



REQUIEM by John Rutter – interpretation and performance

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Summary

This prominent British composer has been very popular for many years because of his music – extremely appreciated, especially in Great Britain, Scandinavia and North America. Not very popular in Poland for a very long time, only in the United States of America his *Requiem* was presented hundreds times in the year of its premiere.

Amongst Rutter's compositions, apart from great vocal-instrumental forms, there are also smaller compositions with an instrumental or vocal accompaniment and a great amount of *a cappella* pieces.

There are many funeral masses very well known in musical literature, amongst them some famed for their very advanced structure. Funeral masses of Hector Berlioz or Giuseppe Verdi, traditional but monumental, full of drama and exalted atmosphere are different from rather chamber construction of Rutter's composition, although thematically it belongs to the same group of musical genre.

The title of *Requiem* comes from the beginning of the text: *Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine...* Words are always related to the music in a very illustrative way, to emphasize a human idea of a posthumous existence. Regarding that matter Rutter's composition is greatly clear. The text is organized clearly, almost theatrically and this gives a great range of possibilities concerning artistic expression especially for conductors but also for their choirs. It is not surprising that this composition is constantly presented on the concert posters all over the world.

It is possible that some of critic opinions seem to be unflattering, indicating the fact that Rutter follows too much in his *Requiem* standards used by his predecessors like G. Faure or W. A. Mozart? But there is no doubt – John Rutter is an outstanding musical stylist, although his style is sometimes described as 'sensitive sentimentality'. There are some specific features of his composer's workshop, easily audible in every composition, which makes his music very unique and simply charming.

Undoubtedly, *Requiem* remains an occasional piece, performed to emphasize very special circumstances – but rather sad or tragic. But also, for outstanding individualities amongst conductors, this kind of mass form will always be a potential structure to create a subjective but in many ways – universal interpretation.



John Rutter, an outstanding British composer, has been widely recognised for a long time, and his works are valued especially in Great Britain, Scandinavian countries and North America. For many years he was unknown in Poland, although in the United States alone Rutter's *Requiem* was performed hundreds times in the year of its premiere!

I heard about the composer for the first time in 1990, during my stay in Denmark. At that time, a "new" work of an interesting – as I was told – composer from Cambridge created a sensation. However, although I received the piano score for the piece, *Magnificat*, no audio recording were available in Poland. They soon became available for

purchase in London, thanks to the composer himself¹. Ten years passed before one day, quite unexpectedly, I heard fragments of the piece in the Music Academy in Poznań. The students of the Musical Education, Choral Conducting and Rhythmics departments, preparing for their final exams, were practising *Magnificat* (a work that, admittedly, I partially forgotten) in the Concert Hall of the Academy, together with the choir and orchestra, conducted by Prof. Antoni Grochowalski. It was an exciting experience, when carried by the sounds of fascinating music, I was literally “led”, unintentionally, to where the place from which the wave of music, full of joy, singing and feeling, was coming. I still remembered the composer’s name, but that was the first time I heard his music, and from that moment I dreamed about performing independently one of the pieces by my favourite composer.

The Internet sources present concise information: “John Rutter – English composer, conductor, publisher and music producer”². However, these succinct terms describe an exceptional artistic personality and an outstanding author³. He was born in London on December 24th, 1945, as John Milford Rutter. He did not come from a particularly musical background, but, similarly to thousands of English children, he started musical education at the age of 7. Highgate School was the place where Rutter’s musical sensitivity developed, primarily due to singing in the school choir. As the composer recalls: (...) *then I got a taste of work with music, the sense of scene and audience, the magic created by instruments and singing* (...) ⁴. Rutter studied at *Clare College* at Cambridge, and this is where his first composition concepts developed, and first works were published. As a talented musician and composer, he did not have to wait long for his stage debut, which took place already during his time at the university. Rutter’s professional carrier was so fortuitous and fruitful, that since 1975 he was a director of music at his alma mater. He composed a lot of works for a vocal

ensemble, conducted the premieres of his pieces, and prepared them as the choir conductor. The increasing difficulty in terms of technique, performance and interpretation resulted in creation of a professional vocal ensemble, operating since 1981 as *The Cambridge Singers*. This chamber choir was initially established for recording of Rutter’s works on a level that would enable commercial distribution. The ensemble gathered the most talented voices from great regional choirs including *Clare College Choir*).

