

**PROGRAM PAGES FOR
CONCERT NIGHT
ON
DISCOVER CLASSICAL
SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 2025, 8-10PM**

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2002-2003 Season



DAYTON
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

NEAL GITTELMAN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Be There from the Beginning



Neal Gittleman

A Biography

8th Year as Musical Director for the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra

Conducted Orchestras in Germany, Czech Republic, Japan, Switzerland, Canada and Mexico

Guest Conductor with orchestras in Chicago, San Francisco, Minnesota, Phoenix, Indianapolis, San Antonio, Omaha, San Jose, Jacksonville and Buffalo

Native of Brooklyn, New York

Graduate of Yale University

The 2002-2003 season is Neal Gittleman's eighth year as Music Director of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. Gittleman has led the orchestra to new levels of artistic achievement and increasing renown throughout Ohio. The orchestra's performance has been praised by *American Record Guide* magazine as well as by the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, which called the DPO "a precise, glowing machine." In recent years the orchestra has received three ASCAP awards from the American Symphony Orchestra League for its commitment to programming music of our time.

Prior to coming to Dayton, Gittleman served as Music Director of the Marion (Indiana) Philharmonic, Associate Conductor of the Syracuse Symphony, and Assistant Conductor of the Oregon Symphony Orchestra, a post he held under the Exxon/Arts Endowment Conductors Program. He also served for ten seasons as Associate Conductor and Resident Conductor of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra.

Neal Gittleman has appeared as guest conductor with many of the country's leading orchestras, including the Chicago, San Francisco, Minnesota, Phoenix, Indianapolis, San Antonio, Omaha, San Jose and Jacksonville symphony orchestras and the Buffalo Philharmonic. He has also conducted orchestras in Germany, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Japan, Canada and Mexico.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Gittleman graduated from Yale University in 1975. He studied with Nadia Boulanger and

Annette Dieudonné in Paris, with Hugh Ross at the Manhattan School of Music and with Charles Bruck at both the Pierre Monteux School and the Hart School of Music, where he was a Karl Böhm Fellow. He won the Second Prize at the 1984 Ernest Ansermet International Conducting Competition in Geneva and Third Prize in the 1986 Leopold Stokowski Conducting Competition in New York.

At home in the pit as well as on stage, Gittleman has led productions for Dayton Opera, the Human Race Theatre Company, Syracuse Opera Company, Hartt Opera Theater, and for Milwaukee's renowned Skylight Opera Theatre. He has also conducted for the Milwaukee Ballet, Hartford Ballet, Chicago City Ballet, Ballet Arizona, and Theater Ballet of Canada.

Gittleman is nationally known for his Classical Connections programs, which provide a "behind the scenes" look at great works of orchestra's repertoire. These innovative programs, which began in Milwaukee 14 years ago, have become a vital part of the Dayton Philharmonic's concert season. Gittleman was also active in conducting an annual three-concert Classical Connections series with the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra.

His discography includes the premiere recording of the Dayton Philharmonic in performances of Tomas Svoboda's two piano concertos with Norman Krieger and the composer as featured soloist. Gittleman has also recorded a CD of George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue and Concerto in F with Krieger and the Czech National Symphony. Both recordings are available on the Artistic 4

When not on the podium, Neal is an avid player of golf, squash and t'ai chi ch'uan. He and his wife, Lisa Fry, have been Dayton residents since 1997.

Neal's Notes on Acoustics

Everything You Wanted to Know About Acoustics, but had No Earthly Idea What to Ask

This season's "Classical Connections Listener's Guide" includes an essay on acoustics by DPO Music Director Neal Gittleman. Excerpts of that essay will be serialized in this season's program books.

Part 1: Wallace WHO?

The biggest thing in the history of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra is right around the corner: the opening of the Orchestra's new home in the Mead Theater of the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Performing Arts Center. Besides "Wow!" the word on many people's lips when the Schuster Center opens will be "acoustics."

So what is acoustics, anyway? Acoustics is the study of how sound behaves in different listening environments and how the listening experience can be shaped and controlled.

When the subject of the Schuster Center's acoustics comes up, many people preface their comments with, "I don't know anything about acoustics." Don't worry. It's not about knowing. It's about listening. Will the "untrained ear" notice the difference in the new hall? You betcha. Let's learn why.

Acoustics dates back some 2,500 years, to Pythagoras, who studied the acoustical properties of Greek amphitheatres. But the true science of acoustic design began in 1895 with the engineer Wallace Sabine (1868-1919). Sabine was commissioned by Harvard to figure out why no one could understand speakers in the lecture hall of the university's new Fogg Art Museum. Three years of study of the Fogg's lecture hall led Sabine to the discovery of the "e=mc²" of acoustics: $T = .161V/A$. Not as pithy or catchy as Einstein's equation, but Sabine's formula relating a room's

reverberation, volume and sound absorption is the foundation on which the modern science of acoustics – and concert hall design – is based.

Harvard's lecture hall was too reverberant. Speakers' voices could be heard, but the echoes bouncing around the room made their words incomprehensible. Sabine figured out how to redesign the interior of the hall with enough sound absorption to deaden the echoes. He took a "live" room and made it "deader" – the exact opposite of our goal in moving from Memorial Hall (a "dead" hall) to the Mead Hall (a "live" one). But the Schuster Center's acoustical consultants, Jaffe Holden Acoustics of Norwalk, Connecticut, essentially follow Sabine's path: they design a hall which will be "too reverberant," but build-in features to custom-control the amount of echo to suit each different use of the hall – orchestra, opera, Broadway.

Wallace Sabine's next big project after fixing the Fogg Museum lecture hall was to design the acoustics of Boston Symphony Hall, which opened in 1900 and is still generally considered to be the finest concert hall in the United States and one of the top three halls in the world. The art and science of architectural acoustics had been born.

Sabine's legacy lives on in one other form. The international standard unit for measuring sound absorption – the amount of sound dissipated by an open window one square meter in area – is the sabin.

In the next program book: Part 2, a look at the three greatest concert halls in the world, and why they sound so good.



The Mead Theater of the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Performing Arts Center is the ideal shape to allow the sound to project from the stage.

Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra Personnel

70th Season 2002-2003

Music Director
Neal Gittleman

Founding Music Director
Paul Katz

1st Violins

Lucas Alemán, *Concertmaster*
J. Ralph Corbett Chair
Marilyn Fischer
Huffy Foundation Chair
Elizabeth Hofeldt
Sherman Standard Register
Foundation Chair
Karlton Taylor
Mikhail Baranovsky
Louis Proske
Nancy Mullins
Barry Berndt
Philip Enzweiler
Leora Kline
Janet George
Dona Nouné-Wiedmann

2nd Violins

Kirstin Greenlaw, *Principal*
Jesse Philips Chair
Kristen Dykema,
Assistant Principal
Ann Lin
Izumi Lund
Gloria Fiore
Aurelian Oprea
Mary Arnett
Lynn Rohr
Warren Driver
William Slusser
Joyce Green
Yoshiko Kunimitsu

Violas

Sheridan Kamberger, *Principal*
F. Dean Schnacke Chair
Colleen Braid, *Assistant Principal*
Karen Johnson,
Grace Counts Finch Chair
Jean Blasingame
Belinda Burge
Lori Wittenmyer
Mark Reis
Scott Schilling

Hsiaopei Lee
Emma Louise Odum,
Principal Emeritus

Cellos

Xiao-Fan Zhang, *Acting Principal*
Edward L. Kohnle Chair
Mary Davis Fetherston,
Assistant Principal
Jane Katsuyama
Nan Watson
Catherine McClintock
Mark Hofeldt
Nadine Monchecourt
Christina Coletta*
Linda Katz, *Principal Emeritus*

Basses

Deborah Taylor, *Principal*
Dayton Philharmonic
Volunteer Association
C. David Horine
Memorial Chair
Jon Pascolini, *Assistant Principal*
Donald Compton
Stephen Ullery
Christopher Roberts
James Faulk
Bleda Elibal
Nick Greenberg

Flutes

Rebecca Tryon Andres, *Principal*
Dayton Philharmonic
Volunteer Association Chair
Jennifer Northcut*

Piccolo

Janet van Graas

Oboes

Eileen Whalen, *Principal*
Catharine French Bieser Chair
Roger Miller

Clarinets

John Kurokawa, *Principal*
Rhea Beerman Peal Chair
Robert Gray

Bass Clarinet

Anthony Costa

Bassoons

Jennifer Kelley Speck, *Principal*
Robert and Elaine Stein Chair
Kristen Canova

Contrabassoon

Bonnie Sherman

Horns

Richard Chenoweth, *Principal*
Frank M. Tait Memorial Chair
Elisa Belck
Todd Fitter
Amy Lassiter
Nancy Cahall, *Utility*

Trumpets

Charles Pagnard, *Principal*
John W. Berry Family Chair
Alan Siebert
Michael Kane

Trombones

Timothy Anderson, *Principal*
John Reger Memorial Chair
Clair Miller

Bass Trombone

Chad Arnow

Tuba

Steven Winterregg, *Principal*
Zachary, Rachel and Natalie
Denka Chair

Timpani

Donald Donnett, *Principal*
Rosenthal Family Chair in
Memory of Miriam Rosenthal

Percussion

Michael LaMattina, *Principal*
Miriam Rosenthal Chair
Jane Varella, *Principal Emeritus*
Richard A. and Mary T.
Whitney Chair
William Awsumb

Keyboard

Michael Chertock, *Principal*
Demirjian Family Chair

Harp

Leslie Stratton Norris, *Principal**
Daisy Talbott Greene Chair

Jane Varella, *Personnel Manager*
William Slusser, *Orchestra*
Librarian

Hank Dahlman, *Chorus Director*
Patrick Reynolds, *Assistant*
Conductor

Karen Young, *Junior String*
Orchestra Director

*Leave of absence

Classical Concert

Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra

Neal Gittleman, Music Director

Thursday
Nov. 14
2002

8 PM*
Memorial Hall

Miriam Rosenthal Memorial Concert

Dayton Philharmonic Chorus
Hank Dahlman, Director

University Of Dayton Chorale
Robert Jones, Director

Wright State University Chamber Singers
Hank Dahlman, Director

Kettering Children's Choir
Natalie DeHorn, Director

Saturday
Nov. 16
2002

8 PM*
Memorial Hall

*This performance will last approximately 90 minutes and will run without intermission.

