

REQUIEM

Thierry Lancino

libretto by Pascal Quignard

Commissioned by Radio France, the French Ministry of Culture and the
Koussevitsky Music Foundations



Eliahu Inbal / Thierry Lancino © Jean-François Leclercq

Orchestre Philharmonique et Chœur de Radio France

Matthias Brauer, Chorus Master

Eliahu Inbal, conductor

Heidi Grant Murphy, soprano - Nora Gubisch, mezzo-soprano
Stuart Skelton, tenor - Nicolas Courjal, bass

World Premiere - Salle Pleyel, Paris - January 8, 2010

Table of contents :

Page 5:	Lancino's <i>Requiem</i> (by Radio France)
Page 7:	About Thierry Lancino's Requiem (program notes by F-G. Tual)
Page 11:	Thierry Lancino (program notes by François-Gildas Tual)
Page 12:	Author's biography (Pascal Quignard)
Page 13:	Composer's biography (Thierry Lancino)
Page 15:	Instrumentation – Structure of the work
Page 17:	Libretto by Pascal Quignard - English translation
Page 29:	Critical Acclaim
Page 32:	Full Reviews

Lancino's *Requiem*

The Koussevitzky Music Foundations, the French Ministry of Culture and Radio France chose to commission a vast score for soloists, chorus and orchestra from Thierry Lancino, in order to renew the tradition of Requiem.

Dies irae dies illa

Solvat saeculum in favilla

Teste David cum Sibylla.

Day of wrath! This day!

A day that the world will dissolve in ashes,

As foretold by David and the Sibyl.

The first verse of the *Dies Irae* brings together two opposing forces: David, facing death, asks to be granted eternity; the Sibyl, draws closer to it without ever reaching it, and begs for annihilation. The presence of these two paradoxical forces within this thirteen century sacred text had never been challenged until now. The composer draws his inspiration in the synergy that flows from this staggering collision. He uses it as the impulse of his music and interweaves violence and meditation. This work is composed on an original libretto by **Pascal Quignard** who keeps the liturgical verses in their traditional order, but simplifies and opposes them with three texts in French and responses in Latin and ancient Greek. David (tenor) and the Sibyl (mezzo), are in the company of two other soloists: soprano (the simple human) and bass (the warrior side of David). This astounding work, at the same time singular and provoking, explodes the theme of time and death, and gives it a renewed dimension. « The Requiem », says the composer, « is a kind of sacred oratorio, and not a mass composed of successive liturgical moments. It is an epic fresco that blows sulfur and incense ». Pascal Quignard confides: « The extraordinary idea that dominates this Requiem and so profoundly distinguishes it from all others consists precisely in letting next to each other - without choosing – desire of annihilation and desire for eternity ».

Radio France (December 2009)

ABOUT THIERRY LANCINO'S REQUIEM

Program notes by François-Gildas Tual

The *Requiem* is not a work written for an occasion, nor is the composer a mere hired hand. Would his hair show more shades of gray, it could be considered his life's achievement, a central work whose presence can be intuited in previous and future compositions, and particularly in the planned opera inspired by Hermann Broch, *The Death of Virgil*. This work is the fruit of a long meditation, of unforeseen encounters, and of marvels that presented themselves to Thierry Lancino during a Mediterranean journey: "Maupassant's account of his trip to Sicily had taken me to the Capuchin monastery in Palermo, with its morbid catacombs. Later, Virgil's tomb on the Posillipo hillside in Naples was a source of deep emotion. I did not know then that, not far away, in Cumae, where the mythic Sibyl had her cave, she who was to become the central figure in my *Requiem*." The Sibyl, an uncommon prophet, announced, rather than the birth of Christ (Virgil, IVth Eclogue), his return on Judgment Day: in the XIth century, some liturgical texts already linked her to Jeremiah, to Daniel and to David, a procession of prophets that also included Virgil, whose specter was thus to visit this *Requiem* as it had visited the opera that was left unfinished.

Thierry Lancino understood gradually that the Latin sources of the requiem invited a dialogue between the Sibyl and liturgy: "At that point my project took an altogether different turn. I realized that there was a pagan presence in the liturgical text, 'Dies Irae ... teste David cum Sibylla'. – Day of wrath ... as announced by David and the Sibyl. From then on I was convinced that an original libretto had to be written for this work..."

"The Sibyl stands at the divide between two worlds, she links one to the other, the pagan and the Christian worlds, the human and the divine worlds, the worlds of the living and of the dead, the worlds of

writing and of the voice. By means of obscurity, through the mystery of her person and of her words, she set imaginations to work, and centuries past saw in her a means to approach the unspeakable or the incomprehensible, in a constant back-and-forth between ephemeral speech and its fixation into writings or images." (Monique Bouquet & Françoise Morzadec, *The Sibyl, Speech and Representation*)

Thierry Lancino immediately thought of Pascal Quignard for the libretto: one encounter was sufficient for them to understand each other, especially regarding the balance of newly written text and traditional liturgy.

The collaboration ultimately demanded neither compromise, nor long discussions on the manner in which words and music should come together. And no sooner was the understanding confirmed that the composer's mind was set ablaze: "I was in a state of shock for about five weeks, and tried to write down as many musical sketches as was possible, for indeed I was overwhelmed by the visions that presented themselves to me. I then started the composition work, which lasted more than two years with little interruption. Pascal Quignard was admirable in granting me total freedom, something for which I am very grateful to him." Only one certainty accompanied him, that the fusion of poetry and music should confer coherence to the work on a third level.

What the composer particularly appreciated in the author was "his remarkable knowledge of the Antiquity, the poetry and evocative power of his writings, and first and foremost his deep meditation on death." During the summer of 2005, Thierry Lancino described to Pascal Quignard how he envisioned "a requiem in which the Cumae Sibyl would partake as a counterweight to the liturgical rite. Her voice

would guide us into the Netherworld. Of course Virgil/Aeneas, Dante/Virgil. The Sibyl's cruel death instills deep dread in me and calls to mind the progressive and inescapable vanishing of our civilization. The Sibyl has guided me somewhat before, notably in the lines of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, a poem that became a powerful source of inspiration for this project. So has a quote from Petronius' *Satiricon*: 'Nam Sibyllam quidem Cumis ego ipse oculis meis vidi in ampulla pendere, et cum illi pueri dicerent *Sibylla tithieleis?* Respondebat illa *Apothanein thelô!* - I want to die! - The Sibyl is now leading me to you.'

Truly "haunted" by the *Requiem*, Pascal Quignard then imagined the face-to-face between David and the Sibyl, in a poem contemplating death's most frightening features as well as its appeasing virtues, a poem in which annihilation blended with the prospects of eternal life. "The extraordinary idea that dominates this requiem and makes it so profoundly different from all others precisely consists in leaving in coexistence - and without choosing one over the other - a desire for annihilation and a desire for eternity." The composer wished to preserve this dialectics and synergy as the source of a powerful dynamics that he must develop to paroxystic heights: "The composition is progressing. Step by step. Grain by grain. And the music will not choose. (...) Echoes of ancient rites and sacred polyphony will find a meeting point, a point of opposition, a point of possible full realization. Spectacular passages will be heard alongside moments of pure contemplation. The Sibyl will guide us into the Netherworld, much like Virgil the pagan guided Dante through his initiatory journey. There thus will be an alternation, but beyond, the two worlds will communicate and partake in the same polyphony. The roughness of one will be polished by the other; the sweetness of the other will be corrupted."