With this – today fully professional – choir Rutter took part in several popular television shows, and made numerous radio recordings of his works. He implements successfully new projects, each time personally supervising the enterprises as the conductor. For over 30 years, both composing and conducting have been within the scope of Rutter’s interests. It is still part of his professional activity, apart from the didactic work. Presently, J. Rutter also holds the position of a professor at the Cambridge University. He is often invited to give specialist lectures at many European universities, especially in Scandinavia and in North American musical centres. Since 1980, the composer is a Honorary Member of *Westminster Choir College* at Princeton.

His compositions, apart from large vocal and instrumental forms, include smaller works with the accompaniment of an instrument or a small ensemble, and a number of *a cappella* pieces. J. Rutter also composes instrumental music. His didactic piano pieces for children are known and popular. He is also the author of orchestral works, and film music. He wrote several pieces dedicated for recognised, professional vocal ensembles, e.g. *King’s Singers*. Rutter also published arrangements of many known choral works. He published four anthologies of Christmas songs, where he placed his own *Carols for Choirs*⁵. He edited and published two volumes in the new *Oxford Choral Classics*, including *Opera Choruses* (1995) and

b



anthology *European Sacred Music* (1996), covering a few dozen arrangements, and his own choral pieces.

Among the well-known funeral masses – *Requiem* – some demonstrate exceptionally rich formal structure. Funeral masses by Hector Berlioz or Giuseppe Verdi, traditional in their form, are characterised by monumental texture, both in the instrumental and vocal aspect. They are infused with dramatic and elevated tone. Rutter's work belongs to the same genre, but its form is unusually modest. The contained instrumental texture is undoubtedly an asset in terms of performance, as it enables emphasis on the lyrics, which contributes to a prayer-like character of the piece, and clarity of its message. The mood of the work evokes associations with *Requiem* by Maurice Durufle; however, it was the meditative *Requiem* by Gabriel Faure that directly influenced Rutter's writing. The vocal texture requires a chamber choir, which is also characteristic of other works by Rutter. Delicate instrumental part, mostly providing a background for the choir, is specific, or even "typical" for the composer.

The piece is composed for four-voice mixed choir and a small orchestra:

- 2 flutes,
- oboe,
- 2 clarinets in B,
- bassoon,
- 2 French horns in F,
- 3 kettledrums,
- glockenspiel,
- harp,
- string quintet,

or a 7-instrument ensemble:

- pipe organ,
- flute,
- oboe,
- kettledrums,
- glockenspiel,
- harp,
- cello.

The composer also planned a solo soprano voice for *Pie Jesu* and *Lux aeterna*. It seems clear that Rutter offers double instrumental

versions (for chamber and symphonic orchestras) due to a variety of modern needs in terms of performance, demonstrating a typical, practical approach, presented also in other vocal and instrumental works, such as *Gloria* or *Magnificat*. The works usually take 30 minutes to perform. Their form is not monumental, which is an asset, and contributes to their popularity among professional and amateur choirs alike. *Requiem* had its premiere in 1985, in Dallas (Texas, USA)⁶. Since then, Rutter's *Requiem* became one of the most frequently performed works of this type, along with Mozart's and Brahms', both in churches and in concert halls across the world. (Pic. 1)

The most frequently performed vocal and instrumental works by Rutter, apart from *Requiem* (from 1985), are *Magnificat* (from 1990) and *Gloria* (from 1974). In Poland, the interest in the composer's work has been growing in the last years. The Academic Choir of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń performed them several times in the past two years, both with the chamber and symphonic orchestra. (*Requiem* 3 concerts, *Magnificat* 6 concerts, and *Gloria* 2 concerts)⁷.

The title of the *Requiem* funeral mass (Rest) is derived from the first words of *Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine ...*, which is traditionally translated as: *Eternal rest, grant unto them, o Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them*. Considering the significant variety of musical forms and genres, particularly of masses, *Requiem* seems to be the most intriguing one, especially when its extramusical content and philosophical aspect is analysed. This type of mass is a special piece. Funeral mass is usually performed on special occasions, especially on All Saint's day, during funeral ceremonies, but also to commemorate tragic events or death on their anniversary.

John Rutter composed *Requiem* in 1985 to honour his deceased father. It was created as a very personal work, which can be seen in its specific, bright mood, conveying not

sadness, but a joy of transition to “eternal life”, similarly as in G. Fure’s piece.

