The University of Washington
School of Music Presents

Messa de Requiem
by Giuseppe Verdi

A President’s Benefit Concert
to aid the School of Music Scholarship Fund

University Symphony
and Combined Choruses
Abraham Kaplan, Conductor

June 1, 1984
Meany Theater 8 p.m.
Giuseppe Verdi

The University of Washington School of Music Presents
*Messa de Requiem*
by Giuseppe Verdi
(1813-1901)

A President's Benefit Concert

University Symphony and Combined Choruses

Abraham Kaplan, conducting
Linda Cusanelli, soprano
Sara Hedgpth, mezzo-soprano
Augusto Pagialunga, tenor
Leon Lishner, bass

June 1, 1984

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**INTERMISSION**

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Guisepppe Verdi: Messa de Requiem

On May 22, 1873 Alessandro Manzoni died. He wrote I promessi sposi, a novel which helped to define the modern Italian language, and he was a patriot and a senator when the independent Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed in 1870. Verdi, an ardent nationalist himself, venerated Manzoni, and was so grief-stricken by his death that he was unable to attend the funeral.

A few weeks later he proposed to his publisher that he compose a Requiem Mass to be performed on the first anniversary of Manzoni’s death. His proposal was accepted. The Libera me had been written and the Dies irae sketched back in 1868-9 when Verdi worked on his part of a collaborative Italian Requiem in memory of Rossini. Verdi had left off work on that Requiem because, as he wrote to a colleague a few years after the Rossini project fell through, he didn’t like “useless things.” (He composed very little music without a commission or a specific performance in mind.)

Verdi worked on the Manzoni Requiem through 1873 and early 1874. He finished the piece only five weeks before the first performance at the Church of San Marco’s-in Milan on May 22, 1874. The Requiem is grand and dramatic, in the style of his operatic music. Critics of the Requiem denounced its operatic sound as too secular, but the music expresses the emotional meaning of the text as well as any other music ever has. As his wife Giuseppina defended him in response to some criticism, “...a man like Verdi must write like Verdi. ...I would have disowned... a mass by Verdi which had been made following Model A, B, or C.”

Following an opening murmured “Requiem aeternam,” the hymn “Te decet hymnus” is sung by unaccompanied choir. After a repeat of the opening “Requiem” text a sorrow plea for mercy in the “Kyrie eleison” uses the full complement of chorus, soloists and orchestra in the first of several characteristically “operatic” sections. The next nine parts are all from the text of the latin sequence Dies irae, which portrays the Day of Judgement. The music for the first part of this sequence vividly describes the words of the text, with thundering drums and fortissimo brass. Later a long brass fanfare introduces the Tuba mirum, where the text describes the sound of the trumpet as it raises the dead.

The chorus sings a reprise of the Dies irae at the end of the Liber scriptus, a virtuosic solo for mezzo-soprano. The Dies irae is heard a third time after the bass sings the Confutatis as well, and again in the Libera me later in the piece. Verdi’s continuing emphasis on this matter of setting of this text may clarify his attitude at that time toward death and the Day of Judgment. He was never a very religious man, but by 1873-4, when he was completing the Requiem, he had lost his first wife, his two children, his parents, his father-like patron Baretti, and his idol, Manzoni. He was looking into a bleak future.

But not all of Verdi’s Requiem is sad or threatening. Requiems masses are, after all, set to music for the living to hear and enjoy. The Offertorium, sung by the solo quartet, never approaches the fury of the earlier music. At its most insistent, on the text “Quam olim Abrahae promissisti” the full orchestra joins the soloists homophonically. Otherwise, beautiful melodies, often presented contrapuntally, abound.

The Sanctus — an eight part double chorus in F Major that ends with an operatic flourish familiar to all — is, like the Offertorium, definitely music for the living. Its enthusiastic tone is followed by the Agnus Dei, which is comforting in its simplicity of statement, while at the same time compositionally daring in its employment of soprano and alto soloists singing in parallel octaves.

The final movement, the Libera me, returns us to Verdi’s images of the Day of Judgement, opening with a chanted prayer by the chorus, soon followed by the final performance of the Dies irae music from the second movement. Of the soloists, only the soprano sings in this final section. In a piece that uses such large forces of performers, her solo voice singing the original opening melodies with the unaccompanied choir is a dramatic climax to the entire piece. After this the soprano repeats the initial chant of the choir, and the final movement concludes with a magnificent fugue of legendary difficulty. The last words of the piece, “Libera me,” may well summarize Verdi’s whole statement with the Requiem. It is definitely music for the living, definitely operatic, and profoundly religious in its great drama.