Janice Chandler, soprano
John Wesley Wright, tenor
Ian Greenlaw, baritone

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) War Requiem, Op. 66
I. Requiem aeternam
II. Dies irae
III. Offertorium
IV. Sanctus
V. Agnus Dei
VI. Libera me

"My subject is War, and the pity of War.
The Poetry is the pity...
All a poet can do today is warn."

- Wilfred Owen

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Concert Broadcast
hosted by Lloyd Bryant
WDPR-FM 88.1
WDPG-FM 89.9

Sunday, Jan. 19, 2003 at 7:00 pm

Janice Chandler

A Biography



Among America's foremost lyric sopranos, Janice Chandler is renowned for a beautiful voice deployed with exceptional musicianship, artistry and conviction. She achieved international prominence as a favorite of Robert Shaw, performing with the Cleveland, Minnesota, and Florida orchestras and the Baltimore, Atlanta and San Diego symphonies. Distinguished conductors with whom she has collaborated include Marin Alsop, Sergiu Comissiona, Christoph von Dohnányi, Jeffrey Kahane, Raymond Leppard, Jahja Ling, and Hugh Wolff. She has appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles and Saint Paul chamber orchestras; the Boston, NHK (Japan), Vancouver, Colorado, Akron, New Mexico, Eugene, Grand Rapids, New Jersey, Alabama, Utah, Santa Rosa and Syracuse symphonies; and the Hong Kong, Rochester and Evansville philharmonics. She has appeared at both the Prague Autumn and Blossom Festivals.

Of particular note in recent seasons are acclaimed performances of the Mozart *C Minor Mass* with Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in both Los Angeles and New York's Carnegie Hall; the Faure Requiem with Charles Dutoit and the Montreal Symphony in Montreal and Carnegie Hall; the world premiere of Hannibal's *One Heart Beating* with the Philadelphia Orchestra. In addition, Ms. Chandler has performed Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileira no.5* on a Japanese tour with the NHK Symphony under Jahja Ling; Mahler's *Symphony no. 2* with the Florida Orchestra; Brahms' *Requiem* with the Colorado Symphony; Poulenc's *Gloria* on the occasion of Sergiu Comissiona's Farewell Concert as Music Director of the Vancouver Symphony; and Gorecki's *Symphony no. 3* and Poulenc's *Gloria* with the New Mexico Symphony.

John Wesley Wright

A Biography



John Wesley Wright, Artist-in-Residence, Vocal Instructor and Co-director of Opera Workshop, began teaching for the University of Dayton in the 1995 fall semester. Mr. Wright is a tenor originally from Rome, Georgia and now resides in Mt. Orab, Ohio. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Maryville College and a Master of Music degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

He is the recipient of numerous awards, including prizes from the International MacAllister Awards, Opera Columbus Competition, Dayton Opera Guild Competition, Metropolitan Opera Auditions, and the National Federation of Music Clubs. In March of 2000 he received from

legendary singer William Warfield the gold medal and a \$10,000 first prize at the American Traditions Competition in Savannah, Georgia. As he gave the award to Mr. Wright, Warfield said, "We have made you master over a few things. Now, step on up a little higher, and He will make you ruler of many."

Mr. Wright's performance experience extends from classical dance with the Appalachian Ballet to the opera stages of Indianapolis, Dayton, and Memphis. He enjoys recital and oratorio work and frequently performs with the Dayton Bach Society and on area concert series. In addition, he is serving his third year as vocal consultant and instructor for the Musical Arts Center in Cincinnati.

The Dayton Power and Light Company Foundation is proud to support Thursday evening's Classical concert program – *War Requiem*.

We salute The Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra for bringing such outstanding performances to our community.



Ian Greenlaw

A Biography



An alumnus of the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists (LOCAA) in Chicago this season, Ian Greenlaw is gaining a reputation as one of today's new and up-and-coming baritones.

Last season Mr. Greenlaw made his debuts at the Metropolitan Opera in its new production of *Sly*, conducted by James Levine and featuring Plácido Domingo and Maria Guleghina, and at the Chicago Opera Theater as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*. He has also appeared in concert with the New York Festival of Song, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra and with the Wolf Trap Opera Company.

As a member of LOCAA, Mr. Greenlaw performed the title roles in *Don Giovanni*, and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Before entering the LOCAA, he spent two years as a

member of the Pittsburgh Opera Center, where his roles included the title role in *Eugene Onegin*. Other credits with the Pittsburgh Opera include Fleville in *Andrea Chenier* and Paris in *Romeo et Juliette*. Mr. Greenlaw's other concert engagements have included performances with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Missouri Choral Society and The Cleveland Orchestra under the baton of Pierre Boulez.

A native of St. Charles, Missouri, Mr. Greenlaw received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and his Master of Music degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is the first place winner of the Heinz Fefuss Singing Actor Competition, and a recipient of the 2001 Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation.

Text of Benjamin Britten's War Requiem

I. Requiem aeternam

Chorus:

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Children:

Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion;
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem;
exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.

Chorus:

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
lux perpetua luceat eis.

Chorus:

Lord, grant them eternal rest,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.

Children:

Thou shalt have praise, God, in Zion;
and homage shall be paid to thee in Jerusalem;
hear my prayer,
all flesh shall come before thee.

Chorus:

Lord, grant them eternal rest,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.

Tenor:

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, —
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of silent minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.
— Wilfred Owen, "Anthem for Doomed Youth"

Chorus:

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

Chorus:

Lord, have mercy upon them.
Christ, have mercy upon them.
Lord, have mercy upon them.

II. Dies irae

Chorus:

Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvat saeculum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sibylla.
Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando Judex est venturus,
Cuncta stricte discussurus!
Tuba mirum spargens sonum
Per sepulchra regionum
Coget omnes ante thronum.
Mors stupebit et natura,
Cum resurget creatura,
Judicanti responsura.

Chorus:

This day, this day of wrath
Shall consume the world in ashes,
As foretold by David and the sibyl.
What trembling there shall be
When the judge shall come
To weigh everything strictly!
The trumpet, scattering its awful sound
Across the graves of all lands
Summons all before the throne.
Death and nature shall be astounded
When all creation arises
To render account before the judge.

Baritone:

Bugles sang, saddening the evening air;
And bugles answered, sorrowful to hear.
Voices of boys were by the river-side.
Sleep mothered them; and left the twilight sad.
The shadow of the morrow weighed on men.
Voices of old despondency resigned,
Bowed by the shadow of the morrow, slept.
— Wilfred Owen, "Voices"

Soprano:

Liber scriptus proferetur,
In quo totum continetur,
Unde mundus judicetur.
Judex ergo cum sedebit
Quidquid latet, apparebit:
Nil inultum remanebit.

Soprano:

The written book shall be brought,
In which all is contained,
Whereby the world shall be judged.
When the judge takes his seat
All that is hidden shall appear:
Nothing will remain unavenged.

Chorus:

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
Quem patronem rogaturus,
Cum vix justus sit securus?

Chorus:

What shall I, a wretch, say then?
To which protector shall I appeal
When even the just man is barely safe?

Soprano and Chorus:

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

Soprano and Chorus:

King of awful majesty,
Who freely saves those worthy of salvation,
Fount of pity, save me.

Tenor and Baritone:

Out there, we've walked quite friendly up to Death;
Sat down and eaten with him, cool and bland, —
Pardoned his spilling mess-tins in our hand.
We've sniffed the green thick odour of his breath, —
Our eyes wept, but our courage didn't writhe.
He's spat at us with bullets and he's coughed

Shrapnel. We chorussed when he sang aloft;
 We whistled while he shaved us with his scythe.
 Oh, Death was never enemy of ours!
 We laughed at him, we leagued with him, old chum.
 No soldier's paid to kick against his powers.
 We laughed, knowing that better men would come,
 And greater wars; when each proud fighter brags
 He wars on Death — for Life; not men — for flags.
 — Wilfred Owen, "The Next War"

Chorus:

Recordare Jesu pie,
 Quod sum causa tuae viae:
 Ne me perdas illa die.
 Quarens me, sedisti lassus:
 Redemisti crucem passus:
 Tantus labor non sit cassus:
 In gemisco, tamquam reus:
 Culpa rubet vultus meus:
 Supplicanti parce Deus.
 Qui Mariam absolvisti,
 Et latronem exaudisti,
 Mihi quoque spem dedisti.
 Inter oves locum praesta,
 Et ab haedis me sequestra,
 Statuens in parte dextra.
 Confutatis maledictis,
 Flammis acribus addictis,
 Voca me cum benedictis.
 Oro supplex et acclinis
 Cor contritum quasi cinis
 Gere curam mei finis.