Form and genre

The term “form” applied to *requiem* requires explanation. Musical nomenclature specifies the term *form*, associated with the shape, external appearance, model or template (Latin *formatio*)⁸. In musical terminology, the term *musical form*⁹ in the subject literature is often used as an equivalent or synonym of *genre*. The everyday interpretation of the commonly used terms may be due to a certain analogy to biology and its systemic classification of organisms¹⁰? Both terms: *form* and *genre* can be found in a popular musical lexicon by Ulrich Michels. He specified the term *musical genre* based on the factors such as: performers, lyrics, function, place of performance and texture¹¹. However, he also noted that the terms are intertwining. On the other hand, the term *genre* in the *Formy muzyczne* [Musical forms] textbook clearly refers to “ (...) any rhythmical and melodic structures, simultaneously indicating a correlation between the musical genre and form”¹². The book’s authors, Aleksander Frączkiewicz and Franciszek Skołyszewski, mentioned two types of *genre*: formal (e.g. dance) and contrapuntal. They emphasise that determination of the musical form is a result of cooperation of elements, a method of expressing content through material (sounds) juxtaposed in typical dimensions (time)¹³. In this context, it is worth presenting another, quite illustrative, definition: “the form is this perfect, unique in a given work of art set of elements, harmoniously expressing the sense, meaning of the work; it determines the potential of emotions expressed, transmitted, evoked or experienced by the recipient”¹⁴. The above definition by Maria Przychodzińska is similar to that by another musical theoretician, Peter Brooke-Ball. In his lexicon we find a concise formula: *musical form* as a scheme of the work’s structure¹⁵. However, in his work the author does not describe the term *ge-*

nre, which may be considered a significant shortcoming.

During a review of the specialist musicology literature one must include the most important work: the five-volume *Formy muzyczne* [Musical forms]. Its authors, Józef Chomiński and Krystyna Wilkowska-Chomińska, apply the term *form* to a work of music meaning literally “(...) shape, form, figure of the work”¹⁶. This concept, according to these recognised Polish musicologists, is a result of a concise inclusion of ordering activities, shaping the sound material into a given musical form. Their definition is similar to that of the previously mentioned linguist, Władysław Kopaliński.

After the analysis of the most important terminological interpretations of *musical form* and *genre*, the clearest definition seems to be the one adapted after J. Chomiński and K. Wilkowska-Chomińska. Within the *form* they distinguished so-called co-factors of the work of music, such as: *genre*, *composition* and *structure*. *Genre* is associated with the purpose and character of the work, its performers and size (i.e. choral pieces), proper selection of lyrics (literary genres)¹⁷. *Composition* of a work is a category involved in the formative process, and refers to a set of devices used to form the work’s structure. It includes only the external side of the form. *Structure* applies to the relationships between these factors, classified by the authors as the primary ones. To understand the important formal properties of the work, a given *genre* must be considered from both the compositional and structural point of view¹⁸. Chomińscy classify the variety of different musical forms, and demonstrate the vast range of individual creative interpretations, depending on the “mode of functioning of the work, and its treatment by the composer”¹⁹.

In the view of the above three co-factors of a work of music, *Requiem* is a *musical genre* within a wider framework of mass as a *musical form*.

Eschatological²⁰ approach to *missa pro defunctis*

The religious doctrine regarding the end of man, associated with the inevitable event of death, presents the transgression to the “eternal” life not as an existential tragedy, but the essence of existence. Although the death present in Rutter’s *requiem* is unique (the work is in honour of his deceased father), it is presented in a manner that does not evoke fear, but rather as a state of calm and acceptance of the “inevitable goal” of life. Similar associations can also be found in other composers. The verbal content was related to the musical one in a illustrative manner, emphasising the man’s vision of his posthumous existence – judgement for the quality of the earthly life. The soul will be rewarded or punished.

Rutter’s work is exceptionally clear in that respect. It is worth noting, that the doctrine of the Anglican church is very unrigorous in this matter. It postulates a much less “traditional” vision of the “final things” than the Catholic church. The dramatic and tragic aspect of death, despair and regret of leaving this world are characteristic for the Catholic approach to destiny. Rutter’s work presents the essence of posthumous life with music that does not evoke fear or anxiety in the audience, unlike most of the funeral masses²¹. Its musical arrangement can be perceived as a tender goodbye to a man who had a good life, and earned his

“reward in heaven”. In this context, the musical connotations between Rutter and Gabriel Faure are visible, whose *Requiem* op. 48 was referred to as “death lullaby”²². In his requiem, Faure selected lyrics subjectively, which was a planned compositional decision “(...) as it presents God more as a merciful Creator, than the strict Judge at the Last Judgement, and death provides rest and joyful meeting with the Saviour, rather than painful experience, suffering or punishment for sins.”²³ The orchestral version of *Requiem* op. 48 by G. Faure was arranged by Rutter in 1980. He discovered a manuscript in the version for a chamber orchestra, and based on it he wrote a new score for the full orchestra. Fascinated by Faure’s piece, he started working on his own *Requiem*²⁴.

