The Choral Music of Keaton Lee Scott With A Conductor’s Analysis Of Requiem

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THE CHORAL MUSIC OF KEATON LEE SCOTT WITH A CONDUCTOR’S ANALYSIS OF *REQUIEM*

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ABSTRACT

In addition to the analysis of *Requiem* by K. Lee Scott, this document provides biographical information and compositional style characteristics. The study was informed by frequent correspondences and multiple interviews with the composer. It is the author’s desire that this study will inspire and prepare other conductors to program this excellent composition, and encourage greater study of other accessible choral works by K. Lee Scott.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Keaton Lee Scott (b. 1950) is emerging as one of America’s prolific composers of sacred music. Presently he has over 300 published compositions including hymns, anthems, works for solo voice, organ, brass, and larger sacred works, including *Lux Aeterna*, a five-movement work that is scored for men’s chorus, piano, flute, cello and timpani. *Lux Aeterna* was premiered by The University of Mississippi Men’s Chorus on March 30, 2010 in Nutt Auditorium in Oxford, Mississippi. Nick Strimple writes:

> In an environment in which commercialism took easy precedence {sic} over artistic integrity few composers still wrote almost exclusively for the church, Scott’s honest inclinations resulting in well crafted, informed, and moving music written in a variety of styles (though usually based on traditional models) also became quite popular.¹

Scott’s greatest gift is his ability to choose and set text to music. Scott did not re-formulate the early European Anglican anthem; instead he created a fresh, modern, American-style anthem. Scott’s innovative and pragmatic approach to modern religious choral music has set him apart from his contemporaries, as Scott has rejected a more “academic” compositional language that might distort his interpretation of the genre.

Scott’s approach to writing permits his compositions to be performed by choirs of differing structures and abilities. He is exceptionally sensitive to the type of choirs that perform his music (high school, collegiate, church, and professional). Consequently, a variety of communities across the country have been able to appreciate the character and quality in Scott’s works.

**Justification**

Scott’s work has not received scholarly attention. He has received a vast amount of praise for his well-crafted compositions. However, he has not enjoyed scholarly attention equivalent to other 20th century composers as John Rutter or Aaron Copeland. Considering the vast amount of literature Scott has produced, the lack of research his music has received makes an argument for the necessity of this study.

According to Strimple, Scott’s compositional attributes include “an avoidance of rhythmic gimmicks and saturated harmonies, an inclination toward profound and literate texts, an obvious understanding and appreciation of ancient church traditions and their continued relevance and application, and an acute awareness of technical limitations.”

Scott’s broad stylistic approach is apparent in his large works. His writing is ingratiating without being difficult. According to Michael Huebner “Scott is a skillful orchestrator and adept at writing an understandable text for chorus and vocal soloists.”

He spent 20 years creating his *Requiem*, one of his most highly regarded works. An analysis of this work will conclude that Scott’s extended works reflect a composition-

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2 Ibid.
3 Michael Huebner, “Birmingham composer K. Lee Scott's CD of 'Requiem' takes cues from Rutter, Brahms” *The Birmingham News*, (December 26, 2007), Section B.
al style that is not constrained by market forces and limited to church choirs as Scott’s extended works have been performed by a number of collegiate ensembles. In addition, an analysis will provide information about his *Requiem*. His attentiveness and commitment to this work and others is a definite indication of his high level of musicianship and sensitivity towards choral music.

An understanding of his compositional process will assist the reader in gaining an intellectual understanding of his works and help choral conductors perform them. A study of Scott’s works may help to further his legacy and encourage their performance in concert halls and churches in the United States.

**Methodology**

As a living composer, contacting Scott through personal interviews, email, and telephone exchanges provides a unique and authoritative view of the composer’s music and his views on sacred music. Additionally a biographical sketch of Scott will outline the most important experiences in his life and will trace his compositional style. The analysis of *Requiem* will cover melody, harmony, form, and texts. Musical examples will be used to illustrate his style. An interview with a conductor, Dr. Donald Trott, who has premiered one of Scott’s compositions, will be conducted by phone conversation and email.
Literature Review

While there are no scholarly books written about Scott, Strimple mentions Scott in *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century*. Strimple’s book is a nation-by-nation, concise reference for important classical choral music written from 1900-2000. Strimple includes analysis, insight, and informed scrutiny. He states that Scott’s compositions are well crafted and show an evident appreciation for ancient choral traditions and the early European anthem.