Chorus:

Remember, gentle Jesus,
 That I am the reason for Thy time on earth,
 Do not cast me out on that day.
 Seeking me, Thou didst sink down wearily,
 Thou hast saved me by enduring the cross,
 Such travail must not be in vain.
 I groan, like the sinner that I am,
 Guilt reddens my face,
 God spare the suppliant.
 Thou, who pardoned Mary
 And heeded the thief,
 Hast given me hope as well.
 Give me a place among the sheep
 And separate me from the goats,
 Let me stand at Thy right hand.
 When the damned are cast away
 And consigned to the searing flames,
 Call me to be with the blessed.
 Bowed down in supplication I beg Thee,
 My heart is as though ground to ashes:
 Help me in my last hour.

Baritone:

Be slowly lifted up, thou long black arm,
 Great gun towering toward Heaven, about to curse;
 Reach at that arrogance which needs thy harm,
 And beat it down before its sins grow worse;
 But when thy spell be cast complete and whole,
 May God curse thee, and cut thee from our soul!

—Wilfred Owen, "Sonnet: On Seeing a Piece of
 Our Artillery Brought into
 Action"

Chorus:

Dies irae, dies illa,
 Solvet saeculum in favilla:
 Teste David cum Sibylla.
 Quantus tremor est futurus,
 Quando Judex est venturus,
 Cuncta stricte discussurus!

Soprano and Chorus:

Lacrimosa dies illa,
 Qua resurget ex favilla,
 Judicandus homo reus:
 Huic ergo parce Deus.

Chorus:

This day, this day of wrath
 Shall consume the world in ashes,
 As foretold by David and the sibyl.
 What trembling there shall be
 When the judge shall come
 To weigh everything strictly.

Soprano and Chorus:

Oh this day full of tears
 When from the ashes arises
 Guilty man, to be judged:
 God, have mercy upon him.

Tenor:

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

Soprano and Chorus:

Lacrimosa dies illa...

Soprano and Chorus:

Oh this day full of tears...

Tenor:

Think how it wakes the seeds —
 Woke, once, the clays of a cold star.
 Are limbs, so dear-achieved, are sides,
 Full-nerved — still warm — too hard to stir?
 Was it for this the clay grew tall?

Soprano and Chorus:

...Qua resurget ex favilla...

Soprano and Chorus:

...When from the ashes arises...

Tenor:

Was it for this the clay grew tall?

Soprano and Chorus:

...Judicandus homo reus...

Soprano and Chorus:

...Guilty man, to be judged...

Tenor:

— O what made fatuous sunbeams toil
 To break earth's sleep at all?
 —Wilfred Owen, "Futility"

Chorus:

Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem.
 Amen.

Chorus:

Gentle Lord Jesus, grant them rest.
 Amen.

III. Offertorium

Children:

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae,
libera animas omnium fidelium
defunctorum de poenis inferni,
et de profundo lacu:
libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas
tartarus, ne cadant in obscurum.

Chorus:

Sed signifer sanctus Michael
repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam:
aquam olim Abrahae promisisti, et semini ejus.

Children:

Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory,
deliver the souls of the faithful
departed from the pains of hell,
and from the bottomless pit:
deliver them from the jaw of the lion, lest hell
engulf them, lest they be plunged into darkness.

Chorus:

But let the holy standard-bearer Michael
lead them into the holy light
as Thou didst promise to Abraham and his seed.

Tenor and Baritone:

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

—Wilfred Owen, "The Parable of the Old Man and
the Young"

Children:

Hostias et preces tibi Domine
laudis offerimus; tu suscipe pro
animabus illis, quarum hodie
memoriam facimus: fac eas, Domine,
de morte transire ad vitam.
Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.

Chorus:

Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini
ejus.

Children:

Lord, in praise we offer to Thee
sacrifices and prayers, do Thou receive them
for the souls of those whom we
remember this day: Lord, make them
pass from death to life.
As Thou didst promise to Abraham and his seed.

Chorus:

...As Thou didst promise to Abraham and his
seed.

IV. Sanctus

Soprano and Chorus:

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua,
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Soprano and Chorus:

Holy, holy, holy
Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Baritone:

After the blast of lightning from the East,
The flourish of loud clouds, the Chariot Throne;
After the drums of Time have rolled and ceased,
And by the bronze west long retreat is blown,
Shall life renew these bodies? Of a truth
All death will He annul, all tears assuage? —
Fill the void veins of Life again with youth,
And wash, with an immortal water, Age?
When I do ask white Age he saith not so:
“My head hangs weighed with snow.”
And when I hearken to the Earth, she saith:
“My fiery heart shrinks, aching. It is death.
Mine ancient scars shall not be glorified,
Nor my titanic tears, the sea, be dried.”

—Wilfred Owen, “The End”

V. Agnus Dei

Tenor:

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

Chorus:

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

Chorus:

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the
world, grant them rest.

Tenor:

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

Chorus:

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

Chorus:

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the
world, grant them rest.

Tenor:

The scribes on all the people shove
and bawl allegiance to the state,
But they who love the greater love
Lay down their life; they do not hate.

—Wilfred Owen, "At a Calvary Near the Ancre"

Chorus:

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

Chorus:

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the
world, grant them rest.

Tenor:

*Dona nobis pacem.**

*Grant us peace. (This line, not part of Owen's poem, was added by Benjamin Britten.)

VI. Libera me

Chorus:

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna,
in die illa tremenda:
Quando coeli movendi sunt et terra:
Dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem.

Soprano and Chorus:

Tremens factus sum ego, et timeo,
dum discussio venerit, atque ventura ira.
Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna.
Quando coeli movendi sunt terra.
Dies illa, dies irae, calamitatis
et miseriae, dies magna et amara valde.
Libera me, Domine.

Chorus:

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

Soprano and Chorus:

I am seized with fear and trembling,
until the trial shall be at hand and the wrath to
come.
Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal death.
When the heavens and earth shall be shaken.
That day, that day of wrath, of calamity
and misery, a great day and exceedingly bitter.
Deliver me, O Lord.

Tenor:

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

tr.
ia

Baritone:

“None”, said the other, “save the undone years,
 The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
 Was my life also; I went hunting wild
 After the wildest beauty in the world.
 For by my glee might many men have laughed,
 And of my weeping something had been left,
 Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
 The pity of war, the pity war distilled.
 Now men will go content with what we spoiled.
 Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
 They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress,
 None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.
 Miss we the march of this retreating world
 Into vain citadels that are not walled.
 Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-wheels
 I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
 Even from wells we sunk too deep for war,
 Even from the sweetest wells that ever were.
 I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
 I knew you in this dark; for so you frowned
 Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
 I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.”

Tenor and Baritone:

“Let us sleep now...”

—Wilfred Owen, “Strange Meeting”

Children, then Chorus, then Soprano:

In paradisum deducant te Angeli;
 in tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres,
 et perducant te in civitatem sanctam
 Jerusalem.

Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat,
 et cum Lazaro quondam paupere
 aeternam habeas requiem.

Children:

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
 et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Chorus:

Requiescant in pace. Amen.

Children, then Chorus, then Soprano:

Into Paradise may the Angels lead thee:
 at thy coming may the Martyrs receive thee,
 and bring thee into the holy city Jerusalem.
 May the Choir of Angels receive thee,
 and with Lazarus, once poor,
 may thou have eternal rest.

Children:

Lord, grant them eternal rest,
 and let perpetual light shine upon them.

Chorus:

Let them rest in peace. Amen.

Hank Dahlman

A Biography

Hank Dahlman, Director of the Dayton Philharmonic Chorus since 1996, is an associate professor of music, director of graduate studies in music, and director of choral studies at Wright State University. He coordinates the choral program of six choirs, and personally conducts the Wright State Chamber Singers. Recently, Dahlman conducted the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus in performances of Brahms' *Nanie* and the Rutter *Gloria*. He is also the Artistic Director of Wright State's popular Madrigal Dinners, a Dayton-area tradition for over years.

Choirs under his direction regularly tour the US and Europe, with invited feature performances at St. Stephan's Cathedral in Vienna (during the Cathedral's 800th anniversary celebration), Salzburg Cathedral, the National Cathedral, and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. His choirs perform regularly at conferences of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), the Music Educators National Conference, the Ohio Music Education Association, and the Music Teachers National Association. Dahlman's choirs have performed with such artists as

Anonymous 4, the Kings Singers, Leon Bates, Marvin Hamlisch and Kenny Rogers.

Dahlman holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the Conservatory of Music at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, Master of Music degree from the University of South Florida, and a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Longwood College. He has prepared choruses for prominent conductors such as Robert Shaw, William McLaughlin, and Neal Gittleman. Recently, he was one of six conductors chosen internationally to study with Jon Washburn and conduct the Vancouver Chamber Choir as part of that ensemble's National Conductors Symposium.

