸ This movement is a clear example of the way in which Krouse both connects to the tradition and pushes forward, paying homage to Britten while integrating eclectic influences into his own distinctive style..

Armenian Requiem also connects deeply to Bach; despite Bach's never writing a requiem, his work is an important influence on the evolution and traditions of the requiem genre. Krouse expresses in an interview that both he and Barsoumian "adore Bach above any other"⁴⁹. Krouse's approach to the traditional Armenian hymns reflects Bach's use of German hymns in his passions, using their melodies and texts to provide moments of congregational reflection and commentary on the narrative of Christ's suffering and death.

Bach's influence is also clear not only in Krouse's use of counterpoint to highlight important moments in the work, but also in specific musical references to Bach. Firstly, Krouse pays homage in another Air, Movement 9: Interlude 4 – AIR (*On a fragment of J.S. Bach*). Though Krouse does not disclose the exact fragment, there is a note at the beginning of the piano part stating, "Play in a soloistic manner in the style of a Bach prelude." Further, the dedication at

⁴⁸ Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 151

⁴⁹ Kangyi Zhang, Armenian Requiem | Composer Ian Krouse, other, February 9, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOwukLpleGw>.

the top of the first page of the score reads, “In loving memory of the composer’s mother, Charlotte Goodwin Krouse, who adored the music of Bach”⁵⁰ Another musical example is the use of the four-note B–A–C–H motive for the largest passage of counterpoint and climax of the work at the end of movement 7, as discussed earlier in the chapter.

All of the above characteristics of text, structure, symbolic key centers, symbolic soloists, and influence of Bach and Britten are ways that Krouse draws from the requiem genre, using the tradition as a framework for innovation and personal expression.

3.2 Innovation and Evolution

There are many aspects of *Armenian Requiem* that innovate within the requiem tradition. This work is the first requiem mass in Armenian, built on fifteen Armenian texts compiled by Vatsche Barsoumian, and the even movements are the first polyphonic settings of the ancient Armenian liturgy. Krouse explains that “Vatsche spent nearly a year consulting with experts in the field before arriving at the present structure: seven liturgical sections which would be preceded, juxtaposed and followed by poems carefully chosen from the past 1,000 years of Armenian history.”⁵¹ The text represents not only a major innovation within the requiem genre but also a crucial means of conveying the work’s central message; it highlights the Armenian perspective and centers Armenian memory as the core of the experience through the texts in the vernacular and of the ancient liturgy. Contrasting the point of view of the traditional Catholic requiem, the perspective of *Armenian Requiem* is collective and multi-voiced: the living give voice to the dead, the dead speak through poetry and prayer, and the future is invoked through blessings and lullabies. This point of view is further expressed through three elements: (1) a

⁵⁰ Ian Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 142

⁵¹ Ted Ayala and Ian Krouse, A First for Armenia and Composer Ian Krouse, other, *Crescenta Valley Weekly*, April 16, 2015, <https://www.crescentvalleyweekly.com/leisure/04/16/2015/first-armenia-composer-ian-krouse/>.

connection to Armenian music; (2) symbolic and theatrical orchestration; and (3) Krouse's assimilation of eclectic influences.

3.2a Armenian music

The Armenian perspective on mourning which is central to the work's point of view is expressed by a deep connection to Armenian music which pervades the work. Armenian music is historically monophonic with liberal use of drones, so many of the movements in the requiem, especially the even numbered movements based on traditional Armenian hymns, begin with monophony accompanied by a drone and evolve into counterpoint. These traditional hymns are based on settings by Komitas Vardapet, an ethnomusicologist and composer who laid the foundation for Armenia's unique national musical style. A central figure in Armenian music history, Komitas remains highly regarded for his folk-inspired songs, choral works, and liturgical chants.⁵² The settings by Komitas are foundational to *Armenian Requiem*; Krouse explains,

“Komitas' own beautiful settings of the Divine Liturgy, along with other hymns from the Armenian service, serve...in much the same way that J.S. Bach used Lutheran chorales in his passions and cantatas. Since becoming associated with Lark, I have developed a growing familiarity and admiration for the music of Armenia, in particular Komitas, who, tragically, suffered a nervous breakdown in the aftermath of the Genocide from which he would never fully recover.”⁵³

Krouse also draws from two other Armenian musical materials: firstly, *sharakan*, the monophonic, melismatic Armenian liturgical chant mentioned earlier in the chapter, by crafting moments based on the chant singing style and the double harmonic scale, the intervals of which

⁵² Britannica Editors, “Komitas,” Encyclopædia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Komitas>.

⁵³ Ted Ayala and Ian Krouse, A First for Armenia and Composer Ian Krouse, other, *Crescenta Valley Weekly*, April 16, 2015, <https://www.crescentavalleyweekly.com/leisure/04/16/2015/first-armenia-composer-ian-krouse/>.

are constructed similarly to those of certain modes in Armenian sacred music. Secondly, Krouse builds much of the melodic material from interval sets that stem from tetrachords and pentachords of the Armenian modal system. In a dissertation about Armenian musical identity as expressed in the works of Komitas, Vasken Ohanian provides a framework of tetrachords and pentachords of the Armenian modal system, which will be utilized for this analysis.

One example of how Armenian music appears in *Armenian Requiem* is in movement 11. First, the movement is based entirely on the number 5, pulling from two influences: (1) a motive from the “Agnus Dei” of Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem*; and (2) a traditional Armenian folk song collected, arranged, and recorded by Komitas, the “Plowing Song of Lori,” which is entirely constructed around the number 5. Thus, movement 11 is built on an ostinato of four bars of 5/8, with constant eighth notes. The constant ostinato and alternation of ascending and descending pentachords draws from Britten’s “Agnus Dei,” but the intervallic construction of the first two pentachords comes from the Armenian modal system; these pentachords form the basis for much of the melodic material in the movement.

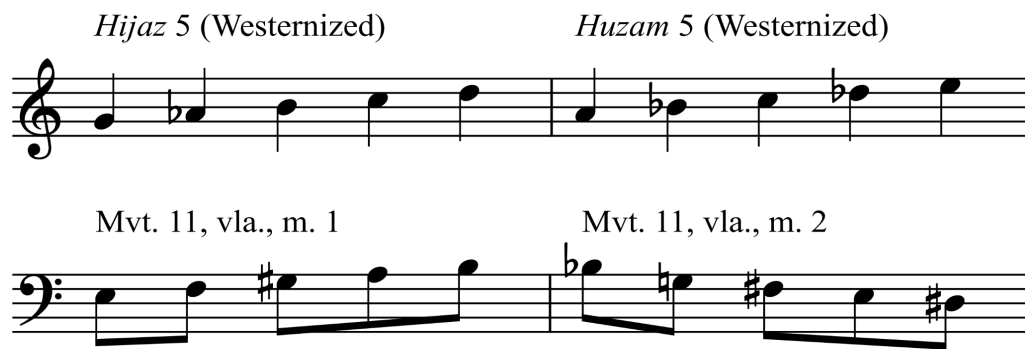


Figure 3.7. Armenian tetrachords (top staff)⁵⁴ and *Armenian Requiem*, Movement 11 tetrachords (bottom staff)⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Vasken Aristakes Ohanian, “The Issue of Armenian Cultural Identity as Expressed in the Choral and Vocal Music of Komitas Vardapet” (dissertation, 2025).

⁵⁵ Ian Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 151

As shown by the figure above, the first tetrachord in movement 11 is the westernized version of the *Hijaz 5*, ascending, and the second tetrachord is the westernized version of the *Huzam 5*, descending. These are also two of the pentachords that form the basis of the Armenian *Octoechos*, creating a relationship in this movement to Armenian sacred music.

In addition to the “Plowing Song of Lori,” the language of *Armenian Requiem* incorporates Armenian folk music through the inclusion of Armenian folk instruments in the orchestra, most prominent being the duduk. Dr. Jonathan McCollum, Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) Research Fellow, explains in an illustrated lecture that duduk is “actually the only truly Armenian instrument that’s survived through history, and as such is a symbol of Armenian national identity...The most important quality of the duduk is its ability to express the language dialectic and mood of the Armenian language...”⁵⁶ Duduk is commonly played in pairs, with the first player playing the melody and improvisation and the second playing a steady drone⁵⁷. Krouse features a pair of duduks in this way, often providing a framework within which the duduk melodic player can improvise, allowing the performer’s individual expression to emerge.

The strong sense of expression in the duduk timbre is utilized at specific moments in the work to deepen and highlight the emotion present in the text and music. McCollum explains, “The duduk is meant to invoke feeling and ‘native emotional accumulation’ of historical memory...”⁵⁸ One example of this is the third movement; the profound pain of this movement has been discussed earlier in the chapter, and the presence of the duduk in the orchestra is part of

⁵⁶ Andy Turpin, “Nothing Sounds Armenian like a Duduk: ALMA Lecture,” *The Armenian Weekly*, February 12, 2010, <https://armenianweekly.com/2010/02/12/nothing-sounds-armenian-like-a-duduk/>.

⁵⁷ “Duduk and Its Music,” UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/duduk-and-its-music-00092>.

⁵⁸ Turpin, “Nothing Sounds Armenian like a Duduk: ALMA Lecture”

what conveys this. The folk sense and symbolic identity of the duduk brings this movement onto a personal, real level, pulling the listener into the world of the speaker in the poem. The duduk enters at rehearsal mark 46, at the end of the line which translates to, “The blind cranes flew,” and before the mezzo sings “wailing mournfully,” allowing the duduk to text paint this line with an improvised passage. The duduk floats over the orchestra, and the listener feels the mournful cry even if they are unable to understand the sung Armenian. The duduk returns at rehearsal mark 53, the climax of the work with a deep C pedal and a return to the initial C minor key center. Both duduks join the C pedal, adding the expression of the duduk to the compound timbre of the pedal. As the climax fades, the melodic duduk plays a short, improvised solo, bringing the music back into the world of the mother.

The duduk also appears at the end of Movement 13: Interlude 6, *Brothers We Are*. The movement ends with an a cappella passage for the text: “Let us work and sow together, / Together pour our sweat; / Let us harvest the good crop / And give life to Armenia’s soil. / What is more alluring under the stars / Than the charming name of ‘brother’?”⁵⁹ In the final cadence, the orchestra quietly joins the chorus, creating a sparkling timbre for the last chord. The duduk emerges with a brief improvised solo, bringing out the Armenian identity and intimacy of the moment to underline the importance of community present in the text.

Folk elements are also present in the choral writing; Krouse features moments of repeating melodies in the chorus which are evocative of folk music passed down aurally, as Armenian folk music is. This choral singing is also evocative of moments of community healing, giving participants a space to process and express together. One example of this in *Armenian Requiem* is in Movement 5: Interlude 2, *Moon of the Armenian Tombs* – “The Flood;” the choral

⁵⁹ Mkrtich Peshiktashlian, *Brothers We Are* (Excerpt), trans. Vatsche Barsoumian

entrance at rehearsal mark 85 establishes the central melody, which continues to repeat and develop up to rehearsal mark 92. This is further supported by the entrance of a dhol, a traditional, double-headed cylindrical drum played with bare hands or mallets in Armenian folk music⁶⁰, at rehearsal mark 91. Additionally, the theme of redemption through music and fighting against oppression with immortal song is also an essential theme of the work, and choral moments like this are especially indicative of these themes.