Additionally, in *Hymn Interpretation*, Emily Brink discusses the origin and meaning of the text from the hymn “There is a Garden.” Brink mentions Scott’s arrangement as just one of many that was well crafted. In addition, she mentions that Scott’s choral arrangements sustain good melodies and continue to develop musical ideas with apparent ease. This is not the case in many hymns and compositions written today.

Furthermore, Michael Huebner of the *Birmingham News* wrote a critique of the recording of Scott’s *Requiem*. Huebner praises Scott for his unique writing ability for choir, soloist and orchestra. Huebner also relates Scott’s *Requiem* to major choral works of Brahms and Rutter. These sources are concise, informative and useful. However, they are lacking depth of information concerning Scott’s vision and musical strategy. Further research on this topic will not only complement these sources, but will prove to be beneficial to choral musicians. Scott has received a vast amount of praise for his well-crafted compositions and natural style of writing. However, he has not enjoyed the equivalent scholarly attention of other 20th century composers. This study will promote Scott’s most significant composition and will serve as a resource for choral musicians performing and analyzing selected examples of his work.
CHAPTER 2

BIOGRAPHY

Early Years and Education

Keeton Lee Scott was born April 19, 1950 in Valley, Alabama. His father, Willard W. Scott, was an electrician and later a minister. His mother, Katheryne Sorrell Scott, was a homemaker and amateur musician. His parents and grandparents were extremely musical and came from musical families, particularly his mother’s.⁴

My dad played mandolin and fiddle, and both were members of a country and western band at one time in the early years of their marriage. My mother's family seems to have been the more musical of my forebears, particularly my maternal grandmother, Ardecie Sharp Sorrell. Ardecie, my grandmother, was a fine singer, and she married Rufus A. Sorrell. My grandfather, Rufus, also loved to sing, and lead Sacred Harp singings in the Chambers County Courthouse in Lafayette for 40 years. This was to have an effect on me through my mother's singing, though granddad died before I was born. My mother sang me to sleep every day when I was very small, and the hymns and folk songs were often modal in nature, and modal writing has been an important aspect of my compositional vocabulary.⁵

Scott’s mother was the final child of twelve children. Ten survived to adulthood; of these, nine were musical. Scott states, “You were expected to be musical in the Sorrell family.”⁶ Scott’s father had two siblings, one of whom played the violin. When he was six years of age, his parents became believers in Jesus Christ. A few years later, his father

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⁴ Keaton Lee Scott, email with the author 15 June 2012.
⁵ Ibid.
⁶ Ibid.
felt a call to the Christian ministry”\textsuperscript{7} and decided to study Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta in 1963. It was also during this time that Scott had begun to take private piano lessons. He truly enjoyed playing the piano and continued practicing daily on his own, listening to recordings and reading supplemental materials. After his father completed seminary studies in 1965, the elder Scott served as a minister for five different churches in three counties in Alabama.

Scott began high school when his family moved to Greene County, Alabama. Over the next few years, he continued to practice and became quite proficient as a young pianist. He attended 3 high schools, none of which had a choral program. Scott remembers, “the band director would get a couple of students together and sing, but there was not a real choral program.”\textsuperscript{8} Scott’s first encounter with choral music was by listening to recordings of The Mormon Tabernacle Choir. He became fascinated with choral music and began to collect choral scores and play them on the piano. He also resumed piano and organ lessons when his family moved to Boligee, Alabama.\textsuperscript{9} Throughout his remaining three years of high school Scott played for all his father’s church services. Three of the churches had pianos, one had an electric organ, and one a 19\textsuperscript{th} century pump organ.\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Womack, Damion. Interview with Keaton Lee Scott. Phone Interview. Montgomery, June 19, 2012.
\textsuperscript{9} Keaton Lee Scott, email with the author 15 June 2012.
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
College Years and Education

Scott enrolled at The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa in 1968, studying choral literature and composition. As Scott puts it, “The University of Alabama had a rare and now defunct BM undergraduate degree program in choral literature and conducting.” Only two students ever received this degree, and I am happy to say I was one of them.”

According to Scott, this type of degree was uncommon because it seemed to be specialized and most degrees of this nature were established on the graduate level.

When Scott began his undergraduate study, full professors taught most of the courses. This gave him exposure to practically all of the professors of theory and composition. Scott states, “The Music Department emphasized composition in the same way that a good English department emphasizes writing.” In addition, most of Scott’s courses in theory strongly emphasized composition, with projects assigned each semester.