Prior to his appointment at Wright State University, Dahlman has held conducting, teaching, and administrative positions at the University of Akron, University of Missouri-Kansas City, University of Kentucky, and Hillsborough County Public Schools in Florida.



Wright State University Chamber Singers

Director

Hank Dahlman

Soprano

Kate Dickey

Heather Hall

Marlaina Harris

ra Haun

Liz Kusner

Leah Michael

Sara Santino

Alto

Sheena Bevins

Lauren Case

Christina Condon

Emily Fultz

Lorri Johnson

Meredith Richardson

Stephenie Tooman

Tenor

Dean Brown

Jesse Callahan

Ryan Dodds

Jesse Kidd

Chris Puckett

Brock Roberts

Dan Stein

Bass

David Coffey

Adam Leigh

Stu McKittrick

Brian Pohlar

Aaron Svisco

Steve Wendell

Justin Williams

Dayton Philharmonic Chorus

Director

Hank Dahlman

Soprano

Carla Ballou
Carolyn Bendrick
Stephanie Buschur*
Nancy Byrd
Brenda Carter*
Junko Coursen
Rosie DeMott
Alberta Louise Dynes
Lois Foy
Nancy Hagan
Norma Jean Hendricks
Marian Kay Howard
Luvada Johnson
Effie Sue Kemerley*
Leslie Kepler
Annalies Matheson
Shelly Mulvaine*
Lynn Nothstine*
Barbara Pade
Cynthia Perander*
Deborah Nash Probert*
Cheryl Richardson*
Annette Rizer*
Emma Johnson Smith
Marilyn Smyers*
Helena M. Strauch
Elizabeth Swisher
Susan Thomas
Amy Vaubel*
Rebecca Weaver

Alto

Lynette A. Atkinson
Marcia Bernhard
Barbara Bernstein
Jacqueline M. Cales

Jane Collinsworth*

Anne Crouch
Beverly Dean*
Dee Earl*
Sallie Fisher*
Michele J. Foley
Melinda D. Gilmore*
Peg Holland*
Valerie Little
Nancy Longo*
Sr. Mary Rose McCrate
Barbara Ostermeier
Helen Oswald
Patricia Peck*
Karan Repogle
M. Jane Rike
Sharon Sanderson
Pamela Cooper-Servaites*
Kalleen Smith
Mildred Taylor
Lynne Vaia
Sharon Veley
R. Barbara Vera
Fran Walker
Judi Weaver

Tenor

Tom Beery*
Winfried Bernhard*
Otto Bufe
Frank C. Gentner*
Jonathan C. Hauberg*
Scott Helstad
Tom Kelly
Breck Lebeque
W. Jack Lewis*
David McCray*
David McElwee*
Mark J. McPherson*

J. Richard Schairbaum*

George Schmitt
Jerome C. Servaites*
Michael Wright*

Bass

Anthony Munson*
Stanley Bernstein
Ramon Blacklock
Jeff L. Brown*
Doug Conrad*
Mark Corcoran*
John Fenic
Michael Foley
W. Bruce George
Ellis Harsham*
Darrin Harvey*
Roger Krolak
Lloyd D. Little III*
Greg Marx
John Nydegger
Charles Oliver
Bruce Nordquist
Dustin Payne
Roger Penn
Leonard Pohlar*
Dave Roderick*
Karl Schroeder
Bruce Scranton
Ron Siemer
Frederick A. Stevenson*
Mike Taint
Max Weaver

*Chamber Choir

Amy Vaubel, Chorus Manager
Ellen Bagley Barnett, Assistant
Chorus Manager
Linda Hill, Accompanist

Robert Jones

A Biography

Dr. Robert Jones directs University Chorale at the University of Dayton. His other duties include teaching vocal music education and conducting courses, aural skills and supervising vocal music student teachers.

Jones is also artistic director of MUSICA!, a professional choral ensemble known throughout the Miami Valley for its performance excellence. Its musical repertoire ranges from seasonal selections, to partsongs and sacred literature from all musical eras, to vocal jazz and spirituals. MUSICA!'s first CD, GREAT DAY, was released in 2001. The ensemble performed for the Ohio Choral Directors Conference at Miami University in 2001.

Dr. Jones has conducted performances in Washington National Cathedral, Europe, and for MENC regional conferences. His articles and music

reviews have appeared in *School Musician*, and *Director*, the *American Choral Directors Journal*, the *Catholic Music Educator*, the Chorus America newsletter, the Ohio Choral Directors Association newsletter, *Chorus*, and *TRIAD*, the publication of the Ohio Music Educators Conference. Dr. Jones recently presented a session at the National Association of Teachers Midwest Conference on the Mature Voice. Additionally, he has published arrangements and compositions and was employed as a choral editor for Plymouth Music Company in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

Dr. Jones is a member of Pi Kappa Lambda, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, the Music Educators National Conference, and a life member of the American Choral Directors Association. He was named to *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*, 2000.



University of Dayton Chorale

Conductor

Robert Jones

Soprano

Ashley Allman
Katie Bollin
Traci Davis
Emily Dobrinich
Michelle Hess
Alyse Horton
Lindsey Kline
Terry Mitch
Tril Morris
Rachel Seitz
Mandy Williams

Alto

Julia Danial
Emily Barrows
Nicole Davis
Dawn DeKrell
Alisa Godfrey
Sarah Johannssen
Melissa Kinman
Meg LaVigne
Angela Potticary
Jennifer Rogers
Michelle Vachon
Heidi VanSlambrook

Tenor

Chris Albanese
Mike Hall
Adam Halma
Adam Hicks
Brian Kuzmin
Tim Wilson

Bass

Rob Altenau
Jason Helton
Erik Kalish
Jeremy Samudio
Phil Farris, piano

Natalie DeHorn

A Biography



Natalie DeHorn is director of the Kettering Children's Choir, which she co-founded in 1986. She has received many grants for the KCC, including awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ohio Arts Council, which have sponsored special projects and commissioned works.

DeHorn has taught music at all levels from pre-school to college. Before moving to Dayton, she was assistant Professor of Music Education at Concordia University in River Forest, Illinois. She currently serves on the faculty of Meadowdale High School, where she directs the choirs and teaches a course in video production for the closed-circuit student broadcasting system, KMHS-V.

The Kettering Children's Choir has grown from one choir of 45 singers to five

graded choirs with almost 250 singers participating from 27 communities in the Miami Valley area. The Choirs perform on tour every spring and every third year the KCC tours and performs internationally. In 2000 the KCC took their fourth international tour to England and Wales, and in 2003 they will travel to Australia. Included in their many appearances, the KCC has performed several times with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra, Dayton Opera, Miami Valley Symphony Orchestra and the Dayton Bach Society in the "Sing Season" holiday performance.

DeHorn is a graduate of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Michigan State University, and Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.

Kettering Children's Choir

Director

Natalie DeHorn

Devin Albert
Morgan Albert
Melanie Bange
Anna Benton
Carla Benton
Meredith Blankenheim
Justin Blaylock
Erin Brown
Lindsey Brown
Tara Browne
Nathan Cain
Chris Cavendish
Ian Chadd
Marly Coldiron
Alison Concha
Andrew Davis
Katrina Davis

Lauren Davis
Rosa Dixon
Sarah Frankhouser
Elizabeth Freeman
Molly Friesenborg
Gerad Gornes
Matilda Hall
Alyssa Hanson
Claire Helmers
Abby Hollingshead
Jessica Hylton
Rachel Izor
Laura Kenney
Caroline Kent
Hilary Lanman
Marysa Marderosian
Emily Marvin
Emily McClure
Megan McNeerney
Beth Nicholson

Elizabeth Nix
Carolanne Olon
Michelle Palmer
Courtney Peterson
Lauren Pratt
Angele Price
Brittany Price
Jacqueline Radaker
Lisa Ramsey
Sara Ramsey
Vikram Rao
Jennifer Schieltz
Kwesi Seabrook
Kelley Via
Diane Walters
Pamela Walters
Emily Wandland
Dylan Williams
Emma Williams
Jennifer Yi

The Dayton Power and Light Company Foundation
is proud to support Thursday evening's Classical concert
program – *War Requiem*.

We salute The Dayton Philharmonic
Orchestra for bringing such
outstanding performances
to our community.



Ian Greenlaw

A Biography



An alumnus of the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists (LOCAA) in Chicago this season, Ian Greenlaw is gaining a reputation as one of today's new and up-and-coming baritones.

Last season Mr. Greenlaw made his debuts at the Metropolitan Opera in its new production of *Sly*, conducted by James Levine and featuring Placido Domingo and Maria Guleghina, and at the Chicago Opera Theater as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*. He has also appeared in concert with the New York Festival of Song, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra and with the Wolf Trap Opera Company.

As a member of LOCAA, Mr. Greenlaw performed the title roles in *Don Giovanni*, and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Before entering the LOCAA, he spent two years as a

member of the Pittsburgh Opera Center, where his roles included the title role in *Eugene Onegin*. Other credits with the Pittsburgh Opera include Fleville in *Andrea Chenier* and Paris in *Romeo et Juliette*. Mr. Greenlaw's other concert engagements have included performances with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Missouri Choral Society and The Cleveland Orchestra under the baton of Pierre Boulez.

