

Abstract

In this thesis, the evolution of the Requiem Mass throughout the centuries has been explored. The evidence provided clearly demonstrates the changes that the Requiem mass has gone through, from the first traditional Requiem mass all the way to the new Requiems of the Contemporary era. While early composers were inspired by religion, over time, a clear shift towards freedom of expression (war, human losses, tragic events) is evident. Requiems can be written for liturgical use and concert halls, and can be performed by choirs, soloists and orchestras (Acapella and Orchestral compositions). Requiems can have both short and long durations, and can have different textures (polyphonic style, homophonic style etc.). The traditional Latin language and religious texts are still widely used, however, there have been many changes throughout the centuries, such as the use of translations into different languages, the use of psalms, bible verses, poetry and famous speeches. Today, a large number of Requiems can be found from composers on a worldwide scale, including America, Europe and Great Britain.