

# Britten War Requiem Score

Britten War Requiem Score Britten's War Requiem A Score Etched in Sorrow and Hope Britten War Requiem Benjamin Britten War Requiem score Requiem Mass Wilfred Owen musical analysis performance history impact analysis meaning Benjamin Britten's War Requiem isn't just music; it's a visceral experience, a sonic tapestry woven from the threads of war's devastation and the yearning for peace. Commissioned for the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral in 1962, a site rebuilt from the ashes of its World War II destruction, the work stands as a powerful testament to the enduring human spirit amidst unimaginable suffering. This article delves into the score's compelling story, its musical intricacies, and its lasting impact, guiding you through its emotional landscape.

**A Symphony of Grief and Remembrance** Imagine the scene: a shattered city, a cathedral reborn, and a requiem mass unlike any other. Britten's masterpiece wasn't a traditional liturgical setting; it was a revolutionary fusion of the Latin Requiem Mass with poems by Wilfred Owen, a young World War I soldier who perished in the conflict. This juxtaposition of the formal ancient ritual alongside the raw, unflinching poetry of a fallen soldier immediately establishes the work's central tension: the clash between timeless faith and the brutal realities of modern warfare. The score itself is a battlefield of sounds. The soaring Latin of the Requiem Mass, performed by a traditional choir, represents the unwavering faith, the enduring hope for redemption. But this traditional voice is constantly challenged, even overwhelmed, by the stark, visceral poetry of Owen, sung by a tenor solo and a boys' choir. Owen's words, poems like "Anthem for Doomed Youth" and "Dulce et Decorum Est," paint harrowing pictures of the trenches, the mangled bodies, and the soul-crushing psychological toll of war. These words aren't merely narrated; they are experienced through Britten's masterful orchestration.

**A Musical Landscape of War and Peace** Britten's genius lies in his ability to paint sonic landscapes. The orchestra doesn't simply accompany the voices; it becomes the war. The brass blares like artillery fire, the strings wail like grieving widows, and the percussion creates a cacophony of destruction. Yet, amidst this chaos, moments of profound beauty emerge: fragile melodies that whisper of hope and remembrance, passages of hushed intimacy that speak of solace and grief.

**2 One particularly poignant section is the Dies Irae, the Day of Wrath, where the terrifying power of the orchestra confronts the fragile hope of the soprano solo.** This section is a powerful metaphor for the struggle between the destructive forces of war and the enduring strength of the human spirit. The juxtaposition is breathtaking, a stark reminder of the constant tension between the horrors endured and the enduring power of faith. Consider also the baritone solo's rendition of Owen's poetry. It's not simply a recitation; it's a heartwrenching portrayal of a man grappling with the trauma of war, his voice cracking under the weight of his experiences. The intimacy of the baritone's delivery contrasts sharply with the vastness of the orchestral forces, highlighting the individual's vulnerability in the face of immense destruction.

**Beyond the Score: A Legacy of Remembrance** The War Requiem is more than just a composition; it's a historical document, a testament to the horrors of war and a plea for peace. Its premiere in Coventry, a city scarred by bombing, was itself a powerful statement: a symbolic act of reconciliation and healing. Since then, it has become a staple of the choral repertoire, performed globally in diverse settings, reminding audiences worldwide of the devastating cost of conflict. The work's enduring popularity is a testament to its ability to transcend cultural boundaries and speak to the universal human experience of loss, grief, and the hope for a brighter future.

**Actionable Takeaways**

- Listen to the War Requiem: Immerse yourself in the music. Pay attention to the interplay between the Latin Mass, Owen's poetry, and Britten's masterful orchestration.
- Read Wilfred Owen's poetry: Understanding the context of the poems enhances your appreciation of the music's emotional depth.
- Attend a live performance: The experience of witnessing a War Requiem performance is truly unforgettable. The sheer scale and emotional power of the work are best appreciated in a live setting.
- Explore Britten's life and other works: Understanding Britten's personal history and other compositions provides further context for appreciating the War Requiem.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