A similar passage occurs in movement 10; at rehearsal mark 219, the tempo almost doubles and a 5/8 groove begins with an E pedal in much of the orchestra. This pedal tone, functioning as a drone, and dance-like groove immediately evokes Armenian folk music, in which dance is a central facet. Further, 5/8 is a common time signature for Western Armenian music.⁶¹ The use of pizzicati in the string section reinforces it as it summons imagery of plucked string instruments which would also be present in a folk music setting. Finally, the *dhol* is also present in this passage. The ensemble begins with a *pianississimo* (*ppp*) dynamic, slowly building as the image of a folk-dance scene comes into focus. This passage text paints the section of the text that the baritone sings here:

“...And this is spoken not by you, not by them
But by me,
I, the Sis and Massis;
With the continuous-unceasing-eternal sound of my sleepless peal,
With the diverse meters of Goghtan songs,
With the various rumbles of bambir instruments,
With the sundry scales of sharakans,
Sis and Massis are ringing eternally-unceasingly-continuously...”⁶²

⁶⁰ Gerard Madilian, *Traditional Armenian Instrumental Music* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2017).

⁶¹ Vasken Aristakes Ohanian, “The Issue of Armenian Cultural Identity as Expressed in the Choral and Vocal Music of Komitas Vardapet” (dissertation, 2025).

⁶² Paruyr Sevak, *Three-Voice Mass* (Excerpt), trans. Vatsche Barsoumian

This text expresses a distinctly Armenian scene from the point of view of the Sis and Massis, the highest two-peaked, sacred mountain of the Armenian Highland. “Goghtan songs,” refers to traditional songs from the historical Armenian region of Goghtan. “bambir instruments” refers to the Armenian bambir, a four-string fiddle played with a horsehair bow which is utilized as both an Armenian folk ensemble instrument and as a solo instrument.⁶³ Finally, “sharakan” again refers to the liturgical chant in the Armenian Apostolic and Catholic Churches, musically expressed through the melodic use of [0134] tetrachord throughout, which reflects the intervallic construction of the *Hijaz* 4 tetrachord from the Armenian modal system.⁶⁴ Also mentioned earlier, this movement paraphrases the “Plowing Song of Lori,” a traditional Armenian folk song collected and arranged by Komitas. The use of Armenian folk music characteristics and text painting brings this scene to life.

The final element of Armenian folk music present in Krouse’s requiem is heterophonic textures. This is particularly interesting as these textures are typically not found in Western classical traditions, especially the requiem genre, but are highly present in traditional folk and sacred Armenian music. Movement 15, the Postlude, is a great example of this, the first example being the opening of the movement, as the bass flute plays the melody in a heterophonic texture with the mezzo-soprano’s introduction of the main melody. This is particularly highlighted by the similarities in timbre of a bass flute and mezzo voice, as well as the fact the melodies are played in the same octave. This is supported by Krouse’s marking “freely embellish this line ad lib.” in the bass flute part, adding improvisation as an element of this passage as well. This moment also features the duduk, accompanied by a drone in the second duduk. The melodic

⁶³ Madilian, *Traditional Armenian Instrumental Music* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2017).

⁶⁴ Ohanian, “The Issue of Armenian Cultural Identity as Expressed in the Choral and Vocal Music of Komitas Vardapet” (dissertation, 2025).

duduk again improvises over a framework established by Krouse, furthering the heterophonic texture. Another important example is at rehearsal mark 264, the final bars of the entire work. Here, the duduk and solo violin play melodies heterophonically with motives pulled from the main melody, though one octave apart. This continues until each instrument fades to the end of the work.

Movement 15 culminates the Armenian musical characteristics discussed above, thematically resonant as the final and most hopeful movement of the work. The movement is a loose strophic form, based on the same repeating melody set to the different stanzas of the text. The use of a repeating melody evokes aural tradition and is particularly evocative and moving in this movement as the melody is passed between soloists and the chorus. The folk sense is supported by the addition of a dumbek, a goblet-shaped, single-head drum of the Middle East, North Africa, and the Balkans,⁶⁵ to the texture, entering at the beginning of the stanza which will add the chorus part way through. These folk elements support the themes of continuing tradition and community healing which are at a peak here, the final statement of hope to close the requiem.

3.2b Symbolic and Theatrical Orchestration

Another unique aspect of *Armenian Requiem* is the use of symbolic orchestration and instrumentation choices; firstly, the instrumentation is for a sizable and unique group:

4 Flutes (3rd and 4th doubling Piccolos and Alto Flutes; 4th doubling Bass Flute), 2 Oboes, English Horn, 2 Duduks, 3 Clarinets (1st doubling Clarinet in Eb; 3rd doubling Bass Clarinet), Contrabass Clarinet in Bb, Alto Saxophone (doubling Clarinet in Bb), 2 Bassoons, Contrabassoon (doubling Bassoon), 4-6 Horns (all doubling Wagner tubas optional), Piccolo Trumpet in Bb (from balcony), Trumpet in D (from balcony), 4 Trumpets in C (1st doubling Piccolo Trumpet in Bb), 2 Trombones, Bass Trombone, 2 Tubas (2nd doubling Euphonium)

⁶⁵ Blades, James (1970). *Percussion Instruments and Their History*. New York. p. 175.

3 Sets of Timpani played by 3 players (12-13 drums - two sets of 4 drums each are to be deployed in the balcony)
Percussion Battery: (at least 5 players), 3 Bass Drums (two deployed in the balcony), Triangle, Tam-tam, Water Gong, Chimes, Vibraphone (played by two players), Crotales, Glockenspiel, Thunder sheet, Large Suspended cymbal, Small Suspended Cymbal, Xylophone, Medium Gong, Hand bells, Almglocken, 2-3 Dhol, Dumbek
Piano, Celesta, Organ, 2 Harps
Soprano Soloist - The Angel, Mezzo Soprano Soloist - The Mother, Tenor Soloist – The Prophet, Baritone Soloist - The Sage/Priest
SATB Choir (120 voices minimum, a larger group is preferable)
Children's Choir (in balcony)
String Quartet
Strings (minimum): 12 First Violins, 12 Second Violins, 8 Violas, 8 Cellos, 6 Bases (3 or more of which will need low C)

Not only is this a huge ensemble but involves many notable timbres: the Armenian instruments which have been discussed already, a variety of percussion, and a children's choir and string quartet as separate ensembles. Further, as shown in the list above, many of the instruments and the children's choir are placed in the balcony. This creates a spatial separation of timbres from the main ensemble, which is especially significant in regards to the children's choir. This was discussed earlier in reference to movement 8 for the line "...in the residence of angels..." Separating the children's choir from the rest of the ensemble gives them an other-worldly quality which brings the imagery in the text to life.

One forward thinking element of Krouse's orchestration is the use of percussion, piano and harp. This occurs in two specific movements, 12 and 13. In movement 12, the phrases in the middle section of the movement sung by the chorus are punctuated by single fermatas in the low register of the piano and two harps with tam-tam. Two of these instances occur after the chorus sings "Alleluia." The addition of the tam-tam creates a sense of ritual, connecting the movement to the tradition from which the hymn stems. The orchestration creates a similar sense in Movement 13: Interlude 6, *Brothers We Are*, the beginning of the final mid-level arch of the piece; the movement opens with a calming texture of handbells, gong, and harps highlighting a

minor third of 'G#' and 'B.' Utilizing this texture at the opening of the movement establishes an aspect of community healing with timbres often associated with calm and healing. This is significant as the text discusses the theme of redemption through music and community, and this texture brings the text to life, especially painting the line, "Strum the strings of a delicate harp," which is followed by "A lovelier sound they can't produce / Than the charming name of 'brother'?" The orchestration subtly supports the message of the text.

Another facet of Krouse's unique text painting and orchestration is the use of sound mass textures and aleatoric passages, drawing from Ligeti's micropolyphony exhibited in his own requiem. Though the resultant sound mass is similar, Krouse approaches the texture through aleatory rather than the extreme micropolyphony seen in Ligeti's requiem. Movement 2: Khorhurd Khorin – "The Creation" utilizes these techniques to convey the feelings of collective pain and anguish which are so central to Part I. The first instance of this is at rehearsal mark 17, where Krouse provides a two-bar passage for the tenors and baritones, boxed with the note "Continue in the same manner, one by one each singer gradually singing slower and slower, and falling more and more out of phase with the others,"⁶⁶ creating an aleatoric sound mass of low voices. This mass of voices creates a sense of discomfort and of a crowd, as each voice in the group can be heard, evoking the pain and mourning of an entire community. Krouse continues with this technique, utilizing different aleatoric textures in the chorus and orchestra to build to a final climax toward the end of the movement. These aleatoric and sound-mass textures reinforce the movement's form and heighten its emotional intensity.

Movement 5, "The Flood," also features these techniques; in the first half of the movement, they illuminate a similar sense of collective pain as movement 2, but also aid in text

⁶⁶ Ian Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 14

painting the textual imagery. The movement begins with a single descending melodic cell in the high register; one by one, more instruments join the texture, creating an enormous mobile, like stars raining. The momentum of the orchestra is evocative of a flood: small droplets of water joining together to build a surge of unrelenting water. This builds to a climax at rehearsal mark 76, where members of the orchestra and the entire choir have aleatoric boxes, resulting in a loud and chaotic mass of sound, instilling a sense of terror. The text in the chorus translates to “Turn around, look down;” this climax is an important moment, demanding attention from the audience. Immediately following, there is an ascending sweep through the orchestra, leading to an extreme contrast to quiet strings accompanying a passage in the baritone with the text:

“Turn around now and look down,
look at the foot of our mountains,
Observe our temples, leveled,
and our villages, reduced to rubble!”⁶⁷

The sound mass and aleatory shows this in the music before it is stated by the baritone, creating an impact that is felt more deeply by the listener. Later in the movement, the choir will sing the repeated, folk passage, an example of fighting oppression through music. This is one example of the way the sound mass texture can create the opposite effect of collective healing and communal uplifting, indicating how Krouse’s orchestration also illuminates the transition from pain to hope which occurs on the movement level.

Another facet of the orchestration is the symbolic use of individual ensembles within the larger ensemble sound. This is a technique that stems from Britten’s *War Requiem*, but Krouse assimilates this technique into his own personal style. The children’s choir in the balcony is a particularly evocative example of this and has been discussed throughout the chapter as a symbol

⁶⁷ Father Ghevond Alishan, *Moon of the Armenian Sepulchers* (Excerpts), trans. Vatsche Barsoumian

for heaven or eternal afterlife. The string quartet is another important example of this technique, a representation of individual souls, contrasting the communal expressions to highlight personal impact. The string quartet emerges from the orchestra and often reflects the four solo voices. This is different from soloists that occur within the orchestra as the string quartet is its own unit, symbolically separated from the rest of the instrumental ensemble. A few moments highlight this well, the first being movement 3; the string quartet is featured between stanzas of the text, after each statement of the mezzo which translates to “I have cried too much.”

The string quartet material is similar each time: each fragment beginning on C and leaping into the high register of the violins, a musical depiction of crying out. Krouse even marks the final note of the first statement of this material “shrieking” under the crescendo. At rehearsal mark 45, the viola and cello crescendos continue into the next mezzo passage, further supporting the text painting. The longest and most developed version of this material occurs at rehearsal mark 53, the climax of the movement, the most intense expression of the speaker’s pain. After a brief pause, the string quartet joins the mezzo from rehearsal mark 55 to the end of the movement, starting with the line “Ah, ‘tis mixed with the poison of my sorrow,”. Here, the quartet truly joins the mezzo, fully supporting her through the final stanza of text. The conjoining of the mezzo and string quartet further support the symbolism of the string quartet, as an instrumental expression of the emotions of the individual. Echoes of the wailing motive return to close the movement, a final expression of the mother’s pain.

