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Requiem for the Transient

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Requiem
for the Transient

A Thesis Presented for the
Master of Music
Degree
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Dedication

This work is dedicated to Scott T. Wood,
and to all those that only briefly passed through this world.

"Transient guests are we."
-Hideyuki Kikuchi

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There are many people I would like to thank:

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Abstract

Requiem for the Transient is a six-movement piece of music for full orchestra and choir. The six movements are the "Prelude," "Introit," "Sequentia," "Agnus Dei," "Lux Aeterna," and "In Paradisum," As with most Requiems, the music is a setting of prayers from the Roman Missal. Historically composers have used various prayer choices, sometimes even including texts outside of the Missal. *Requiem for the Transient* contains only one source of text outside of the Missal; the first movement, "Prelude", uses text from the New King James version of Ecclesiastes 12:1-7.

This document will compare and contrast *Requiem for the Transient* with other works from the twentieth and twenty-first century with a focus on the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic construction of key sections of music. The Requiem will also be compared to other notable Requiems ranging back as far as Mozart. This thesis will provide an explanation of compositional approaches to show the musical influences that have directly, or indirectly, influenced the writing of *Requiem for the Transient*.

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Chapter I:
Introduction

The *Missa pro defunctis*, or the Requiem Mass by its more familiar title is monolithic in its scope. Musical settings of the Requiem stand in the upper echelon of combined orchestral and choral compositions; however, the symphony and its sibling, the standard Mass, often overshadow the Requiem. This status has dictated the necessity to compose within the genre. In many ways *Requiem for the Transient* was manifested from a desire to write within a genre that has been elevated by past composers, but more importantly, it is the realization of music that is close to the soul. Spirituality, doubted or not, is inescapable when handling the Roman liturgy. The liturgy does not dictate the music; it merely acts as a guide. *Requiem for the Transient* is first and foremost a dedication Scott T. Wood, a friend who died too young, and to all those who have passed before their time.

I had the pleasure of knowing Scott for a brief three years before he succumbed to cancer on February 9th, 2012 at the age of 20. He was a true testament to strength and courage. By the time I met Scott during my undergraduate years, he had already beaten cancer once. Over the years, the cancer came back and eventually he left the university to focus on his treatment and healing. As I was getting ready for work one Wednesday morning, I received a phone call from a mutual friend informing me that Scott's condition had worsened significantly. He was not expected to make it past the weekend. I left immediately and met Scott, his family, and several friends at Scott's house. His physical appearance had completely changed; he was frail and thin beyond compare. It was difficult for me to see him in this condition, but Scott was iron-willed. He was slow to speak, but his wit, charm, and character were all consummate. Though cancer

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and chemotherapy had ravaged his body, Scott's spirit was invulnerable. He was alert and smiling just like always. The entire house was alive with conversation. Everyone spent the day talking, reminiscing, and having a good time. When it was time to go, we each personally said our goodbyes, and, I knew that would be the last time I saw Scott. The next morning I received a phone call informing me that Scott had passed away.

In my twenty-seven years of life, I have had little experience with death. Scott's passing hit me harder than anything I have felt before. The emotional devastation was compounded by the fact that he was so young. He could have easily lived for another seventy years had it not been for this insidious disease. In the three years I knew him, Scott taught me so much about the strength of human resolve. He changed my life, not by the words he spoke, but just by being himself—a man who loved life despite the enormous weight of mortality on his shoulders. This Requiem is just a small way for me to return the favor and bring closure to a difficult event, not only for me, but also for all those that have gone too soon and those that have endured such a debilitating loss.

Requiem for the Transient is a work that sets parts of the Roman Catholic rite to music. Following traditional settings with orchestra, the forces employed are an array of woodwinds, brass, percussion, strings, and full choir (see full instrument list in Appendix B). The work is in six movements: "Prelude," "Introit," "Sequentia," "Agnus Dei," "Lux Aeterna," and "In Paradisum." The "Introit" is subdivided into two sections: "Requiem Aeternum" and "Kyrie Eleison," while "Sequentia" is subdivided into three: "Dies Irae," "Tuba Mirum," and "Lacrimosa." The subsections of "Introit" and "Sequentia" are to be played *attacca*. This document is an explanation of the influences (beyond the dedication to Scott Wood) and interests that eventually led to the creation of *Requiem for the Transient.* Discussed herein will be musical

parameters of themes, melody, harmony, form, and rhythm.

Movement Background and Themes

At its core, *Requiem for the Transient* is a dual journey. For the dead, it is a process of moving between worlds to a final resting place. For the living, it is a progression through and an eventual conquering of grief. Each movement can be seen through the eyes of both parties as a gradual step towards enlightenment and acceptance.

The "Prelude" is the only movement set to text outside of the traditional Roman rite. It is the only movement that uses English text, taken from the New King James version of the Bible.[1] The text used is from Ecclesiastes 12:1-7, which depicts a biblical and symbolic description of death. More specifically, each verse details the degeneration of one or more parts of the human body: The grinders represent the loss of teeth and the inability to eat solid food. The darkened windows express the loss of eyesight. The grinding—in this case, the grinding of mills—and daughters of music being brought low is the loss of hearing. The loosened silver cord and broken golden bowl represent the hunching of the spine and the eventual loss of cognitive functions. In the context of the Bible this passage is meant to illustrate that our earthly form is nothing but vanity (as verse 8 states: "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity"). One's true self is their everlasting spirit.

The "Introit" is divided into two subsections, the "Requiem Aeternum" and the "Kyrie Eleison." These two prayers have been linked together by their pleading nature. The Requiem Aeternum is the first prayer in the traditional *Miss pro defunctis*. The opening phrase, "*Requiem*

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[1] See Appendix A for a complete listing of text used in *Requiem for the Transient*. Translations of all Latin are also provided. Note that Appendix A does not contain an exhaustive transcription of the entire Requiem liturgy.

aeternum dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis," ("Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them") is the namesake of the *Missa pro defunctis* and contains themes and elements that permeate the Mass, namely, eternal light and sleep. The Kyrie, often times set to very lyrical and beautiful melodies, is even more acquisitive than its predecessor. The Greek text translates to "Lord have mercy; Christ have mercy; Lord have mercy."[2] There is certainly something unsettlingly dark about these passages: a desperate plea to the Lord to save the souls of the dead from damnation.