The Director of Choral Activities during Scott’s freshman year was Kenneth Neilson. According to Scott, Neilson put importance on pure vowels and good rhythmic production. However, Scott mentioned that Neilson rehearsed at a very slow pace and did not teach or perform much literature. Scott says “The strong emphasis on technique was excellent for me since I had [sic] very little choral training to that point.” Neilson left UA the next year for another position; however, Scott was elated to discover that Fredrick Prentice was appointed Director of Choral Activities. Scott was familiar with

11 Keaton Lee Scott, email with the author 18 June 2012.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
the education background of Prentice, a published composer with degrees from The University of Southern California and Yale University.

Scott states “Frederick Prentice said that his work as a composer was one of the reasons he was hired as Director of Choral Activities.”\(^\text{15}\) In addition to Scott’s delight at the arrival of Prentice, he also learned that The University of Alabama was the home base for The Southeastern Composers Conference each year during his undergraduate study. As a new member of the University Singers, Scott took advantage of the opportunity to perform and study new works written by participants in the conference.

He studied choral literature and conducting under Prentice from 1969-1974 while also singing with him in the University Singers. He regularly worked on choral compositions and consistently presented them to Prentice to receive comments and guidance. Scott recalls, “He was always generous with his time, and often had the pieces read and/or performed by The University Singers. None of this was for credit, but it proved to be my most rewarding study of composition of all time.”\(^\text{16}\) Scott’s first piece, “Now is the Month of Maying” was published in 1972 by one of Prentice’s publishers in California.

He was delighted to become published while he was studying for his first degree. He credits Prentice for all of his help and support. Scott’s minor was voice, which required him to take a year-long course entitled “Song Literature”. “For an entire year we studied five centuries of solo song and how composers set the texts, created accompaniments, etc”.

\(^{15}\) Ibid.
\(^{16}\) Ibid.
This intense study influenced me dramatically, and I would not have guessed this before taking the course." Upon graduation in 1972, Scott was accepted into the graduate music programs at the University of Southern California and The University of Iowa.

While he was deciding on his college selection for graduate study, his family life was not going well. His father became extremely ill, eventually having a nervous breakdown. These events led to Scott’s father being dismissed from the ordained ministry and divorcing his wife. This caused financial instability at home, and Scott was unable to attend USC or Iowa. In January 1973, he enrolled in the Masters of Music program at the University of Alabama, majoring in Choral Literature and Conducting, and studying with Prentice.

He spent extensive time taking music history courses. He also spent a great deal of time researching and studying scores. Throughout his Masters degree, he served as a choral assistant for Prentice and continued to study composition and arranging with Prentice without receiving credit. Additionally, Scott developed a curiosity for Elizabethan choral music and the classical setting of the Mass.

In 1976, Scott’s final year of graduate study, he received an invitation from Don Moses, Director of Choral Activities at The University of Iowa, to attend a Haydn seminar in Austria. This event was held during the United States’ Bicentennial year and, according to Scott, the Austrian government had made no special gesture to the United States concerning the Bicentennial year, so they decided to give his group a special viewing of rare musical scores at the Albertina Museum and Archive in Vienna.

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17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
Attendees at the Haydn Seminar were shown astonishing musical scores by Bach, Haydn, Beethoven, Bruckner, and Brahms. “We were simply breathless when the curator unwrapped a small black score with small gold lettering reading, "Mozart Requiem." It was at this point in his life he knew that he desired to create his own Requiem. It would not be until years later that his creation would be completed.

**Career as Professor and Composer**

After completing his Master’s degree in 1976, he took a position in the spring of 1977 at Calvary Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama serving as interim choir director for six months. In the fall of 1977, he accepted a position as Director of Choral Activities at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Alabama. During this time, UAB’s music department was a division of the Department of Performing Arts as there were no music majors. According to Scott, “The choral program was underdeveloped and required a great deal of recruitment and hard work.” While at UAB, Scott conducted the University Chorus. In addition, he established a college and community chorus named the Madrigal Singers. Both ensembles performed a wide variety of literature including Renaissance motets, Bach cantatas and modern literature.