Analysing the liturgy of *Requiem*, following the Roman tradition, it always comprises 9 parts:

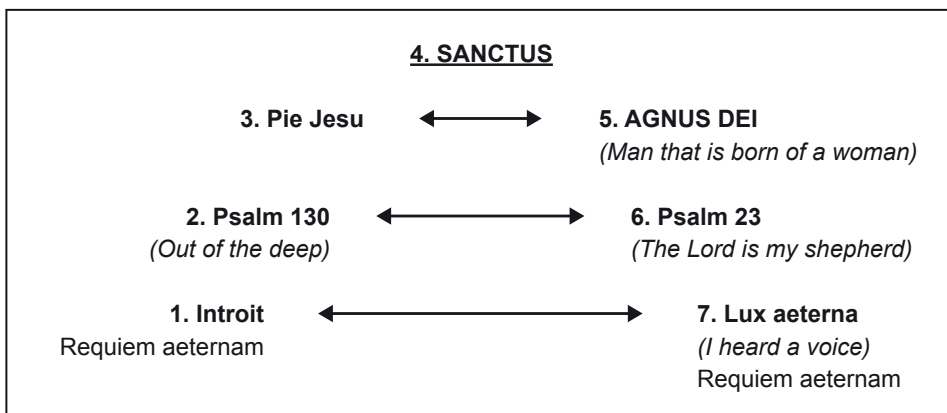
Introitus (*Requiem aeternam – Eternal rest*)

- Kyrie (*Lord*)
- Graduale (*Requiem aeternam*)
- Tractus (*Absolve Domine – Forgive, o Lord*)
- Sequentia (*Dies irae – Day of wrath*)
- Offertorium (*Domine Jesu Christe*)
- Sanctus (*Saint*)
- Agnus Dei (*Lamb of God*)
- Communio (*Lux aeterna*)

There are certain differences between the liturgic composition and the mass order:

MISSA	REQUIEM
Introit	Introit
KYRIE	KYRIE
GLORIA	–
–	Graduale
	Alleluja
CREDO	Tractus (<i>Absolve Domine</i>)
	Sequentia (<i>Dies irae</i>)
	Offertorium
SANCTUS – benedictus	SANCTUS – benedictus
AGNUS DEI	AGNUS DEI
	Communio
	Postcommunio
	Ite missa est

List of the parts of *mass* as a musical for and its genre – *Requiem*



Symmetrical formal structure of the work with the central *Sanctus*

The comparison shows that so-called joyful parts (gloria and credo) are missing in requiem, and substituted by the text from the *Dies irae* sequence.

Similarly as in Faure, the Latin text of *Missa pro defunctis* is not fully present in Rutter's work. The selected parts emphasise the optimistic, somehow "joyful" concept of leaving the life on Earth, and passing through death to the eternal life. Symbolism of despair and darkness, presented at times in music, is contrasted with the fragments presenting the "optimistic" vision of God, in a mild and warm manner. As for the verbal content of *Requiem*, the traditional Latin text intertwines with Old-English prayer.

The entire piece, comprising 7 parts, creates a symmetrical structure, which may also be considered to carry a symbolic value. In the verbal plain, the first and the last part are prayers to Father God, parts 2 and 6 are psalms, 3 and 5 – prayers to Christ, and central *Sanctus* demonstrates the essence of faith. The musical aspect of the whole piece is clearly consistent with the verbal content. Therefore, *Sanctus* provides a culmination of the energetic tension, creating a "narrative" mood involving procession of parts, and a slow decrease of the dramatic effect, until the initial prayer, *requiem aeternam*, is repeated in the last phrases of the work.