The third movement, "Sequentia," like "Introit," is also divided into smaller subsections. Three selections of the traditional *Dies Irae* Sequence make up the third movement: "Dies Irae," "Tuba Mirum," and "Lacrimosa." In many Requiem settings, the *Dies irae* is large and bombastic. The text literally describes the destruction of the world on the "Day of Wrath" and proclaims it to be a terrifying day when the Judge will finally come so it is natural to give this section of the Sequence an aesthetic appropriate for heralding doom. "Dies Irae" plays with that expectation. Instead of trying to recreate that terror in musical form with blaring horns, screeching strings and screaming voices, the "Dies Irae" is approached in a way that suggests unrealized fear. The Day of Wrath is only spoken about in hushed whispers lest the Judge be summoned early. The "Tuba Mirum" is the realization of the terror spoken of in the "Dies Irae". The trumpet sounds, which summons all creatures to stand before the Judge. A book is brought forth which contains the law from which everything will be judged. Nothing will escape punishment. For a moment, the prayer takes a first person narrative step away from the Day of Wrath and asks, "who can I look to for guidance when even good people may hardly be sure of their fate?" This is surely the darkest moment of the entire Mass. There is a sense of complete

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[2] Traditionally, the Kyrie Eleison is the only text not spoken in Latin.

hopelessness, dread, and uncertainty. Finally, "Lacrimosa" is the close of the Sequence where, in a somewhat reflective mood, the narrator of the text ponders how sad the Day of Wrath will be when the guilty will rise from the ashes to be judged. A final plea for God's mercy is made, and the prayer ends with a request for eternal sleep.

The "Agnus Dei" is among the few prayers that are shared between the standard Mass and the Requiem. It is a single phrase uttered three times: "Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest." In the *Missa pro defunctis,* the "Agnus Dei" is slightly altered from the version recited in the Mass. The second part of the phrase is changed in the first two repetitions from "*miserere nobis*" ("have mercy on us") to "*dona eis requiem*" ("grant them rest") and, in the last statement, "*dona nobis pacem*" ("grant us peace") is changed to "*dona eis requiem sepiternam*" ("grant them eternal rest"). Again, this prayer is another appeal, but this time it is to Christ, the Lamb of God, to grant the dead eternal rest. This prayer offers content of a bit more somber nature. Christ is often depicted as the peaceful and kind Son of God, the one who took the sins of the world on his shoulders so that man may attain to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The first glimmer of hope for absolution is heard in the "Lux Aeterna," a prayer dedicated to the light of God. The prayer asks God to allow the dead to be bathed in eternal light in the company of his saints, with, of course, the added explanation being that God is merciful and kind.

One of the most positive prayers in the whole *Missa pro defunctis* is the final. Until this point, each prayer has been an address to God or Christ. The "In Paradisum" changes focus to speak directly to the dead, "May angels lead you into paradise." This prayer is the end point for everyone. This is the moment when the dead can enter into heaven. The word "paradise" is

expressly used instead of alluded to, and a choir of angels and martyrs are said to be waiting in reception. The prayer, and thus the entire Requiem, ends with the statement, "And with Lazarus, who once was poor, may you have eternal rest."

Genre

The Requiem, as liturgy, has its roots in the fifth century where a brief prayer for the dead was included in the canon and followed after the consecration of the bread and wine. Out of this origin, the Memento of the Dead was made.[3] It is important to note that historians often argue these prayers were not distinguished from standard Masses, but were always included in the Mass. By the tenth century, the Memento of the Dead had become personal silent prayer and was omitted during services on Sundays and Feastdays in the Roman rite. A substantial amount of The Mass for the Dead that appears today comes from Franco-Gallican origins. Charles the Great imposed Gregorian *Antiphonale* on the Franks. By his own decree he enriched the texts with supplemental liturgy that was already in use in France. By the middle of the century, the Roman Liturgy began to return to Rome, but it had been transformed from what Rome previously knew. As Cardinal Newman, an academic and priest in the Church of England, once said, Rome had never shown any marked gift for origination. All the parts of the Proper and Ordinary of the Mass were adopted, mainly from the East, and not invented. While France and Spain had more than a dozen different formulae for the Mass for different classes of people, Rome had but one.[4] Kings, popes and peasants all shared the same rite under the Holy Roman Empire.[5]

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[3] Robertson, Alec, *Requiem: Music of Mourning and Consolation*. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), 8.
[4] Robertson, *Requiem*, 9-10.
[5] For more detailed information on the Requiem Mass, Alec Robertson's *Requiem: Music*

Table 1.1 Comparison of Requiem liturgy utilized by various composers.

Liturgy	Mozart, *Requiem Mass in D minor*	Verdi, *Messa da Requiem*	Britten, *War Requiem*	Stravinsky, *Requiem Canticles*	Gee, *Requiem for the Transient*
Introit (Requiem Aeternum)	X	X	X	X	X
Kyrie Eleison	X	X	X		X
Gradual					
Tract					
Sequence (Dies Irae)	X	X	X	X	X
Offertory (Domine Jesu Christe)	X	X	X		
Sanctus	X	X	X		
Agnus Dei	X	X	X		X
Communion (Lux Aeterna)		X			X
Pie Jesu				X	
Libera Me		X	X	X	
In Paradisum			X		X

Several Masses, Requiems, and other liturgical settings have informed the creation of

Requiem for the Transient. Table 1.1 compares a modest pool of the most influential Requiem

settings from as far back as the Classical period, all the way up to the twentieth-century. Of the

compositions assembled, only Britten's *War Requiem* has had a direct influence on *Requiem for*

the Transient. The other Requiems have served as either indirect progenitors or antitheses.

