



PAUL CARR

REQUIEM
FOR AN ANGEL

SOPHIE BEVAN MARK STONE
CHORUS ANGELORUM BATH PHILHARMONIA
GAVIN CARR



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1	i	Requiem Aeternam	7.28
2	ii	Pie Jesu	5.55
3	iii	Chorale – Let Mine Eyes See Thee	5.16
4	iv	Sanctus	5.17
5	v	Agnus Dei	8.10
6	vi	Song – Do I Love You	3.55
7	vii	Kyrie	4.00
8	viii	Lux Aeterna	11.13

9	i thank You God for most this amazing day	9.42
10	Holding The Stars	5.51
11	Now Comes Beauty	4.44

Total time: 71.37

SOPHIE BEVAN *soprano*
MARK STONE *baritone*
CHORUS ANGELORUM
BATH PHILHARMONIA
GAVIN CARR *conductor*

REQUIEM FOR AN ANGEL

It is inevitable that at some point in our lives we are faced with situations and events that may alter our daily routines and so change the way we feel and think about our own existence. This was the case with me following the death of my mother in March 2005. A few months prior, I had received a commission for a large-scale choral work from the Athenaeum Singers of Warminster – an amateur choir to which my brother Gavin had recently been appointed music director. Not being a religious person, at least not in the formal sense of the word, I did not really want to write a work on religious themes. However, having a love for choral music, especially English choral music, makes it difficult to get away from the traditions of setting formal religious texts, whether one believes in them or not. There are honest sympathies in all religious texts that have as much to do with a human response to love, life and death, as they do to an ethereal one, and in this respect I would wish my **Requiem For An Angel** to be thought of as a comforting expression of love and compassion, rather than one simply adhering to the formalities of the Church.

It is strange that at this particular time I should have felt drawn to writing a requiem mass; perhaps using texts from the mass as a starting point helped me in writing a work identifiable to everyone. My mother was the Australian soprano, Una Hale, a much-loved principal at Covent Garden in the 1950s and '60s. Writing this requiem in dedication to her undoubtedly helped me through a period of grief surrounding her death, and afforded me the opportunity of expressing my love and gratitude through music and words to a woman who had given her life to music, to her family, and given me everything.

Having completed the initial score one week before my mother died, my brother then came to stay with me some months later in Mallorca, where I was living at the time. I played through the requiem to him and he became unusually excited, suggesting that we work on it further together, thus creating a larger, more dynamic piece. Sometimes it is hard for a composer to let go of a newly written work, and my first responses to Gavin's suggestions were not enthusiastic and we

came to blows, with me sulking in a corner feeling bashed, bruised and misunderstood as a composer. Gavin was a choral scholar at King's College, Cambridge and later an opera singer and recitalist of some renown, turning to conducting – his first love – in more recent times. He knows more about the voice than anyone I know and is a supremely intelligent and passionate musician; deep down I knew he was right, and a week later I had done all he suggested. So I feel that this requiem is as much his as it is mine; as grieving brothers, we shared in its creation.

As in Fauré's *Requiem*, I too chose to omit the Terrors set out in sections of the Last Judgement, preferring my work to be one of compassion and warmth. I have also set words from other literary sources, including lines from two poems of Emily Dickinson, and poems by St. Teresa of Avila and the American actor and poet, Jack Larson, whose beautiful words I first encountered in settings by Ned Rorem. I chose two verses from the poem dedicated to Larson's life-long partner, the film director, James Bridges, each beginning with the words 'Do I love you'. I wished to include it for two reasons. Firstly, in its original version, as a song for voice and piano, it was the last piece of music my mother heard in concert when my brother sang it as a recital encore; it was also the one she enjoyed the most. Secondly, with the continuing arguments over the acceptance of homosexuality in the Church, I also wanted to include this essentially gay love song as an expression of my belief that were Jesus alive today, he would embrace us all, as one.

Requiem For An Angel was commissioned by, and is dedicated to Gavin Carr and the Athenaeum Singers of Warminster, who gave the first performance with Rebecca Ryan, Andrew Rupp and the Bath Philharmonia, at The Minster Church of St. Denys, Warminster, on Saturday 10th June, 2006. It was the most memorable première of my life to date, receiving a standing ovation from a packed church. The Athenaeum Singers later undertook a sponsored slim; the loss of many collective pounds resulted in a generous donation towards the cost of this recording, for which I am truly grateful.