Program Notes by Paula Creamer

UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY
Robert Feist, director

Violins
Paul Culbertson, Concertmaster
Meredith Arksey
Louanne Bean
Robert Chisholm
John Higgenbotham
Karen Law
Stephen Lee

Viola
Chris Boyd
Linda Chang
Jubilee Cooke
Kendall Couch
Marianne LaCrosse
Stuart Lutzenhiser
Mathew Underwood

Cello
Tony Amone
Joseph Bichsel
Cathy Chang
Sasha Von Dassow

Double Bass
Walter Flint
Harold Johanson
Paul Nelson

Horns
Margaret Berry
Charles Karschner
Robert Rasmussen
Carrie Weick

Trumpets
Ward Brunnan
Kevin Hodgson
Bud Jackson
Dan Bens'ove Royal
Ron Barrow
Dave Berkman
Joan Bowron
Keith Curtis

Flutes
Katy Brown
Susan Hallstead

Oboes
Catherine Ledbetter-Taylor
Ailene Mungar

Clarinet
Laura Downey
Jean Moran

Piccolo
Susan Telford

Bassoons
Carolyn Frazer
Elisabeth Gross
Paul Rafanelli
Eric Shankland

Tuba
Walt Flint

Trombones
David Bentley
Andrew Hillaker
Robert Zimmerman

Bass Drum
Alan Gerkings

Timpani
Adam Kruehn

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS — We wish to thank President William Gerberding for his support of this concert and the School of Music Scholarship Fund, and to thank the following people whose assistance has made this concert possible: James Beale, Shanta Benegal, William Bergsma, Robert Burdick, Neill Burner, James Collier, Marilyn Dunn, Dean Ernest Henley, Thomas Griffin, Matthew Krashan, Jean Leed, and Peter Newman, and Darleen Treene.
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Diane Abbey
Michelle Allen
Dorothy Anthony
Andrew Asbro
Kristin Brewer
William Brown
Lorna Burkey
Robin Byerly
Elizabeth Byng
N. Chaiuchittamanond
Melene Chang
Aaron Cole
Sheryl Couch
Anne DeGallier
Darold Duke
Kathleen Eder
Thomas Ellison
Darcy Finlay
Heidi Fish
James Fisher
Gina Gunther
Steven Hart
Alice Hebner
Thuan Hong
Kevin Howard
Kelly Hughes
Ching-Ngar Hung
Craig Johnson
Caprice Jones
Hye-Suk Jun
Panto Karimi
Junghyun Kim
Dawn Kirkpatrick
Susan Kodish
Sandra Kord
Janet Kowacki
Agus Kurniawan
Hyok Jun Kwon

Soofin Lam
Kathleen Langford
Jin Soo Lee
Richard Lee
Sandra Lee
Lorre Lewis
Chang Sub Lim
Te Van Ly
Beth McNee
Mary Ann Meteyer
Richard Miles
Larry Murante
George Nicholas
Carol Nugent
Pauline Palk
Maria Peyton
Trung Pham
Angelina Purdy
Ngoc Hong Quach
Lynn Red
Kelly Reynolds
John Roco
Selma Salazar
Daryl Savage
Diane Scriber
Sheila Shoo
Eumice Shen
Patricia Showell
Kwang Son
Esther Song
David Soukup
Holly Stoleson
Darren Toshi
Lien Soi Tu
Mary Wade
Bruce Wilson
Sang Chang Yang
Kerry Yates
William Yi

ORATORIO CHORUS
Abraham Kaplan, director
Andrew Bernard, assistant conductor
Cynthia Steeves, rehearsal accompanist

David Adihoch
Ruth Ahn
Brad Anderson
Andrew Bernard
Alice Bridgforth
Aaron Caughey
Paula Creamer
David Eng
Hrika Forberg
Siri Forsman
Sara Foster
Karen Gryllis
Lynn L. Hall
John Imholpf
Murniarty Irwan
Sheryl Jensen
Christine Johnson
Ira Jones
Pil Sung Kim
Paul Klemme
Joon Kwon

Sonja Lauber
Cynthia Lee
Sung Mi Lee
Tai-Wai Li
Shaw Pei Loh
Allicia M. Maloy
Rose Mauro
Bud McRae
Sarah Millikan
Maureen O'Neill
Jim Owen
Changhoon Park
Scott R. Peterson
Loren Ponten
Catherine Roubal
Rob Rucker
Carla Sabotta
Sue Shawger
Karen Sjober
Cynthia Steeves
Susan M. Thompson

UNIVERSITY CHORALE
Kenneth L. DeJong, director

Johanna Arneson
Susan Bishop
David Chan
Rebecca Clemens
Lisa Cromwell
Jon Deyo
Paul Firth
Julie Gibson
David Greely
Kelli Hart
Karen Hedges
Don Hensley
Kurt Hoffman
Tim Jeske

Barb Kratz
Allen Leslie
Marvin Loiselle
Sheila Mattos
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