Aesthetically, *Requiem for the Transient* follows traditionally conventional chord structures and

employs subtle chromaticism as one might expect out of Mozart and Verdi. Harmonic

progressions, however, do not always follow traditional Classical or Romantic precedence. The

result is a blend of conventional sonorities and divergent harmonic progressions. In this way,

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of Mourning and Consolation gives a thorough history of the rite up through the 1960's. Robert
Chase's *Dies Irae: A Guide to Requiem Music* provides an exhaustive listing of Requiem musical
settings from Gregorian chant up to the end of the twentieth-century.

Requiem for the Transient rejects Stravinsky's approach of high chromaticism by settling somewhere between the Romantic and twentieth-century idioms.

Choices of what parts of the liturgy to include within the setting vary from composer to composer; almost none include the *Missa pro defunctis* in its entirety. Of the other Requiems included, none use the exact same series of prayers. In some cases, prayers are combined or divided as the composer sees fit. Perhaps the most difficult part of the liturgy is how to approach the Sequence.[6] Colloquially known as the Dies Irae, the Sequence is a lengthy prayer spanning nineteen stanzas made up of 3 lines each, save for the eighteenth and nineteenth stanza, which are four and two lines respectively. Each composer tackles the Sequence differently. For example, Mozart's Sequence has traditional divisions grouping stanzas 1-2, 3-7, 8, 9-15, 16-17, 18-19, into different movements, while Verdi groups the entire Sequence into a single movement with subdivisions at significant sections denoted by style or tempo markings. Other notable settings of the Sequence are Britten's juxtaposition of Wilfred Owen poems in between stanzas in the *War Requiem* and Stravinsky's stark removal of all but the first three stanzas in his comparatively short *Requiem Canticles*. *Requiem for the Transient's* Sequence sets only stanzas 1-2, 3-7, and 18-19 to music. There is certainly a parallel between these divisions and Mozart's divisions—although he set the entire Sequence instead of just specific parts—but the conscious connection is hazy, though not entirely unfounded.

Requiem for the Transient includes a moderate, but practical, amount of the traditional liturgy. Of the six missing movements (Gradual, Tract, Offertory, Pie Jesu, and Libera Me), only

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[6] It should be noted that the Dies Irae Sequence has been almost completely removed from the liturgy since the Second Vatican Council, with all of the compared compositions being written before its removal. Since *Requiem for the Transient* is not dependent on liturgical congruity, but instead on past compositions, the standard of a bygone era is paramount over modern consistency.

the omission of two is particularly egregious, that of the Offertory and Sanctus. As shown in Table 1.1, there is a precedence set by the previous composers to construct a Requiem which only contains prayers the composer finds necessary. Considering the dark and linear narrative of *Requiem for the Transient*, the removal of the discussed sections is not all too surprising. The Offertory is a prayer about making sacrifices on behalf of the dead, and the Sanctus is a prayer of revelry in God's glory. Both seem out of place in the narrative story arc. Having the joyous "Sanctus" precede the melancholic "Angus Dei" disrupts the gradual rise out of darkness that develops as the piece progresses.

The remaining movements are omitted because of redundancy. As seen in Table 1.1, the Gradual and Tract are missing completely from all settings; this is most likely due to these prayers being parts of the Mass Proper.[7] The Gradual and Tract offer only slight variance in the text. The Gradual in particular is nearly identical to the Introit, the Pie Jesu is a combination of the Sequence's stanza 19 and the final utterance of the Agnus Dei. Likewise, the Libera Me is essentially a summarization of the text given in the Sequence.

As mentioned, *Requiem for the Transient* combines both the "Introit" and "Kyrie Eleison" into a single movement. Originally, both movements were conceived separately, but the "Kyrie Eleison", which was composed before the "Introit", seemed to materialize out of nothing. The piece works better as a direct response to the drama of the "Introit." Traditional liturgy regards these prayers as separate, albeit consecutive in order. Other composers have also combined or intended the movements to be performed with little or no break. Both Mozart's and Verdi's Requiems have combined Introits and Kyries

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[7] The Mass Proper contains prayers that change based on calendar events whereas prayers contained in the Mass Ordinary never change.

Chapter II:
Approach to Pitch Organization

Melody and harmony are at the forefront of expression in *Requiem for the Transient*.

Rhythm, while very important in this setting, is more subdued compared to its sonic counterpart.

This chapter will show compositional approaches to melody and harmony by comparing

prominent selections of *Requiem for the Transient* to other compositional approaches by

composers of the twentieth and twenty-first century.

Melody and Texture

Melodic content for *Requiem for the Transient* is not dependent on thematic or motivic

subjects. Instead, much of the music embodies a more emotional feeling by utilizing static or

subtly oscillating harmonies or what one might consider white noise, to convey despondence and

grief. Motives and repeated material are used sparingly in order to suggest a perpetual forward

motion. This reflects time and the mortality of man. There is no returning from death.

Texture and Quotation in "Dies Irae"

"Dies Irae" was intended to be a thinly textured movement in opposition to the

notoriously aggressive approach many composers have traditionally employed. This movement

also extensively utilizes indeterminate pitches in the choir and strings. Crossed noteheads in the

choir, such as in measure 15, denotes a harsh whisper. The strings' *tremolo glissandi* in measure

27 end in the extreme upper range of the instruments, and intentionally gives no terminative

pitch in order to create a moment of highly unstable tension. The entire movement is meant to

embody mounting apprehension and anxiety. The brass section is fully restrained to make the entrance of the "Tuba Mirum" more dramatic.