Gabriel Faure	John Rutter
Introit (<i>Requiem aeternam</i>) KYRIE - - Offertorium (<i>Domine Jesu Christe</i>) SANCTUS <u>Sequence Pie Jesu</u> AGNUS DEI Libera me Communio (Psalm 121: <i>In paradisum</i>) Requiem aeternam	Introit (<i>Requiem aeternam</i>) KYRIE Psalm 130 (<i>Out of the deep</i>) <u>Sequence Pie Jesu</u> - SANCTUS - AGNUS DEI (<i>Man that is born of a woman</i>) - Communio Psalm 23 (<i>The Lord is my shepherd</i>) Lux aeterna (<i>I heard a voice</i>) Requiem aeternam

Comparison of the parts in *Requiem* by Gabriel Faure and *Requiem* by John Rutter

SANCTUS, *Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria Tua. Hosanna in excelsis Deo (Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts! Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!)* – is a necessary liturgic component of the mass cycle. It is not never omitted, even in *Missa brevis* (short mass). The lyrics always present a joyful affirmation of faith. In the musical aspect of *Sanctus*, Rutter additionally introduced varied dynamics and imitation, providing the element of illustration. *Sanctus* is the central part in the work's composition, one that significantly adds to the dramatic clarity of the "narrative" of the funeral ceremony. Man's soul "goes" to God, in a cheerful company of angels – "the hosts" "heavens are full of". *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.* Here, the melodic motifs based on ascending figurations, which present a certain technical and intonational difficulty from the performative point of view, but are very evocative and consistent with the verbal content.

Two parts in the formal composition of the work are psalms, associated in liturgy with the funeral ceremony: depressing (ominous) *Psalms 130 (De profundis)*, and joyful *Psalms*

23, each characterised by an important solo part: the cello and the oboe, respectively. Moreover, the composer introduced to parts 5 and 7 the sentence derived from the Anglican funeral service, in Old English (quoted, as the composer declares, from the *Book of Common Prayer* from 1662)²⁵. The traditional and specific for *Requiem* sequence *Dies irae* is treated here similarly as in the *Requiem* by G. Faure. Rutter included in the texture only the verses from the mild part 3 – *Pie Jesu*²⁶, written for the solo soprano with the accompaniment of the choir. In general, the composition of the verbal and musical content of individual parts of Rutter's *Requiem* induces reflection. It evokes in the audience retrospective feelings, prompting the imagination towards the "final things". The majestic introduction *Introit* and *Kyrie* is similar in character.

Out of The deep. Part 2 of the work is *Psalms 130 (129)*, (*De profundis – Out of the deep*). It is one of 150 pieces in the *Book of Psalms*. Its individual verses for centuries have been a prayer included in the liturgy (although not exclusively) of the Catholic and Protestant Church. The psalm's title is derived from its first words in the Latin translation (*Vulgata*). It was also referred to as the sixth *penitential psalm*²⁷.

Out of the deep have I called un three o Lord,
hear my voice.
Let thin ears consider well the voice of my complain.

Z głębokości wołam do Ciebie, Panie,
słuchaj głosu mego!
Nakłoń swoich uszu ku głośnemu błaganiu mojemu!

If thou lord, wild be extreme to mark what is done
amiss, o lord who may abide it?
Fur there is mercy with thee,
there for shalt thoune fear'd

Jeśli zachowasz pamięć o grzechach Panie,
któż się ostoł?
Ale Ty udzielasz przebaczenia,
aby Cię otaczano bojaźnią

I look for the Lord. My soul doth wait for him and in
his word is my trust.

W Panu pokładam nadzieję, nadzieję żywi moja du-
sza: oczekuję na Twe słowo.

My soul fleeth un to the Lord berofe the morning
watch I say, before the morning watch.

Dusza moje oczekuje Pana bardziej niż strażnicy świ-
tu, <bardziej niż strażnicy świtu>.

O Israel trust, in the Lord. For with the lord there is
mercy and with him plenteous redemption.

Niech Izrael wygląda Pana. U Pana bowiem jest łaskawość i obfite u Niego odkupienie.

And he shall redeem Israel from all their sins

On odkupi Izraela ze wszystkich jego grzechów.

Psalms 130 in English and in Polish

This psalm, as presented, also in the original version was divided into clearly separate parts (stanzas).

Verses 1–2 in the first stanza are lamentation, where the voice calling God “out of depth”, begs to have his soul saved. *De profundis* meaning *depth*, was often interpreted in an unambiguous way by Christian theologians. Augustin of Hippo²⁸ identified it with “man’s implication in the sin”. According to Martin Luther’s interpretation²⁹, *depth* symbolises “sinful nature of man”, which is a very convincing association, also in the mentality of contemporary man. Lamenting solo narration of the cello is an introduction to the proper narration of the choir as the psalmist (example below). The instrumental solo throughout the psalm provides a specific background, introducing a cool atmosphere of mystery, contrasted with the bright sound of the choir. Illustrative mood of this part clearly relates to the symbolism of awaiting for the Last Judgement. The choral part is an important regulator of this mood, optimistic, despite the “ominous” fragments (apart from the cello background), e.g.: *Out of the deep* (t. 9–16), *My soul fleeth unto the Lord* (t.51–55). (Pic. 2)