The string quartet symbolism also functions to support the other emotional side of the piece, especially seen in the Postlude. The quartet first enters the movement at rehearsal mark 252, with the text “And when the bell in every village tolls, / May there hymn-singing be,” supporting the alto soloist and connecting to the individual. The quartet emerges from the texture

at rehearsal mark 253, an interjection to close the phrases of the repeated melody. The same interjection occurs at rehearsal mark 260, after the text “May there jollity be.” From here, the string quartet is present until the end of the movement, supporting the passage of Baritone soloist and Treble chorus, finally rising to the forefront of the sound again two bars before rehearsal 264, with the text “May there love-singing be.” The presence of the string quartet at each of these moments symbolizes the emotional resolution of the individual within the community, and the hope for a peaceful future expressed in the prayer of each of these lines.

3.1c “Totalism:” Assimilation of Eclectic Influences

There are a wide range of influences which Krouse assimilates in this work, uniting them under his own unique compositional voice and creating a cohesive sound world. This element of Krouse’s music has been termed “totalism,” as described at the beginning of the chapter, and is reminiscent of the synthesis of contrasting styles established by Penderecki in his *Polish Requiem*. Many of Krouse’s influences have already been discussed, such as the motives of Bach and Britten as motivic material for each of the ‘Air’ movements and influences from the requiem genre. The contemporary techniques of aleatory and sound mass are included in this as well, established in the mid-to-late 20th century. Movement 11 provides a great example of how totalism manifests in *Armenian Requiem*, seamlessly bridging influences of Komitas, Britten, and Armenian folk and liturgical music.

This applies to the influence of Baroque techniques and styles as well. For example, movement 7 utilizes the Baroque “Lament” style, a musical style that conveys deep sorrow and mourning, typically performed by a solo vocalist accompanied by a basso continuo and often featuring expressive, descending melodies. A common element is a specific type of “ground bass” or *basso ostinato*, a brief bass pattern that repeats with a changing melody above, that

descends through a tetrachord repeatedly, reinforcing a persistent feeling of descent or emotional heaviness⁶⁸. Krouse marks “in the style of a ‘Lament’” at rehearsal mark 137, but there is an especially strong sense of Lament style at rehearsal mark 138, with the entrance of the tenor solo and a descending pentachord for the bassline. Further, the ostinato appears in the solo cello and is marked “*in the Baroque style*.” This is a form of text painting as part of the tenor’s text translates to “Lament and not shed tears.” This texture and descending bassline return at rehearsal mark 142.

138 **Poco più mosso** ($\text{♩} = 112$) 139

A. Fl. 1-2 *mp* *pp*

Ob. 1-2 *mp* *pp*

Eng. Hn. *mp* *pp*

Timp. 1 *pp*

Hp. 2 *f*

Pao. *mf*

Ten. Solo *with growing ardor* *Lament and not shed tears,*
 mi li - tsi indz yerk - nel, yev voch tzə - na - nel, vogh - bal, yev voch ar - tas - vel,
 զի ի - զի ինձ Երկ - նել, Եվ Վոչ շէ - նա - նել, Վոց - Բալ, Եվ Վոչ ար - տաս - վել,
 զի ի - զի ինձ Երկ - նել, Եվ Վոչ շէ - նա - նել, Վոց - Բալ, Եվ Վոչ ար - տաս - վել,

Vc. Solo *in the Baroque style* *f*

Vla. *mf* *pp*

Vc. *mf* *pp*

Cb. *pizz* *mf*

Figure 3.8. *Armenian Requiem*, Movement 11, Rehearsal Mark 138⁶⁹

⁶⁸ J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014).

⁶⁹ Ian Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 95

90

143

Harp 1

Ten. Solo
and you to hark not, Implore and not be heeded,
yev qez voch la - sel, pa - gha - til, pa - gha - til, yev an - tes mə -
tu qez voch la - sel, pa - gha - til, pa - gha - til, tu an - tes mə -

Vla. Solo

Vc. Solo

Cb.

Figure 3.9. *Armenian Requiem*, Movement 11, Rehearsal Mark 142⁷⁰

Krouse also references the Baroque form *passacaglia*, a continuous variation piece built on a short, repeating bass line or harmonic progression called a *basso ostinato*, in movement 5. This passage begins at rehearsal mark 113, marked “Tempo di ‘Passacaglia’ – sempre più intensamente and sempre crescendo – lamentando.” The *basso ostinato* appears clearly at the beginning of the section with pizzicato notes in the cellos and basses, a five-bar melody beginning on beat 2. Krouse continues to repeat and develop this melody, slowly adding more voices and instruments to the texture, continually building to a climax at rehearsal mark 121 with the *basso ostinato* as a chorale sung by the chorus. The *basso ostinato* is a central melodic feature of this passage, appearing in all registers and colors.

All three aspects discussed above are encompassed in Krouse’s compositional voice, particularly the idea of “universalism” or “totalism,” indicating the personal and expressive nature of *Armenian Requiem* and furthering its point of view.

⁷⁰ Krouse, *Armenian Requiem*. (Drazark Music, 2015), 96

3.3 Conclusion

Serving as both a reflection on loss and a hopeful vision for humanity's future, *Armenian Requiem* draws from the requiem tradition through text, structure, symbolic tonal centers, dramatic theatrical techniques, and a strong connection to Bach and Britten. The work evolves the requiem genre through a culmination of eclectic influences and contemporary techniques, cultivating a sense of Armenian musical language and personal compositional voice, all of which are essential to expressing the point of view. Barsoumian writes “...we offer up our gesture of commemoration to time and future generations, who will breathe new life into this beautifully rendered piece of classical sacred music and give eternal voice to our sorrow and our light.”⁷¹

⁷¹ Vatsche Barsoumian, "Introduction" in *Armenian Requiem*, Ian Krouse (Los Angeles, CA: Drazark Music, 2015), i

CHAPTER FOUR: MASS FOR THE ENDANGERED BY SARAH KIRKLAND SNIDER

In a discussion of the requiem as a genre in the 21st century, it is important to consider the breadth of what constitutes a requiem today, and Sarah Kirkland Snider's *Mass for the Endangered* provides a fruitful case study to explore this. The work was commissioned by Trinity Wall Street for their "Mass Re-Imagings" Project and premiered by The Choir of Trinity Wall Street and NOVUS NY at St. Paul's Chapel, New York, NY on April 26, 2018. Snider expresses in her program note that the work "is a hymn for the voiceless and the discounted, a requiem for the not-yet-gone;"⁷² the work combines the traditional Latin mass text with original text by writer, visual artist, and musician, Nathaniel Bellows, and "embodies a prayer for endangered animals and the imperiled environments in which they live" (Snider). Although not raised Catholic, Snider developed a love for sacred choral music through singing in the Princeton High School choir,⁷³ establishing an early connection to the sacred tradition that informs her work. *Mass for the Endangered* encapsulates Snider's personal compositional voice, known for emotionally rich and genre-blending music.

Though the mass does not utilize text from or reference the traditional requiem mass, Snider herself identifies the work as a requiem, making it a compelling case study for this investigation. The work reflects a broader trend seen in works like *Ein Deutsches Requiem* and *Armenian Requiem*: a requiem is defined less by its text than by its subject matter and emotional intent. *Mass for the Endangered* is unique in that it focuses not on mourning the lost but on praying for those still in peril. The work "appeals for parity, compassion, and protection, from a

⁷² Sarah Kirkland Snider, "Mass for the Endangered," Sarah Kirkland Snider, <https://www.sarahkirklandsnider.com/works/mass-for-the-endangered>.

⁷³ Tom Huizenga, "Sarah Kirkland Snider's Mass, Rebooted for the 21st Century," NPR, September 28, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/sections/deceptivecadence/2020/09/28/908029027/sarah-kirkland-sniders-mass-rebooted-for-the-21st-century>.

mindset—a malignance or apathy—that threatens to destroy the planet we all are meant to share.”⁷⁴

When asked about engaging with extramusical material—particularly the degree to which artists should address current politics—Snider emphasized two key aspects of the mass: (1) a deep sense of divinity in nature, and (2) a focus more on sadness than rage or anger. She explained that she endeavored to write a “love letter” to the environment. This emotional approach reinforces the work’s identity as a requiem, emphasizing solemnity and love for what is being mourned. The idea of engaging with current politics also places this mass in the requiem tradition, connecting it to works like Britten’s *War Requiem* as well as the requiems of Danielpour and Krouse. *Mass for the Endangered* achieves this by shifting the point of view in a different direction from the traditional Mass. Functioning as both an act of reverence and moral summons, the natural world becomes the divine presence, humans are positioned as advocates, and the listener is implicated in a call to action.

4.1 Relationship to the Tradition

Snider expresses this distinct point of view by drawing from the requiem tradition, especially through: (1) text; (2) structure; (3) symbolic tonal centers and modality; and (4) motivic unity and symbolic motives.

4.1a Text

The text illustrates how *Mass for the Endangered* both draws from and expands the requiem tradition, weaving lines from the traditional Latin mass text with Bellows’s original text. Including newly written text is a major innovation, enabling a deeply personal expression tailored to Snider and Bellows’s artistic vision. The standard five-movement form is expanded to

⁷⁴ Sarah Kirkland Snider, “Mass for the Endangered,” Sarah Kirkland Snider, <https://www.sarahkirklandsnider.com/works/mass-for-the-endangered>.

six movements with the inclusion of the “Alleluia” between the “Gloria” and “Credo” movements. There are two different approaches to the text in this work: the “Kyrie,” “Alleluia,” “Credo,” and “Agnus Dei” movements combine fragments of the Latin mass text with Bellows’s original text, while the “Gloria” and “Sanctus/Benedictus” movements set the traditional Latin without change, addition, or fragmentation. The “Credo” and “Agnus Dei” movements also feature fragments from the English translation, a way of seamlessly integrating the lines of text with Bellows’s poetry. The use of fragments of the Latin text allows a connection to the traditional mass while shaping the message of the work. For example, the opening lines of the text are:

“Kyrie eleison

On earth, air, and water,
have mercy.
On stone, tree, and flower,
have mercy.
World have mercy.”⁷⁵

The opening line “Kyrie eleison,” which translates to “Lord, have mercy,” establishes the connection to the traditional mass as well as the prayer for mercy, but the entrance of Bellows’s poetry immediately shifts the point of view: the speaker is not asking for mercy for themselves, but rather for the environment. Moreover, the final line redirects divinity from a God figure to the Earth itself. In this way, the overall message of the work is established immediately within the first few minutes of music, a technique which applies to many of the works already discussed. The “Kyrie” text here also leaves out the middle line of the text, “Christe eleison.” This helps to support the shift toward divinity in nature by the lack of mentioning Christ specifically by name. Snider states, “What we sought to do was use the traditional Catholic Mass as a prism through

⁷⁵ Nathaniel Bellows, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018)

which to worship, celebrate, and eulogize endangered animals and their imperiled habitats, praying to a higher power for mercy, forgiveness, and intervention. But where the Catholic Mass pleads to a God conceived in the image of man, our ‘Mass’ pleads to nature itself, or Mother Earth.”⁷⁶

4.1b Structure

Snider’s cyclical approach to form and narrative reflects the requiem framework; as in other 21st-century examples, the work unfolds across multiple structural levels. This structure emphasizes recurrence and reflection, mirroring the natural cycles of the Earth. On the largest scale, the form is a palindromic arch, beginning and ending with the same material and built around the climactic “Credo” movement which occurs almost exactly in the center of the 43-minute form. This reinforces the work’s perspective by situating belief at its structural and emotional center.