Buried within "Dies Irae" is the first melody of the Gregorian chant of the same name. (see Figure 2.1a). The Gregorian *Dies Irae* is a Latin poem that has been commonly ascribed to the Franciscan monk, Thomas of Celano (d. c. 1250), but an earlier twelfth-century version of the poem has cast his authorship in doubt.[8] The composer of the *Dies Irae* melody, as well as the time of its composition remain unknown, however, it has been suggested that it was written by Adam of St. Victor, who is known for writing poems, Latin hymns, and Sequences.[9] The chant melody has been an influence and interest of mine for many years, and it felt wrong not to include it somewhere within the actual movement. The melody itself is a fragment, but the head-motif is present and partitioned between the upper strings and woodwinds (specifically flute and clarinet) in measures 23-25. The viola is the only instrument that plays the full motif. (see Figure 2.1b).

The intent was to incorporate the melody as homage without making it the focus of the movement itself. In this form, the chant melody is present, but does not detract from the main melodic material that has been present since the beginning of the piece. The excerpt is bisected by the opening rhythmic motive, which further removes the melody from context. Other notable composers have used the Dies Irae melody, especially during the Romantic era. Hector Berlioz quotes the melody in the fifth movement of his *Symphonie Fantastique*. Likewise, Franz Liszt was similarly interested in the melody, for it is the subject of a set of variations in his piano concerto, *Totentanz*.

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[8] Chase, Robert. *Dies Irae: A Guide to Requiem Music*. (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2003), 509.
[9] Ibid., 509.

a)
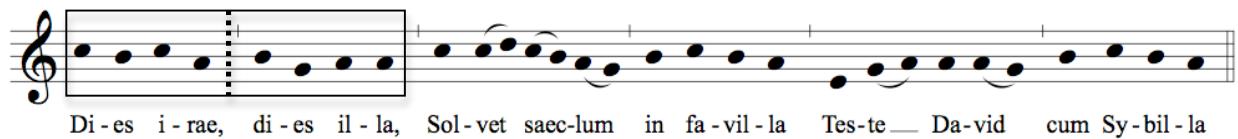
Di - es i - rae, di - es il - la, Sol - vet saec - lum in fa - vil - la Tes - te __ Da - vid cum Sy - bil - la

b)

Figure 2.1: a) Dies Irae Chant melody; b) Quote in III. Sequence 1. Dies Irae mm. 23-25.

Sequencing in "Agnus Dei"

The "Agnus Dei" movement brings cohesion back to the musical narrative of the Requiem. After the unstable "Lacrimosa", the "Angus Dei" creates stability though not without some difficulty. The movement is once again in the key of F minor, but in the opening phrase the altos sing a short introductory melody that contains a leading tone. The E-natural is frustrated as the altos move down to the dominant instead of the tonic. This refusal of resolution is a reference to the disastrous state of the "Lacrimosa" with its persistent E-natural harmonic.[10]

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[10] Details of the "Lacrimosa" harmonic drone are discussed in the Harmony and Unconventional Effects section.

The textural quality of the "Angus Dei" pulls back the forces to a simple, four-part a capella choir during the first—and longest—section from measures 1-29. The section is made up of two phrases, which can be seen in measures 5-15. The first phrase uses only upper voices and the second is a repeat of the first with all voices and slight variation. Within these phrases the choir makes use of inexact sequencing techniques and melismas, which can be seen in measure 21 in the alto and bass, and measure 22 in the soprano and tenor lines. Melodic lines are largely polyphonic, and moving voices trade back and forth to maintain a certain amount of undulation to the movement of the harmony. (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Agnus Dei displaced entrance and sequencing mm. 19-29.

The aesthetic of "Agnus Dei" bears a resemblance to Barber's *Adagio for Strings,* a piece based completely on sequencing and resolution. The long held note of the upper voices with the delayed entrance of the lower voices is nearly identical to the entrance of the strings starting in measures 8 of *Adagio*. (see Figure 2.3). Violin I enters with a Bb and the other strings follow after two beats filling in the chord with violin II being a third below. The same entrance happens in the "Agnus Dei." The sopranos and altos enter in unison at C. When the tenor and bass enter (in thirds) the alto drops to match the bass on Ab.

Figure 2.3: Barber Adagio for Strings, *displaced entrance and sequencing mm. 8-12.*

Barber originally wrote the movement as part of a string quartet but eventually arranged it for string orchestra, which is the most well known version. Some time later, Barber arranged the piece for choir and used the text of the Agnus Dei. The idea to mimic Barber's *Agnus Dei* was not necessarily a conscious one, but the piece surely had a hand in guiding the direction of *Requiem for the Transient's* own "Agnus Dei."

Harmony and Unconventional Effects

The vast majority of *Requiem for the Transient* is centered in F minor. The key was chosen in part for its range, but also the expressiveness of the key itself. If eighteenth and nineteenth century affectations are to be considered, then F-minor is associated with death, despair, and grief. Christian Schubart describes F minor as a key of "Deep depression, funereal lament, groans of misery and longing for the grave."[11] By its very nature, F minor rejects all of the open upper strings of the string section. The typical quality of these open strings is of varying degrees of bright or brilliant sonorities, especially that of the violin's E string. There are only brief moments where such a tone is desirable within the Requiem setting, and certainly the majority of this piece rejects that timbre. The lower strings of all the instruments, except the double bass, are unaffected, which allows the section their full range of lower notes.

Climax and Catharsis in "Prelude"

The richest chord and climax comes early in the Requiem and stands out as an anomaly in the grand design, but there is thematic relevance to the single occurrence. Death is often times described as our final release, the end of our struggle. The text of Ecclesiastes 12:1-7 has a subtle tension that mounts with each passing verse. Death surely takes everyone, sometimes very gradually. This diminishment of one's human body culminates in measures 69-77 when verse 6 is stated, signifying the final diminishment of the worldly being. Harmony becomes slightly blurred as voices divide, leaving behind suspensions as seen in measure 73. As the choir climbs

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[11] Steblin, Rita, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, 2nd ed, (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2002), 262-266. Jean-Phillip Rameau, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Sir John Hawkins, Hector Berlioz, and many others attribute similar affectations to F minor.

steadily higher, major and minor seconds appear and resolve, but eventually tone clusters form until every note of the F-minor scale is present. The resolution of the cluster comes in the form of the Remember Motif in measure 78 (see Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4: Cluster and catharsis in Prelude mm. 72-83.