- Who commissioned the War Requiem? The War Requiem was commissioned by the Coventry Cathedral for its consecration in 1962.
- What is the significance of using Wilfred Owen's poetry? Owen's poetry provides a powerful firsthand account of the horrors of World War I, adding a layer of visceral reality to the traditional Requiem Mass.
- What is the overall message of the War Requiem? The War Requiem explores the themes of war, death, faith, and hope for peace. It highlights the devastating consequences of conflict and the enduring strength of the human spirit.
- How long is the War Requiem? The performance typically lasts around 75-85 minutes.
- Where can I find recordings of the War Requiem? Numerous recordings are available, including those by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

recordings of the War Requiem are available on streaming services like Spotify Apple Music and YouTube Music You can also find recordings on physical media like CDs and vinyl Britten's War Requiem continues to resonate with audiences decades after its creation serving as a timeless reminder of the importance of peace and the enduring power of music to express the inexpressible It's a work that demands attention evokes emotion and ultimately leaves a lasting impact on all who experience it

War Requiem, Op. 66 War Requiem War Requiem; choral score War Requiem War Requiem. Op. 66. Vocal Score by Imogen Holst. Words From the Missa Pro Defunctis and the Poems of Wilfred Owen Britten: War Requiem Catalogue of (printed) music. Music. Accessions, pt.[1]-94 Masterworks of 20th-Century Music A Conductor's Guide to Choral-Orchestral Works The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980 University of California Union Catalog of Monographs Cataloged by the Nine Campuses from 1963 Through 1967: Subjects National Union Catalog Choral-Orchestral Repertoire The National Union Catalog A Basic Music Library The British Catalogue of Music University of California Union Catalog of Monographs Cataloged by the Nine Campuses from 1963 Through 1967: Authors & titles Catalog of Copyright Entries Catalogue Dictionary Catalog of the Music Collection Benjamin Britten B - 4 Britten Vocal and choral works. Scores Benjamin Britten Benjamin Britten Mervyn Cooke British museum dept. of pr. books Douglas Lee Jonathan D. Green British Library. Department of Printed Books University of California (System). Institute of Library Research Jonathan D. Green Music Library Association University of California (System). Institute of Library Research Library of Congress. Copyright Office May and May (Firm) New York Public Library. Reference Department War Requiem, Op. 66 War Requiem War Requiem; choral score War Requiem War Requiem. Op. 66. Vocal Score by Imogen Holst. Words From the Missa Pro Defunctis and the Poems of Wilfred Owen Britten: War Requiem Catalogue of (printed) music. Music. Accessions, pt.[1]-94 Masterworks of 20th-Century Music A Conductor's Guide to Choral-Orchestral Works The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980 University of California Union Catalog of Monographs Cataloged by the Nine Campuses from 1963 Through 1967: Subjects National Union Catalog Choral-Orchestral Repertoire The National Union Catalog A Basic Music Library The British Catalogue of Music University of California Union Catalog of Monographs Cataloged by the Nine Campuses from 1963 Through 1967: Authors & titles Catalog of Copyright Entries Catalogue Dictionary Catalog of the Music Collection *Benjamin Britten B - 4 Britten Vocal and choral works. Scores Benjamin Britten Benjamin Britten Mervyn Cooke British museum dept. of pr. books Douglas Lee Jonathan D. Green British Library. Department of Printed Books University of California (System). Institute of Library Research Jonathan D. Green Music Library Association University of California (System). Institute of Library Research Library of Congress. Copyright Office May and May (Firm) New York Public Library. Reference Department*