"I solemnly assure you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains barren; but if it dies, it produces much fruit." (The Gospel according to John, XII.24)

"I now know that all of King David's responses will be in Latin. I chose not to use Hebrew because a king in Jewish Antiquity would never have perceived the world as a Christian prophet - which is what he is in the liturgy of the defunct. (...) I do need a pagan Sibyl who constantly disrupts Christian liturgy in order to leave the latter, if I may say, on an equally passionate footing. I do not want to have to choose between King David and the Cumae Sibyl. I want to leave the two desires face to face. In my conception the *Requiem* must not sort out sufferings. It does not choose either between *requiescat*, *requiescant*, peace; It does not choose between gestures; it does not choose between the languages that preceded us and that founded our language, it does not choose between figures; it does not select among cries of pain or joy. [...] It cannot choose any more than I can choose. It leaves face to face." (Pascal Quignard to Thierry Lancino, Monday December 26, 2005)

"From the decomposed body of the Sibyl in the earth grass and brushwood would grow, that would be eaten as pastures by sacred creatures, and that would give their bowels all sorts of colors, shapes and qualities, in which men would read predictions for the future." (Plutarch, *Oracles of the Pythia*, 398d)

Two characters cross paths, with obviously opposed, but complementary visions. Duality: David responds to the Sibyl, Latin responds to Greek. On one hand psalms, on the other excerpts from sibylline oracles, some rare fragments that are considered authentic and which date back to the second century before Jesus-Christ - from a ritual for Demeter - cited by Phlegon of Tralles in his *On Marvels*. Languages from another era, confronted to the contemporary voice of the French language. Musical duality also, since the mezzo-soprano responds to the choir and to other soloists, while the orchestra places itself "at the service of these two visions. Linking one to the other. Or opposing them." If some rhythmic patterns bring to mind the medieval technique of the hocket, if one can recognize, through reminiscences, the traditional theme of the

Dies Irae, or if one can intuit the presence of David in the harp accompaniments, the listener will be even more sensitive to the manner in which melodic lines appear at times to rise to heaven, and at other times to be condemned to staying on earth, to which they are “attracted by some irresistible, telluric magnetism.” (Thierry Lancino) “I want to die” cries the Sibyl in a long phrase ascending towards a high F note. When dread overcomes hope, chromatic descending lines become prevalent (*Dies Irae*), unless the choir’s increasingly insistent calls come crashing into a momentous, helpless octave leap, or unless all musical motions become superimposed and blend into a great whirl during the *Mors Stupebit*. In addition to the two characters, a human figure (soprano) and “David’s warrior extension” (bass) are heard: this is something quite unusual in a requiem. After a brief duet between David and the Sibyl (*Agnus Dei*) for a sole moment of junction, we may wonder if we are even listening to a mass in the prime sense of the word. To an opera perhaps, if one looks at the initial stage directions: “*The Sibyl’s figure appears. She gets into her trance. She is gyrating and starts to sing her song.*” To an oratorio or, in Thierry Lancino’s words, to “some epic fresco or sacred ceremony” that includes a theatrical dimension well beyond any stage manifestation, resembling cults that were necessarily infused with a dramatic dimension. Suffice it to consider the mere first measures of this composition in thirteen sections, a procession punctuated with thirteen hits on the bass drum, on the tubular bells, on the gong and the Tibetan bowl. Thirteen calls that invoke the Sibyl, the thirteenth prophet. A prologue during which she narrates her long story. Sistre, waterphone, clinking of seashells, balafon, all echoes of the murmurs of an imagined, ancient Mediterranean sea.

Profane or sacred, the *Requiem* sometimes appears akin to some pagan ceremony. Dedicated to Selam, a three-year-old Australopithecus girl, fossilized in Ethiopia for the past three million years, it ultimately invites the listener to attempt comprehending the notion of departure. “The approach of death is

a contradictory process: panic and peace”, writes Pascal Quignard in his notes attached to the Requiem; in the Amharic language, “selam” signifies peace. Resistance, fight, attempt at negotiation would then be necessary stages towards the acceptance of death. A journey in five steps, like the five stages of grief described by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in terminally ill patients, like the five parts in the suite inspired by *The Death of Virgil*. With the offertory as the “keystone to the whole work: through the depth of its meditation. In the liturgy, it refers to the sacrifice of Isaac by his father Abraham. Animal sacrifice is substituted to human sacrifice at the last moment by effect of the goodness of God. Abraham, as a reward for his blind obedience, will beget an endless lineage. During the *Offertory*, the Sibyl, condemned to remain without descent, asks that a sacrifice be arranged of three times three bulls for Demeter (fragments of the Sibyl’s oracle reputed original). Imploring the gods to let her die (Pascal Quignard’s text), she concludes that the gods she is addressing are made of stone, and that the ancient gods are dead. That she outlived them.”

Through this musical experiment, Thierry Lancino may have tried to understand also. Not only to grasp the idea of death, but also to touch it in a concrete manner, to materialize “an asymptote common to people of faith, who seem to be able to reach that land and set foot on it. It is while writing the *Offertory* that I had a form of revelation on the deep meaning of the *Requiem*: The Sibyl cannot die because her gods died before her. It appeared to me that one cannot die without the help of a deity. That one is – like the Sibyl – condemned to wander endlessly. This deity, she envisions it (Virgil, IVth Eclogue) to the point of announcing the coming of a new god, Christ for Christians. Which explains her presence in Christianity.”

Translation: Jean-Louis Pautrot

¹ I even saw, saw with my own eyes, the Cumae Sibyl in suspension in a flask, and when children would ask her, in Greek, *Sibyl what do you wish for?* The poor soul would reply, in Greek as well, *I want to die*.

THIERRY LANCINO

A portrait by François-Gildas Tual

A strange conclusion indeed that the last measures of the *Sonata for Cello* (1995) by Thierry Lancino, that, according to the composer himself, slowly give the work “an air of imbalance...” Doomed to a lack of closure as well, much like *The Aeneid*, was a project for an opera inspired by *The Death of Virgil*, whereas the *Requiem*, created from a text by Pascal Quignard, accepts closure but obstinately refuses to choose. A few examples consistent with the notion of Open Work rather with a difficulty to take writing to completion. But couldn't we find in these troubling instances of indecision, if not a signature, at least something that testifies to the nature of the works? Something that seems to build a bridge between Antiquity and today's world, something that allows for the encounter of distant eras in a fascinating spatial and temporal merging?

There are no real contradictions in Thierry Lancino's life. Opposites cross paths, enrich each other, and, as isolated experiences, they gain meaning in the unity of existence. It is possible for him to work alongside John Chowning, to collaborate with Pierre Boulez, to teach new technologies and computer science at the IRCAM, to be a researcher at Stanford University, and also to embark on a fishing boat in Alaska. To love the green landscapes of his native Poitou passionately, to roam the banks of the Niger river, to value the serenity, in the heart of the Berry region, of the former Cistercian abbey of La Prée, and to settle finally in Manhattan.

If we may summarize Thierry Lancino's journey: born in 1954 in Civray, near Poitiers, he studied in Paris before being sent to California by the Minister of External Affairs. Put in charge of a project at the IRCAM, he received the Prix de Rome and left Paris again to go live in the Villa Medici, in Rome. Today he lives in the USA, free from any institutional charge. Each journey being a synonym for a quest of identity, we may think of some Greek sailor going from island to island, in search of something, and discovering, as if by chance during a long Mediterranean cruise, the subject of his *Requiem*. His music crosses oceans and ages and writes, page after page, a sort of travelogue. Accompanied by David, by the Sibyl or by Virgil, appropriating bits of the journey log of the Endurance by Shackleton (*Who is the third?* 2009), it is comparable to these explorers of the Antarctic who, when lost on the polar ice cap, invented the presence of a companion at their side.