Without a doubt, this technique of cluster resolution was influenced by Eric Whitacre's choral aesthetic. The approach and execution of the cadence come from Whitacre's Absalom chords in his choral work, *When David Heard* (see Figure 2.5). Unlike in the Prelude, Whitacre introduces his tension and release early in the work. The approach is the same: voices are suspended and sustained until a massive cluster is formed which is then released in three rich whole-note chords. The differences in execution between "Prelude" and *When David Heard* lie in Whitacre dividing his voices over a longer period of time. Once every note of D-minor is present he maintains that cluster for several measures before finally releasing the tension.

Figure 2.5: Absalom chords in Whitacre's When David Heard*, mm. 9-19.*

Drone Harmonic in "Lacrimosa"

The "Lacrimosa" is by far the most unconventional of all the movements within *Requiem for the Transient*, and much of its inspiration came as a result of the overwrought setting of the "Tuba Mirum." For the duration of the "Lacrimosa" the orchestra is reduced to shambles. As if recovering from an explosion, the listener is exposed to a high E-natural harmonic sustained by a modest selection of the second violins. This piercing note is a literal representation of tinnitus incurred as a result of the "Tuba Mirum" finale and is present for the duration of the "Lacrimosa". This pedal tone oscillates through a spectrum of dynamic levels as the piece

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proceeds.

Out of the rubble emerges a lone tenor accompanied by a solo violinist. Both literally struggle to complete a single melodic idea. The music is scattered and neither instrument can gain a foothold from which they can work. Amidst the struggle, the high harmonic in the second violins cuts through the would-be duet, sometimes obscuring melody and harmony without bias (see Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6: Lacrimosa harmonic against violin and tenor, mm. 31-37.

One particular example of a composer utilizing such a technique in twentieth-century repertoire is found within Shostakovich's *Eighth String Quartet*. Although the harmonic approach is slightly different, the fourth movement of Shostakovich's quartet uses a pedal tone in much the same way, creating a sense of continuous, unresolving tension (see Figure 2.7). Shostakovich's *Eighth String Quartet* is one of his most recognizable pieces, fraught with emotion and an unparalleled intensity. Of the five movements, the fourth is the most overlooked, and possibly the most intriguing. Drones and long held pedals are nearly constantly humming underneath broad, and often times, unison melodic lines. On some occasions the string quartet,

though all four instruments are continuously playing, is essentially reduced to two voices: a

drone vs. melodic content.

Figure 2.7: Opening measures of Shostakovich String Quartet no. 8 IV. Largo.

At the end of the quartet's third movement, the first violin begins by sustaining an A-

sharp that carries over into the fourth movement. The shift from a G minor to C-sharp minor key

signature leaves the suspended note in a strange and highly unstable limbo. The harmony of the

other voices gives little support to the A-sharp and causes more dissonance by existing outside

the signified key. David Fanning offers an interpretation of the sustained notes and pounding

chords that open the fourth movement. Early analyses of the work commonly interpreted the A-

sharp as the drone of bombers, while the *pesante* chords represent the explosion of bombs or anti-aircraft fire.[12] Fanning quickly dismisses this interpretation as the "crudest level of programme music – onomatopoeia," suggesting it to be a rather absurd notion; however, there is merit to the analogy. Regardless of Shostakovich's original intent, the listener is drawn into the unsettling nature of the drone against chords that do not harmonically match. Recollections of humming electronics, fans, and other sustaining ambient noises come to the forefront when listening to the Largo. It is this exact feel of a buzzing tone outside and independent of, but somehow imbibed by, the music that led to the function of the harmonic in "Lacrimosa."

This pedal tone is actually much more static in the "Lacrimosa" than in Shostakovich's Largo. As it turns out, Shostakovich resolves each of his suspensions before introducing another drone on a new note. In the "Lacrimosa," the E-natural is sustained for almost the entire piece until the end where the utterance of the word "requiem" clears away the dissonance. The final cadence, featuring a Picardy third, often associated with sacred music, solidifies a final resolution and end to the "Sequentia."

Influence of Shostakovich's Symphony no. 8, Mvt. III.

The opening *marcatissimo* of the Allegro non troppo third movement of Shostakovich's *Symphony no. 8* was the source of inspiration for both opening sections of the "Kyrie Eleison" and the "Lux Aeterna." Similarities among all three include the use of solo viola section, strict measured rhythm, and consistent harmonic progression. However, Shostakovich makes the *marcatissimo* figure the focus of his movement, whereas in *Requiem for the Transient* it is

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[12] Fanning, David, *Shostakovich: String Quartet No. 8*, (UK: Ashgate, 2004), 103. The Eighth String Quartet is dedicated to the "victims of fascism and the war," and was written in Dresden in 1960, which helps explain the interpretation of bombs and gunfire.

subservient to the other voices, acting more as a type of static Alberti bass.

As seen in Figure 2.8, both phrases are highly similar and feature triadic outlines. Shostakovich moves around more freely, traveling to different scale degrees above and below the initial starting triad while in the "Kyrie Eleison," the C-minor triad is continuously outlined. Both phrases occur as sectional solos at the beginning of the movement. Shostakovich's phrase lasts more than four times as long as the "Kyrie Eleison" phrase before other instruments are introduced. However, it is at the point of entry of the other voices that the similar function of both phrases shift. In the "Allegro non troppo," the phrase is enhanced by loud powerful *pizz.* In "Kyrie Eleison," the phrase is overlaid by melodic content, reducing the viola part to simple arpeggiation accompaniment.

a)

b)

Figure 2.8: a) Shostakovich Symphony no. 8 viola solo phrase mm. 1-16; b) Kyrie Eleison viola solo phrase mm. 1-3.