A native of St. Charles, Missouri, Mr. Greenlaw received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and his Master of Music degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is the first place winner of the Heinz Fefuss Singing Actor Competition, and a recipient of the 2001 Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation.

Benjamin Britten

War Requiem



Benjamin Britten, the greatest English composer since Henry Purcell, was born in Lowesoft, England, on November 22, 1913. In 1973 he underwent open-heart surgery, and on December 4, 1976 he died of his heart condition. His War Requiem, Op. 66, was commissioned in 1958 for the new cathedral to be built at Coventry, and was composed between 1961-62. The premiere took place at Coventry Cathedral on May 30, 1962, with both Britten and Meredith Davies conducting. This is the first performance by the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra.

"My subject is War and the pity of War," wrote Wilfred Owen in his introduction to a collection of poems he wrote during World War I. "The Poetry is in the pity...all a poet can do is warn." This deeply moving poetry reflects Owen's increasing anti-war feelings, even as he bravely served his country and then was killed in action one week before armistice – at age 25. In Benjamin Britten's War Requiem, Owen's sentiments are found together with the traditional Requiem mass text, powerfully linking words and music to unforgettable effect.

The story of the composition of the War Requiem goes back to 1961, when Britten wrote to the famed German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau on February 16:

"Please forgive me for writing to such a busy man as yourself...Coventry Cathedral, like so many wonderful buildings in Europe, was destroyed in the last war. It has now been rebuilt in a very remarkable fashion, and they are holding a big Festival at the end of May and beginning of June next year. I have been asked to write a new work for what is to us all a most significant occasion.

I am writing what I think will be one of my most important works. It is a full-scale Requiem Mass for chorus and orchestra (in memory of those of all nations who died in the last war), and I am interspersing the Latin text with many poems of a great English poet, Wilfred Owen, who was killed in the First World War. These magnificent poems, full of the hate of destruction, are a kind of commentary on the Mass; they are, of course, in English. These poems will be set for tenor and baritone, with an accompaniment of chamber orchestra, placed in the middle of the other forces. They will need singing with the utmost beauty, intensity, and sincerity.

Peter Pears has agreed to sing the tenor part, and with great temerity I am asking whether you would sing the baritone."

Britten also asked soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, wife of cellist-conductor Mstislav Rostropovich, to sing. She relates what he told her: that, "His composition, which was a call for peace, would bring together representatives of the three nations that had suffered most during the war: an Englishman, Peter Pears; a German, Fischer-Dieskau; and a Russian, myself." (Interestingly, Britten failed to include Jews among those who had "suffered most.") Unfortunately, Vishnevskaya, Britten's choice for soprano, was unable to perform. She was denied permission to take part by Ekaterina Furtseva, then Minister of Culture, who wrote, reflecting the chilled atmosphere of

Instrumentation:

- 4 Flutes (incl. piccolo)
- 4 Oboes (incl. English horn)
- 4 Clarinets (incl. E-flat clarinet and bass clarinet)
- 4 Bassoons (incl. contrabassoon)
- 7 Horns
- 4 Trumpets
- 3 Trombones
 - Tuba
 - Percussion
 - Timpani
 - Harp
 - Piano
 - Organ
 - Strings
 - Chorus
 - Children's choir
 - Soprano, Tenor, and Baritone soloists

Continued on page 48



Benjamin Britten, *War Requiem* continued from page 45.

the Cold War, "How can you, a Soviet woman, stand next to a German and an Englishman and perform a political work?" She was replaced by Heather Harper, who learned the role on ten days notice.

When he arrived at Coventry for the final series of rehearsals, Britten found the new cathedral's acoustics "appalling" and "lunatic." The cathedral's staff were also waging "really Trollopian clerical battles, but with modern weapons" against the performance, and the builders' noise was continuous. The cathedral staff were creating obstacles even up to the evening of the premiere by insisting that the large audience enter only through one small doorway. After much persuasion more doors were opened, but the performance was still delayed; Britten said, "We can't go on yet, it's like a marketplace."

The *War Requiem* won immediate praise from the critics and performers alike: William Mann called it "the most masterly and nobly imagined work that Britten has ever given us," while Fischer-Dieskau was so moved that he later wrote in his memoirs, "I was completely undone; I did not know where to hide my face. Dead friends and past suffering arose in my mind." In his review, the playwright Peter Shaffer wrote, "I believe it to be the most impressive and moving piece of sacred music ever to be composed in this country... the most profound and moving thing which this most committed of geniuses has so far achieved. It makes criticism impertinent."

Successive performances in Berlin (November), London's Westminster Abbey (December 6), and Festival Hall

(December 1963) confirmed the work's position. Stravinsky, who envied Britten, said that to dare to criticize the *War Requiem* would be "as if one had failed to stand up for *God Save the Queen*."

Britten divided the performing forces into three groups. The majority of the traditional Requiem text is sung by the chorus and soprano soloist, accompanied by the full orchestra. The tenor and baritone soloists represent two soldiers from opposing sides, singing Owen's poetry and accompanied by a chamber orchestra in a "colder, more pointillistic music[al style] emphasizing the horror and confusion depicted in Owen's verse." The children's chorus is placed at a distance and, accompanied by a small organ, sing some of the Latin text. "Their innocence is a disturbing reminder that such children are the fodder of the next generation's wars."

Throughout the *War Requiem* Britten powerfully juxtaposes the ancient Latin text with Owen's poetic indictment. At the outset the first movement introduces the interval of the tri-tone, historically, the "devil in music," whose unsettling quality engenders unrest throughout. (Bernstein used the tri-tone for a different purpose, to express longing, in the syllables "Ma-ri" in the song "Maria" from his *West Side Story*.)

The Philharmonic's 2003 performances of the Britten War Requiem included a Classical Connections program. The following pages, taken from that program book, plus the Classical Connections Listener's Guide, contain additional information about the War Requiem.

Classical Connections Neal's Notes

A Requiem for All Time(s)



The Dayton Philharmonic's new home, the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Performing Arts Center, will open in March 2003. But two years ago, when we were planning the 2002-2003 concert season, the plan was for the hall to be ready for occupancy in December 2002. In other words, November's Classical and Classical Connections concerts were to be our final performances in Memorial Hall, and something special was in order.

So I put my thinking cap on and got to work. November is usually the month when we do something big for the DPO and the Dayton Philharmonic Chorus. Why November? Because September and October are too early for choral programs (not enough time to schedule sufficient rehearsal time for the DPC) and December is bad because so many church choirs are gearing up for their special Christmas programs and even Dayton Philharmonic Chorus members aren't talented enough to be in two places at once. Thus, our final Memorial Hall concert would be a big choral program.

Then it hit me: choral program plus Memorial Hall plus November plus concert dates in the week of Veterans Day added up to one piece and, what's more, it was a piece on our "Wish List." The piece was Benjamin Britten's War Requiem.

Then there was a delay at the construction site – some structural steel was late arriving,

if I remember correctly – and the Schuster opening had to be pushed back by a couple of months. So the "Last Program in Memorial Hall" plan had to be revisited. I thought about moving the War Requiem to February. But I decided that keeping the Britten in November – in the week of Veterans Day – made an important and worthy statement.

I will confess that I had one small worry about the piece. I mean the programming of this piece, its timing and its location as a tribute to veterans and to our home for more than 65 years, Montgomery County War Memorial auditorium. I didn't want any veterans to take the fact that Britten was a pacifist or the War Requiem's anti-war message as an affront to their service in the United States military services. It is not at all meant as an affront. The "villain" of the War Requiem is war itself, not the warriors. Owen's poetry – and Britten's music – gives the soldier on the battlefield an elegant, compelling voice that speaks directly to the hearts and minds of the listener. Indeed, Britten chose for the work's epigraph three haunting lines of Wilfred Owen:

*My subject is War, and the pity of War.
The Poetry is in the pity...
All a poet can do today is warn.*

Owen's words and Britten's music do, indeed, warn. And in the week of Veterans Day, in a War Memorial auditorium, in an Air Force town, it is a warning that is particularly appropriate for those of us who will never fight in a war, but in whose name veterans – past, present and future – are sent into battle.

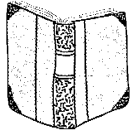
Classical Connections no. 1

Arvo Pärt:
Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten

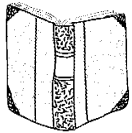
Benjamin Britten: *War Requiem*

Friday, November 15, 2002
at Memorial Hall

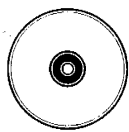
Benjamin Britten



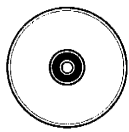
Benjamin Britten
Humphrey Carpenter
Scribners
ISBN 0684195690



Master Musicians:
Britten
Michael Kennedy
Oxford University
ISBN 0198164793



Britten
War Requiem
London Symphony
Benjamin Britten
London/Decca 2LH2
414383



Pärt
Cantus...
Hungarian State
Opera Orchestra
Tamas Benedek
Naxos 8553750

- 1913 November 22**, born in Lowestoft, England to Robert Britten, a dentist, and Edith Hockey Britten, an amateur singer.
- 1919** Composes first piano pieces.
- 1927** Begins studies with composer Frank Bridge.
- 1930** Enters the Royal college of Music to study composition and piano.
- 1933** Meets tenor Peter Pears, who four years later becomes Britten's professional and romantic partner. Nearly every major solo tenor part composed by Britten was written with Pears' voice in mind.
- 1935** Hired by the British post office to compose music for a series of documentary films.
- 1937** Writes *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*, his first important orchestral work.