“To experience such a presence is sometimes brought about by extreme conditions. Such emotion can then open the door to spirituality. Music is for me a privileged means of opening that path. Its hypnotic strength allows us to access inner powers, the limits of which are not known to us., but some aspects of which are then revealed. Music, when it touches us, conjures up this presence.” (Thierry Lancino)

Author's biography

Pascal Quignard (France - 1948) is a French writer born in Verneuil-sur-Avre, Eure. In 2002 his novel *Les Ombres errantes* won the Prix Goncourt, France's top literary prize.^[1] *Terrasse à Rome* (Terrasse in Rome), received the French Academy prize in 2000, and *Carus* was awarded the "Prix des Critiques" in 1980.

One of Quignard's most famous works is the eighty-four "Little Treatises", first published in 1991 by Maeght. His most popular book is probably *Tous les matins du monde* (*All the Mornings in the World*), about 17th-century viola de gamba player Marin Marais and his teacher, Sainte-Colombe, which was adapted for the screen in 1991, by director Alain Corneau. Pascal Quignard wrote the screenplay of the film. *Tous les matins du monde*, starring Jean-Pierre Marielle, Gérard Depardieu and son Guillaume Depardieu, was a tremendous success in France and sold 2 million tickets in the first year, and was subsequently distributed in 31 countries. The soundtrack was certified platinum (500,000 copies) and made musician Jordi Savall an international star. The film was released in 1992 in the US.

Pascal Quignard has also translated works from the Latin (Albucius, Porcius Latro), Chinese (Kong-souen Long), and Greek (Lycophron) languages. Five of his works available in English: *Albucius* (The Lapis Press), *The Salon in Württemberg* (Grove Weidenfeld), and *All the World's Mornings* (Graywolf Press). *Sarx* and *On Wooden Tablets: Apronesia Avitia* (Burning Deck).

Composer's biography

Thierry Lancino was awarded with a prestigious Koussevitzky Music Foundations commission (2007) for which he wrote a Requiem including an original text by Pascal Quignard, (Goncourt Prize 2002). The world premiere of this evening long work was premiered by the Radio France Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir in Paris, Salle Pleyel (January 2010) under the baton of Eliahu Inbal. A recording is to be released by Naxos in 2011.

Thierry Lancino was appointed Pensionnaire of the Académie de France à Rome (1988-90) at the Villa Médicis - formerly the historical Prix de Rome - which honors composers for their entire body of literature. After residencies at the universities of Colgate, Stanford and San Diego where he acquired expertise in new technologies, Pierre Boulez invited him to join the artistic team of his Paris Institute at the Pompidou Center (IRCAM – 1981-1988). This collaboration resulted in commissions and recordings.

Recently, Lancino has focused on large orchestral writing which includes his Violin Concerto (2005) for the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra and The Death of Virgil, a lyric suite for the Orchestre National de France (2000). In 2005 he wrote ONXA, a chamber work for mezzo soprano and strings which was given its U.S. premiere at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival (2008). His Cinq Caprices for violin and piano were heard at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (2008). His choral work "Who is the Third ? " was commissioned by Accentus for the Jeune Chœur de Paris (music director Laurence Equilbey) and was premiered at the Opéra Comique, spring 2009. His upcoming works include lyric projects (oratorio, opera) and chamber music (string quartet, solo pieces).

Amongst numerous commissions and performances from ensembles worldwide, Thierry Lancino has been given grants from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Culture, and he received awards from the Beaumarchais Foundation, Prix Médicis hors les murs, Prix des Jeunes Compositeurs Européens, Sacem. He can be heard on recordings by Wergo, Ades/MFA, Triton, K167 and very soon by Naxos. After completing university, Lancino studied at the Conservatoire de Paris (CNSMP). He acquired the US citizenship in 2005 and resides presently in New York City.

REQUIEM

INSTRUMENTATION

Soprano
Mezzo-soprano (Sibyl)
Tenor (David)
Bass

Mixed chorus

Orchestra :

4 flutes (3 & 4 also piccolo, 3 also alto, 4 also bass)
3 oboes
3 *Bb* clarinets
1 *Bb* bass clarinet
3 bassoons (3 also contrabassoon)

8 Horns in F (5, 6, 7 & 8 also tenor tuba)
4 trumpets
3 trombones (3 also bass trumpet)
1 bass trombone
1 bass tuba bass

5 percussionists
1 timpani
1 piano
2 harps

Strings

I - INTROITUS

- 1 - Prologue**
- 2 - Kyrie - Gradual**

II - SEQUENTIA

- 3 - Dies Irae**
 - 3a - Psalm XVIII
 - 3b - Dies Irae
 - 3c - Mors stupebit
 - 3d - Rex tremendae
- 4 - Ingemisco**
- 5 - Confutatis**
- 6 - Lacrimosa**

III - OFFERTORIUM

- 7 - Offertorium**
- 8 - Song of the Sibyl**

IV - SANCTUS

- 9 - Sanctus**
- 10 - Song of David**
- 11 - Benedictus**

V - AGNUS DEI

- 12 - Agnus Dei**
- 13 - Dona eis requiem**

4(2pic.af1.bfl).3.3(Ebcl.Acl)+bcl.3(cbn)/8(4Wtba).4(2Ebpic).4(Ebbs).1(Cb1b)/
timp.5perc(2timp).pf(pf prepared).2hp/S.Ms.T.B.Cho/str(16-14-12-10-9min)

Duration: 75 minutes - no intermission (16mn, 31mn, 11mn, 10mn, 7mn)

The Premiere occurred at Salle Pleyel, in Paris, on January 8 of 2010.

Heidi Grant Murphy (soprano), Nora Gubisch (mezzo-soprano), Stuart Skelton (tenor), Nicolas Courjal (bass), Radio France Orchestre Philharmonique and Chorus were led by Eliahu Inbal.

REQUIEM

Thierry Lancino

Libretto by Pascal Quignard

texts from the Roman Liturgy
and Greek Oracles

Translation by Jean-Louis Pautrot

REQUIEM

Thierry Lancino

Libretto by Pascal Quignard

texts from the Roman Liturgy
and Greek Oracles

ORIGINAL TEXT

ENGLISH - Translation by Jean-Louis Pautre

I – INTROITUS

I - INTROITUS

1 - 1 - Prologue

Sibylle:

L'ombre de la Sibylle apparaît.

Elle commence sa transe.

Elle tourne et commence son chant.

Moi, fille de Neso née de Teucer Sibullé Sibylla Sibylle
moi qui habitais Marpeossos
moi qui au fond de la grotte du mont Corcyre suis demeurée
neuf fois cent dix ans
moi qui vécus à Samos
moi qui vécus à Claros
moi qui vécus à Erythrae
moi qui vécus à Delphes
chaque aube je transportais ma pierre
pour tomber
et je ne tombais pas.

Ovide a dit:

Ô Amalthée!

Et moi je ressemblais à une cigale et ne pouvais mourir.

Je ne suis ni chamane ni prophétesse ni pythie!

Je ne suis qu'une mortelle qui n'arrive pas à dépenser ses jours!

Jadis j'ai ramassé par terre une poignée de poussière

Ô favilla! Poussière!

Ô vous, les cendres!