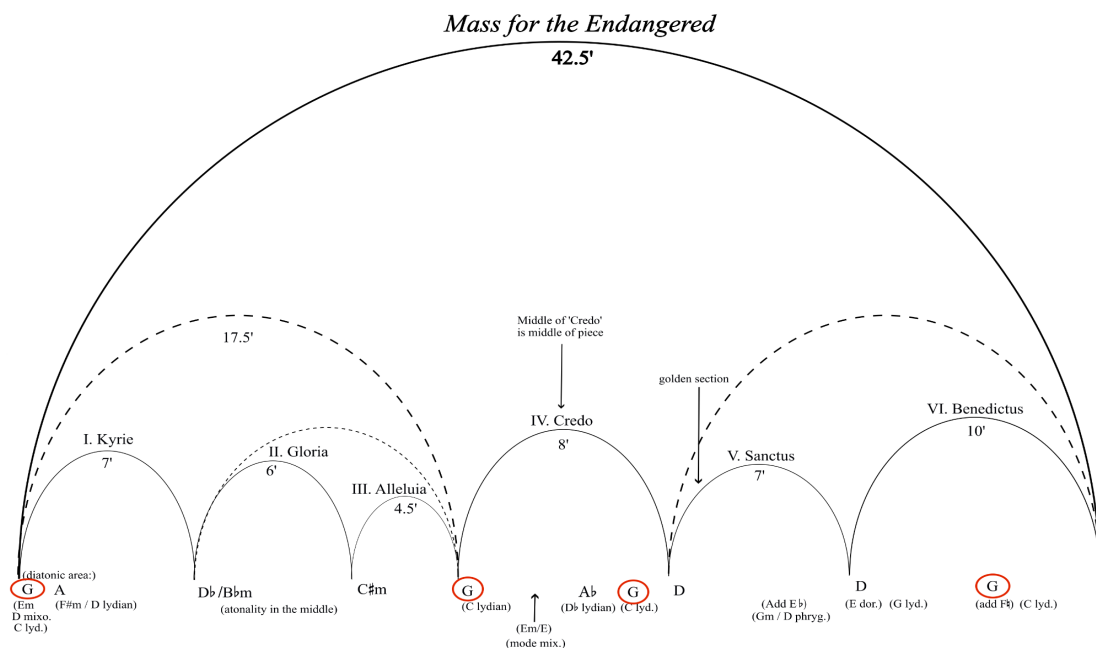


Figure 4.1. *Mass for the Endangered*, Arc Diagram

⁷⁶ Francisco Salazar and Sarah Kirkland Snider, Q & A: Sarah Kirkland Snider on Composing & Recording ‘Mass for the Endangered,’ other, *Opera Wire*, September 28, 2020.

Movements 1 and 6 heavily utilize the piano motive which opens the mass; throughout each of these movements, this motive is developed and transposed, but the core six-note contrapuntal motive is intervallically unchanged, making it easily recognizable when it returns in movement 6. The choral writing at the end of the introduction of both movements also utilizes the same music:

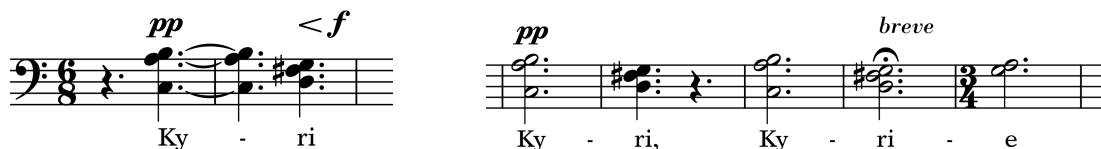


Figure 4.2. Tenor/Bass Reduction, *Mass for the Endangered*, Movement 1, mm. 23-24; mm. 28-33⁷⁷

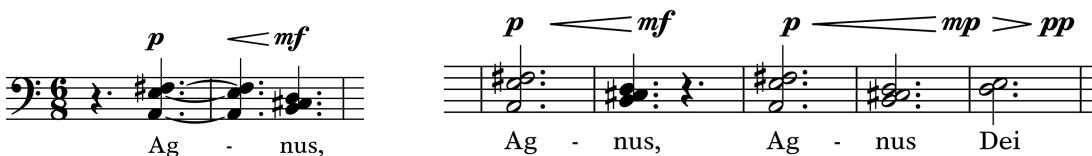


Figure 4.3. Tenor/Bass Reduction, *Mass for the Endangered*, Movement 6, mm. 28-29; mm. 33-38⁷⁸

These passages are almost exactly the same, transposed down by a perfect fourth. The most important difference is the interval between the tenors and basses. In the “Kyrie,” the outer voices are a major seventh apart; in the “Agnus Dei,” the outer voices are a major sixth apart. The other major change is the removal of the short fermata on the penultimate chord. The same removal of the fermata occurs in the piano part which separates these choral statements:



Figure 4.4. Piano, *Mass for the Endangered*, Movement 1, mm. 25-28⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Sarah Kirkland Snider, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018), 3-4, 23-33

⁷⁸ Snider, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018), 132-133, 28-38

⁷⁹ Snider, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018), 4, 25-28



Figure 4.5. Piano, *Mass for the Endangered*, Movement 6, mm. 30-33⁸⁰

Both changes create vertical and horizontal compression, heightening momentum in Movement 6 and propelling the work to its conclusion.

The connection between the two movements can also be seen in the text, as both focus on the theme of mercy, discussing and reframing in relation to the environment. Additionally, the construction of the “Kyrie” and “Agnus Dei” texts is similar, each beginning and ending in Latin and frequently bringing back fragments of the traditional text, in Latin or translated to English. The cyclical nature of the overall form is also seen in the G major diatonicism at the beginning of movement 1 (Kyrie), beginning and end of movement 4 (Credo), and end of movement 6 (Agnus Dei); these spots are indicated with a red circle in the arc diagram below. Each of these passages also features a repeated note motive in the instrumental ensemble, especially the strings, connecting each of these spots texturally as well.

On the middle level, the mass can be broken into three smaller arcs: the first over movements 1–3, totaling about seventeen and a half minutes, the second over movement 4, and the third over movements 5–6, totaling about seventeen minutes. This is shown with dotted-line arcs in the figure above. This mid-level analysis further indicates the symmetry of the form.

On the movement level, each movement is cyclical in some way, either frequently bringing back blocks of material or using a ternary form. The ‘Credo’ movement at the center of

⁸⁰ Sarah Kirkland Snider, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018), 133, 30-33

the work is both: the ternary form is seen in the diatonic centers: starting in G major, modulating to Ab major, then returning to G major. The cyclical sense is indicated in the movement's form:

A B A C C B D (from B) A A B E (from B) B

This is partially due to the text, as motives such as “We believe in all who...” frequently return throughout the text, but Snider's decision to highlight this using the same music to set these lines should not be overlooked. This movement clearly shows an approach to form which is both natural and intentional, reflecting the work as a whole. Snider's approach to form not only links to the genre characteristics of the requiem tradition but also exhibits the work's perspective, reflecting the natural world in its fractal-like structure and inviting profound reflection from the listener through a multi-level narrative.

4.1c Symbolic Tonal Centers and Modality

Mass for the Endangered is largely diatonic, though primarily modal rather than tonal. This use of modes connects the mass to the origin of the musical setting of the requiem mass in the early Renaissance. For example, the “Kyrie” movement has a strong pull to a D pitch center, first D Mixolydian, then D Lydian. The movement opens with a low D pedal in the contrabass, immediately orienting the pitch center around D, but heavily featuring C naturals in the piano motive. Further, the whole first section propels toward measure 18, featuring a high tri-chord of D–E–F# in the sopranos and altos. At measure 36, the central thematic material of the movement is introduced in the strings, switching the mode to D Lydian with the introduction of ‘C#’ and ‘G#.’ The bass line repeats the cell F#–E–D, continually pulling down to D as a “tonic.” This cell forms the basis of the material in the low register for the rest of the movement and the diatonic scale in the rest of the ensemble remains, maintaining the D Lydian mode. Furthermore, the

emphasis on D in the opening links this pitch center to the work's reimagining of the natural world as divine.

Another example is the "Agnus Dei;" the movement begins in E Dorian, with a transposed version of the piano motive from the first movement. The pitch center is reinforced by the E pedal which enters at measure 12. Snider establishes the shift to C Lydian in measure 76, highlighting it with a textural contrast from most of the ensemble sounding to solo harp and a rhythmic shift to a quintuplet-based pattern. After the first iteration of the "Let, allow, admit, accord:" passage, the music returns to the opening diatonicism, with a shift to G Lydian. The shift back to C Lydian occurs partway through the second "Let, allow, admit, accord:" passage at measure 148, staying in this modal area until the end of the movement. The modality is especially clear during the climax, centered strongly in C Lydian with a C pedal tone in the bass. The prevalence of Lydian mode, especially during climactic moments, is another way that the outer movements of the mass are linked.

Mass for the Endangered also connects to the lineage through symbolic key centers, particularly D major in Movement 5, "Sanctus/Benedictus," one of the only tonal passages in the mass. As in many other works, Snider uses D major to convey celebration and praise, highlighting the joy in the "Sanctus" text. The orchestration supports this view as well; for example, the passage from measure 126–139 is the climax of the movement and features a rhythmic ostinato in the crotales. The bright, bell timbre creates a celebratory and ritualistic feeling for this passage, a return to the opening material in D. This all contributes to this being the brightest movement in the work. These pages from the score can be found in Appendix B.

The use of the D major to praise or exalt, as featured in the aforementioned requiems, is also significant here as the "Sanctus" is one of only two movements to use the full traditional

Latin text without inclusion of new poetry. Thus, the “Sanctus” movement explicitly mentions God (“Domine Deus”). In this way, the key further supports the meaning of the text.

Additionally, the harmonic movement from a G pitch center at the end of the “Credo” to a D pitch center for the “Sanctus” is a large-scale plagal cadence, also known as the “Amen cadence” due to its frequent use in hymns, which indicates a connection to the religious tradition from which the mass stems. The symbolism of D major underlines the mass’s point of view by the placement of this movement within the overall form. The first movement created the connection between a D pitch center and nature as divinity, setting up the “Sanctus” as the ultimate expression of this idea. By this stage, the sacred has been clearly redefined through the first four movements, and D major reinforces this celebration and reverence for nature.

4.1d Motivic Unity and Symbolic Motives

Snider’s mass reflects the requiem lineage through its economical use of material and symbolic motives, particularly major seconds and [013] trichords and repeated note textures. The [013] trichord, in various voicings, is central to many of the significant vertical sonorities throughout, one being the first sung chord at measure 4: C–A–B from bottom to top in the sopranos and altos. The outer notes of the piano motive, D–B–C, are another voicing of [013]. Both examples establish the trichord in the opening. The major second is also important as a vertical sonority, the chorus often ending phrases on a major second, as seen in measures 20, 32, and 106 in the “Kyrie.” This expands to sonorities of stacked major seconds as well, like the final chord in the chorus at the end of the “Kyrie.” These intervals evoke a fragile, unstable tension, mirroring the endangered state of the natural world.

The repeated note motive in the orchestra is also established in the first movement, periodically interjecting in measures 40, 46, and 54, before taking over the texture at measure 72.

