

A black and white photograph of a man in a dark coat, seen from the side, looking out over a city of ruins. The city is densely packed with buildings, many of which are in various stages of destruction, with some showing skeletal remains. The scene is somber and evocative, fitting the theme of a requiem.

REQUIEM ÆTERNAM

Duruflé
Requiem

Milford

Mass for five voices

The Choir of
Somerville College
Oxford

David Crown



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REQUIEM ÆTERNAM

MAURICE DURUFLÉ (1902-1986)

REQUIEM, Op.9

(Version for choir, organ and cello)

1	i	Introït	3'41
2	ii	Kyrie	3'33
3	iii	Domine Jesu Christe	8'52
4	iv	Sanctus	3'49
5	v	Pie Jesu	3'38
6	vi	Agnus Dei	4'14
7	vii	Lux æterna	3'57
8	viii	Libera me	6'08
9	ix	In Paradisum	2'57

ROBIN MILFORD (1903-1959)
MASS FOR FIVE VOICES, Op.84
(*Mass for Christmas morning*)

10	i	Kyrie eleison	3'06
11	ii	Gloria in excelsis	4'13
12	iii	Credo	4'43
13	iv	Sanctus	1'49
14	v	Benedictus	1'57
15	vi	Agnus Dei	2'32
			59'12

Christine Rice *mezzo-soprano*

Mark Stone *baritone*

Guy Johnston *cello*

Tristan Mitchard *organ*

The Choir of Somerville College, Oxford

David Crown *conductor*

MUSICAL GHOSTS IN A POST-WAR ERA

This disc juxtaposes two choral works of the late 1940s which share a spirit of neoclassicism. Both can, in their own way, be considered a reaction against an encroaching trend of post-war musical modernism, which assumed somewhat different forms in Britain and on the continent. The two composers might thus be considered – for want of a less politically-loaded term – conservative. Yet neither work is properly old-fashioned; rather, they both adopt ancient models as a means of contemporary musical expression: medieval plainchant in the case of Duruflé's *Requiem*, and Renaissance-tinted modal harmony and contrapuntal technique in Milford's *Mass for five voices*.

An intensely private man, Maurice Duruflé's small output of consistently excellent choral, orchestral and organ music is never autobiographical or introspective – it is perhaps even outwardly antiromantic – but rather craftsman-like and monumental. These are certainly the characteristics of his *Requiem*, which is at once an outstanding example of Duruflé's *oeuvre*, and, along with those by Fauré and Verdi, of the genre as a whole.

Until 2002, public knowledge of the work's early history, beyond those details considered salient by Duruflé, was obscured. Whilst the score bears a dedication to the memory of Duruflé's father, and the composer related that the work was commissioned by the publisher Durand, documents unearthed in Duruflé's centenary year reveal that the work which was to become the *Requiem* in fact began as a commission by the Vichy government for an orchestral tone-poem. It is unsurprising that Duruflé would want to keep this fact secret, such were the political ramifications of being associated with the regime (and despite the fact that artists were acquitted of enemy conspiracy in the immediate post-war years).

James E. Frazier notes that Duruflé's was not the first Requiem Mass to use the Gregorian chants proper as a gestural nod to the past: Victoria's *Requiem* (his *Officium defunctorum* of 1603) sets these ancient melodies as *cantus firmi* in a rich polyphonic setting, although even that technique was becoming outmoded by the 17th century. Duruflé's setting is similar in spirit, but the harmonic and tonal world which his *Requiem* occupies logically proceeds from

the music of Debussy and Ravel. Within a general trend of renewal in French liturgical music, the paleographic rediscovery of original chant sources by the monks of Solesmes greatly interested Duruflé, and the so-called 'Solesmes method' informed the composer's rhythmic treatment of the chants (the metre of the Latin text dictates the rhythm, especially in the *Introït* and *Lux aeterna*, and thus a free alternation between duple and triple pulse lends much of the work a rhythmic lightness).

Duruflé sets mostly the same texts of the Requiem Mass as Fauré, omitting the larger part of the *Dies irae* and including the *Libera me* from the Office of the Dead. Here, direct correspondence between the works ends, although it is interesting to compare the two historically: Fauré's is a Requiem rooted in the nineteenth century, whilst Duruflé's, in light of the socially-traumatic experience of the World Wars, very much belongs to the twentieth. In Duruflé, the monumental or ethereal quality imposed by the Gregorian themes gives way in the *Pie Jesu* to music of a singular, human expressiveness. If the soprano soloist in Fauré's *Pie Jesu* perhaps represents the Virgin singing to the Christ-child, the much darker quality of the mezzo in Duruflé's setting suggests an older Mary's plaint for her son's earthly suffering.