Je vous ai montrées dans ma paume ouverte au dieu qui soulevait
sa tunique vers moi le sexe tendu vers moi et je l'ai repoussé.

Ô favilla! Favilla!

Depuis lors ma vie en égrène un à un chaque grain minuscule.

Je suis plus vieille que la vieillesse.

1 - 1 - Prologue

Sibyl:

The Sibyl's figure appears.

She gets into her transe.

She is gyrating and starts to sing her song.

I, daughter of Neso born of Teucer Sibulle Sibylla Sibyl
I who dwelled in Marpeossos
I who at the rear of the cave in Mount Corcyra stood
One hundred and ten years ninefold
I who lived in Samos
I who lived in Claros
I who lived in Erythrae
I who lived in Delphi
Every dawn saw me carrying my stone
For me to fall
And I would not fall.

Ovid said:

O Amaltheus !

And I was like a cicada and could not die.

I am neither a shaman nor a prophetess nor the Pythia !

I am but a mortal who cannot get to spend her days.

In days of yore I gathered from the ground a handful of dust.

O favilla ! Dust !

O you, ashes !

I showed you in my open palm to the god who lifted

His tunic at me his penis erect at me and I pushed him away.

O favilla ! Favilla !

Since then my life is counting off each minuscule speck,

I am older than old age.

J'ai sept cents ans.
 Trois cents moissons m'attendent.
 Il me reste encore à boire trois cents fois le vin nouveau.
 Dans la poussière, trois cents fois tombée ivre!
 Trois cents printemps attendent
 un corps qui s'affaisse déjà
 et déçoit.
 Les destins ne laissent aux corps qui vieillissent
 que le souffle sur les lèvres.
 Et aux morts que le silence qui les engloutit.
 Dans l'ombre de la grotte
 je tiens tant que je puis mes yeux fixés à terre:
 Mon nom n'est plus qu'un chant qui veut mourir.
 Mon corps n'est plus qu'un souffle qui voudrait s'expirer.
 Chaque fois qu'un fidèle pénètre dans ma caverne
 chaque fois qu'il demandait:
 - Sibylle, que veux-tu?
 Je répondais:
 - Homme, je veux mourir.

Chaque fois qu'un enfant poussait les pierres et dans mon
 ombre venait jouer, levait la tête:
 - Sibylle, que veux-tu?
 Je répondais:
 Enfant, je veux mourir.

ἀποθανεῖν θέλω
 ἀποθανεῖν
 ἀποθανεῖν θέλω

2 - 2 - Kyrie-Graduel

Chœur:

ἀποθανεῖν θέλω

Kyrie eleison !
 Christe eleison !
 Kyrie eleison !

Requiem aeternam, dona eis, Domine.

I am seven hundred years old.
 Three hundred harvests are awaiting me.
 I still have to drink the new wine three hundred fold.
 In the dust, three hundredfold, drunk to fall !
 Three hundred springs are awaiting
 a body that is already sagging
 And disappointing.
 The fates from aging bodies take
 but the breath on their lips.
 And from the dead but the silence that devours them.
 In the darkness of the cave
 I keep as much as I can my eyes to the ground:
 My name is now but a song that wishes to die.
 My body is now but a breath striving to expire.
 Each time a believer would enter my cave
 Each time he would ask:
 - Sibyl, what do you wish for ?
 I would answer :
 - Man I want to die.

Each time a child would be pushing stones and in my
 Shadow would come and play, would raise his head:
 - Sibyl, what do you wish for ?
 I would answer :
 Child, I want to die.

I want to die !
 Die !
 I want to die !

2 - 2 - Kyrie-Gradual

Chorus:

I want to die !

Lord have mercy !
 Christ have mercy !
 Lord have mercy !

Eternal rest, grant them, Lord.

II- SEQUENTIA

3 - Dies Irae

3 - 3a - Psalm XVIIIBasse solo:

Seigneur, tu es mon rocher.
 Tu me remplis de force.
 Mes mains, tu les entraînes au combat.

Mes ennemis, tu leur fais tourner le dos
 et j'extermine ceux qui me haïssent.
 Je les broie comme la poussière
 qu'emporte le vent.
 Je les foule comme la boue des rues.

Seigneur, je chanterai à la gloire de ton nom
 Tu fais miséricorde à celui que tu as choisi: David.

David:

Les filets de la mort m'avaient surpris
 et j'ai crié vers mon Dieu
 et mon cri est parvenu devant lui
 et jusqu'à ses oreilles.
 Et la terre fut ébranlée et trembla.
 Et les fondements des montagnes frémirent.

Chœur (sopranos):

Domine petra mea et robur meum et salvator meus

David:

Il s'élevait de la fumée de ses narines.
 Un feu dévorant sortait de sa bouche,
 En jaillissaient des charbons en feu.

Chœur (altos):

Laudatum invocabo Dominum
 vivit Dominus et benedictus
 et exaltabitur Deus salutis meae

David:

Il abaissa les Cieux et descendit.
 Il y avait une épaisse fumée sous ses pieds.
 Il était monté sur un ange et planait
 sur les ailes du vent.

Chœur (sopranos):

Domine petra mea et robur meus
 Domine, Domine, Domine

David:

Il faisait des ténèbres, sa retraite: tenebras.
 Il tonna dans les cieux, il fit retentir sa voix
 et le lit des eaux apparut
 et les fondements du monde furent découverts.

II- SEQUENTIA

3 - Dies Irae

3 - 3a - Psalm XVIIIBass solo:

Lord, thou are my rock.
 Thou fill me with strength.
 My hands thou train for war.

My enemies thou put to flight before me
 And those who hate me I destroy.
 I ground them fine as the dust
 Before the wind.
 Like the mud in the streets I trample them down.

Lord, I will sing praise to thy name
 Thou show mercy to your anointed: David.

David:

Nets of the nether world enmeshed me
 And I cried out to my god
 And my cry reached up to him
 And he heard.
 And the earth swayed and quaked.
 And the foundations of mountains trembled.

Chorus (sopranos):

Lord, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer !

David:

Smoke rose from his nostrils,
 And a devouring fire from his mouth,
 That kindled coals into flame.

Chorus (altos):

I cry: Praise to the Lord !
 The Eternal live and blessed be my rock !
 Extolled be the God of my salvation !

David:

He inclined the heavens and came down.
 There were clouds of smoke under his feet
 He mounted a cherub and was borne
 on the wings of the wind.

Chorus (sopranos):

Lord, my rock, my fortress,
 Lord, Lord, Lord !

David:

He made darkness his retreat: tenebras.
 He thundered from heaven, he gave forth his voice
 And the bed of the seas appeared
 And the foundations of the world were laid bare.

Chœur (altos):

τὸν μὲν ἀτέλευτον φόβον λιπεῖν θέλω
 ἀποθανεῖν λιπεῖν θέλω
 μὲν ἀτέλευτον
 ἀποθανεῖν δὲ θέλω φόβον λιπεῖν
 ἀποθανεῖν ἀποθανεῖν ἀποθανεῖν θέλω

David:

Seigneur - Dominus - par ta menace - Ô Domine!
 par le seul bruit du souffle de tes narines,
 par le souffle de ta colère.