Scott says the Madrigal Singers had some of the best voices in Birmingham and was capable of quite difficult literature. In 1979, his final year as Director of Choral Activities at UAB, he had the opportunity to present a concert featuring the choral works of Pulitzer Prize winning composer, Gail Kubik. Kubik spent several days with Scott, and as

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19 Keaton Lee Scott, email with the author 23 June 2012
20 Keaton Lee Scott, email with the author 3 July 2012.
21 Ibid.
a result, Scott was able to learn from Kubik’s style of writing. Moreover, Kubik became especially interested in Scott’s works and wanted to publish many of his compositions. Scott remembers, “He became very interested in several of my compositions and wanted to feature them on his choral series with Lawson Gould Publishing Company of New York. Robert Lawson Shaw owned half of this company and being associated with them would be quite a help to my young career.” However, due to a few stipulations in the agreement, Scott did not accept the offer, but it still proved to be beneficial for Scott. In 1980, Scott’s financial stability was a major concern and he thought it would be important to develop a relationship with several publishers.

He decided to focus on writing and teaching part-time at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, Samford University, and Altadena Valley Presbyterian Church. It was during this time at Samford University that he was offered the opportunity to write his first major work, an opera. This was a challenge for Scott, as he had never written a work of this magnitude before. This project presented many difficulties. Scott remembers “The work was well received, and I grew tremendously in compositional skill through the process, and gained more than a little wisdom about how to go about things.”

During his time as an undergraduate, he wrote original works and arrangements of spirituals and folk songs. He adds “Many of these works made their way into print during those years and some as recently as 2007.” Additionally while serving as Music Director at Altadena Valley Presbyterian Church, he became increasingly interested in hymn tunes. After his interim position at UAB, he was faced with the decision of whether to

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22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Keaton Lee Scott, email with the author 3 June 2014.
pursue a doctorate in choral conducting or try to establish a reputation as a composer. Scott ultimately decided to pursue a career in composition. He remembers, “1980 saw a significant economic down turn, and I decided that I should move strongly in the direction of establishing a career as a composer. I already had about a dozen pieces in print and was anxious to add to that number quickly. It began at a frustratingly slow pace”.

In 1982, for instance, only one piece came out, “Now Glad of Heart” for SATB, organ with optional brass. This work for Easter and Ascension is brimming with youthful vigor, featuring driving energy and an abundance of mixed meters. It continues to be one of my best and most favorite publications and was recently recorded by The Brigham Young Singers conducted by Dr. Ronald Staheli.” He continued to work part-time for various churches and colleges, and conduct the Lee Scott Singers. However, his main vocation and love is composition.

Awards and Honors

K. Lee Scott has become one of the most commissioned, performed and published choral composers of his generation. Children’s choirs, choral associations church choirs, and universities throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand regularly perform his choral music. He has been the recipient of several awards and commissions. In 2001, Scott received The John Ness Beck Foundation Award for writing the best anthem published for Beck Publishing.

25 Ibid.
CHAPTER 3
COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

Compositional Process

When Scott began studying at The University of Alabama, he states “I wanted to learn two things: to learn to conduct and compose for choirs.”26 His compositional style and technique evolved along with his career as an educator. His compositional techniques changed and expanded, as did his professional career as a composer. His approach differs with each composition.

“The common denominator is that I want each composition, whether arrangement or free composition to highlight and enhance the meaning of the text. There is an element of creativity that is mysterious, and the romantics had no problem embracing that fact. A more cerebral approach would do away with the mystery completely.”27

“Ideas come to me when I sit down to write. Sometimes I get writers-block, but I don’t dodge tunes and phrases as I drive down the road. As I study a text, sometimes a melodic fragment will occur. Sometimes it is simply a rhythmic idea, and sometimes a sense of harmonic flow. As I work to place these fragments into some context, I think on all levels--melodic, harmonic and rhythmic, as well as instrumentation, if any. The overall concept of what you want the piece to express is enormously important at every stage.

26 Ibid.
27 Keaton Lee Scott, email with the author 13 June 2014.
A study of the text often helps frame out some sense of form even before a note is conceived.”

When composing for choral voices and accompaniment, Scott believes that it is necessary for both to be conceived at the same time so that neither seems to be an addition. Scott credits his ability to successfully write accompaniments to studying piano and organ while in high school. “As I was commissioned to write anthems for church, the need to create effective accompaniments became very important. The ability to create on more than one level, for instance voice parts and accompaniments, is quite a feat. As I listen to works like the Mozart and Brahms Requiem, I am amazed at how the voices and instruments all work together, each with its idiomatic rightness.”

