Mozart’s Requiem

Presenting a fresh interpretation of Mozart’s Requiem, Simon P. Keefe redresses a long-standing scholarly imbalance whereby narrow consideration of the text of this famously incomplete work has taken precedence over consideration of context in the widest sense. Keefe details the reception of the Requiem legend in general writings, fiction, theatre and film, as well as discussing criticism, scholarship and performance. Evaluation of Mozart’s work on the Requiem turns attention to the autograph score, the document in which myths and musical realities collide. Franz Xaver Süssmayr’s completion (1791–2) is also reappraised and the ideological underpinnings of modern completions assessed. Overall, the book affirms that Mozart’s Requiem, fascinating for interacting musical, biographical, circumstantial and psychological reasons, cannot be fully appreciated by studying only Mozart’s activities. Broad-ranging hermeneutic approaches to the work, moreover, supersede traditionally limited discursive confines.

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MUSIC IN CONTEXT

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Mozart’s Requiem: Reception, Work, Completion

SIMON P. KEEFE
For my parents, Terry and Sheila Keefe,
and in memory of
Edith Prinz (1939–2011) and Rudi Prinz (1938–2009)
## Contents

- **List of music examples** [page ix]
- **List of tables** [xi]
- **Acknowledgements** [xii]

**Introduction: Mozart’s Requiem in context** [1]

1 The Requiem legend in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries [11]
   - The legend of Mozart’s Requiem in the nineteenth century [14]
   - The Requiem in nineteenth-century fiction, drama and poetry [24]
   - The Requiem legend in the twentieth century [34]
   - Conclusion [41]

2 Criticism and scholarship from 1800 to the present day [44]
   - Nineteenth-century critical discussion of the Requiem [44]
   - 20th- and 21st-century criticism and scholarship [65]
   - Conclusion [80]

3 The Requiem in performance [82]
   - Nineteenth-century editions [82]
   - Nineteenth-century performances [86]
   - 20th- and 21st-century performances and recordings [92]
   - Conclusion [104]

4 Mozart’s work on the Requiem: sounds and strategies [107]
   - Sounds and strategies in the Requiem [117]
   - Requiem sounds and strategies in context [159]
   - Conclusion [169]

5 After Mozart: the Requiem completion, 1791–1792 [172]
   - The orchestration of the Sequence and the Offertory [179]
   - The Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei and Communio [210]
   - Süssmayr's completion in context [223]
   - Conclusion [230]
Contents

6 Modern completions of the Requiem [234]
   Levin, Beyer and Maunder completions [235]
   Conclusion [244]

Epilogue: a Requiem for the future [247]

Appendix: original text of Franz Xaver Süssmayr’s letter to Breitkopf & Härtel (1800) [249]
Select bibliography [251]
Index [258]
Music examples

4.1 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Domine Jesu, bars 42–6 [page 109]
4.2 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Confutatis, bars 5–8 [110]
4.3 Florian Leopold Gassmann, Requiem, Introit, bars 1–16 [119]
4.4 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Introit, bars 1–8 [121]
4.5 Handel, Anthem for the Funeral of Queen Caroline, HWV 264, ‘The Ways of Zion Do Mourn’, bars 1–17 [123]
4.6 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Introit, bars 19–21 [125]
4.7 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Introit, bars 43–8 [126]
4.8 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Kyrie, bars 27–33 (including Mozart’s deleted bar 30) [128]
4.9a Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Dies irae, bars 1–10 [131]
4.9b Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Dies irae, bars 19–31 [132]
4.10 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Dies irae, bars 40–8 [134]
4.11 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Dies irae, bars 66–8 [135]
4.12 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Tuba mirum, bars 1–18 [136]
4.13 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Tuba mirum, bars 44–62 [138]
4.14 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Rex tremendae, bars 1–7 [140]
4.15 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Rex tremendae, bars 17–22 [141]
4.16 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Recitare, bars 50–5 [144]
4.17 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Recordare, bars 103–12 [145]
4.18 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Confitatis, bars 10–12 [146]
4.19 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Confitatis, bars 23–30 [148]
4.20 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Confitatis, bars 36–40 [149]
4.21 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Lacrymosa, bars 1–8 [152]
4.22a Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Domine Jesu, bars 1–3 [155]
4.22b Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Domine Jesu, bars 13–18 [156]
4.22c Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Domine Jesu, bars 6–10 [157]
4.23 Mozart, Requiem, K. 626, Hostias, bars 44–54 [158]
4.24 Mozart, Mass in C, K. 317 (‘Coronation’), Kyrie, bars 26–31 [161]
4.26 Mozart, Mass in C, K. 337, Dona nobis, bars 113–19 [164]
4.27 Mozart, Mass in B flat, K. 275, Kyrie, bars 29–33 [165]
List of music examples

5.1 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Tuba mirum, bars 51–62 [182]
5.2 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Tuba mirum, bars 24–34 [186]
5.3 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Rex tremendae, bars 1–7 [190]
5.4 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Recordare, bars 103–12 [194]
5.5 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Confutatis, bars 25–30 [196]
5.6 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Confutatis, bars 5–8 [200]
5.7 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Lacrymosa, bars 28–30 [203]
5.8 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Lacrymosa, bars 19–23 [204]
5.9 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Domine Jesu, bars 31–3 [208]
5.10 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Sanctus, bars 1–5 [211]
5.11 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Sanctus, bars 32–8 [214]
5.12 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Benedictus, bars 18–20 [216]
5.13 Süßmayr’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Agnus Dei, bars 1–17 [219]
5.14 Süßmayr, Missa solemnis, SmWV 106, Agnus Dei, bars 1–7 [226]
5.15 Süßmayr, Missa solemnis, SmWV 106, Agnus Dei, bars 94–9 [227]
6.1 Levin’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Benedictus, bars 49–56 [238]
6.2 Maunder’s completion of Mozart’s Requiem, Tuba mirum, bars 1–15 [242]
## Tables

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Mozart’s Requiem, Introit  [page 117]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Mozart’s Requiem, Tuba mirum  [136]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Mozart’s Requiem, Recordare  [143]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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