- 1939** Britten and Pears, both pacifists, move to the United States to protest Britain's military mobilization. While in the U.S. he writes *Paul Bunyan*, the first of his 12 operas.
- 1942** Composes the anti-war *Sinfonia da Requiem* on a commission from Boston Symphony Music Director Serge Koussevitsky. Returns to England and is granted official status as a conscientious objector exempt from military service and assigned non-combatant duties.
- 1945** Composes *Peter Grimes*, perhaps the greatest opera in the English language.
- 1946** Writes *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, based on a theme by Henry Purcell.
- 1948** Starts a music festival in Aldeburgh, still considered one of the world's major summer festivals.
- 1951** Writes *Billy Budd*, a powerful operatic setting of Herman Melville's novel.
- 1961** Commissioned to compose a large choral work for the dedication of the new St. Michael's Cathedral in Coventry, Britten composes the *War Requiem*.
- 1962 May 30**, *War Requiem* premiered at St. Michael's.
- 1973** Premiere of Britten's final opera, *Death in Venice*, based on the Thomas Mann novella.
- 1976 December 4**, Dies in Aldeburgh of complications from heart disease.

Another Different Kind of Requiem

Last season's Classical Connections series began with a program titled "A Different Kind of Requiem", an in-depth look at Brahms' *German Requiem*. This 1868 masterpiece was, indeed, a different kind of requiem. Instead of setting the traditional Latin requiem liturgy, with its dark imagery focused on the departed, Brahms used German biblical texts that offered comfort to the bereaved.

The commission to write a piece for the dedication of the new Coventry Cathedral presented Benjamin Britten with a problem. St. Michael's Cathedral had been nearly completely destroyed in a German bombing raid on November 14, 1940. The new St. Michael's is one of the world's most striking churches. It is a beautiful modern building overlooking the adjacent ruins of the old cathedral, which were preserved as they were after the bombing. The new cathedral makes a profound statement about rebirth, recovery and reconciliation. The Coventry commission obliged Britten to come to grips with the Second World War, a war which he had himself avoided.

Britten wanted to write a liturgical piece memorializing those who died fighting in the war — a setting of the Latin requiem mass for chorus, large orchestra and soprano soloist. He also wanted to write a secular piece expressing outrage at the horror of war — songs for tenor and baritone accompanied by a 12-piece chamber orchestra set to war poems by Wilfred Owen. Britten's brilliant idea was to combine both pieces into a single work, interweaving the Latin and English texts, merging the powerful imagery of the requiem with the powerful imagery of Owen's verses. It's one of the most gripping compositions ever written. To create a sense of post-war reconciliation, Britten wrote the *War Requiem* solo parts for the Russian soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, the British tenor Peter Pears and the German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. (When Soviet authorities refused to allow Vishnevskaya to travel to England for the premiere, the soprano part was sung by the British singer Heather Harper. But all three of the intended soloists did sing on the first recording of the work.)

There is some debate as to what is Britten's greatest masterpiece for

the stage. Some say *Peter Grimes*. Others say *Billy Budd* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. But there is no debate about Britten's greatest concert work. It is the *War Requiem*, a piece that makes us think, that challenges us, touches us and gives us all — performers and listeners alike — a truly cathartic experience. It is also a piece that's custom-made for Classical Connections.

November's program will be different in structure from the usual Classical Connections evening. Normally we'd follow a four-step process: (1) play a short piece to get things going; (2) spend 30 to 45 minutes exploring the focal piece of the concert, with me talking and the orchestra playing musical examples; followed, after intermission, by (3) a complete performance of the work in question and (4) a post-concert question-and-answer session. We generally try to have steps 1, 2 and 3 done in about two hours' time. But Britten's *War Requiem* is 90 minutes long and extremely taxing for the players and singers. So step 2 is going to be shorter and simpler than usual. Following Estonian composer Arvo Pärt's haunting six-minute piece dedicated to Britten's memory, the orchestra will leave the stage while I give a brief talk on the *War Requiem*. We'll be at intermission by 8:30, back by 8:45 and the performance will end around 10:15. I didn't want to pass up the chance to open the Classical Connections season with the *War Requiem*, and there wasn't any other practical way to make it work. We'll all miss the participation of the orchestra, chorus and soloists during my "mini-lecture", but everyone will be fresh and ready to give you a heart-stopping performance after intermission. The usual Classical Connections format, with orchestral demonstrations, will return for our January look at Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*.



The ruins of Coventry's old cathedral and the entrance to the new cathedral.

Excellent Detailed Britten Site:
<http://www.musicweb.uk.net/britten/>



world wide web

Research Project by Two Caltech Students, But a Damn-Fine
War Requiem Site: <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~anb/britten/war.html>



world wide web

Coventry Cathedral Site, Complete with Pictures:
http://uk.geocities.com/knowbritain/churches/coventry_cathedral_1.html



world wide web

Britten: Britain's Greatest Composer?

In "A One-Man British Revival", an essay in last year's *Listener's Guide*, I talked about England's uneven record in producing great composers. After a glorious period in the 16th and 17th centuries — led by Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, John Dowland and Henry Purcell — there was a long drought until the eve of the 20th century, when Edward Elgar's *Enigma Variations* sparked a new golden age in British composing. Britain's great composers of the last 100 years include Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, William Walton, Michael Tippett, Peter Maxwell Davies and the subject of November's Classical Connections presentation, Benjamin Britten. (As a big fan of the Beatles, Stones and The Who, I feel bad about leaving Lennon & McCartney, Jagger & Richards and Pete Townshend off that list of great 20th century Brit composers, but you know what I mean...)

And Benjamin Britten was the greatest of them all. Indeed, I'd probably be saying that even if all he had composed was the *War Requiem*. But he wrote much, much more. There's his first major work, *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* (1937). There are wonderful concertos for piano (1938) and violin (1939). There's the powerful *Sinfonia da requiem* (1940). And there's the piece that has introduced millions to the wonders of the orchestra, *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell* (1946), better known as *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*.

Britten left his greatest mark on the 20th century with his operas. Indeed, Benjamin Britten was "Opera Man" well before Saturday Night Live! Britten wrote five absolute masterpieces for the lyric stage: *Peter Grimes* (1945), a chilling tale of alienation and tragedy set in an English fishing village; *Billy Budd* (1951), a moving story of good and evil on a British warship; *The Turn of the Screw* (1954), a great ghost story and perhaps the spookiest opera ever; an operatic rendition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1960) that truly captures the magic of Shakespeare's play; and his last work, *Death in Venice* (1973), a moody and haunting psychological drama based on Thomas Mann's novella.

In addition, Britten wrote other theater works, each with its particular charms. These include the delightful comedy *Albert Herring* (1947), the 1958 children's opera *Noye's Fludde* (*Noah's Flood*, for those of us not fluent in Old English), and three unique dramas for performance in churches rather than opera houses: *Curlew River* (1964), *The Burning Fiery Furnace* (1966), and *The Prodigal Son* (1968).

In each of these works Britten demonstrated a remarkable gift for setting the English language in music. Britten was drawn to great texts. A glance at his "librettists" is a literary Who's Who: Shakespeare, Melville, Henry James, Thomas Mann. But more important than his choice of texts or his skill in setting them was Britten's command of the music itself. Britten made his music an integral part of the drama, something that only a handful of composers ever mastered. A Britten opera is more than a musical experience. It's more than a theatrical experience. It is an all-encompassing dramatic experience.

The two opera composers whom Britten most admired were Mozart and Verdi. And just as experience in the opera house helped Mozart write the most dramatic requiem of the 18th century and Verdi write the most dramatic requiem of the 19th century, Britten's years of writing for the stage helped him make the *War Requiem* the most dramatic requiem of the 20th century.

Opera Men



Britten



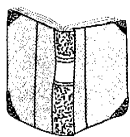
Verdi



Mozart

A perfect example of Britten's sense of drama is the third movement of the *War Requiem*, the Offertorium. The Latin text of the Offertorium is in three parts. Part 1 is a prayer for the deliverance of the souls of the departed from the pains and suffering of hell. Part 2 is a reminder of God's promise to lead "Abraham and his seed" into God's holy light. Part 3 is an offering (hence the title "Offertorium") of sacrifices and praises to God for bringing the souls of the departed from death to eternal life. The Offertorium is a part of nearly every standard musical setting of the requiem liturgy.

But the *War Requiem* is no standard requiem, and there's nothing standard about Britten's Offertorium. Part 1 is sung by a distant chorus of boys accompanied by a small organ. Part 2 is a fast, powerful, vigorous passage for adult choir and orchestra. Part 3 is again sung by the boys and the movement closes with the adult choir and orchestra repeating the reference to "Abraham and his seed". But between Parts 2 and 3, just after the choir sings about Abraham for the first time, the tenor, baritone and chamber orchestra suddenly interrupt with a song set to



Benjamin Britten's
Operas
Michael Wilcox
Stewart, Tabori &
Chang
ISBN 1899791604

Wilfred Owen's poem "The Parable of the Old Man and the Young", a retelling of the biblical story of Abraham's near-sacrifice of his son Isaac. The first hint of something amiss comes after the baritone sings the words

Then Abram bound the youth with belts and straps,
And builded parapets and trenches there
And stretched forth the knife to slay his son.