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Another parallel to *Symphony no. 8*, though a bit more distant, is the shimmering

accompaniment in the viola and cello in the "Lux Aeterna." Again, the phrase is fairly static

compared to the one in the Allegro non troppo. In this regard, both the "Kyrie Eleison" and "Lux

Aeterna" are more easily comparable. The doubled thirty-second notes under broad harmonies,

serve to push the momentum of the movement without relying on a higher tempo setting. (see

Figure 2.9). Each chord is savored, but the motion is still there. The same can be said about the

function of the arpeggiation in the "Kyrie Eleison."

Figure 2.9: Lux Aeterna viola thirty-second notes, mm. 5-10.

Chapter III:
Approach to Rhythm and Form

The approach to formal designs in this setting is informed by tradition. It should be noted that at no point does form or meter dictate the creative process. Capturing the aguish of losing a loved one at an early age is paramount and best expressed by melody, harmony, and rhythm. Meter is decided upon after an idea manifests itself. Rarely, if ever, does form or meter precede melody, harmony, or rhythm in my compositional process, and this setting is no different. This chapter will discuss the rhythmic motif that both opens and closes *Requiem for the Transient* and how the movements therein conform or diverge from traditional formal designs.

Rhythms and Meter

Because much of the text in the liturgy is without meter or form, setting the music to strophic form was nearly impossible. Only the Sequence maintains a constant rhythmic meter and rhyming scheme. The rest of the prayers have irregular line length and syllabic pattern. It is for this reason that in several movements the time signature is forced to change to compromise between the desired melody and prosody of the words in that melody. The movements that use shifting meters the most are the "Prelude" and "In Paradisum." The prosody of the "Prelude" was particularly difficult to overcome because of its long compound sentences and list-like nature of each verse. Metric division of measures is largely duple throughout *Requiem for the Transient*. The "Lacrimosa" and "Angus Dei" are the only representations of triple meter.

Remember Motif

The Remember Motif (see Figure 3.1a) is a simple three beat rhythmic motif that appears throughout the *Requiem for the Transient*. The importance of three is obvious to those familiar with Christian beliefs. Three is representative of the Holy Trinity: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The motif is introduced in the second measure of the Prelude by the bass drum and timpani, but is somewhat concealed by an identical series of four "knocks" that precede it. (see Figure 3.1a) The motif is solidified by the chant-like repetition of the altos syllabically reciting the word "remember." The motif is featured exhaustively during the first verse from measures 2-18 before dwindling out during the second verse at measure 24. The motive does not return until the fifth verse at measure 54. This time, however, the syllabic rhythm in the choir is reinforced by the beat of the bass drum. Even when the voices once again cease to recite the word, the bass drum carries on ensuring that the motif is carried until the climax at measure 77. The choir makes one last plea for remembrance with three large dramatic chords, which are punctuated by unison bass drum and timpani strikes.

The motif is utilized again in the final cadence of the "In Paradisum," but it has undergone a transformation from the word "remember" to the word "requiem" and is a far more relaxed and broad grouping of three, representing the change from a sense of urgency to acceptance. "Requiem" is repeated three times, each time being punctuated by a single soft bass drum hit and chime strike on the last syllable (See Figure 3.1b).

a)

b)

Figure 3.1: Comparison of Remember Motif in a) Prelude and b) In Paradisum.

Form

Formal designs in *Requiem for the Transient* largely follow conventional tradition. The

form of each movement is varied falling under one of three categories: simple binary, rounded

binary, or through-composed. Of the nine major sections of *Requiem for the Transient,* seven are

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binary and two are through-composed. Formal sections are most often set off by melodic or textural changes as opposed to a shift of key. A modulation to the dominant, as one might expect going into a B section, is not always present. This section will look at each movement separately, identifying the formal divisions, as well as the compound nature of the "Introit" and "Sequentia."

The movements that can be categorized as simple binary are the "Agnus Dei" (Table 3.1), "In Paradisum" (Table 3.2), and the "Dies Irae" (Table 3.6) subsection of "Sequentia". Formal division in the "Agnus Dei" is not marked by modulation as would be expected. In measure 30 the a cappella choir becomes accompanied by the woodwinds and strings. This textural shift is the defining characteristic of the change from A to B. "In Paradisum" follows a similar textural shift, but the progression into the B section is also marked by a melodic change. A thin texture of broad woodwind harmony supports an active choral line during the first eighteen measures. The entrance of the brass fanfare at measure 19 marks the beginning of the new section. The choir melody becomes broader, replacing the now vacant woodwinds, and is doubled by the strings. The B section eventually concludes at the final Remember Motif coda in measure 33. Formal divisions in the "Dies Irae," are largely marked by new melodic material. The texture of the subsection gradually grows as the piece develops. At the height of tension in the A section, the music suddenly bottoms out leaving only the bass drum and the *Symphonie Fantastique*-esque chimes to signify the start of a new section.

Table 3.1: Form of movement IV: "Agnus Dei"

Section	Introduction	A	B
Measure Range	1-4	5-29	30-45

Table 3.2: Form of movement VI: "In Paradisum"

Section	A	B	Coda
Measure Range	1-18	19-32	33-39

A significant number of movements can be considered rounded binary: the "Lux Aeterna" (Table 3.3) and both subsections of the "Introit" (Table 3.4) all feature A and B sections with a concluding A section. The "Lux Aeterna" is the only movement that explicitly follows precedence set by tradition by preparing movement to the dominant at measure 14. In measure 15 the music modulates but only briefly before returning to A at measure 21. The "Requiem Aeternum" and "Kyrie Eleison" of the "Introit" share the similarity of having a verbatim return of their individual A sections contrasted by melodically and texturally diverse B sections.