Although returning later in life to a religious belief, albeit the essentially undogmatic Unitarianism of his father, E.E. Cummings continued to struggle with the dogmatism of religion for most of his life. In this respect I like to think of his poem, **i thank You God for most this amazing day**, as more an expression of praise for the beauty of life and nature than anything to do with a more formal religious design. I was drawn to this poem by its simple shimmering lightness, expressing a love and understanding for the beauty of nature as presented through God, whatever, or whoever one might perceive God to be. The piece is delicately scored for choir and a small orchestra of single wind and brass, percussion, harp and strings. It was written in dedication to my father, Martin Carr.

I originally conceived of **Holding The Stars** in November 2009, after attending a concert in the church of St. Mary Redcliffe in Bristol, given by the Bristol Bach Choir. It was an inspired programme of contemporary American music and included works by Morten Lauridsen, Eric Whitacre and Samuel Barber. Among the Barber pieces was his timeless setting of the James Agee poem *Sure on this shining night*. I knew the song well from my singing student days at the Guildhall, but found the choral setting even more beautiful and felt I wanted to set the words myself for unaccompanied choir. I assumed, foolishly, that the celebrated poem of James Agee would, by now, be in the public domain, but I was wrong. As Eric Whitacre discovered with his now famous choral piece *Sleep* – which he originally set to words by Robert Frost, only then to be denied publishing rights – obtaining permission from publishers to set words still under copyright can be painfully problematic. In the end, Whitacre commissioned a friend and poet to write new words to his already composed music and the piece went on to become a modern choral classic. So, I have followed suit, only in this case I found it cheaper to commission myself! My words are a simple reverie to the solitude of thoughts and feelings that we all feel from time to time; lost in the beauty of a summer's night – in contemplation of one's self and the world. It was written in dedication to my dear friend and fellow composer, Guy Richardson, on the occasion of his 60th birthday. The first performance was given by the Bristol Bach Choir at the 2010 Frome Festival.

It is not unusual for me to write a piece that I then adapt for different forces. Some might view this as prostituting an original idea, or even laziness, but I see it as development – reworking material can be a most rewarding experience. **Now Comes Beauty** started life as a simple song for voice and piano, again to my own words, commissioned by my brother Gavin as a birthday present for his wife, Heather. Gavin then suggested its simple line and chordal accompaniment would transcribe, perhaps even more effectively, for unaccompanied mixed voice choir, as is recorded here. By chance at a programming meeting for the Bath Philharmonia, he played it through to conductor Jason Thornton, who immediately asked me to arrange it for string orchestra. Having also been asked for a short piece for a chamber concert in Mallorca at the same time, I then arranged it for violin, clarinet and piano and I have since used it as the slow movement of a cello concerto, composed for Natalie Clein. So from one simple song came five different versions, all standing alone as though they were unique. Written at a time of great change in my life, it is essentially a ‘song of farewell’ to an idyllic, though sometimes solitary life on the beautiful island of Mallorca, where I lived from 2004 to 2009: the ending of a long relationship and the need to move on in a new direction. It is about death and re-birth: painful, lost, but accepting and open at the same time. It is dedicated to my brother and the Bristol Bach Choir who gave the first performance at St. Mary Redcliffe in Bristol, on 26th June, 2010.

I began writing music at the age of fifteen with a short piano piece that went down well enough at a school concert for me to have to play it twice. Although heavily influenced by 20th century English, American and French composers as well as my contemporaries, I always knew that I would remain true to my own identity as a composer of music in the English lyrical vein. Many composers who, like myself, write lyrical music (often wrongly referred to as ‘light music’) were once frowned upon because they write tunes. It is, however, encouraging to see how times have changed and that English lyricism has returned to its rightful place at the centre of our national musical idiom.

1 **REQUIEM FOR AN ANGEL**
i Requiem Aeternam
Missa pro defunctis and Paul Carr

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine:
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion:
Et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam,
Ad te omnis caro veniet.

*Give them eternal rest, Lord:
And light eternal shine on them.
A hymn adorns You, God in Sion:
And a vow shall be repaid to You
in Jerusalem.
Hear my prayer,
All flesh shall come to You.*

Father forgive us,
Jesus forgive us,
Father forgive us.

2 **ii Pie Jesu**
Missa pro defunctis and
Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem.
Dona eis sempiternam requiem.

*Blessed Lord Jesus, give them rest.
Give them everlasting rest.*

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality.

3 **iii Chorale – Let Mine Eyes**
See Thee
Arthur William Symons (1865-1945)
after St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)

Let mine eyes see Thee,
Sweet Jesus of Nazareth,
Let mine eyes see Thee,
And then see death.

Let them see that care
Roses and jessamine:
Seeing Thy face most fair,
All blossoms are therein.
Flower of seraphim,
Sweet Jesus of Nazareth,
Let mine eyes see Thee,
And then see death.