4 - 3b - Dies IraeChœur:

Dies irae dies illa
 solvet saeculum in favilla
 teste David cum Sibylla

Basse solo:

Dies irae dies illa
 solvet saeculum in favilla

Sibylle:

ἀποθανεῖν ἀποθανεῖν ἀποθανεῖν θέλω

Basse solo:

Quantus tremor est futurus
 quando iudex est venturus

Sibylle:

τὸν μὲν ἀτέλευτον φόβον λιπεῖν θέλω.
 ἀποθανεῖν δὲ θέλω

Chœur et basse solo:

Judex judex judex
 Quantus tremor est futurus
 Quando iudex est venturus
 Cuncta stricte discursurus
 Judex Judex

5 - 3c - Mors stupebitChœur:

Mors stupebit et natura
 cum resurget creatura
 judicanti responsura

Liber scriptus proferetur
 in quo totum continetur
 unde mundus judicetur

Judex ergo cum sedebit
 quidquid latet apparebit
 nil inultum remanebit

Chorus (altos):

I want to relinquish endless fear !
 I want to die !
 Relinquish fear !
 I want to die, relinquish fear !
 Die, die, I want to die !

David:

Lord – Dominus – by the threat – O Domine !
 By the sole sound of thy nostrils breathing,
 by the breath of your wrath.

4 - 3b - Dies IraeChorus:

Day of wrath the day when
 The world is reduced to ashes
 As announced by David and the Sibyl.

Bass solo:

Day of wrath the day when
 The world is reduced to ashes.

Sibyl:

Die, die, I want to die !

Bass solo:

Immense will dread be
 When the judge is about to appear.

Sibyl:

I want to relinquish endless fear !
 I want to die !

Chorus and bass solo:

Judge! judge! judge!
 Immense will dread be
 When the judge is to appear
 To speak terrible words !
 Judge! judge! ...

5 - 3c - Mors stupebitChorus:

Death will be struck with awe
 Nature will be stunned when all creatures rise again to
 Answer the judge.

A book will be brought that contains all
 In which all is written.
 He opens it. The world will be judged.

When the judge is seated
 All that laid in wait will appear
 And nothing will be concealed

Mors stupebit et natura
cum resurget creatura
judicanti responsura

κριθῆναι μὲν οὐ θέλω
ἀποθανεῖν δὲ θέλω
θάνατε θάνατε
ἐπιλαθοῦ μου
δός με τυφλὴν εἶναι
ἐγκατάλιπέ με
μέθεες με θάνατε θάνατε
μέθεες με ἄρον με ὦ θάνατε

6 - 3d - Rex tremendae

Chœur:
Rex tremendae majestatis
salva me

θάνατε μέθεες με
ἄρον με ὦ θάνατε

Soprano solo:
Salva me
Voca me
Parce mihi
Libera me

7 - 4 - Ingemisco

Soprano solo:
Ingemisco tanquam reus
supplicanti parce Deus
culpa rubet vultus meus.

Preces meae non sunt dignae
sed tu bonus fac benigne
ne perenni cremer igne.

Qui Mariam absolvisti
et latronem exaudisti
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.

Quid sum miser
Tunc dicturus
Quid sum miser?

Death will be struck with awe
Nature will be stunned when all creatures rise again to
Answer the judge.

I do not want to be judged
I want to die.
Death, death,
Forget me !
Grant me to be sightless !
Abandon me !
Desert me, death, death !
Desert me, lose me, O death !

6 - 3d - Rex tremendae

Chorus:
King of terrifying majesty
Save me !

Death, desert me !
Lose me, O death !

Soprano solo:
Save me !
Call me !
Spare me !
Free me !

7 - 4 - Ingemisco

Soprano solo:
I moan like a culprit
Spare him, Lord, he who implores thou.
Sin makes my face go red.

My prayers are not worthy.
But thou who are kind,
Spare me from burning in eternal fire.

Thou who absolved Mary,
Thou who heard the thief,
To me thou also gave hope.

Unfortunate as I am,
What will I say then?
Unfortunate as I am.

8 - 5 - ConfutatisSolistes (ténor and basse pris dans le chœur):

Confutatis maledictis
 Flammis acribus addictis
 Voca me cum benedictis

Solistes (soprano, mezzo prises dans le chœur):

σὺ δ'οὖν κάταιθέ με
 ἐπιλαθοῦ μου
 μέθες μέθες με

Chœur:

Confutatis
 maledictis
 Flammis
 acribus addictis
 Voca me
 cum benedictis
 Voca me
 cum benedictis

Chœur:

κάταιθέ με
 ἐπιλαθοῦ μου
 μέθες μέθες με
 ὦ θάνατε
 μέθες μέθες με
 ἐγκατάλιπέ με

κάταιθέ με
 ἐπιλαθοῦ μου
 μέθες μέθες με
 ὦ θάνατε
 ἐγκατάλιπέ με

Ténor:

Voca me cum benedictis
 Oro supplex
 et acclinis
 Cor contritum
 quasi cinis
 Gere curam mei finis

Chœur (femmes):
 Voca voca me
 Cum benedictis... etc...

Chœur (hommes):
 Oro supplex et acclinis
 Cor contritum quasi cinis
 Gere curam mei finis

9 - 6 - LacrimosaChœur:

Lacrimosa dies illa
 qua resurget ex favilla
 judicandus homo reus

Basse et David:

Lacrimosa dies illa
 qua resurget in favilla
 judicandus homo reus

Soprano et ténor:

Lacrimosa dies illa
 qua resurget ex favilla
 judicandus homo reus

Domine
 Dona eis requiem
 Dona eis requiem

Sibylle:

ἀλλ' ἄφες ἄφες μείνω
 ἐν τῷ μνημείῳ
 ὦ θάνατε
 δός μοι τὸν θάνατον

8 - 5 - ConfutatisSoloists (tenor and bass in the chorus):

After confounding the cursed,
 And leading them to eternal fire
 Call me with the blessed

Soloists (soprano, mezzo from chorus):

Burn me !
 Forget me !
 Desert, desert me !

Chorus:

After confounding
 the cursed,
 and leading them
 to eternal fire.
 Call me
 with the blessed
 call me
 among the blessed.

Chorus:

Burn me !
 Forget me !
 Desert,desert me !
 Oh death !
 Desert,desert me !
 Abandon me !

Burn me !
 Forget me !
 Desert,desert me !
 Oh death !
 Desert me !

Tenor:

Call me among the
 blessed. I pray and
 implore, prostrated
 my heart crushed
 down to ashes, my
 end is in your care.

Chorus (females):
 Call call me
 among the blessed, etc...

Chorus (males):
 I pray and implore, prostrated
 My heart crushed down to ashes
 My end is in your care

9 - 6 - LacrimosaChorus:

Day of tears
 When the guilty
 Emerges from his ashes to be judged

Bas and David:

Day of tears
 When the guilty
 Emerges from his ashes to be judged

Soprano and tenor:

Day of tears when the
 guilty emerges from
 his ashes to be judged

Sibyl:

Leave me in my tomb !
 Oh death !
 Put me to death !

Lord,
 Grant them rest,
 Grant them rest.

Basse:

Huic ergo parce, Deus,
pie Jesu Domine,
dona eis requiem

Sibylle:

ἀποθανεῖν θέλω
ἀποθανεῖν θέλω
θέλω

Bass:

Spare us by your mercy,
Lord,
gentle Lord Jesus,
grant them eternal rest

Sibylle:

I want to die !
I want to die !
I want !

III. OFFERTORIUM

10 - 7 - Offertorium

Chœur:

Domine Jesu Christe Rex Glorïae
libera animas omnium defunctorum
de poenis inferni et de profundo lacu.
Libera eas de ore leonis
ne absorbeat eas tartarus
ne cadant in obscurum

11 - 8 - Chant de la Sibylle

Sibylle:

Heureux les morts qui meurent
dans la mort!