Just after the word "trenches" the chamber orchestra plays a musical figure from the first movement of the *War Requiem*, a setting of Owen's poem "Anthem for Doomed Youth". Owen and Britten each connect the trench Abraham digs with the trenches of the First World War.

As Owen's version of the biblical story continues, an angel calls from heaven telling Abraham not to slay Isaac but to sacrifice a ram instead. Britten marks the angel's appearance with an amazing sonority: a single deep note on a gong along with a fast rising figure in the harp and a widely spaced chord (marked "cold" in the score) from a string quintet. The voice of the angel is the tenor and baritone soloists singing together for the first time in the song. (Up until this point the baritone has taken Owen's narrative lines and the tenor has only sung Isaac's words.) After the angel speaks the chamber orchestra plays a brief passage of jittery, uncertain music representing Abraham's bewilderment at the confusing turn of events. Then Owen and Britten spring their trap.

The baritone resumes his role as narrator with the devastating final couplet of Owen's poem:

But the old man would not so, but slew his son, —
And half the seed of Europe, one by one.

Just at that moment we hear the distant sound of the boys singing Part 3 of the Offertorium in an eerie sing-song, almost like a schoolyard ditty:



("Lord, in praise we offer you sacrifices and prayers...") When the choir returns to close the movement with the repeat of the reference to God's promise to Abraham, instead of singing loudly and forcefully (as this text is invariably set in other requiems), the choir sings the vigorous music of Part 2 in a hushed whisper.

The effect is chilling, heartbreaking and scary as hell. It's a full-scale operatic tragedy compressed into a hair-raising ten minutes of words and music. And only Benjamin Britten could have written it.

A Tale of Two Cities

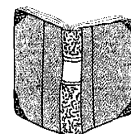
The English midlands city of Coventry and the eastern German city of Dresden will always be linked in history because each was the victim of a ferocious fire bombing during the Second World War. Though these events are nearly 60 years in the past, whenever the words "Coventry" and "Dresden" are mentioned, passions run high. So facts first. Then passions.

The Coventry Bombing

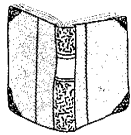
On November 10, 1940 RAF bombers struck Munich, the birthplace of the Nazi party. Hitler demanded prompt retaliation, and on the night of November 14-15 the Luftwaffe struck back, raiding three English cities: Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Coventry. Coventry, an industrial city that was home to car and airplane factories, was a natural target. Although Coventry's war production facilities had been moved to the city's outskirts at the beginning of hostilities, the German bombers focused the brunt of their firepower on the city center. That firepower was considerable, including 30,000 incendiary bombs, 500 tons of high explosives plus land mines dropped by parachute. The raid began at approximately 7:30pm and lasted for almost 11 hours.

Less than ten minutes after the attack began, St. Michael's Cathedral was hit by incendiary devices and its wooden roof caught fire. By morning, nothing was left of the cathedral but a ruined shell. More than 4,000 homes had been destroyed by bombs or by the ensuing firestorm. Over 500 people lost their lives. Much of the city's industrial capacity had been reduced to rubble. So complete was the devastation that a new slang term entered the Luftwaffe lexicon: *coventrieren* — to destroy a city as thoroughly as Coventry had been demolished. The city was particularly crushed by the loss of St. Michael's and the image of Coventry's cathedral in flames was burned into the English psyche.

This sad story was made sadder by F. W. Winterbottom's 1974 book *The Ultra Secret*. Winterbottom revealed that the British had decrypted the German orders to bomb Coventry two days before the raid was to occur. Churchill allegedly had the information in time to intercept the raid, but allowed it to proceed, leaving Coventry without additional countermeasures to avoid revealing that the Nazi codes had been compromised. Although some historians dispute this account, it does explain why an enraged Churchill would still be looking to avenge Coventry more than four years later.



Operation Moonlight
Sonata
Allan W. Kurki
Greenwood
ISBN 0275951049



Dresden 1945
Alexander McKee
Dutton/Plume
ISBN 0525242627



Coventry Cathedral After the Raid (Compare to picture on page 11).

The Dresden Bombing

The Allied attack on Dresden took place on February 13, 14 and 15, 1945, beginning with an RAF fire bomb raid on the night of February 13 which ignited one of the largest firestorms in history. If this was Britain's revenge for the Coventry attack, it was revenge on a gargantuan scale — 650,000 incendiary bombs dropped on Dresden vs. the 30,000 that fell on Coventry. Casualty figures are a matter of dispute — ranging from a low of 25,000 people killed to a high of 300,000 — but even the low-end estimate dwarfs the casualties in Coventry.

The bombing of Dresden has become a *cause célèbre*. It's an important element of Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse-Five*. It's still the subject of heated arguments and passionate internet postings. Some argue that targeting Dresden, a cultural center with few if any military targets, was immoral. Others argue that Dresden was a legitimate target, controlling one of the Soviet army's main attack routes into the Nazi heartland. We can't settle the disputes here. But we can agree that the devastation suffered in Dresden was horrific.



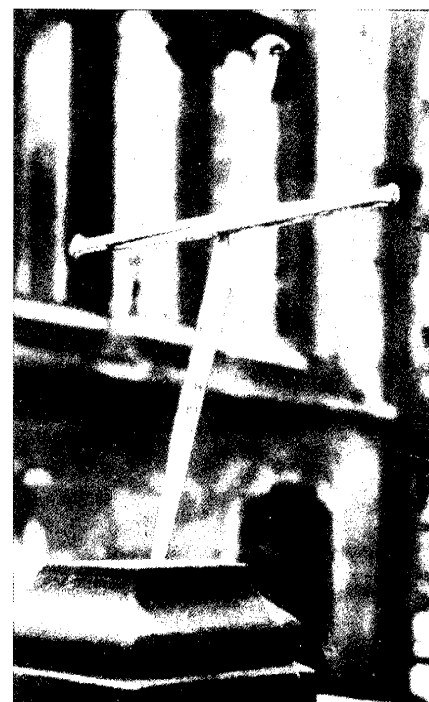
Dresden After the Raid

Crosses of Nails

When the people of Coventry went to the site of St. Michael's Cathedral on the morning of November 15, 1940, they found the floor of the ruined church was littered with nails — large medieval nails that had held the wooden roof together for centuries and that fell to the ground when the wood around them was incinerated. Almost immediately, the staff of St. Michael's began to make crosses out of the nails, and adopted the "Cross of Nails" as a new symbol of the cathedral and its ministry. At the end of the war, crosses of nails from Coventry Cathedral were sent to churches in Dresden and other ruined German cities, beginning a process of reconciliation that started with reconstruction exchanges between Coventry and Dresden and later expanded to "Cross of Nails Centers" across the world in regions affected by conflict and in need of reconciliation.

The people of St. Michael's took it upon themselves to turn their tragedy into good. They also built their new cathedral alongside the ruins of their old cathedral and celebrated its consecration with the premiere of Britten's *War Requiem*, which was composed both as a gesture of outrage at the horror and banality of war and also as a gesture of reconciliation.

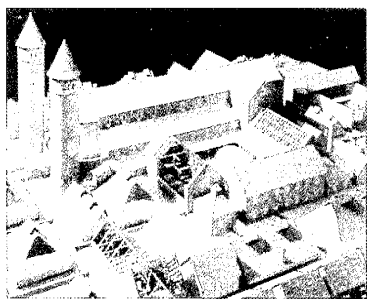
Are the cities of Coventry and Dresden linked? Partisans' arguments about wartime linkages in the past will last forever. But peaceful linkages in the present and future will last forever, too.



Coventry's Cross of Nails

A Troped Requiem: Updating an Ancient Tradition

The Monastery of St. Gall, in Switzerland, was one of the most important musical centers in 9th century Europe. Music was central to the work and worship of the St. Gall monks. Not content to simply follow the traditions of previous generations, they were innovators, composing new additions to the sung liturgy of the Catholic church. One of their innovations, the trope, figures prominently in Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, composed a thousand years later.



St. Gall (Detail of a Modern Replica)

A trope was an original composition added to the proper of the mass. ("Proper" refers to the portions of the mass that change daily — Introit, Collect, Epistle, Gradual, Alleluia, Sequence, Gospel,

Sermon, Offertory, Preface, Communion, Post-Communion — as opposed to the "Ordinary", the texts that are the same at every mass — Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, *Ite missa est*.) Tropes either served to introduce the prescribed chant and or as a commentary on the text of the day. Tropes were popular, flourishing for over 500 years. But they were also controversial because they were not authentic parts of the liturgy. The Council of Trent, charged in 1545 with the task of restoring the liturgy to its "pure form", ultimately outlawed troping.

When Britten began work on the *War Requiem*, 400 years after the Council of Trent did away with tropes, he didn't feel obliged to follow the Council's decrees. As far as he was concerned, tropes were fair game. Good thing, too, since troping is what the *War Requiem* is all about. Britten described his plan in a letter to baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau:

It is a full-scale Requiem Mass for chorus and orchestra (in memory of those of all nations who died in the last war), and I am interspersing the Latin text with many poems of a great English poet, Wilfred Owen, who was killed in the First World War. These magnificent poems, full of the hate of destruction, are a kind of commentary on the Mass...