Table 3.3: Form of movement V: "Lux Aeterna"

Section	A	B	A
Measure Range	1-14	15 - 20	21-50

Table 3.4: Macro Form of movement II: "Introit"

Movement Divisions	A			B		
Subdivision	"Requiem Aeternum"			"Kyrie Eleison"		
Sections	A	B	A	C	D	C
Measure Range	1-11	12-40	Pick up 41-65	1-40	41-74	75-107

Finally, the "Prelude" (Table 3.5) and the last two subsections of the "Sequentia"—"Tuba Mirum" and "Lacrimosa" (Table 3.6)—do not follow any conventional formal designs and can be considered through-composed. The "Prelude" is melodically homogenous giving no clear textural shifts to denote section changes. Formally, each verse has new melodic content that is never repeated. Inklings of previous content appear to return, but have been so transformed by the continuous process that it is brief and nearly unrecognizable. The only constant in the piece is the three-beat Remember Motif, which can be interpreted as formally dividing the piece into three sections—an opening and closing section that contain the motif, and a middle section that does not—but the notion is unsubstantiated by any other musical elements. The "Tuba Mirum" unlike the "Prelude" has three defined formal sections denoted by textural and melodic transformations, however each section is different from the last, making no significant use of previous material. The "Lacrimosa" is the most difficult of all the movements to identify formally. Texturally, the subsection never changes. The main melodic content of the solo violin repeats, but does not stray far enough away between repeats to warrant a true formal division. Thus the "Lacrimosa" can be interpreted as an A section followed by an A' (refered to as F and F' in Table 3.6).

Table 3.5: Form of movement I: "Prelude"

Phrase Sections	Introduction	Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3
Measure Range	1-4	5-18	19-28	Pick up 29-43

Phrase Sections (cont.)	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6	Verse 7
Measure Range (cont.)	44-54	55-68	Pick up 69-83	84-92

Table 3.6: Macro Form of movement III: "Sequentia"

Movement Divisions	A		B			C	
Subdivision	"Dies Irae"		"Tuba Mirum"			"Lacrimosa"	
Sections	A	B	C	D	E	F	F'
Measure Range	1-27	28-44	1-36	37-67	67-96	1-58	59-80

Of particular interest is the compound nature of both the "Introit" and "Sequentia."[13] As discussed previously, the "Introit" is divided into the "Requiem Aeternum" and "Kyrie Eleison" (Table 3.4), while the "Sequentia" is divided into the "Dies Irae," "Tuba Mirum," and "Lacrimosa" (Table 3.6). Because each subsection should be performed *attacca*, it is important to look at the combined form of the entire "Introit" and "Sequentia." The "Introit" can be considered a compound simple binary. "Requiem Aeternum" would be an A section, and the "Kyrie Eleison" would follow as the B with no return to A material. The "Sequentia" moves linearly through its sections making the overall macro form through-composed as each subsection moves from A to B to C.

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[13] The term "compound" is being used here in the same way it is used to describe compound ternary form. That is to say, each subsection is considered a section of the overall movement, but each subsection contains its own form much like a minuet and trio would.

Chapter IV:
Conclusion

Requiem for the Transient is, by no means, ground breaking or revolutionary in the contemporary era. It was not my intent to attempt to revolutionize composition like the early composers of the twentieth century. The goal was to capture my own personal emotions of loss and bring closure to a traumatic event. I believe I succeeded more than I ever could have imagined. Overall, the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic content of this setting are very conventional. This piece is a rejection of twentieth-century trends such as serialism. What the Requiem does manage to do is combine elements of the past with elements of modern composition. Memorable melodies are replaced by gestures or certain sonorities. Rules of functional harmony are largely ignored in favor of more interesting progressions and lush chords. Formal designs are not always adhered to closely. Instead, form is an after thought, a way of approximating a process of development. Yet the aesthetic of the Requiem Mass is intact and recognizable. In my mind, *Requiem for the Transient* is neo-romantic. Emotion is at the forefront of its incarnation, needing no algorithms, matrixes, or rules of tradition to dictate its existence. This is not to say that *Requiem for the Transient* has not been informed by the various "isms" of the twentieth century (or any other era of music). Indeed, the examples, allusions, and comparisons contained in this document are only but a fraction of the influences that have coalesced in order to form this music. *Requiem for the Transient* is a complex response to the exposure and influence of hundreds of years worth of music.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Libretto

I. Prelude – Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

1. Remember now thy Creator in the days of the youth, while the evil days come not,
    nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;
2. While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened,
    nor the clouds return after the rain.
3. In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow
    themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the
    windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets.
4. When the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the
    daughters of musick shall be brought low;
5. Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way,
    and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall
    fail: because man goeth to his long him, and the mourners go about the streets:
6. Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken,
    or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.
7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave
    it.

II. Introit

1. Requiem Aeternum

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,	Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.	and let perpetual light shine upon them.
Te decet hymnus Deus, in Sion,	A hymn becomes you, O God, in Zion
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.	and to you shall a vow be repaid in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam;	Hear my prayer;
ad te omnis caro veniet.	to you shall all flesh come.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,	Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.	and let perpetual light shine upon them.

2. Kyrie Eleison

Kyrie eleison;	God have mercy;
Christe eleison;	Christ have mercy;
Kyrie eleison.	God have mercy.

III. Sequentia

1. Dies Irae

Dies irae! Dies illa	The day of wrath, that day
Solvet saeclum in favilla	Will dissolve the world in ashes
Teste David cum Sybilla!	As foretold by David and the sibyl!
Quantus tremor est futurus,	How much tremor there will be,
Quando judex est venturus,	When the judge will come,
Cuncta stricte discussurus!	Investigating everything strictly!