The second stanza (verses 3–4). The choir unites in unison. It is the only way to articulate in music “confession of sins”. The melodic phrase is rather a statement, as the final motif descends down the scale. – *O Lord who be may abide it?* However, the text included a question: *If you kept the record of sins, o Lord, who could stand?* This rhetorical question can be only answered affirmatively, as no-one is without a sin. Verse 4 is sung by sopranos, with joyful elation, which evokes associations with angel’s voices. The phrase ends in a climactic

chord, preceded by unison singing, gently transforming into a clear harmony. The text fragments are arranged illustratively in the form of a dialogue of unison voices juxtaposed with the continuous “lament” of the cello (example below). (Pic. 3)

The third stanza (verses 5–6) in the words: *I look for the Lord* expresses a typically Christian trust in “God’s will”. This attitude is the only one among those “awaiting” God and submitting to His judgement. Only “trust” is certain against the “inevitable”, just as “the day always follows the night” – *watchmen wait for the morning*. The last stanza (verses 7–8) is a call, and, somehow, also a warning to await only God’s assistance.

The text of the psalm was introduced by Rutter in the musical aspect of the piece so that the entire verbal message can be clearly articulated by the choir. The moderate ambitus of the melody in individual voices emphasises the narrative character of this part, allowing choirs with certain performative skills forming dialogues. The universality of sin, “fear” as the basic requirement for absolution and God’s forgiveness – are the key words, clearly introduced in the transparent musical texture of the work. Thanks to the declamation melody used by Rutter in this part of *Requiem*, the psalm gained a specifically elated character. It is expressive, particularly when contrasted with the following psalm.

Psalm 23 (*The Lord is my shepherd*)³⁰. It presents the symbolism of “contrition”, therefore, the vocal parts should perform with expressive articulation and fluent phrasing. (Pic. 4)

Rutter made it possible with his compositional technique.

The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I nothing.

He shall feed me in a green pastures.

and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.
He shall convert my soul.

And bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for
his Name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow
of death. I will hear no evil, for you are with me.

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

Thou shalt prepare a table for me against them that
trouble me.

Thou hast anointed my head with oil and my cup
shall be full.

But thy loving kindness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house
of the lord forever.

Psalm 23 in English and in Polish

However, certain fragments are challenging for the choir – due to a homogeneous, slow pulsation rhythm in both female and male voices. This issue is important, especially in declamation parts, which engage in a dialogue with the solo flute part providing the narrative background. Long fragments of unison singing (t. 19–44, 78–84), require a warm, homogeneous timbre of voice, necessary to obtain the right mood, so important for the entire *Requiem*. (Pic. 5)

Psalm 23 is also called the “pastoral psalm”. It is one of the best known biblical psalms, and one of the “psalms of trust”. Its text expressed joy from the sense of God’s assistance, care and the spiritual well-being experienced by people who obey his laws. (*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me*). It also expresses trust in the eternal life (... *goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever*).

In the ancient times, in the region of the world now known as the Middle East, the term “shepherd” was applied to people with outstanding merits, exceptional traits of character, often also to unique, recognised people. Etymologically, this “nickname” de-

Pan jest moim pasterzem, nie brak mi niczego.

Pozwala mi leżeć na zielonych pastwiskach.

*Prowadzi mnie nad wody, gdzie mogę odpocząć:
orzeźwia moją duszę.*

*Wiedzie mnie po właściwych ścieżkach
przez wzgląd na swoje imię.*

*Chociażbym chodził ciemną dolią, zła się nie ulękę,
bo Ty jesteś za mną.*

Twój kij i Twoja laska są tym, co mnie pociesza.

Stół dla mnie zastawiasz wobec mych przeciwników.

*Namaszczasz mi głowę olejkami; Mój kielich jest prze-
obfity.*

*Tak, dobroć i łaska pódją w ślad za mną przez wszyst-
kie dni mego życia i zamieszkam w domu Pańskim po
najdłuższe czasy.*

scribed outstanding features of a man’s personality. It denoted a charismatic leader. A shepherd takes care of his charges, for whom he is responsible.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona eis requiem. (*O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, Grant them rest.*) is arranged in a manner typical for Rutter. The Latin liturgic text is somehow commented by the poetic English lyrics³¹:

***Man that is born of a woman
hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery.
He cometh up and is cut down like a flower.
He fleet as it were a shadow***

It is followed by *Agnus Dei*, but then again commented by the male voices:

In the midst of life we are in death

The tumultuous middle part ends with a calm fragment:

***I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord.
He that beliveth in me, though he were dead,
yet shall he live.
And who so ever liveth and beliveth in me,
shall never die.*** (Pic. 6)

Lux aeterna – an antiphon with repeated *Requiem aeternam* in the end.

**Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis Tuis in aeternam,
quia pius es.**

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

The idea of ending a funeral mass with the image of “paradise”, the aim of the life on Earth, and a happy destination of man’s posthumous journey, considering the organisation of the musical material by Rutter, is not novel. Like Faure and a few other composers, Rutter also uses a melody based on long notes in high vocal registers, using the ostinato accompaniment of a solo harp. However, in the formal aspect, the use of *Lux aeterna* – the proper text of a funeral mass – as the preceding part is innovative. It is a 41 – bar part, using an Old English funeral prayer³²:

I heard a voice from heaven

Saying unto me – blessed...

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord

From they Rest, from their labours

Even so saith the Spirit...blessed... (Pic. 7)

The lyrics in Rutter’s work are arranged very clearly, almost theatrically. It provides a large space for artistic expression for musical ensembles, and first and foremost, for their conductors. It is not surprising that the piece is still performed across the world.

Some music critics suggest that Rutter relies too much on the models provided by the great progenitors of the genre, especially by G. Faure (formal structure) or W.A. Mozart (characteristic repetition of the first part in the end), which is quite unflattering. However, Rutter is doubtlessly an exceptional musical stylist, even if his style is sometimes referred to as “affectionate sentimentalism”. His characteristic compositional technique is clearly audible in each work, but it contributes to the uniqueness and charm of all his pieces.

Requiem will clearly be still performed on special occasions, to commemorate exceptional events, be it sad or tragic. However, for outstanding composers this type of mass will always provide a potential material for creating a subjective, yet largely universal work, such as the exceptional in its content *Requiem* by John Rutter.

Translation by

Dr Izabela Szyma-Wysocka

Notes

- 1 Rutter owns a recording company *Collegium Records*, (www.collegium.co.uk), which holds exclusive rights to the recording and edition of his works performed by *Cambridge Singers*
- 2 <http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/category/music/composers/rutter.do>
- 3 M. Kennedy, J. Bourne – *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1999
- 4 The quote is from the R. Leung’s interview with J. Rutter. (www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/12/17/60II/main589173.shtml)
- 5 Rutter wrote over 20 Christmas songs, so-called carols, for which he composed the music and wrote the lyrics.
- 6 The premiere took place on 13th October 1985, in *Lane United Methodist Church* in Dallas (Texas, USA). The preview of parts 1, 2, 4 and 7, written earlier, took place on 14th March 1985 in *Fermont Presbyterian Church* in Sacramento (California, USA).
- 7 The pieces were performed together with the Symphonic Orchestra of Toruń, Symphonic Orchestra of Płock, and Piotr Sutt’s Percussion Group *Juanesses Musicales* from Gdańsk in 2007–2009. (<http://www.chor.umk.pl/kalendarium/>)
- 8 W. Kopaliński specifies the term as applicable to the shape, outline and work of art (see *Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów bliskoznacznych*, (ed.) W. Kopaliński. Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1980