This is developed in the opening of the third movement, now soft and legato with waves of volume, contrasting the staccato and accented crescendos of the first movement. This material forms the accompaniment for a large portion of the movement. A similar texture appears briefly in the woodwinds in the fourth movement, starting at measure 19 with the text “We believe in all who are offset.” This texture in the woodwinds returns each time this text returns, most extensively toward the end of the movement, first at the shift up to A \flat major diatonicism and again at the return to G major diatonicism. The repeated note motive is also central to the orchestral texture in movement six, as mentioned earlier in the connection between the outer movements and the cyclical form. The motive’s recurrence and transformation across movements symbolize persistence and hope for the survival of endangered species. All the motives mentioned contribute to the emotional narrative and overarching structure of the mass, both central to its point of view.

4.2 Innovation and Evolution

Mass for the Endangered is forward thinking in its approach to genre, expanding the boundaries of what constitutes a requiem. This is encapsulated in the work’s distinct perspective, which expresses reverence for the natural world and a desire to protect it through five characteristics: (1) text; (2) combination of old and new styles, especially in the vocal writing; (3) text setting; (4) texture; and (5) rhythmic and harmonic techniques.

4.2a Text

Like the requiems of Brahms and Krouse, *Mass for the Endangered* inhabits the emotional and spiritual territory of the genre without employing the traditional text. Snider’s mass is distinctive for two reasons: first, it features original English poetry, written specifically for the mass and intentionally interwoven with fragments of the Latin text; and second, it

reframes the act of remembrance, mourning, and pleading for the ecological crisis. Snider stated in an interview, “Nathaniel’s text is elegant, lyrical, layered in meaning, and immensely singable – in short, it’s ideal for setting to music. But also, Nathaniel is a close friend of mine, and we’d had many, many conversations about the natural world—our mutual love of it, the role it plays in our work, the role it plays in our sense of spirituality—so when I’m setting his words I’m tapping into all of that, and it’s informing the emotion of the music.”⁸¹ Bellows’s original text and the duo’s collective conception of the work is what makes *Mass for the Endangered* a requiem; while traditional requiem is a collective prayer to God on behalf of the dead, formal rather than personal, Snider’s mass embodies a prayer to Mother Earth on behalf of the endangered species and a plea to humanity to aid the crisis.

The chosen fragments of the traditional Latin text help to convey this reframing, and the “Credo” text is an interesting example of this:

“We believe in stone and moss,
sand and grass. Land limned on loam,
haven to the harmed and the whole,
the lesser and the left,
the spirit housed in the opposite.

We believe in all who are offset.

We believe in the blessing of wing,
angelic, ingenious—every
soaring thing. We believe in the holy
pelt and fin, hoary hide and shell.
The armor of every beast is blessed,
adorned in their own regalia.

Mercy, now,
on all animalia.
Take no tooth or tusk, steal no heart, hair, or husk.
Et expecto...
No shark robbed of its fin, no mink
denied its skin.
resurrectionem mortuorum et vitam

⁸¹ Sarah Kirkland Snider, Fifteen Questions Interview with Sarah Kirkland Snider, other, *Fifteen Questions*, n.d.

venturi saeculi...
No bath in bowls of salted blood
And I await the life of the world to come...
no cove for corpse, no reddened veldt.

A flora fashioned, valued, known
to heal the mind and mend the bone.
We believe in all who are at risk.
We believe in all who are voiceless.
We believe in all who are helpless.
We believe in all who are at risk.

Lay down the spear, lay down the hook,
lay down the gun, the knife, the net.
No majesty in poison. No virtue in
the snare. No salvation in a strangled spirit.

We believe in songs at daybreak,
cries and calls at dusk.
In quell and coo, drone and hum,
in hovel, hollow, river, pond.

We believe in listen.
We believe in wish.
And to be worthy of their gift: this chance to look
within ourselves and change how
we have lived, to change
how we have lived.

We believe in all who are offset.
We believe in all who are outcast.
We believe in all who are voiceless.
We believe in all who are stranded.
We believe in all who are stalwart.
We believe in all who are fearless.
Expecto vitam venturi saeculi...
We believe in all who are dauntless.
And I await the life of the world to come...

We believe in all offset, outcast, voiceless, stranded,
stalwart, fearless, dauntless, promised.

We believe in all who are silenced.
We believe in all silenced.
We believe in all who are promised.
We believe in all promised.
*And I await...*⁸²

⁸² Nathaniel Bellows, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018)

Bellows's original poetry builds on the traditional text by beginning many of the lines with "We believe..." Already there is an important reframing in that 'credo' translates to "I believe." Changing the speaker to "we" emphasizes the collective nature of the ecological crisis, directly implicating the listener. Further, what is believed in are all elements of the natural world; for example, the first line is: "We believe in stone and moss, / sand and grass..." Again, Bellows immediately applies divinity to Earth. This shift not only redefines divinity but also draws attention to the often-overlooked elements of the natural world.

Beyond the "I believe" motive, the "Credo" movement only features one line from the traditional "Credo" text: "Et expect resurrectionem mortuorum / et vitam venturi saeculi," which translates to "and I await the resurrection of the dead / and the life of the world to come." Bellows particularly highlights the second half ("and the life of the world to come") by also using its English translation and repeating both the Latin and English versions of the line later in the text. This line is significant in that it calls out the "world" (in the context of the work we presume this refers to Earth) and the future, reminding the listener that the crisis is ongoing and the endangered still have the possibility of life ahead.

The "Credo" text is also indicative of another important and distinctive element of *Mass for the Endangered*: a direct call to action. At the center of the movement, which is the center of the mass as a whole, occurs the most explicit statement of the call:

"Lay down the spear, lay down the hook
lay down the gun, the knife, the net.
No majesty in poison. No virtue in
the snare. No salvation in strangled spirit."⁸³

⁸³ Bellows, *Mass for the Endangered*

The musical setting is striking: fast, loud passages in the low instruments alternate with moments of silence, allowing a single soprano voice to emerge, pleading the lines above. The stanza also plays cleverly with language, connecting to the traditional text, juxtaposing words like “majesty,” “virtue,” “salvation,” and “spirit,” which are prevalent in the Catholic texts, with “poison,” “snare,” and “strangled.” The close placement of these words together further underlines their contrast, creating a deeper sense of the injustice faced by the endangered species.

After another stanza highlighting the beauty of Earth, the call-to-action shifts into a positive light:

“We believe in listen. We believe
in wish. And to be worthy of
their gift: this chance to look
within ourselves and change how
we have lived, to change
how we have lived.”⁸⁴

This shift underscores a key message of the work: awareness of the ecological crisis is only meaningful if it inspires introspection and behavioral change. This stanza also highlights the divinity of nature with the line “And to be worthy of their gift.” Musically, the stanza begins climatically, but quickly diminuendos to a sparse texture in the high register, with the sopranos singing the text in unison. The quiet volume, monophonic vocal line, and sparse texture ask the audience to lean in, and musically depict the idea of introspection.

Another key feature of the “Credo” text is its emphasis on responsibility toward the “voiceless.” This theme is present in the requiems of both Danielpour and Krouse, in the mourning and remembrance of those killed by war or genocide, and the need to protect others from the same fate. *Mass for the Endangered* reminds the listener that the environment is also

⁸⁴ Nathaniel Bellows, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018)

voiceless, and that the need for protection doesn't only apply to human beings, but the Earth as a whole. All these facets of the text are central to conveying the personal perspective present in the mass.

4.2b Synthesis of Old and New Styles

One hallmark of Snider's style in *Mass for the Endangered* is the integration and juxtaposition of old and contemporary musical idioms, especially in the vocal writing, reflecting the combination of traditional Latin with new poetry in the text. Similarly to Krouse's totalism, this synthesis can be traced back to Penderecki's *Polish Requiem*, though Snider approaches the technique in a personal way. She mentions this in an interview, stating, "Before starting the Mass, I did consciously strive to open the gates in my mind between the Western choral tradition I grew up singing and all of the non-choral vocal popular music I grew up listening to, so that I could focus my energy on best serving Nathaniel's text, regardless of what part of my musical background the ideas came from."⁸⁵ For example, Snider periodically utilizes a call-and-response form, reminiscent of a cantor and congregation. This connection to Catholic liturgical practice underscores the communal nature of the chorus, in the feeling of coming together in shared ideals. One example of this is the opening of the "Sanctus" movement; one tenor soloist sings a simple, repeated note "Sanctus," which is answered by the rest of the choir with the main "sanctus" motive. This is immediately followed by a contemporary technique in the bass voices, where they sing a repeated note 'D' with the syllable 'n' or 'na' to create a subtle murmuring effect. This immediate juxtaposition of traditional cantor–congregation exchanges with contemporary vocal textures casts the older style in a new light.

⁸⁵ Natalia Kazaryan and Sarah Kirkland Snider, Sarah Kirkland Snider's Mass for the Endangered; Call to Action to Save Planet, other, *Classical Post*, November 16, 2020.

Figure 4.7. *Mass for the Endangered*, Movement 2, mm. 71-83⁸⁷

Conversely, this movement is the most chromatic and dissonant, juxtaposing the early music textures with a contemporary melodic and harmonic sound world. It is also important to note that the two movements without English text have a clear connection to early music styles, deepening the relationship between these movements and the traditional Mass.

The integration of old and new styles extends to the movement-level approach to form as well. The “Credo” movement is subtitled “on a ground by Caroline Shaw;” a “ground,” or “ground bass” (*basso ostinato*), is again a brief pattern in the bass line that functions as structural foundation, repeating while the melody above it changes. The *basso ostinato* was incorporated

⁸⁷ Sarah Kirkland Snider, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018), 35, 71-83.

into stricter forms of continuous variation, such as the *chaconne* and *passacaglia* in the Baroque era⁸⁸.



Figure 4.8. *Mass for the Endangered*, Movement 4, first statement of the ground

Snider utilizes this early music technique, but with a melodic ground by a contemporary of hers: Caroline Shaw. This is reminiscent of the way composers began to approach the *cantus firmus*, employing secular tunes, whether folk songs or the top lines of chansons (French polyphonic songs). By incorporating a theme from a fellow 21st-century composer, Snider links the movement to early music traditions while firmly grounding it in a contemporary sound world. Further, the ground does not appear in the low register but is passed through the orchestra in the middle and high registers. It is developed rhythmically, sometimes appearing on multiple rhythmic planes simultaneously. Snider’s approach to this form is also interesting in the sense that a *basso ostinato* typically repeats in the bass line with variations on the harmonic progression, while the “Credo” movement does the opposite, developing and varying the repeating five-note motive during long passages of harmonic stasis. The following figure shows an example of how the ground is developed, circled in red.

⁸⁸ J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014).

Figure 4.9. Woodwinds, Marimba, & Harp, *Mass for the Endangered*, Movement 4, mm. 25-32⁸⁹

4.2c Text Setting

Snider’s personal voice also features a distinctive approach to text setting; for example, Snider subverts the expected emotional tone of certain movements; both “Gloria” and “Alleluia” are traditionally bright, celebratory parts of a mass, often in a major key. Interestingly, both feature a pitch center of D \flat /C \sharp and both feature a more somber tone, creating a sense of a two-movement arch. Though often occupying D \flat major diatonicism, the “Gloria” could be considered the most chromatic and dissonant movement of the work. The “Alleluia” is largely diatonic and is one of the most tonal passages in the work, flipping to the parallel minor key of C \sharp minor. This is supported by the frequent use of ‘B \sharp ’ and a “cadence” in C \sharp minor, where the bass instruments land heavily on ‘C \sharp ’ in the low register, creating a strong pull to ‘C \sharp ’ as a pitch center. This material returns 8 times over the course of the movement. By contrasting traditional

⁸⁹ Sarah Kirkland Snider, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018), 65, 25-32.

emotional associations and subverting expectations, these movements' solemnity heightens the gravity of the environmental crisis.