bh large choral for soprano tenor and baritone solos chorus orchestra chamber orchestra boys choir and organ scoring 3 3 picc 2 ca 3 iii cl in eb and bass cl 2 dbl bn 6 4 3 1 timps 4 perc 2 sd td bd tamb trgl cymb castanets whip chinese blocks gong bells in c and f vibr antique cymbals in c and f piano grand org ad lib strings chamber orch fl picc ob ca cl bn hn perc timp sd bd cymb gong harp string quintet 2 vl vla vc db chamber organ or harmonium to accompany boys choir text missa pro defunctis and wilfred owen publisher boosey hawkes difficulty level 5 for soprano tenor and baritone solos chorus orchestra chamber orchestra boys choir and organscoring 3 3 picc 2 ca 3 iii cl in eb and bass cl 2 dbl bn 6 4 3 1 timps 4 perc 2 sd td bd tamb trgl cymb castanets whip chinese blocks gong bells in c and f vibr antique cymbals in c and f piano grand org ad lib strings chamber orch fl picc ob ca cl bn hn perc timp sd bd cymb gong harp string quintet 2 vl vla vc db chamber organ or harmonium to accompany boys choir text missa pro defunctis and wilfred owen publisher boosey hawkes difficulty level 5 his inspired idea was to mix the words of the missa pro defunctis mass for the dead in latin with the poems of one of the greatest of the first of the spirit war poets wilfred owen he uses nine of owen's poems which form a kind of song cycle which weaves in and out of the formal sections of the latin mass when britten's recording was released the following year it sold 200 000 copies within the first five months which was almost unheard of for a classical work and possibly unique for a large scale contemporary one this was the moment of destiny for which britten had been preparing all his adult life the peace movements of the 1960s the cuban missile crisis nuclear testing anti nuclear protests the war weariness of the seemingly endless conflict in vietnam all these things contributed to the public's readiness to hear this message which britten so powerfully addressed duration 85 minutes paul spicer lichfield 2011

widely regarded as one of the greatest choral works of the twentieth century britten's war requiem was first performed at the consecration of the new coventry cathedral in 1962 it provocatively juxtaposes the

vivid anti war poetry of wilfred owen with the latin requiem mass in a passionate outcry against man s inhumanity to man this handbook explores the background to britten s use of the owen texts charting the development of the composer s lifelong pacifist beliefs and in a chapter contributed by philip reed of the britten pears library aldeburgh detailing the process of composition from hitherto unpublished correspondence and manuscript sources the musical structure is investigated and the work s compositional idiom related to britten s output as a whole a concluding chapter surveys the fluctuating critical responses to the score and includes discussion of the composer s legendary 1963 recording and derek jarman s controversial interpretation on film

masterworks of 20th century music introduces more than one hundred of the greatest compositions by world renowned composer that have entered the standard orchestral repertoire the author surveyed dozens of major american orchestras to focus on those works that an average audience member is most likely to hear concertgoers who are intimidated by the modern repertoire finally have a single resource that will help them understand and enjoy it like an educated guide he walks the listener through the piece explaining how all the elements come together to form a unified whole this book serves the general reader interested in 20th century music plus students teachers and scholars

now in paperback this innovative survey of large choral orchestral works written between 1900 and 1972 and containing some english text examines eighty nine works from elgar s dream of gerontius to bernstein s mass for each work the author provides a biography of the composer complete instrumentation text sources editions availability of performing materials performance issues discography and bibliographies of the composer and the work based upon direct score study each work has been evaluated in terms of potential performance problems rehearsal issues and level of difficulty for both choir and orchestra when present solo roles are described the forty nine composers represented include samuel barber arthur bliss benjamin britten henry cowell frederick delius r nathaniel dett gerald finzi howard hanson roy harris paul hindemith ulysses kay constant lambert peter mennin gunther schuller william schumann michael tippett ralph vaughan williams william walton and healey willan written as a field guide for conductors and anyone else involved in programming concerts for choir and orchestra this text should prove a useful source of new repertoire ideas and an invaluable aid to rehearsal preparation cloth edition first published in 1994

choral orchestral repertoire a conductor s guide omnibus edition offers an expansive compilation of choral orchestral works from 1600 to the present synthesizing jonathan d green s earlier six volumes on this repertoire this edition updates and adds to the over 750 oratorios cantatas choral symphonies masses secular works for large and small ensembles and numerous settings of liturgical and biblical texts for a wide variety of vocal and instrumental combinations each entry includes a brief biographical sketch of the composer approximate duration text sources performing forces available editions and locations of manuscript materials as well as descriptive commentary a discography and a bibliography unique to this edition are practitioner s evaluations of the performance issues presented in each score these include the range tessitura and nature of each solo role and a determination of the difficulty of the choral and orchestral portions of each composition there is also a description of the specific challenges staffing and rehearsal expectations related to the performance of each work choral orchestral repertoire is an essential resource for conductors and students of conducting as they search for repertoire appropriate to their needs and the abilities of their ensembles

lists 7 000 recordings and 3 000 printed scores coded for different levels of collecting

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