In other words, Britten would be troping the requiem liturgy with Owen's poetry.

Throughout his career, Britten showed great sensitivity and imagination in his choice of texts and in the way he set them to music. The text treatments in the *War Requiem* are extraordinary, but not for Britten. Here are a few examples of connections between his settings of the Latin texts and his songs/tropes set to Owen's poetry:

Requiem aeternam / Anthem for Doomed Youth:

The first Owen poem that Britten used shows how the tropes were central to the design of the *War Requiem*. The first movement begins with the choir softly intoning the opening words of the Requiem Mass accompanied by the tolling of bells. Then we hear a distant boys choir offering words of praise. The chimes and choir return, then the tenor soloist and chamber orchestra enter to the harsh words of Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth":

What passing bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons
No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, —

Two references to bells. Though the choir's chanting is not stuttering or hasty, their repeated notes certainly can be heard as "pattered-out orisons":

Not only does Owen's text suggest the instrumentation (bells) and the style of the choir's singing, it even influences Britten's use of boys choir:

What candles may be held to speed them at all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmer of good-byes.

(Our "boys choir" will be the wonderful Kettering Children's Choir. While some Britten purists might argue that *only* an all-boys choir would be acceptable, Owen's next line opens the door for both boys and girls to sing: "The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall"!)

***Dies irae* / Voices:** This is an example of the Latin text determining which of Owen's poems would be the most appropriate trope. The *Dies irae* sequence is a frightening evocation of the horrors that await the

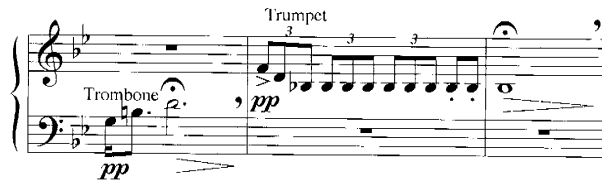
unfaithful at the Last Judgement. It includes the powerful lines

Tuba mirum spargens sonum The trumpet, scattering its awful sound
 Per sepulchra regionum Across the graves of all lands
 Coget omnes ante thronum Summons all before the throne.

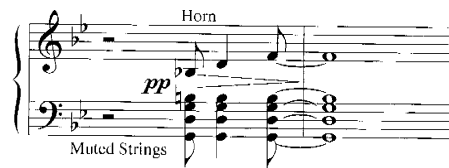
This image of the sounding of the Last Trumpet is echoed in Owen's poem "Voices":

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

Britten mirrors that image in the distant brass fanfares that answer each other as the *Dies iræ* opens:



which is then echoed in the chamber orchestra's music that opens the song:



as well as in the first line the baritone sings:



(The baritone's notes on "Bugles sang" correspond to the trombone call from the start of the movement, the notes of "sadd'ning the evening air" to the trumpet's answer.) The third line of the poem ("Voices of boys were by the river-side") continues and reinforces the web of cross-references between the Britten's music, the forces used, the Latin text and Owen's poetry.

Offertorium / The Parable of the Old Man and the Young: See discussion in "Britten: Britain's Greatest Composer?" on pages 12 and 13.

Agnus Dei / At a Calvary Near the Ancre: This example is particularly striking because it is the one case in which the Latin text is almost used as a trope on the Owen poem. The connection between Owen's image of a young soldier strung up on a battlefield and the image of the Lamb of God sacrificed on the cross for the sins of the world is striking. Britten uses the liturgical text, sung in

unison by the full choir, as a kind of refrain interspersed throughout the song setting of Owen's poem for tenor and chamber orchestra.

One ever hangs where shelled roads part. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
 In this war He too lost a limb, dona eis requiem.
 But His disciples hide apart; (Lamb of God, who bears away the sins
 And now the Soldiers bear of the world, grant them rest.)
 with Him.

Britten closes the circle of references with this final line,



("Grant us peace.") is the end of the Agnus Dei in the proper of the daily Mass. The Requiem Mass liturgy replaces this line with "dona eis requiem sempiternam" ("Grant them eternal rest"). Britten's rising vocal line leaves the poor tenor hanging in the air, just like Owen's dead soldier and just like Jesus on the cross. (This line is Britten's own addition. It is not part of Owen's poem. Britten used great texts, but he wasn't afraid to edit or adapt them to suit his musical or dramatic requirements.)

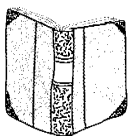
A millennium after the monks of the St. Gall Monastery troped the chants of the Mass liturgy, Benjamin Britten revived the practice, and, in doing so, demonstrated both the revelatory power of troping as well as the principal reason the Council of Trent banned it: In the hands of a master troper, the message of the trope can supersede the message of what is being troped. For the Roman church of the 16th century this was too powerful a message to be heard. But for St. Michael's Cathedral in Coventry of the 20th century, it was too powerful a message not to be heard.

Wilfred Owen's War Poetry

by Burt Saidel

Dentist, master woodworker, arts critic, bicyclist extraordinaire, man-about-town, DPO enthusiast, Burt Saidel is Dayton's own renaissance man. When I found out that he is a Wilfred Owen buff, I asked him to contribute his thoughts on Owen's war poems. The excerpts that appear below are all from poems not used in the *War Requiem*. — NG

Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* is the nearly perfect blend of two of the greatest liberal arts — music and poetry. This monumental work transcends its elements and creates a totality that goes beyond its conception.



The Collected Poems of
 Wilfred Owen
 C. Day Lewis, ed.
 New Directions
 ISBN 0811201325

Composed in 1962, in an England still reeling from the effects of World War II, the *War Requiem* joins the powerful antiwar poetry of Wilfred Owen with the stirring and compelling music of Benjamin Britten.

Britten's music has always been popular as well as important. It is easy to listen to and leaves the audience full of the spirit of the composition. The poetry of Wilfred Owen, on the other hand, grew out of his personal experiences in World War I. Born in 1893, Owen was given a proper Victorian education. Poetry was one of the important attributes of a gentleman and his juvenilia reflects that stylized Romanticism.

Sing me at morn but only with your laugh;
Even as Spring that laugheth into leaf;
Even as Love that laugheth after Life.
Sing me but only with your speech all day,
As voluble leaflets do; let viols die;
The least word of your lips is melody!

The outbreak of World War I caused the flower of England's youth to volunteer to save the Europe of their world. Owen became an officer in an infantry regiment. It was the war, seeing with an artist's eye how destruction replaced idealism, that made him a complete poet.



Wilfred Owen

After enlisting, Owen was sent to France, where he led his squad of men through the landscape of trenches, mud, barbed wire and death. His writing reflected the experience. In a letter home in February 1917, he described "the universal pervasion of ugliness. Hideous landscapes, vile noises... everything

unnatural, broken ... the most execrable sights on earth. In poetry we call them the most glorious."

Owen was wounded in June 1917. The months in the hospital in England were a creative fervor. Many of his *War Poems* came from that time. Owen's wartime poetry ranks among the finest of that genre. His words bring senseless death, camaraderie of arms, valor and hopelessness into an unforgettable focus. A soldier himself, he brings his reader into the soldier's mind with powerful results.

He sat in a wheeled chair, waiting for dark,
And shivered in his ghastly suit of gray,
Legless, sewn short at elbow. Through the park
Voices of boys rang saddening like a hymn,
Voices of play and pleasure after day,
Till gathering sleep had mothered them from him.

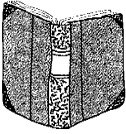
Perhaps the most telling catechism of the personal tragedy of war is in the short preface to Owen's book of war poems, a portion of which Britten quotes as an epigraph on the *War Requiem's* title page:

This book is not about heroes. English poetry is not yet fit to speak of them.
Nor is it about deeds, or lands, nor anything about glory, honour, might, majesty, dominion, or power, except War.
Above all, I am not concerned with Poetry.
My subject is War, and the pity of War.
The Poetry is in the pity.
Yet these elegies are to this generation in no sense consolatory. They may be to the next. All a poet can do today is warn.
That is why the true Poets must be truthful.

In choosing to ennoble the poetry of Wilfred Owen with his music, Britten exalted both words and music. The pivotal poem of the Requiem, "The Parable of the Old Man and the Young", is a recasting of the Abraham and Isaac story, a powerful condemnation of those who choose war instead of pursuing peace.

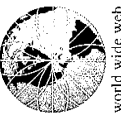
Listening to *The War Requiem* is a kinetic and formidable experience. Britten included sections of the Latin mass as a perfect complement to the powerful poetry. There are moments when you will be breathless. There are moments of exaltation. There are moments of sheer beauty.

The sum of all those moments will be an indelible experience in dealing with this superb blend of poetry and music. Perhaps knowing the fact that our young poet lost his life will intensify the effect. While leading his troops across a canal near the French village of Ors he fell victim to a sniper's bullet. It was exactly one week before the armistice that ended the "War to End All Wars".



Wilfred Owen:
*Anthem for a
Doomed Youth*
Kenneth Simcox
Woburn
ISBN 0713001798

An Amazing Wilfred Owen Multimedia Site:
<http://www.heu.ox.ac.uk/jep/>



world wide web