δήμητρι κέλευ
θυσίαν προτίθεσθαι

Mortelle, je suis venue pour mourir.
Je suis descendue aux enfers où
je guidais Enée.
Je prophétise aux portes de l'enfer

κέλομαί σε τρις ἑννέα ταύρους
φανὰς ἡυκέρους θυέμεν
λευκότριχας

Il dit :

– Je veux descendre auprès des
mânes par l'Arverne !
– Je vais te mener au royaume
qui forme la dernière part du monde.
Là l'orme et les songes,
les mânes et les images, les pleurs.
Ô mon père!
Que demandent les âmes aux eaux?
Passer.
Mourir.
Aux enfers j'implorais les morts :
– Je veux mourir.
Mais je ne mourais pas.

III. OFFERTORIUM

10 - 7 - Offertorium

Chorus:

Lord Jesus Christ King of Glory
Deliver the souls of all defuncts
From the torments of hell and from the deep lake.
Deliver them from the lion's mouth.
May the abyss not swallow them.
May they not fall into darkness !

11 - 8 - Song of the Sibyl

Sibyl:

Fortunate are the dead who die
In death !

In the name of Demeter
A sacrifice be arranged

Mortal, I came to die.
I went down to hell where
I guided Enea.
I used to prophesize at the doors of hell.

The sacrifice be arranged
Of threefold nine white-haired bulls,
Shiny and with beautiful horns.

He said:

– I want to go down meet the
Shades of my ancestors through the Averno !
– I will lead you to the kingdom
That forms the last part of the world.
There the elm tree and dreams
Manes and images tears
O, my father !
What do soul ask of the waters?
To pass.
To die.
In the underworld I would implore the Dead :
– I want to die.
But I would not die.

Alors dans la nuit des enfers
je me tournais vers tous les
dieux sans nombre qui étaient
morts et qui erraient sans fin sur
la rive noire.

– Ô dieux morts vous qui vous
tenez sur la rive de l'Erèbe
moi qui ne suis que la
prophétesse par laquelle vous
parlez, moi aussi,
je souhaiterais mourir.
Mais je ne mourais pas.
Jadis hurlante je dictais
leurs livres
aux anciens rois.
Maintenant gémissante,
je pousse les roseaux,
j'incline les cannes,
je me fraie un chemin obscur
parmi les joncs,
je me dirige vers la barque
crevée qui ne coule jamais.
Je suis tombée
contre le flanc de bois
de la barque infernale.
Je m'adresse aux ombres
qui passent.
Je m'adresse à Charun nu,
aux syrinx qui bruissent.
Je m'adresse aux répercussions
des ombres qui affluent
sur les crêtes innombrables
des vagues.
Je tends les mains vers elles.
Je me tiens désormais à genoux
dans la boue de la rive.
Ô Mort! Ouvre la gueule!
Engloutis-moi!
Dans le lac noir noie-moi!

δός μοι
τὸ τοῦ βίου τέρμα
ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ

Chœur :
μοῖραν ὀπισθομαθῶν
τίν' ἔφυ
ὀπισθομαθῶν
πᾶς εἷς τόπον ἔλθειν
μοῖραν ὀπισθομαθῶν

Chœur:
Hostias et preces tibi
Domine laudis
offerimus
tu suscipe pro
animabus
illis quarum hodie
memoriam faciemus

Chœur:
Libera animas omnium
fidelium defunctorum
de poenis inferni
et de profundo lacu

Chœur:
Fac eas Domine
de morte transire
ad vitam

Then in the darkness of hell
I turned to all the countless gods
who Were dead and who
wandered endlessly Along the
dark bank.

– O, dead gods you who stand on
the Bank of the Erebus,
I who am but the prophetess
through whom you speak,
I too,
wish to die.
But I would not die.

In days of yore I would howl as I
dictated t the ancient kings
their books.
Now I moan as I wade
through the reeds,
And bend the canes,
I open an obscure path for myself
Amid the bulrush
I head towards the punctured
Boat that never sinks.
I have fallen against the wooden
belly

Of the infernal barque.
I address the shades
That walk by.
I address a naked Charun,
And the hum of syringes.
I address the echoes
Of shades that gather
On the countless crests
of waves.
I hold out my hands to them.
I am now on my knees
In the mud of the shore.
Oh, Death ! Open your jaws !
Swallow me down !
In the dark lake drown me !

Grant me
the end of life
in death !

Chorus:
The fate of those who
Learn later,
what was born each
with a place to reach
Those who learn later

Chorus:
These offerings and
prayers
That we present to thee,
Lord, accept them
for the salvation of souls
whose memory
we recall today.

Chorus:
Deliver the faithful
defuncts' souls from
the torments of hell
and from the deep lake

Chorus:
Make them, Lord,
Pass from death
To life.

IV. SANCTUS

12 - 9 - SanctusSoprano:

Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus
 Dominus Deus Sabaoth
 Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua !

David:

Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus
 Dominus Deus, Gloria tua !

Chœur:

Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua !
 Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus
 Dominus Deus Sabaoth
 Hosanna in excelsis !

Soprano:

Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus
 Dominus Deus Sabaoth
 Gloria tua! Gloria Gloria Gloria!

13 - 10 - Chant de DavidDavid:

Je suis rentré dans l'abîme des eaux
 et le flot me submerge, ma gorge brûle.
 Mon âme attend, Seigneur, plus que le veilleur.
 Ultime pâque où la voix est le seul viatique,
 là où l'obscurité est le seul avenir.
 Des profondeurs je crie vers toi,
 Seigneur écoute ma voix !
 Exaudi vocem meam!
 Seigneur écoute ma voix !
 Chaque fois que je crie tu es ce qui m'entend.
 A ce qui m'entendit je dis Tu.
 Ainsi les jours où j'ai crié, Seigneur, tu m'exauças.

Chœur:

Ἐκ τοῦ βάθους τῆς ψυχῆς μου
 φωνή τις ἀνέρχετο,
 τήνδε τὴν ἰκεσίαν ἰεῖσα·
 Μακάριοι οἱ τεθνεώτες
 οἱ ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ ἀποθνήσκουσιν.

David:

Rémission pour les péchés !
 Pardon pour les offenses !
 Repos pour les membres de mon corps.
 Paix: les deux besoins.
 Fin: l'unique désir.
 Vide: les cinq sens.

IV. SANCTUS

12 - 9 - SanctusSoprano:

Saint Saint Saint,
 Lord God of of the armies
 Heaven and earth are full of thy glory !

David:

Saint Saint Saint,
 Lord God, thy glory !

Chorus:

Heaven and earth are full of thy glory
 Saint Saint Saint,
 Lord God of the armies
 Hosanna in the highest !

Soprano:

Saint Saint Saint,
 Lord God of the armies
 Thy glory ! Glory ! Glory ! Glory !

13 - 10 - Song of DavidDavid:

I entered the abyss of waters
 And waves engulf me, my throat is burning
 My soul awaits, Lord, more than the watchman does.
 Final passover when voice is the sole way,
 Where darkness is the sole future.
 From the depth I cry to thee,
 Lord, hear my voice !
 Exaudi Vocem Meam !
 Lord, hear my voice !
 Each time I cry thou are the one who hears me.
 To whom heard me I say Thou.
 Thus whenever I cried, Lord, you answered.

Chorus:

From the depth of my soul
 A voice arose
 That implored :
 Fortunate the dead
 Who die in death.