Nothing I require
Where my Jesus is;
Anguish all desire,
Saving only this;
All my help is His,
He only succoureth.

Let mine eyes see Thee,
Sweet Jesus of Nazareth,
Let mine eyes see Thee,
And then see death.

4 iv **Sanctus**
Missa pro defunctis

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus sabaoth;
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of hosts;
Heaven and earth are full of
Your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.*

Benedictus
Qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

*Blessed is He
Who comes in the name of the Lord
Hosanna in the highest.*

5 v **Agnus Dei**
**Missa pro defunctis and
Emily Dickinson**

Agnus Dei,
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Dona eis requiem.

*Lamb of God,
Who takes away the sins of the world,
Give them rest.*

The world feels dusty
When we stop to die.

6 vi **Song – Do I Love You**
Jack Larson (b.1928)

Do I love you more than a day?
Days used to be faint hours to endure.
Now through our love, I feel each hour on
this spinned world about the sun.
Embodied time, I live creation.
Through you.
And I love you more than a day.

Do I love you more than the air?
Air used to seem just nothingness.
Through our love, now it seems no less than
God's air airing your life's breath:
Too rich for space; too dear for death.
Through you.
And I love you more than the air.

7 vii **Kyrie**
Missa pro defunctis and Paul Carr

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

*Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy,
Lord have mercy.*

Forgive us Lord,
We know not what we do.

8 viii **Lux Aeterna**
Missa pro defunctis, Psalm 133, v.1 and
Paul Carr

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine:
Cum sanctis tuis in aeternam,
Quia pius es.

*Light eternal shine down on them, Lord:
With your saints forever,
For you are merciful.*

With all Your love for ever and ever,
With all Your love for ever more.
Lord have mercy, have love.

Hineh mah tov umah nayim
Shevet ahim gam yahad.

*How good it is and just how pleasant
For us all to live together in unity.*

Requiem aeternam.

Eternal rest.

Amen.

9 **i thank You God for most this**
amazing day
Edward Estlin Cummings (1894-1962)

i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any – lifted from the no
of all nothing – human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

10 **Holding The Stars**
Paul Carr

Now on this night of wonder –
Of moonbeam shadows long,
Loveliness I know will steal my self
When day is strong.

The new sun throws down his crown,
All is life, all is one.
As summer air stills the Earth,
Souls are free, our hearts are won.

Lost in this night of shadows,
I wander alone in thoughtfulness and quiet –
Still lost in dreams,
But holding the stars.

11 **Now Comes Beauty**
Paul Carr

Now comes beauty now my life,
Holds my soul through love, through strife.
Gifts of birds sing, winds from south,
Stars like lightbulbs stop my mouth.

Blue seas beckon, soft lands lie,
One more dream or I fear I die.
Two steps forward, three steps back,
Empty canvas and I lost in track.

Moonbeams send me left to right,
Must I say farewell this night?
New worlds hold new sounds for me,
Time to go, to love, to be.

CHORUS ANGELORUM

Soprano: Miriam Allan, Elenor Bowers-Jolley, Zoe Brown, Ann De Renais, Belinda Yates.

Alto: Ruth Gibbins, Vanessa Heine, Martha Mclorinan, Charles Richardson.

Tenor: Peter Davoren, Graham Neal, Oliver John Ruthven, Nick Todd.

Bass: Alex Ashworth, Richard Bannan, Sam Evans, Lawrence Wallington.

BATH PHILHARMONIA

Violin I: Sophie Langdon (leader), Rosie Wainwright, Matthew Everett, Rachel Allen, Gill Austin, Andrew Maddick, Lauren Abbott, Stephanie Niemira.

Violin II: Declan Daly, Alun Thomas, Lisa Betteridge, Felicity Broome-Skelton, Katy Rowe, Lorna Geller.

Viola: Emma Sheppard, Mike Briggs, Virginia Slater, Rachel Calaminus.

Cello: Miriam Lowbury, Toby Turton, Léonie Adams, Alison Gillies.

Bass: Ben Griffiths, Gaynor James.

Flute: Ian Mullin, Kate Grace.

Oboe: Victoria Brawn.

Clarinet: Stuart King, Claire King.

Alto Saxophone: Andrew Franks.

Bassoon: Christopher Gunia.

Horn: Richard Wainwright, Matt Cooke.

Trumpet: Gavin Wells, Matt Wells.

Timpani: Ben Hoffnung.

Percussion: Jeremy Little, Ben Fullbrook, Matt Turner.

Harp: Kate Ham.

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