Robin Milford belongs to a group of 20th-century English composers who are now considered minor figures, and his posthumous reputation is as a pastoral miniaturist; for example, his most performed work is the single-movement piano and string orchestra piece *Fishing by moonlight* (Op.96, of circa 1952), evoking the painting of the same name by van der Neer. Having been encouraged in his early musical development at Rugby School, Milford studied composition at the Royal College of Music with Holst and Vaughan Williams from 1921 to 1926. Under such influence, it is perhaps unsurprising, therefore, that Milford's early output includes a considerable amount of choral music showing rigorous contrapuntal thinking. As well as being organist of Butcombe Church near Bristol, he was later engaged (with various degrees of professionalism) in choral direction, and hence had a particular aptitude in handling the choral instrument.

The *Mass for Christmas morning*, Op.84, was written between 1945 and 1947, a time of relative stability for the composer (amongst several tragic episodes in the preceding years, he had suffered a breakdown after only one week of army service in 1939, his six-year-old son was killed whilst cycling the following year, and he subsequently attempted suicide). With no evidence of a commission for the work, Milford seems to have been inspired to write the *Mass* on hearing radio broadcasts of Kodály's *Missa brevis*, which he discussed by correspondence with friend and organist Anthony Scott in the late 1940s; Finzi (a close friend of Milford), it is related, also thought highly of that work. In the composer's own estimation, the first performance of the *Mass*, on 28 May 1953 at St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, was a great success. In further correspondence with Scott, Milford wrote at some length of the spirit which animated the work:

"I am so glad that you [...] really enjoyed my *Mass*, for I consider it's the best thing I've done. [...] And I'm very pleased indeed you felt the work was 'truly religious', rather than 'churchy'. Not that I've any objection to the 'not-specifically-Church-music' type of work, when it is good – e.g. [Finzi's] beautiful and spacious *Intimations* – but it was the other type that I had aimed at and hoped that I'd succeeded in creating, as it particularly interests (and moves) me. Of the old composers, whose work I know at all, Tallis, Gibbons, Byrd, and Schütz seem to me to do it to perfection – Bach too, of course, but since Bach I can't think of much that strikes me in this way, save Fauré's *Requiem*."

Although well crafted, the *Mass* (which, incidentally, has no particularly distinguishing 'Christmas' character, and was thus posthumously retitled *Mass for five voices* at the request of the composer's niece Marion Milford) presents not inconsiderable challenges in performance. Though highly modal in character, Milford's tonal thinking incorporates such features as enharmonic modulations and chromatic side-slips, and thus this 'difficult' music in particular casts into relief any prevailing image of Milford as cheery melodist. In the published edition of the work, Milford provides an *ad lib.* organ reduction; however, in this recording we have followed his suggestion that the *Mass* is performed unaccompanied with the exception of the obbligato part in the *Creed*.

MAURICE DURUFLÉ

Requiem, Op.9

1 i Introit

Requiem æternam 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 let perpetual light shine on them.
A hymn adorns You, God, in Zion,
And a vow will be repaid to You in Jerusalem,
Hear my prayer,
All flesh shall come to You.*

2 ii Kyrie

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

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

3 iii Domine Jesu Christe

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex Gloriae,
Libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum
De pœnis inferni et de profundo lacu,
Libera eas de ore leonis,
Ne absorbeat eas tartarus,
Ne cadant in obscurum.
Sed signifer sanctus Michael
Repræsentet eas in lucem sanctam,
Quam olim Abraham promisisti, et semini ejus.
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 Abraham promisisti, et semini ejus.

*Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory,
Free the souls of all the faithful dead
From the pains of hell and from the deep lake,
Free them from the lion's mouth,
Let hell not swallow them,
Let them not fall into darkness.
But let the sign-bearer Saint Michael
Show them into the holy light,
As You once promised Abraham, and his seed.
We offer You sacrifices and prayers of praise, Lord,
Take them for those souls,
Whom we commemorate today;
Make them, Lord, pass from death to life.
Which You once promised Abraham, and his seed.*

4 iv Sanctus

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

*Holy Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

- 5 v **Pie Jesu**
Pie Jesu Domine,
Dona eis requiem sempiternam.
- 6 vi **Agnus Dei**
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Dona eis requiem sempiternam.
- 7 vii **Lux æterna**
Lux æterna luceat eis, Domine,
Cum sanctis tuis in æternum, quia pius es.
Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine,
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
- 8 viii **Libera me**
Libera me, Domine, de morte æterna,
In die illa tremenda,
Quando cœli movendi sunt et terra,
Dum veneris judicare sæculum per ignem.
Tremens factus sum ego, et timeo,
Dum discussio venerit atque ventura ira.
Dies illa, dies iræ, calamitatis et miseriæ,
Dies magna et amara valde.
Requiem æternam dona eis Domine,
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
- 9 ix **In Paradisum**
In Paradisum deducant te Angeli,
In tuo adventu suscipiant te martyres,
Et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem.
Chorus Angelorum te suscipit,
Et cum Lazaro quondam paupere
Æternam habes requiem.
- Merciful Lord Jesus,
Give them eternal rest.*
- Lamb of God, You who remove the sins of the world,
Give them eternal rest.*
- Let eternal light shine on them, Lord,
With Your saints forever, for You are merciful.
Give them eternal rest, Lord,
And let perpetual light shine on them.*
- Free me, Lord, from eternal death,
On that dreadful day,
When the heavens and earth will move,
As You come to judge the earth by fire.
I shake, and am afraid,
As judgement and rage are coming,
That day, the day of rage, calamity and misery,
A great and very bitter day.
Give them eternal rest, Lord,
And let perpetual light shine on them.*
- May Angels lead you into Paradise,
At your coming may the martyrs receive you,
And carry you into the holy city of Jerusalem.
May a chorus of Angels receive you,
And with Lazarus, who was once a beggar,
Have eternal rest.*