Scott enjoys writing in a variety of genres. He loves settings of African American spirituals, especially those of Alabama native William Dawson, Shaw-Parker arrangements, and those he heard growing up in the South. Many of Scott’s spiritual arrangements are strophic but offer many possibilities for word painting and imaginative choral interpretation. One example would be his arrangement of “The Old Ship of Zion” in which Scott utilizes the word “Hallelujah” at the end of the piece, suggesting how wonderful a person’s life can be in heaven (Figure 3.1).

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28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
Figure 3.1 Scott, The Old Ship of Zion, mm. 25-43.
Furthermore, Scott has also arranged numerous secular and sacred folk songs. He recalls his passion for setting melodies. “Their beautiful vocality and intrinsic beauty have taught me a lot about writing for voices. Scott’s illustration of using a simple, but poignant melody and creating a delightful piece without getting in the way is his composition “Write Your Blessed Name.” Scott begins this melody in a unison voice and adds additional vocal lines throughout the entire piece (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Scott, Write Your Blessed Name, mm. 5-14.
Texts

Text is the foremost consideration in Scott’s compositional process. He states, “As a composer, whether arranging or freely composing, everything springs from the text naturally. If I am setting a psalm text, much time is spent researching it to discover its background and precise theological meaning. This would be true of secular texts as well. After spending this time I try to determine the tone and over-all effect I would like the composition to leave with the listener when the piece is finished.”

He pursues rare and uncommon texts. He studies each text, whether poetry or biblical text with extreme care. He devotes time in the library searching for new texts. He reads poetry and purchases new books in order to find texts that are not currently being used. Scott states that publishers are looking for new and refreshing texts. An example of a text that had not been set by many composers is “Write your blessed Name, O Lord, upon my Heart” by Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274).

Write your blessed Name, O Lord, upon my heart,  
There to remain so indelibly engraved,  
That no prosperity, no adversity,  
Shall ever move me from your love.  
Be to me a strong tower of defence,  
A comforter in tribulation,  
A deliverer in distress,  
A very present help in trouble,  
And a guide to heaven  
Through the many temptations and dangers of this life.31

30 Keaton Lee Scott, email with the author 11 June 2014.  
31 The Theology and Ministry Unit, Book of Common Worship Daily Prayer (Louisville, Kentucky: John Knox Press, 1993), 446.
By employing unusual texts, he is inspired to come up with fresh, new, and creative ideas. Other notable poets that Scott sets are John Donne (1572-1656), Timothy Dudley-Smith (b.1926), Thomas Tomkins (1572-1676), and John Wesley (1703-1791).

**Rhythm**

Scott mentions that Igor Stravinsky’s use of mixed meter had a direct influence on his rhythmic ideas as he utilizes mixed meter in many of his compositions. He states that text is the driving force behind using mixed meter, explaining: “When we speak, it is improvised, when you are setting a text, particularly when using a biblical text, it is going to naturally be free, so using mixed meter is natural in choral music because you are discovering the natural rhythm of the words. I just enjoy the freedom of mixed meter as it relates to the possibilities of using different texts.”32

When setting text to music, the music must emulate and emphasize the rhythm of speech. To accomplish this with poetry and other forms of text that are rhythmically free, Scott uses mixed meters with both fast and slow tempos. Examples of this style can be seen on page 31 of *Gloria* in which Scott utilizes mixed meter on the text *Cum Sancto Spiritu in Gloria Dei Patri* (Figure 3.3).

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32 Keaton Lee Scott, interview with the author 6 July 2014.
Figure 3.3 Scott, *Gloria*, mm 124-131.
Another example of his use of mixed meter and repetition of text to create drama, agitation, excitement or tension is seen in the reiteration of the “Alleluia” on page 7 of *Now Glad of Heart*.

Figure 3.4 Scott, *Now Glad of Heart* mm. 41-47.
Musical Form

Scott’s arrangements of folk songs, hymns tunes, and spirituals are frequently strophic or modified strophic. These arrangements may contain verses with refrains or just verses that are presented with great skill. The musical elements in scoring and accompaniment style are varied for each verse to capture the style and mood of the text. A few are: “Above the Stars,” “Apple Tree,” “Chill of the Nightfall,” “Christ is Now Arisen” and “Daniel Saw the Stone.” Scott most frequently composes works that have a theme, variation and recapitulation, or the ternary form ABA. A few include: “Day By Day,” “Pleasure Enough,” “To Thee I Die,” “After the Storm,” and “Write Your Blessed Name.” Scott utilizes through composed form in: “Wilderness Will Rejoice,” “Psalm 96” (A New Made Song), “God is Our Refuge and Strength,” and “The Look.”
CHAPTER 4