2. Tuba Mirum

Tuba, mirum spargens sonum	The trumpet, scattering a wondrous sound
Per sepulchra regionum,	Through the sepulchres of the regions,
Coget omnes ante thronum.	Will summon all before the throne.
Mors stupebit, et natura,	Death and nature will marvel,
Cum resurget creatura,	When the creature arises,
Judicanti responsura.	To respond to the Judge.
Liber scriptus proferetur,	The written book will be brought forth,
In quo totum continetur,	In which all is contained,
Unde mundus judicetur.	From which the world shall be judged.
Judex ergo cum sedebit,	When therefore the judge will sit,
Quidquid latet, apparebit:	Whatever hides will appear:
Nil inultum remanebit.	Nothing will remain unpunished.
Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?	What am I, miserable, then to say?
Quem patronum rogaturus,	Which patron to ask,
Cum vix justus sit securus?	When even the just may only hardly be sure?
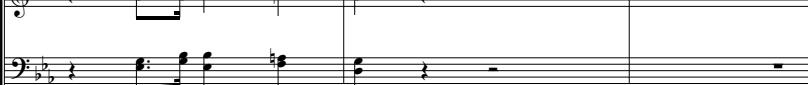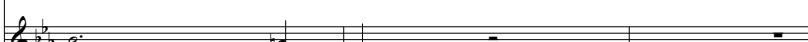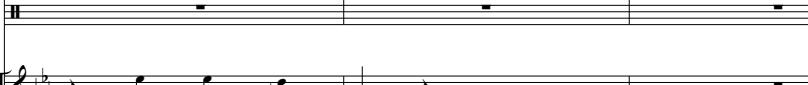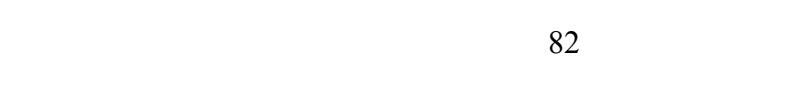
3. Lacrimosa

Lacrimosa dies illa,	Tearful will be that day,
Qua resurget ex favilla	On which from the ashes arises
Judicandus homo reus.	The guilty man who is to be judged.
Huic ergo parce, Deus:	Spare him therefore, God.
Pie Jesu Domine	Merciful Lord Jesus,
Dona eis requiem. Amen	Grant them rest. Amen

IV. Agnus Dei

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

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

V. Lux Aeterna

Lux æterna luceat eis, Domine,

Cum sanctis tuis in æternum,
Quia pius es.
Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine;
Et lux perpetua luceat eis;
Cum Sanctis tuis in æternum,
Quia pius es.

May everlasting light shone upon them,
    O lord
With your Saints forever,
For you are kind.
Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
And may everlasting light shine upon them.
    With your saints forever,
For you are merciful.

VI. In Paradisum

In paradisum deducant te Angeli
In tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres,
Et perducant te civitatem sanctam
    Jerusalem.
Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat,
Et cum Lazaro quondam paupere
    aeternam habeas requiem

May Angels lead you into paradise;
May the Martyrs receive you at your coming
And lead you to the holy city of Jerusalem.

May a choir of angels receive you,
And with Lazarus, who once was poor,
    may you have eternal rest.

To Scott T. Wood
and those that briefly passed through this world

Requiem
for the Transient

(Full Orchestral Score)

Brian P. Gee

Instrumentation

2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in Bb
Bassoon

2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in Bb
2 Trombones
Tuba

Timpani
Tamtam
Chimes
Snare Drum
Bass Drum

Soprano
Alto
Tenor
Bass

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Movements

I. Prelude	(6'30")
II. Introit	
1. Requiem Aeternum	(3')
2. Kyrie Eleison	(2')
III. Sequentia	
1. Dies Irae	(3'30")
2. Tuba Mirum	(3'30")
3. Lacrimosa	(4'45")
IV. Agnus Dei	(2'30")
V. Lux Aeterna	(3')
VI. In paradisum	(2'45")

Total Duration: approximately 32'

I. Prelude

39

41

46

Then shall the dust re - turn to the earth as it was: and the

spir - it shall re - turn un - to God who gave it.

attacca

49

II. Introit
1. Requiem Aeternum

55

II. Introit
2. Kyrie Eleison

III. Sequentia
1. Dies Irae

III. Sequentia

2. Tuba Mirum

III. Sequentia
3. Lacrimosa

IV. Agnus Dei

V. Lux Aeterna

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VI. In Paradisum

Vita

Brian Gee is currently a graduate student pursuing his Master's of Music in Composition at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Prior his graduate studies, Brian obtained his Bachelor's of Music in Composition from Southeast Missouri State University in 2011.

Born in Memphis in 1987, Brian has spent most of his life in the state of Tennessee. At the age of 10 he began formal music training in violin. By 14 he was dabbling in self-taught composition and piano. Brian continued his music training at Southeast Missouri State University pursuing a degree in Music Education with a focus in violin under Dr. Brandon Christensen. In 2009 his focus changed to composition under the mentorship of Dr. Robert Fruehwald. At this time he also changed his instrumental focus to viola, again, under the direction of Dr. Christensen.

After graduating in 2011, Brian returned to his hometown of Paris, Tennessee where he was offered a job as the Assistant Band Director of Inman Middle School from 2011 to 2013. During this time he was given the honor and opportunity to arrange the Civil War era piece, "Fort Donelson is Ours" for the band. The piece was performed at Ft. Donelson on the 150th anniversary of the fort's capture by Union soldiers.

Brian has also remained an enthusiastic instrumentalist throughout his life as a musician. He has studied (to varying degrees) violin, viola, bass, piano, trumpet, trombone, and accordion. From 2011 to 2013 he served as the strings mentor to the Paris Henry County Youth Orchestra, and was also a private instructor of violin, viola, and piano at the Leach's Music Store in downtown Paris.

In the Fall of 2013, Brian began pursuing his Master of Music degree at the University of

Tennessee where he studied under Dr. Kenneth Jacobs and Dr. Andrew Sigler. Brian became a member of SCOUT (Student Composers of the University of Tennessee), a chapter of the Society of Composers, Inc. and has had his music performed at the 2015 SCI conference in Columbus, Georgia. Brian will graduate in the summer of 2015. He currently resides in Knoxville.