4.2d Texture

The textural style in *Mass for the Endangered* is also notable, especially in the relationship between the voices and orchestra. Snider achieves a striking textural balance, often blending the choral and instrumental layers. This occurs in two moments that have already been discussed, the first being measures 113–125 in the “Gloria” where the repeated note motive begins into the chorus; important lines in the chorus emerge from the texture, but the repeat notes serve as textural foundation. The text becomes partially obscured, directing focus toward the music’s emotional resonance rather than its literal meaning. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the repeated note motive most often appears in the orchestra, increasing tension and thickening the texture. The second and fifth movements, those that set the traditional Latin, are the only movements where this motive is utilized in the chorus rather than the orchestra. They are also the only two movements that do not utilize repeat note textures in the orchestra. This creates a contrast between each of these movements and those that surround it. Another example is the murmuring effect in measures 5–9 of the “Sanctus” movement. Here, the textural murmur further highlights the importance of the pitch ‘D,’ adding a dynamic element to the pedal tone. The repeated notes also appear repeatedly in the chorus in the second half of the fifth movement, beginning at measure 70, especially on the words “Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua” and “Osanna.”

The textural technique also relates to the use of vocal soloists in Snider’s mass. In contrast to the other 21st century requiems, there are no designated soloists, but rather soloists who emerge from the chorus. This allows important lines of the text to be underlined, such as the

call-to-action in the center of the “Credo,” as the texture thins to allow the soloist to shine through. Another example is at measure 70 in the “Alleluia;” a transition of solo harp leads to a short, unaccompanied, chant-like passage with one solo soprano voice on the line “She who is sleeping is she who will wake.” This immediately follows the line “Oh, save us mother!”, implying that “she” refers to Mother Earth. The absence of designated soloists reinforces the collective nature of the work, symbolizing humanity as a unified community and highlighting the necessity of coming together to solve the environmental crisis. Individual voices emerge momentarily to highlight key texts, yet the ensemble ultimately functions as a unified collective.

4.2e Rhythm and Harmony

The rhythmic and harmonic techniques employed in *Mass for the Endangered* are also a way that the mass is forward looking within the requiem genre. Snider’s rhythmic language incorporates meter shifts, polyrhythms, and ostinati that sound organic and fluid while concealing intricate underlying complexity—a reflection of nature itself. For example, the opening of the “Gloria” movement is built on unpredictable meter shifts, alternating between standard and compound meters. The complexity and intentionality of these shifts in meter results in an introduction that feels organic and inevitable.

Polyrhythms serve a similar purpose and function as a unifying feature across the entire work. This often occurs on more than two levels; for example, measures 51–66 of the “Agnus Dei” contain repeated sixteenth notes in the woodwinds, eighth-note triplets in the harp, and eighth notes in the voices. These rhythmic patterns at different speeds come together to form a complex mobile, a shimmering backdrop to underscore the text:

“...
replace this
hardened wrath,
with calm.

Lamb of God,
in calling, call,
grant them peace.
The deepest sleep
of safety, the unencumbered
yawn. To bathe and breed
with no threat or risk—
trade our sins,
our trespasses,
for bliss.”⁹⁰

An excerpt of this section in the score can be found on the following page. This passage in the text describes the possibility of a more hopeful future for Earth, and the music accentuates this hopefulness by creating a rhythmic framework which reflects nature itself.

⁹⁰ Nathaniel Bellows, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018)

53

FL. *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Ob. *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Cl. *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Bn. -

Mar. -

Hp. *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Pno. -

S. *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*
 har-dened wrath O Lamb of God grant them peace the deep-est

A. *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*
 calm re-place this har-dened wrath with calm O Lamb of God grant them peace

T. *mf* *f* *p* *mf*
 Lamb of God, in call-ing, call, grant them peace, the deep-est

B. *mp* *f* *p*
 Lamb of God, grant them peace

Vn. I *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Vn. II *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Va. *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Vc. *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Cb. *pp* *f* *p* *pp*

Figure 4.10. *Mass for the Endangered*, Movement 6, mm. 53-58⁹¹

⁹¹ Sarah Kirkland Snider, *Mass for the Endangered* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2018), 136, 53-58.

Snider's harmonic language in the mass is mostly diatonic overall, but largely modal, as discussed earlier in the chapter. The approach to harmonic progression is minimalistic on the large scale, with overarching harmonic stability and repeating progressions. As a result, notes outside the diatonic framework and shifts in the overall harmonic area create a sharp contrast, indicating their significance. One example of this are measures 48–66 in the Credo movement; the beginning of the movement establishes a G major or E minor diatonic center, with the five-note ground G–B–C–E–F#. This is furthered by the C major to A minor progression which repeats, starting at measure 19. At measure 48, an inkling of an E major center begins with the incorporation of 'D#' into the ostinati, but the sharp addition of E major appears with the heavy string E major chords at measure 54. This is an acute contrast after 48 bars of harmonic stability. This brings awareness to the entrance of the next stanza of text: "Take no tooth or tusk, / steal no heart, hair, or husk," which Snider marks, "*forte* with a sardonic jaunt." This harmonic shift amplifies the significance of the text.

This is seen also on a larger scale in the "Credo" movement as well. At rehearsal mark E2, the diatonicism shifts up a minor second to an A \flat major / F minor center for the climax of the movement with the stanza beginning with "We believe in all who are offset". After spending the entire movement thus far in the G major / E minor center, this shift is striking and climatic, especially coupled with the orchestration for the full orchestra and chorus, most of whom are marked *fortissimo*.

A final example of substantial harmonic shifts is in the "Agnus Dei" movement; at measure 118, the contrabasses and bass voices move down a whole step to an F-natural, outside the G major diatonicism which has encompassed the music since measure 74. This high-dynamic moment heightens the harmonic contrast, further underscoring the gravity of the text: "They who

take our basest acts”. The text here accentuates humanity’s responsibility toward the environment and focuses on action, continuing the theme of awareness of the way our human behavior is impacting the earth and its inhabitants. The text and personal characteristics of Snider’s compositional voice contribute to the evolution of the requiem genre and the mass’s distinct point of view.

4.3 Conclusion

Mass for the Endangered contributes to the evolution of the requiem tradition in its conception, incorporating requiem themes without the use of any inherent requiem texts and laying the groundwork for a new way to think about the genre. Moreover, it functions as a prayer for endangered species amid the environmental crisis, shifting divinity from the Christian God to the natural world. This is highly present in the text but deepened by certain connections to the requiem genre: the use of Latin texts, cyclic structure, symbolic tonal centers, and motivic unity and symbolism. In addition to its concept and the incorporation of original text written specifically for the work, Snider’s personal voice expands upon the genre through a unique combination of old and new styles, text setting, and contemporary texture. These characteristics collectively define the work’s perspective—an expression of reverence for nature and a call for humanity to unite in its protection. As Snider expresses, “I think a lot of artists who care about the environmental crisis feel helpless to make change with their art — it’s easy to say ‘what difference will it make?’ So the art becomes a place to reflect, in part, on these feelings of helplessness. What we tend to underestimate is that if the art speaks to someone, it actually can make a difference.”⁹²

⁹² Natalia Kazaryan, Sarah Kirkland Snider’s *Mass for the Endangered*; *Call to Action to Save Planet*, other, *Classical Post*, November 16, 2020.

CHAPTER 5: PRACTICAL APPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

Throughout this investigation, I have returned to the essential questions that first prompted it: Why does the requiem, a genre born from 15th-century Catholic ritual, continue to resonate so profoundly with composers and audiences today? What allows this centuries-old form to inspire such personal, innovative, and culturally significant works in the 21st century? Though rooted in a specific liturgical function, the requiem has become a familiar and enduring creative language; its most iconic moments are recognizable even beyond the concert hall. Yet for the composers who engage with it, the requiem represents far more than a historical tradition. This investigation inspired a practical expression in my own compositional work, further reflecting on these questions through tangible artistic exploration.

5.1 Practical Application of the Investigation in *The Sun in My Heart*

Accompanying this monograph is *The Sun in My Heart*, an oratorio that explores the concepts of “interbeing” and divinity in the natural world, finding a source of comfort through these ideas in the face of death and loss. Though not a requiem itself, this work is highly influenced by the requiem genre and the analysis laid out in this investigation. In all the requiems mentioned, the work expresses something deeply personal to the composer, something important enough to endeavor on the composition process. The same is true of *The Sun in My Heart*, expressing a particular view on life, mortality, and divinity that I’ve been contemplating over the last seven years since being introduced to the concept of interbeing.

“Interbeing” is a term coined and popularized by Vietnamese Zen master and peace activist Thích Nhất Hạnh to express the Buddhist teaching of dependent co-arising in accessible, experiential language. While rooted in classical Buddhist philosophy, interbeing reframes interconnectedness as a lived, relational reality rather than an abstract doctrine. A single sheet of

paper, for example, contains the cloud, the rain, the logger, the sunshine, and the entire network of ecological and human conditions that make its existence possible.⁹³ Hanh writes, “When we think of a speck of dust, a flower, or a human being, our thinking cannot break loose from the idea of unity...if we truly realize the interdependent nature of the dust, the flower, and the human being, we see that unity cannot exist without diversity...Unity is diversity, and diversity is unity.”⁹⁴ Through such examples, Thích Nhất Hạnh makes tangible the principle of non-self, showing that identity and experience arise from innumerable relationships.

Because of this, interbeing carries ethical, ecological, and social implications central to Thích Nhất Hạnh’s vision of mindfulness in action. Recognizing our fundamental interconnectedness transforms how we perceive suffering and responsibility: caring for others and for the natural world becomes inseparable from caring for ourselves. Interbeing thus serves as both a philosophical foundation and a practical way of seeing, offering a counterpoint to feelings of isolation and fragmentation in contemporary life—in the case of *The Sun in My Heart*, as a counterpoint to mourning. The title of my work stems from this idea; as Hanh states, “The sun is our second heart, our heart outside of our body...”⁹⁵

Written for soprano and mezzo-soprano soloists, chorus, and orchestra, *The Sun in My Heart* demonstrates a contemporary application of the central characteristics of the Concert Requiem tradition and 21st-century approaches to the genre, integrating textual, structural, motivic, and theatrical techniques to create a particular point of view: an invitation to see all beings—human, animal, and elemental—as sacred and interconnected, reflecting the divine in

⁹³ Thích Nhất Hạnh and Peter Levitt, *The Heart of Understanding: Commentaries on the Prajñāparamita Heart Sutra* (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 2016).

⁹⁴ Thích Nhất Hạnh, *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change* (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 1993).

⁹⁵ Hanh, *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change*.

every part of Earth. In the face of death, it offers solace, showing that life continues within the interwoven web of existence, held always by the presence of the divine.

5.1a Text

The Sun in My Heart integrates both liturgical and non-liturgical text sources, blending three selections from the traditional Latin requiem Mass, (1) “Introit: Requiem aeternam,” (2) “Sanctus-Benedictus,” and (3) “Lux Aeterna,” with three non-liturgical texts: two in English, (1) Daniel Ladinsky’s “The Body A Tree” and (2) Emily Dickinson’s “The Earth Has Many Keys,” and one in an old dialect of Italian, St. Francis of Assisi’s *Laudes Creaturarum: Cantico di Frate Sole* (*Canticle of the Sun*). The text is laid out in seven movements as follows:

- I. Introit: Requiem aeternam
- II. Laudes Creaturarum: Cantico di Frate Sole
- III. The Body A Tree
- IV. Sanctus
- V. Benedictus
- VI. The Earth Has Many Keys
- VII. Lux Aeterna

I compiled the texts myself, interweaving poetry with the traditional Latin movements, a practice which relates in some way to all three 21st-century works in this investigation. The non-liturgical texts reframe divinity toward nature and, through their placement within the traditional Latin texts, relates this reframing, and idea of interbeing, to the contemplation of mortality. The full text and translations can be found in Appendix C.