David:

Forgiveness of sins !
 Pardon of offenses !
 Rest for the limbs of my body,
 Peace: the two needs.
 End: unique desire.
 Vacuum: the five senses.

Dicit:

Aucun de ceux qui vivent et croient en moi
ne mourra pour toujours.

14 11 - Benedictus

David:

Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini
Hosanna in excelsis

Chœur:

ἀποθανεῖν θέλω

Dicit:

None of those who live and believe in me
Will die for ever.

14 11 - Benedictus

David:

Blessed he who comes
In the name of the Lord
Hosanna to the highest of heaven

Chorus:

I want to die !

V. AGNUS DEI

15 - 12 - Agnus Dei

Chœur:

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi
dona eis requiem.
Dona eis requiem sempiternam.

16 - 13 - Dona eis requiem

David:

Dona eis requiem
non mori
A porta inferi erue
Domine
animam!

Agnus Dei
Dona requiem Domine
non mori

Soprano:

Agnus Dei
qui tollis peccata mundi
dona eis requiem.
Dona eis requiem
sempiternam.

Sibylle:

ἀγνός τοῦ θεοῦ
ἀγνός ἀγνός τοῦ θεοῦ
ὁ αἰρών τὰς ἀμαρτίας
τοῦ κόσμου
δός μοι τὸν θάνατον
ἀγνός τοῦ θεοῦ
δός μοι τὸν θάνατον

ἐμοὶ ἄνοιξόν ποτε
τὰς πύλας τὰς τὸν
θανάτον
δός μοι τὸν θάνατον

Chœur:

Agnus Dei
qui tollis peccata mundi
dona eis requiem.
Dona eis requiem
sempiternam.

Chœur (Basses):

ἐμοὶ ἄνοιξόν ποτε
τὰς πύλας τὰς τὸν
θανάτον

Chœur:

αμήν

V. AGNUS DEI

15 - 12 - Agnus Dei

Chorus:

Lamb of God who relieves the sin of the world
Grant them peace.
Grant them never-ending peace.

16 - 13 - Dona eis requiem

David:

Grant them the peace
Of not dying.
From the gates of hell,
Lord,
Snatch their souls !

Lamb of God,
Grant the peace, Lord,
Of not dying !

Soprano:

Lamb of God,
Thou who relieves the sin of
the world, grant the peace,
Lord,
grant the peace forever !

Sibyl:

Lamb of God,
Lamb, lamb of God,
Thou who relieves the sin of
the world,
Grant me death !
Lamb of God,
Grant me death !

Let me through, at last,
The gates of death
Grant me death !

Chorus:

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of
the world,
grant them rest.
Grant them rest forever.

Chorus (Bass):

Open for me, at last,
the doors
of death !

Chorus:

Amen.

CRITICAL ACCLAIM
&
FULL REVIEWS

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

“ Leaving Pleyel, one has only one desire: to listen again to this Requiem as soon as possible ! ”

Marcel Quillévéré (Forum Opera - 1/8/10)

“ At last a great contemporary work that can touch the largest public. An event, there is no doubt! Lancino has a sharp sense of the theatrical time, of rupture, of declamation that music, relentlessly, magnifies. The Requiem lasts about 1h 20, and attention never drops. The public, very concentrated, full of attention, in an almost pious silence is not fooled, and lets itself be invaded by this music which has transcended the schools and radiates with beauty. ”

Marcel Quillévéré (Forum Opera - January 8,2010)

“ Impressive work by Thierry Lancino. This is a real stroke of genius to have convened David and the Sibyl. ”

Jean Pierre Derrien (France Musique - January 8,2010)

“ To introduce the oracular voice of the Sibyl in the course of the mass for the dead, is just one of the numerous originalities of the Requiem by Thierry Lancino. The score written by the 55 year old French composer residing in the U.S. shows great dramatic qualities. Thierry Lancino's music is none dogmatic, and it scans a vast esthetical field without ever sounding hybrid.”

Pierre Gervasoni (Le Monde - January 10,2010)

“ This eighty minute score distinguishes itself by its sincere fervor, its sense of drama, its capacity to handle masses of sounds. ”

Christian Merlin (Le Figaro - January 11, 2010)

“ Within itself, the work harbors a power and a shimmer, and to tell the truth, a seduction, which, until now, contemporary music has seemed to avoid like the plague. Some post war serial composers must be turning in their graves...”

Pierre-René Serna (Scènes Magazine - January 11, 2010)

“ Although he does not turn down spectacular effects that such vocal and instrumental mass has the potential to produce, Lancino succeeds possibly even more in the moments of contemplation and of sparseness. ”

Simon Corley (ConcertoNet - January 8, 2010)

“ What strikes us in this new score, is its extreme freedom in the writing and its great variety of tone. The vocal writing is opulent. A beautiful unity of inspiration the composer maintains throughout his new work. ”

Jacques Doucelin (Concert Classic - January 8, 2010)

“ The writing alternates passages of great complexity and purified moments, always with concern for the progression of the drama. Moments for contemplation, through their economy of means, seem the most authentic. Disturbing or thrilling, exasperating or enchanting, Thierry Lancino's Requiem does not leave the listener indifferent. ”

Maxime Kaprielian (Resmusica - 1/11, 2010)

“ Lancino has succeeded, as he wished *"to reach (inside every one) the remote territories where soul takes shelter"*. And, to have tried to touch the mystery of Death, really, it is Life that he chants in this beautiful Requiem. ”

Marcel Quillévéré (Forum Opera - January 8,2010)

“ An immense composer triumphs at Pleyel. The great merit of Thierry is to have been able to escape the path where his masters had engaged music for the last sixty years.

”**Jean-Michel Bélouve** (Agora Vox - January 11, 2010)

FULL REVIEWS (selection)

FORUM OPERA – Magazine

A Requiem of today open on life

At last a great contemporary work that can touch the largest public. An event, there is no doubt! The premiere of a Requiem at the beginning of the XXIst century can astound us. Furthermore, a premiere that calls to Salle Pleyel four renowned singers, the Radio France Philharmonic Orchestra in its full complement (even more!), as well as the chorus, also in its full strength, is not common. And one is astounded to see such a large crowd in the hall.

At the sight of such an apparatus that reminds us of the great Requiems of music history, we expect a traditional symphonic concert. However, as soon as it starts, we know that we are about to attend a strong and uncommon work, if only by the impressive impact of thirteen calls of the gongs, Tibetan bowls, tubular bell and bass drums that start and announce the great curse of the Cumean Sibyl : "The fates leave to the dead only silence that engulfs them."

The percussion is going to play, by the way, an essential role throughout the work. The rhythmic hammering, tragic or exuberant, the relentless scansion is going to underlie the construction all through the evening, except a few suspended moments favorable to meditation and of an absolute beauty. The composer invites us to a long march which is the one of any life towards the inevitable event that one calls death.

The Sibyl, in a libretto imagined by Pascal Quignard, is going to be confronted to David. The world of the dead which seeks annihilation, of which Sibyl belongs, collides into the choice of David to aspire to a promise of eternal life. "The score moves on, step after step" the composer says, but the music will not choose" and the listener will remain alone facing this only questioning. Pascal Quignard makes it clear: "I don't want to have to choose between Sibyl and David. I want to leave face to face these two desires."

Curiously it is a vital energy that flows out from this confrontation, leaving the figure of God as outside of the debate, in these traditional texts of the religious ritual. The declamation sung in ancient Greek or in Latin remind us of this quest that goes way far back in the course of human kind.