ROBIN MILFORD

Mass for five voices, Op.84

10 i **Kyrie eleison**

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

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

11 ii **Gloria in excelsis**

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Et in terra pax, hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
Adoramus te, glorificamus te,
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam,
Domine Deus, Rex Coelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite. Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris:
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Suscipe deprecationem nostram:
Qui sedes ad dextram Patris,
Miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus.
Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus Altissimus.
Jesu Christe,
Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.

*Glory in the highest to God,
And on earth, peace and good will to men.
We praise You, we bless You,
We worship You, we glorify You,
We thank You for Your great glory,
Lord God, Heavenly King,
God the omnipotent father.
The only begotten Son of the Lord. Jesus Christ.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father:
You who remove the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.
You who remove the sins of the world,
Receive our prayer:
You who sit on the right of the Father,
Have mercy on us.
For You alone are holy.
You alone are the Lord.
You alone are the most high.
Jesus Christ,
With the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.*

iii **Credo**

Credo in unum Deum.
 Patrem omnipotentem,
 Factorem coeli et terrae,
 Visibilem omnium et invisibilem.
 Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
 Filium Dei unigenitum.
 Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.
 Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
 Deum verum de Deo vero.
 Genitum, non factum,
 Consubstantiali Patri:
 Per quem omnia facta sunt.
 Qui propter nos homines,
 Et propter nostram salutem
 Descendit de caelis.
 Et incarnatus est
 De Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine:
 Et homo factus est.
 Crucifixus etiam pro nobis:
 Sub Pontio Pilato:
 Passus, et sepultus est.
 Et resurrexit tertia die,
 Secundum Scripturas.
 Et ascendit in caelum:
 Sedet ad dexteram Patris.
 Et iterum venturus est cum gloria
 Judicare vivos et mortuos:
 Cujus regni non erit finis.

*I believe in one God.
 The omnipotent Father,
 Maker of heaven and earth,
 Of everything visible and invisible.
 And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
 The only begotten Son of God.
 And born of the father before all worlds.
 God from God, light from light,
 True God from true God.
 Begotten, not made,
 Of the same substance as the Father:
 By whom everything was made.
 Who for us men
 And for our salvation
 Descended from heaven.
 And was made incarnate
 And was made incarnate
 By the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary:
 And was made man.
 He was crucified for us:
 Under Pontius Pilate:
 He suffered, and was buried.
 And rose again on the third day,
 In accordance with the Scriptures.
 And ascended into heaven:
 He sits on the right of the Father.
 And He shall come again with glory
 To judge the living and the dead:
 He whose reign shall not end.*

Et in Spiritum Sanctum,
Dominum, et vivificantem.
Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.
Qui cum Patre et Filio simul
Adoratur et conglorificatur.
Qui locutus est per Prophetas.
Et unam sanctam, catholicam,
Et apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptisma
In remissionem peccatorum.
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum.
Et vitam venturi saeculi.
Amen.

13 iv **Sanctus**

Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.

14 v **Benedictus**

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Osanna in excelsis.

15 vi **Agnus Dei**

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis,
Dona nobis pacem.

*And in the Holy Spirit,
The Lord, and life-giver.
Who appears from the Father and the Son.
Who with the Father and the Son together
Is worshipped and glorified.
Who spoke through the Prophets.
And one holy, catholic,
And apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism
For the remission of sins.
And I await the resurrection of the dead.
And the life of the world to come.
Amen.*

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

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

*Lamb of God, You who remove the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us,
Give us peace.*

The Choir of Somerville College, Oxford:

Soprano – Hannah Blyth, Katie Borg, Tal Katsir, Rebecca Nohl, Katharine Piddington, Amelia Walsh;

Alto – Ellen Border, Jenni Butler, Amy McCourt, Samantha Miller, Clare Phipps;

Tenor – David Bowe, John McElroy, Daniel Reeve, Robert Tilson;

Bass – Simon Grange, David Hughes, Joshua Jordan, Christoph Schnedermann, Stefan Schwarz,

Samuel Talalay, Paul Zaba;

Registrant – Douglas Knight.

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