5.1b Structure

Drawing from the requiem tradition, *The Sun in My Heart* employs a seven-movement form, establishing a multi-layered arc structure with a clear two-part structure. On a macro level, movements 1–3 convey mourning and a reflection on divinity in nature, while movements 4–7 suggest comfort, renewal, and spiritual interconnection, mirroring the dual-arc trajectory seen in many of the aforementioned requiems. Certain movements, such as the first movement, “Introit: Requiem aeternam,” are constructed as a palindrome, creating a sense of symmetry and cycle that reflects the overall arc structure. The multi-layer approach to form was inspired by each of the three 21st-century works in this investigation, and the palindromic arc structure, mapping outer movements to each other around a bright center, draws from *An American Requiem*.

The music of the opening movement is echoed at the conclusion of the work, creating a cyclical closure that reflects the natural world. The idea of striving to reflect the natural world musically drew from my analysis of *Mass for the Endangered*, which expresses a musical impression of the natural world in a variety of ways. This structural design reinforces the thematic trajectory from mourning and introspection toward hope and the affirmation of interbeing, echoing the symbolic journey from darkness to light established in the many of the major requiems. Additionally, the formal approach to the second movement, “Laudes Creaturarum,” stems from my exploration into the seventh movement of *Armenian Requiem*, built on one motive and continually propelling forward until a climactic fugal ending.

This fugue is an example of how counterpoint is employed strategically to underscore significant textual and formal moments, illuminating a pivotal passage from the text, *Laudes Creaturarum: Cantico di Frate Sole* by St. Francis of Assisi: “Ka da te, Altissimo, sirano incoronati,” which translates to “For by you, Most High, they will be crowned.” This line is

5.1c Motivic Symbolism

The movement II fugue subject is one example of motivic symbolism and unity in *The Sun in My Heart*, central to conveying its point of view. This approach to motivic development—creating motives with symbolic significance that shift and evolve over the course of the work—stems directly from my investigation of *An American Requiem* and *Mass for the Endangered*. One example is the opening quintuplet figure, occurring throughout the piece both in rhythm, arpeggio, and chord voicing, functions similarly as a unifying emblem of light and the ideal of divinity in nature.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Glockenspiel, Crotales, and Piano/Harp. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of three measures. The Glockenspiel and Crotales parts play a quintuplet figure (five notes beamed together) in the first measure, marked 'l.v. sempre' and 'p espr.'. The Piano part plays a similar quintuplet figure in the first measure, also marked 'l.v. sempre' and 'p espr.'. The Harp part plays the same quintuplet figure in the first measure, marked 'l.v. sempre' and 'p espr.'. In the second measure, all instruments are silent. In the third measure, the Glockenspiel and Crotales play the quintuplet figure again, marked 'p espr.'. The Bass Drum and Tam-tam play a single note in the third measure, marked 'pp'.

Figure 5.3. Percussion, Piano, & Harp, *The Sun in My Heart*, Movement I, mm. 1-3

The register and orchestration create a bright, heavenly atmosphere, symbolizing the connection of divinity and nature. The quintuplet is later developed to underscore the line ‘et lux perpetua luceat eis’ later in the movement:

Figure 5.4. Percussion, Piano, & Harp, *The Sun in My Heart*, Movement I, mm. 84-87

Here, the motive has expanded into the lower parts of the orchestral register, creating a deeper, underlying connection to the original motive in the opening of the movement. Utilizing this motive in conjunction with the line “et lux perpetua luceat eis” (“and let perpetual light shine upon them”), one of the most significant lines in the traditional Latin text, establishes a link between nature as divinity and the prayer for the deceased. This association is reinforced by the word “light,” a poetic connection between the natural and the divine which is expressed musically through the bright orchestration. This motive occurs in various melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic forms throughout the work, a reminder that the same divine light shining in eternity is the light that fills the natural world now.

Another example is the glissando motive, which symbolizes interbeing, creating connections between two pitches and often occupying transitional spaces. For example, measure 29 in movement II features a glissando in the chorus and strings:

Figure 5.5. Solo Soprano, Chorus, & Strings, *The Sun in My Heart*, Movement II, mm. 29-32

At rehearsal mark D, the key modulates up a minor third to E \flat major and the glissando both functions as a transitional device and occupies the space between the two keys. Additionally, the glissando occurs between the end of the choral passage and the first entrance of the soprano soloist. This symbolizes the interwoven nature of the universe, creating a connection between two diverse points. Further, this moment ushers in the line “Laudato sie, mi’ Signore, cum tucte le tue creature” which translates to “Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures;” the close proximity of this line to the glissando links the glissando motive to “all [divinity’s] creatures” begins to establish a relationship between nature as divinity and the ideals of interbeing.

The glissando motive is also a central compositional seed of movement III, “The Body A Tree.” Within the trajectory of the overall work, this text is a central point that unifies the

different facets of the point of view: nature as divinity and interbeing as a source of comfort in the face of death. The glissando motive is significant in conveying this musically; one example of this is the climax at measure 61–62:

The musical score for measures 61-64 of 'The Sun in My Heart, Movement III' features a complex arrangement of instruments and voices. The Harp (Hp.) part is the most prominent, with a glissando in measure 61. The vocal parts (Soprano and Alto) have lyrics that repeat the word 'Love' and describe a tree moving like this. The string parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass) provide a rich harmonic and rhythmic background. The score includes various dynamic markings and performance instructions, such as 'rit.' and 'gliss.', to guide the performer.

Figure 5.6. Harp, Treble Chorus, & Strings, *The Sun in My Heart*, Movement III, mm. 61-64

The glissando occurs on a repetition of the word “Love” after the line “Love, a tree. When it moves us like this;” this highlights the significance of the word “Love” within the text as well as the connection between “love” and “tree,” a connection between the natural world and human emotion. Positioned directly before the text “When it moves us like this,” the glissandi text paint

the line and unify the ensemble through a coordinated, fluid motion that dissolves individual boundaries.

5.1d Theatrical Orchestration

The work features soprano and mezzo soloists, chorus, and orchestra, with certain passages scored for smaller ensembles to express the dramatic narrative, a technique that stems from my analysis of all three 21st-century works, but particularly *Armenian Requiem*. For example, movement III features only SSA chorus, harp, and strings. This ensemble matches the poetry's delicacy and otherworldly imagery, providing an ethereal, intimate texture that full choir or heavier instrumentation would overwhelm. In this movement, the music leans into wonder: angels gather "beneath my cheeks," and love becomes a force that makes the "limbs of our souls" brush against one another. The harp and treble chorus paints the angelic imagery in the text, supported by a transparent bed of strings. The choice of ensemble supports the peaceful resolution that closes the first large arc. Rather than mourning, this is a moment of reverence—a quiet astonishment at the beauty that continues through and beyond us.

Through the integration of these techniques—cyclical and palindromic structure, counterpoint, selective textual integration, multi-language expression, theatrical instrumentation, and symbolic motivic unity—*The Sun in My Heart* situates itself firmly within the lineage of the Concert Requiem while simultaneously articulating a particular point of view: a reflection on death not as absence but as transformation and a meditation on interbeing, suggesting that our lives are not separate from the earth, the sky, or each other. Each structural, motivic, and theatrical choice is informed by this expressive purpose, demonstrating the capacity of the Concert Requiem framework to serve artistic aims.

5.2 Conclusion

As seen in the works of Mozart, Brahms, Verdi, Fauré, and Britten, the Concert Requiem genre invites a singular act of artistic and philosophical expression. Their works established the emotional and structural foundations upon which later composers have built, allowing subsequent generations to reinterpret its meaning for their own time. In exploring the 21st-century requiems of Richard Danielpour, Ian Krouse, and Sarah Kirkland Snider, this dissertation has traced how that lineage continues to evolve and how today's composers reaffirm the requiem's enduring capacity to give voice to both individual reflection and collective human experience.

In this examination, a throughline becomes unmistakably clear: each composer turns to the genre not merely to memorialize the dead, but to express something deeply personal. Whether grounded in faith or in a broader spiritual or ethical sensibility, each work asserts a belief in the possibility of goodness, understanding, and renewal. The requiem, long rooted in liturgical ritual, becomes in their hands a vessel for intimate reflection and public statement alike: a space where personal conviction, cultural identity, and collective mourning intersect.

None of these composers adhere strictly to the traditional Latin text; rather, they reshape or reinterpret its themes to suit their artistic and philosophical aims. This flexibility is precisely what has allowed the genre to remain relevant into the 21st century, despite many impractical elements such as large ensembles and long durations. The tradition provides today's composers the structure to draw from and the freedom to expand upon it. By integrating new texts, engaging with political and ecological concerns, and expanding the concept of what and whom a "mass for the dead" might honor, contemporary requiems testify to the genre's continued relevance.

In this vein, my own oratorio, *The Sun in My Heart*, extends this exploration into the realm of creative practice. While not intended as a requiem, it draws deeply from the genre's expressive language and from the works analyzed here. Rooted in the Buddhist concept of interbeing—the understanding that all life is interconnected—and in a sense of divinity revealed through the natural world, the oratorio seeks comfort and meaning in the face of death and loss. *The Sun in My Heart* adapts the central characteristics of the modern Concert Requiem to offer a vision of all beings as sacred and interdependent, reflecting divine presence in every aspect of the Earth.

The modern Concert Requiem, as this study and accompanying composition suggest, functions as both an act of remembrance and a declaration of belief, not necessarily in doctrine, but in humanity's ongoing capacity to create meaning out of loss. Each of the composers in this investigation, through innovation grounded in tradition, extends the genre's expressive reach into the present moment. The evolution of the genre reveals that, far from being a relic of religious ceremony, the requiem endures as a profoundly adaptable form: one that continues to give voice to the most essential questions of life, death, and what it means to be human.

APPENDIX A⁹⁶

to the memory of those who died in the wake of the tragic events of September 11, 2001;
and in tribute to the American soldier

AN AMERICAN REQUIEM

PART I

I. Introit Vigil I – Kyrie

Richard Danielpour
(2000–2001)

Misterioso ♩ = 72–80

Copyright © 2001 by Associated Music Publishers, Inc. (BMI) New York, NY
International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.
Warning: Unauthorized reproduction of this publication is prohibited by Federal law and subject to criminal prosecution.

Corrected 6/02

Property of:
G. Schirmer Rental Library
Bellevue Road
Chester, NY 10918
SUPPLIED ON LOAN ONLY

⁹⁶ Richard Danielpour, *An American Requiem*. (Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2001), 1-3, 198-199

7

Fl. 1 2 3

Oboe 1 2

E.H.

Cl. in Bb 1 2 3

Ba. 1 2 3

Hr. in F 1 2 3 4

Tpt. in C 1 2 3

Tbn. 1 2

Ba. Tbn. Tbn.

Tamp.

Perc. 1 2 3 4 5

Cel. in Celesta

Hrp.

Expansion to full phrase

Sopr. A. T. B.

Mezzo Sop.

Vn. I sul G I solo stti, unis.

Vn. II sul G

Va. (div.) unis.

Vc. (div.) unis.

Cb. 4 soli non cresc.

13

Fl. 1, 2

Ob. 1, 2

E.H.