It is not a Requiem mass, but indeed a long meditation, almost theatrical, where the concert is indeed the only ritual, a bit in the manner of the German Requiem by Brahms which was also not a sacred service. Lancino has a sharp sense of the theatrical time, of rupture, of declamation that music, relentlessly magnifies.

The Requiem lasts about 1h 20 and attention never drops. The remarkable conducting by Eliahu Inbal, at the head of the totally invested Philharmonic Orchestra, is essential to it. It needed a great Malherian conductor, as he is, to lead such a vessel to the harbor. And the public, very concentrated, full of attention, in an almost pious silence is not fooled, and let itself be invaded by this music which has transcended the schools and radiates with beauty.

Here is at last a work of "contemporary" music (Ah such a mislead term) that goes directly to the heart. The public of Salle Pleyel, little familiar with concerts of IRCAM and riveted by the work, has not spared its applause at the final bow, especially towards the composer.

Leaving Pleyel, one has only one desire: to listen again to this Requiem as soon as possible.

Desire to be immersed again in the Dies Irae which is not foreign to the Symphony of Psalms, the poignant Ingemisco sung pianissimo by the soprano Heidi Grant Murphy, with her flute like high register, above all of celli playing unison, and that divide only when the chorus makes its entry (the different sections of the Requiem succeeds to each other without transition and seem to give birth to each other, imperceptibly). Desire also of the Lacrymosa sung with great nobility by the bass Nicolas Courjal: magnificent timbre, flawless diction, with a projection that allows him to be heard above the orchestra at all times.

Very beautiful also the Song of the Sibyl inserted in the Offertorium "Happy are the dead who sing in their death" (the voice of the mezzo Nora Gubisch seems not so at ease in a role that requests often the low register of a contralto, and where a more precise diction and well projected sound would be welcome). The tenor, Stuart Skelton, from whom we remember beautiful Florestan, sings the role of David with a beautiful legato and velvet in his voice. His "from the depth I shout towards you" above the dialogue of the bassoon, oboe and percussion is very moving. His song gives birth to a female chorus, unison, simple and obvious, just like a popular lament (Magnificent colors by the Radio France Chorus). And even if the Sanctus seems to come back to already heard plans in today's music, it opens suddenly on a luminous solo by the soprano, above the chorus, as the percussion moves ahead implacably. Yes, this work has transcended the schools and, as Lancino says, referring to Billy Wilder, as an amused blink, the seven years spent happily on the side of Pierre Boulez, at IRCAM, were mostly "seven years of reflection" ("seven year itch") ! (Lancino resides in Manhattan now: this explains that!)

Lancino has succeeded, as he wished "to reach (inside every one) these remote territories where soul takes shelter". And, to have tried to touch the mystery of Death, really, it is Life that he chants in this beautiful Requiem.

Marcel Quillévéré (Forum Opera - January 8, 2010)

LE FIGARO

"This eighty minute score distinguishes itself by its sincere fervor, its sense of drama, its capacity to handle large masses of sounds".

Christian Merlin (Le Figaro - January 11, 2010)

LE MONDE

Requiem "tendance swing"

To introduce the oracular voice of the Sibyl in the course of the mass for the dead, is just one of the numerous originalities of the Requiem by Thierry Lancino, which was premiered on Friday January 8th, in Salle Pleyel, in Paris. Deployed in a sumptuous prologue, the song of the prophetess (mezzo-soprano) who officiated in the bay of Naples, prepares the listener for a spiritual journey of the most enigmatic kind.

The composer Thierry Lancino has shuffled the cards of the Requiem genre, with the complicity of the writer Pascal Quignard. The exclamations of the Kyrie are, for example, projected before the "requiem aeternam" which traditionally opens the Introit. But the result is quite taking. As well as the Dies Irae, which seems to be invaded by a thick cloud of "feux follets" (little bursts of light at night in cemeteries) with a "tendency to swing". The score written by the 55 year old French composer residing in the U.S. shows great dramatic qualities. Often using previously unheard devices (the prepared piano evokes the cave of the Sibyl) but also sometimes in a very simple manner (the prayer sung a capella by the soprano). Thierry Lancino's music is none dogmatic, and scans a vast esthetical field without ever sounding hybrid.

Pierre Gervasoni (Le Monde - January 10, 2010)

AGORA VOX

Thierry Lancino : an immense French composer triumphs at Pleyel

I have been fulfilled beyond all my hopes. Of course I was expecting an uncommon performance having listened to short musical excerpts offered by the site www.lancino.org in which I could already appreciate all the talent of this composer, who has an exceptional career bejeweled with diplomas and prizes. Thierry Lancino can do everything: from music for soloists, for chamber ensemble, for the human voice, to works for large orchestra and most ambitious vocal compositions, and also musical synthesis. He masters perfectly instruments and voices, offers new sonorities, and truly invents music.

But the great merit of Lancino is to have been able to escape the path where his masters had engaged music from the last sixty years. Through academic learning and his time spent at IRCAM, Thierry Lancino has acquired an exceptional know how as a composer and orchestrator, but also he invented his own language, which is made accessible to all ears. Doing that, he gave back contemporary music to great music, as Debussy, Ravel or Olivier Messiaen did themselves. With the Requiem, Thierry joins clearly the pantheon of these illustrious French composers.

The public was not misled: where dodecaphonists and other sorcerers of musical destruction capture barely a hundred listeners, cold and pedantic, Pleyel was packed on Friday evening. And the performers offered them exceptional music which is resolutely modern, with remarkable sound inventions. But it corresponds to what the ear of an ordinary music lover expects and understands, because it stimulates emotion, because it tells a story. A violent music sometimes, surprising by its

dissonances, which are never gratuitous, because they express revolt or pain and therefore carry out a message; a dynamic music, supported by the richness of the percussions and the brass, which develops while captivating the listener, with no timeout, stimulating relentlessly emotions. Energetic passages alternate with long developments of meditation, where perfect fusion of instruments and voices decrescendo until there is only a murmur left, would evoke a heavenly infinity. There you have real music that speaks, that acts on the soul and on the senses, a harmony that brings you into a state of jubilation.

Thank you Mister Lancino, you are saving Music.

Jean-Michel Bélouve (Agora Vox - January 21, 2010)

SCÈNES MAGAZINE

The Requiem by Lancino

Thierry Lancino, a famous and celebrated composer, is one who also stands at the edges of current and fashion. Coming from a traditional path, Rome Prize, IRCAM, he decided to take distance from his country, France, and to settle in New York. This explains the distant aesthetic: unclassifiable, neither post-modern, neither avant-gardist. His Requiem which was recently premiered at the Salle Pleyel stirring an emotional response, proves it. This is a work that finds its roots in tradition - the liturgical structure, the participation of four soloists in homage to Verdi, the constant use of consonances - from which he moves away - the inclusion of a librettist, Pascal Quignard, for parts in French and in ancient Greek, references to non-European music for the percussion, with boldness here and there. But within itself, the work harbors a power and a shimmer, and to tell the truth, a seduction, which, until now, contemporary music has seemed to avoid like the plague. Some post war serial composers must be turning in their graves... Especially since the servants of this privileged moment revealed fully its outstanding musicality: the large forces of the Radio France Orchestre Philharmonique and its Chorus, Nora Gubisch, Stuart Skelton, Nicolas Courjal and the extraordinary soprano Heidi Grant Murphy, the musical direction of a great conductor, Eliahu Inbal.

Pierre-René SERNA (Scènes Magazine - February 1, 2010)