- 9 According to G. Mizgalski, the term describes the structure of the musical work considering the construction technique used and the mode of performance. See *Podręczna encyklopedia muzyki kościelnej*. (ed.) G. Mizgalski ks., Księgarnia Św. Wojciecha, Poznań 1959, p. 154.
- 10 (see *Encyklopedia popularna PWN*. (ed.) A. Karwowski, PWN, Warszawa 1980
- 11 U. Michels, *Atlas muzyki*, vol. I. Pruszyński i s-ka, Warszawa 2003, pp. 109–117.
- 12 Ibid., p. 285.
- 13 U. Michels, *Atlas muzyki*, vol. I..., p. 9.
- 14 M. Przychodzińska, *Kultura powszechna i wychowanie do kultury – nierówność sił*. [in] *Edukacja i kultura. Idea i realia integracji*. (ed.) I. Wojnar, PAN, Warszawa 2006, p. 182.
- 15 P. Brooke-Ball, *Podręczny leksykon muzyczny*. Wydawnictwo Książkowe „Twój Styl”, Warszawa 1997
- 16 J. Chomiński, K. Wilkowska – Chomińska, *Formy muzyczne*, vol. I. PWM, Kraków 1983, p. 13.
- 17 J. Chomiński, K. Wilkowska – Chomińska, *Formy muzyczne...*, p. 20.
- 18 Ibid., p. 21.
- 19 Ibid., p. 15.
- 20 Eschatology (Greek *eschatos* – *final*) is a body of views regarding destiny and the final purpose of the world, as well as posthumous fate of man. [in:] *Słownik wyrazów obcych* – (ed.) J. Tokarski, PWN, Warszawa 1980
- 21 Cf. Aleksander Bock – *Requiem in A*, na chór mieszany z tow. organów
- 22 J. Kasperski – *Recepcja Requiem op. 48 G. Faure w twórczości rekwialnej kompozytorów francuskich*, [in:] *Musicalia I, materiały konferencyjne 1, muzyka francuska 1*, (ed.) M. Bristiger, Materiały z konferencji muzykologicznej organizowanej przez Stowarzyszenie De Musica, Poznań, 25–26 kwietnia 2007 r., Stowarzyszenie De Musica, Poznań 2007
- 23 Ibid., p. 4.
- 24 J. Rutter – Preface to *Requiem*, Hinshaw Music, Inc. Chapel Hill 1986
- 25 J. Rutter – Preface to *Requiem...*
- 26 This part, according to Author's suggestion, functions and an independent work of art.
- 27 The penitential psalms are those used for time immemorial for funeral ceremonies. Penitential psalms in order: 6, 32(31), 38(37), 510(50), 102(101), 130(129) and 142(143). Numbers in the brackets following *Septuaginta*. Primary numbers after *Hebrew Bible*.
- 28 Św. Augustyn z Hippony – *Wyznania*, przekł. Z. Kubiak, Znak, Kraków 2007
- 29 R. Friedenthal, *Marcin Luter*, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warszawa 1992
- 30 *The Lord is my shepherd* was written in 1978 for Mel Olson and *The Chancel Choir of First United Methodist Church* in Omaha (Nebraska, USA). The composer suggests that the work can be performed separately, both with the pipe organ, and with a small ensemble (oboe, harp and strings)
- 31 The Old English original text (corrected by Rutter) comes from the *Book of common Prayer* (1662)
- 32 The text is quoted by Rutter (with minor amendments) from the *Book of Common Prayer...*

Pictures

Pic. 1

CHORAL MUSIC

OXFORD

JOHN RUTTER
REQUIEM

VOCAL SCORE

in memoriam L.F.R.

REQUIEM

English translation by John Rutter

JOHN RUTTER

1. REQUIEM AETERNAM

Slow and solemn (♩ = 60)

Piano Reduction

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Pic. 2

Slow, with some rubato (♩ = c. 54)

SOLO CELLO

p espress.

mf

f

mf

7

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vc.

ten.

p

fp 3

Out of the deep have I

fp 3

Out of the deep have I

10

called un - to thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.

Pic. 3

31

O Lord, who may a - bide it? O Lord, who may a -

35

Più mosso (♩ = 80)

- bide it? For there is mer-cy with

Più mosso (♩ = 80)

Pic. 4

SOPRANOS

9 [A] *p dolce tranquillo*

The Lord is my shep-herd; — there-fore can I lack — no - thing. —

[A]

Pic. 5

Oxford Church Music

JOHN RUTTER

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

For Mixed Choir (SATB) and Organ

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

For Mel Chorus and the Chancel Choir of the First United Methodist Church, Omaha, Nebraska

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

For Mixed Choir (SATB) and Organ

Psalms 23 John Rutter

Slow but flowing (♩ = 50) poco rit. a tempo

Organ Solo Chorus

11

NOTE: Accompaniment for oboe, harp, and strings is available on rental from the Publisher.

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Pic. 6

44 *p*

Ag - nus De - i, Ag - nus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta, pec -
 Lamb of God, Lamb of God, that tak - est a - way the

p *p distinct* *3* *3*

In the midst of life we are in death, we are in
 In the midst of life we are in death, we are in

Pic. 7

Moderato (♩ = 92)

SOPRANO SOLO
mp legato e dolce

I heard a

poco rit. *a tempo*

voice from hea - ven say - ing un - to me, Bless - ed,

CHOIR, ALL VOICES (T. & B. octave lower) *fp* **SOPRANO SOLO** *mp*

Bless - ed, Bless - ed are the dead who die in the Lord,