Cl. in B \flat 1, 2

Ba. 1, 2, 3

Hr. in F 1, 2, 3, 4

Tpt. in C 1, 2, 3

Tbn. 1, 2

Ba.Tbn. 1, 2

Timp.

Perc. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Cel. *sempre*

Hrp.

S. *273 do, na e, in Du, mi, no...*

A. *no...*

T. *no...*

B. *no...*

Messa Sop.

Vc. I *4 soli, flautando*

Vc. II *no vib.*

Vc. III *no vib.*

Cb. *tutti, unis, arco*

pp, *ppp*, *f*, *mf*, *mp*, *ppp*, *pp*, *f*, *pp*, *ppp*

130

Fl. *ppp*

Ob. *ppp*

Bs Cl. *ppp*

Bn. *ppp*

Crot. *pp*

Hp.

Pno. *mp*

S. div. *f* *p* *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf*
- sis o-san-na in ex-cel-sis O-san-na in ex-cel-sis o-san-na in ex-cel-
Sa-anc-tus Sa-anc-tus Sa-anc-tus

A. *p* *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf*
Sa-anc-tus Sa-anc-tus Sa-anc-tus,

T. *ppp* *mf* *mp* *mf*
Sanc-tus, sanc-

B. *ppp* *mf* *mp* *mf*
div. Sanc-tus, sanc-

Vn. I *ppp*

Vn. II *ppp*

Va. *ppp*

Vc. *ppp*

Cb. *ppp*

APPENDIX C
The Sun in My Heart: Texts and Translations

I. Introitus: Requiem aeternam

CHORUS:

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 caro veniet.

Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord
And let perpetual light shine upon them
A hymn, O God, becometh Thee in Zion
And a vow shall be paid to thee in Jerusalem
Hear my prayer
All flesh shall come before you

II. Laudes Creaturarum

CHORUS:

Altissimu, onnipotente, bon Signore,
Tue so' le laude, la gloria e l'honore et onne
benedictione.

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and
all blessings.

Ad te solo, Altissimo, se konfano,
Et nullu homo ène dignu te mentovare.

To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
And no man is worthy to mention Your name.

SOPRANO:

Laudato sie, mi' Signore, cum tucte le tue
creature,
Spetialmente messor lo frate solo,
Lo qual'è iorno, et allumini noi per lui.
Et ellu è bellu e radiante cum grande
splendore:
De te, Altissimo, porta significatione.

Praised be You, my Lord, with all your
creatures,
Especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day,
and through whom You give us light.
and he is beautiful and radiant with great
splendor:
of you, Most High, he bears significance.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora luna e le
stelle:

Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister
Moon and the stars,

In celu l'äi formate clarite et pretiose et belle.

in heaven you formed them clear and precious
and beautiful.

SOPRANO, CHORUS:

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per frate vento
Et per aere et nubilo et sereno et onne tempo,

Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother Wind
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and
every kind of weather

SOPRANO:

Per lo quale a le tue creature dài
sustentamento.

through which you give sustenance to your
creatures.

DUET (SOPRANO, MEZZO-SOPRANO):

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sor'aqua,

Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister
Water,

MEZZO-SOPRANO:

La quale è multo utile et humile et pretiosa et
casta.

which is very useful and humble and precious and
chaste.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per frate focu,

Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother
Fire,

Per lo quale ennallumini la nocte:

through whom you light the night

DUET (SOPRANO, MEZZO-SOPRANO):

Ed ello è bello et iocundo et robustoso et
forte.

and he is beautiful and playful and robust and
strong.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora nostra matre
terra,

Praised be you, my Lord, through our Sister
Mother Earth,

SOPRANO, MEZZO, TREBLE CHORUS:

La quale ne sustenta et governa,
Et produce diversi fructi con coloriti flori et
herba.

who sustains and governs us,
and who produces varied fruits with colored
flowers and herbs.

CHORUS:

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per quelli ke
perdonano per lo tuo amore
Et sostengo infirmitate et tribulatione.

Praised be you, my Lord, through those who
give pardon for your love
and bear infirmity and tribulation.

TUTTI (SOPRANO, MEZZO, CHORUS):

Beati quelli ke 'I sosterrano in pace,

Blessed are those who will endure them in
peace

CHORUS:

Ka da te, Altissimo, sirano incoronati.

for by you, Most High, they shall be crowned.

– St. Francis of Assisi
from *Laudes Creaturum (Cantico di Frate
Sole)*

III. The Body A Tree

TREBLE CHORUS:

The body a tree, God a wind.
When He moves me like this, like this,

angels bump heads with each other
gathering beneath my cheeks.

holding their wine barrels, catching
the brilliant tear, pearl rain.

Love, a tree. When it moves us like this.
How can our soul's limbs not touch?

–Daniel Ladinsky
from *A Year with Hafiz*

"The Body A Tree," from the Penguin publication *A Year with Hafiz: Daily Contemplations* © 2011, Daniel Ladinsky. With permission. www.danielladinsky.com.

IV. Sanctus

CHORUS:

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth
Hosanna in excelsis.
Plenu sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis

Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of Hosts.
Hosanna in the highest.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest

V. Benedictus–Laudes Creaturarum

MEZZO-SOPRANO:

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

MEZZO-SOPRANO, CHORUS:

Hosanna in excelsis

Hosanna in the highest.

CHORUS:

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora nostra morte
corporale,
Da la quale nullu homo vivente pò skappare:

Praised be you, my Lord, through our Sister
Bodily Death,
From whom no living human can escape.

MEZZO, CHORUS:

Guai a quelli ke morrano ne le peccata
mortali:

Woe to those who will die in mortal sin.

TUTTI (SOPRANO, MEZZO, CHORUS):

Beati quelli ke trovarà ne le tue sanctissime
voluntati,
Ka la morte secunda no 'I farrà male.

Blessed are those whom death will find in
your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.

CHORUS:

Laudate e benedicete mi' Signore et
rengriate
E serviateli cum grande humilitate.

Praise and bless my Lord and give him thanks
and serve him with great humility.

– St. Francis of Assisi
from *Laudes Creaturum (Cantico di Frate
Sole)*

VI. The Earth Has Many Keys

SOPRANO:

The earth has many keys,
Where melody is not
Is the unknown peninsula.
Beauty is nature's fact.

But witness for her land,
And witness for her sea,
The cricket is her utmost
Of elegy to me.

– Emily Dickinson
The Earth Has Many Keys

VII. Lux Aeterna

TUTTI:

Lux aeterna

Let everlasting light

CHORUS:

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.

Let everlasting light shine upon them, Lord,
with Thy saints for ever,
for Thou art merciful.

TUTTI:

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis,
quia pius es.

Grant them eternal rest, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them,
for Thou art merciful.

SCORES CITED

AN AMERICAN REQUIEM

By Richard Danielpour

Copyright © 2001 by Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Used by permission.

ARMENIAN REQUIEM

By Ian Krouse

Copyright © 2015 by Drazark Music and Ian Krouse.

All rights reserved.

Used by permission.

MASS FOR THE ENDANGERED

Music by Sarah Kirkland Snider

Text by Nathaniel Bellows

Copyright © 2018 by Music Sales Corporation.

All rights administered by G. Schirmer, Inc.

International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Used by permission.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anson, Philip. "Krystof Penderecki Talks about the Polish Requiem." Krystof Penderecki Talks about the Polish Requiem, April 1, 1998. <https://www.scena.org/lsm/sm3-6/sm36pene.htm>.
- Ayala, Ted, and Ian Krouse. A First for Armenia and Composer Ian Krouse. Other. *Crescenta Valley Weekly*, April 16, 2015. <https://www.crescentavalleyweekly.com/leisure/04/16/2015/first-armenia-composer-ian-krouse/>.
- Britannica Editors. "Komitas." Encyclopædia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Komitas>.
- Burkholder, J. Peter, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca. *A History of Western Music*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014.
- Burkholder, J. Peter, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca. *A History of Western Music*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014.
- Clater, Michelle J. "Interposed between God and Man: Agency in the Requiems of Berlioz and Faure." *Interposed between God and Man: Agency in the Requiems of Berlioz and Faure*. Dissertation, Indiana University, 2009.
- Danielpour, Richard. "An American Requiem: Richard Danielpour – Programme Note." Wise Music Classical, 2001. <https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/27128/An-American-Requiem--Richard-Danielpour/>.
- Dellal, Pamela. "Mache Dich, Mein Herze, Rein [Text & Translation]." Cataloguers Corner RSS. Accessed October 22, 2025. <https://www.viii.org/bwv-244-matthaeus-passion/65-mache-dich-mein-herze-rein>.

“Duduk and Its Music.” UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. Accessed October 22, 2025.

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/duduk-and-its-music-00092>.

Hạnh, Thích Nhất. *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change*. Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 1993.

Hạnh, Thích Nhất, and Peter Levitt. *The Heart of Understanding: Commentaries on the Prajñaparamita Heart Sutra*. Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 2016.

Huizenga, Tom. “Sarah Kirkland Snider’s Mass, Rebooted for the 21st Century.” NPR, September 28, 2020.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/deceptivecadence/2020/09/28/908029027/sarah-kirkland-sniders-mass-rebooted-for-the-21st-century>.

Kazaryan, Natalia. Sarah Kirkland Snider’s Mass for the Endangered; Call to Action to Save Planet. Other. *Classical Post*, November 16, 2020.

Kirkland Snider, Sarah. Fifteen Questions Interview with Sarah Kirkland Snider. Other. *Fifteen Questions*, n.d.

Kirkland Snider, Sarah. “Mass for the Endangered.” Sarah Kirkland Snider. Accessed October 25, 2025. <https://www.sarahkirklandsnider.com/works/mass-for-the-endangered>.

Krouse, Ian. “Armenian Requiem.” *Armenian Requiem*, 2015, 2019.

<https://www.iankrouse.com/armenian-requiem>.

Komitas, Edward Gulbekian, and Vrej Nersessian. 1998. *Armenian Sacred and Folk Music / Komitas; Translated by Edward Gulbekian; Introduction by V.N. Nersessian*.

Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.

Madilian, Gerard. *Traditional Armenian Instrumental Music*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2017.

- Marx, Wolfgang. “Types of Mercy and Non-Liturgical Dramaturgy: The Musical Requiem as a Concert Piece.” Essay. In *Music and Death: Funeral Music, Memory and Re-Evaluating Life*, 53–68. Boydell & Brewer, Boydell Press., 2023.
- Ohanian, Vasken Aristakes. “The Issue of Armenian Cultural Identity as Expressed in the Choral and Vocal Music of Komitas Vardapet,” 2025.
- Orledge, Robert. *Gabriel Faure*. London: Eulenburg Books, 1979.
- Salazar, Francisco, and Sarah Kirkland Snider. Q & A: Sarah Kirkland Snider on Composing & Recording ‘Mass for the Endangered.’ Other. *Opera Wire*, September 28, 2020.
- Steinberg, Michael. “Johannes Brahms: A German Requiem ..., Op. 45.” Essay. In *Choral Masterworks: A Listener’s Guide*. Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Steinitz, Richard. *György Ligeti: Music of the Imagination*. London: Faber and Faber, 2003.
- Turpin, Andy. “Nothing Sounds Armenian like a Duduk: Alma Lecture.” *The Armenian Weekly*, February 12, 2010. <https://armenianweekly.com/2010/02/12/nothing-sounds-armenian-like-a-duduk/>.
- Zhang, Kangyi. Armenian Requiem | Composer Ian Krouse. Other, February 9, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOWukLpleGw>.