REQUIEM

Origins

In 1976, Scott, along with 12 other student conductors from The University of Alabama traveled to Eisenstadt, Austria to attend the International Haydn Festival. During his visit, Scott had a unique opportunity to visit “The Abertina,” home of the State Archives in Vienna to view musical scores by many famous composers. One of the scores he viewed was Mozart’s Requiem. According to Scott, they seldom show this particular musical score to the public, so it was an extreme honor to view it.\textsuperscript{33} It was at this time that Scott was inspired to write a Requiem. It took him 22 years to complete the work. The Requiem was performed for the 32nd annual “Celebration” choral workshop in the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Durham, NC, on Friday August 4, 2006.

It was called a "Celebration" concert and was a highlight of the workshop. The concert, free to the public, was introduced with a welcome from Roberta Van Ness, President of Hinshaw Music. The first part of the program featured highlights of organ and choral music from the Hinshaw catalog. The second half of the concert focused entirely on the music of Scott.

The Requiem by Brahms had a direct influence on Scott resulting in several parallels between the two works. Both used the text from Revelation 14:13. Scott also chose

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
not to use the text from the Roman Catholic Mass. In addition, both composers focused on the living, not the dead.

Scott mentions text was one of the most challenging aspects of writing the Requiem:

By not using the pre-existing Latin Mass for the Dead, I was faced with creating meaningful sequence of scriptural passages laced with a couple of Donne texts and one hymn text by Timothy Dudley-Smith. Since I am coming from the Reformed perspective, the text deals with the need for preparation for the world to come in this life. It is important to take careful note of the Collect from The Book of Common Prayer which I quoted on the title page. This is not placed there in any sense of piety, but as an indication of the meaning to be enfolded with in the work. Otherwise, it deals with comfortable words about the blessed condition of those departed into the company of God.  

Scott gathered his text from common and uncommon sources. In addition, Scott's text selection comes from the King James Version. Funeral sentences, scriptures, and Psalms are found in many other Requiems. The text by John Donne in the second movement speaks about repenting before it is too late: "Tis late to ask abundance of thy grace when we are there; here on this lowly ground, teach me how to repent." The text of repentance is followed by "Search me O God," which reflects the view that one’s eternal state depends on our preparation in the current life.

The inclusion of Revelation 4:8b, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come" states God's ability to sustain the blessed saints throughout eternity. The Timothy Dudley-Smith hymn elaborates on the Revelation texts. The 23rd Psalm and the final prayer by John Donne adds the appropriate ending and meaning and effect of final rest.

34 Ibid.
"Blessed Are the Dead"

“Blessed Are the Dead”, the first movement in the work, is the last movement composed. Scott says writing this particular movement was the most challenging for him. 35 “I realize that the other movements, many of them were some of the finest pieces I had written, so having to come up with something to open it that was of real quality was a real challenge.”

Text

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on! Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors for their works do follow after them.”
Revelation 14:13 KJV, alt.

Musical Form

The musical form unfolds in a series of four sections, beginning with the piano introduction (mm. 1–19). Table 4.1 shows the overall structure of the first movement “Blessed are the Dead.”

35 Ibid.
Table 4.1 The overall structure of the first movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>MM #</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Tempo Marking</th>
<th>Dynamic Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-19</td>
<td>Piano Introduction</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>mp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>20-33</td>
<td>Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>mp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A’</td>
<td>34-43</td>
<td>Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>44-53</td>
<td>That they may rest from Their many labors</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>mp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>53-88</td>
<td>For their works do follow after them</td>
<td>Slow</td>
<td>53-61 mp 62-63 p 64-82 mf 82-89 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C’</td>
<td>83- End</td>
<td>Their works do follow after them</td>
<td>Slow</td>
<td>83-95 f 95-98 mf 99-end p-pp-ppp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The compositional technique most utilized in “Blessed are the Dead” is the fugue. The fugue begins measure 53. He explains, “When you look at the piece, the text helps you write it, the text lends itself to write the fugue.”\(^{36}\) Scott presents the fugue subject in C major in measure 53 in the alto voice (Figure 4-1). The tonal answer appears in the soprano voice in measure 56 (Figure 4-1). The subject appears again in the bass in measure 61 and the tonal answer is restated by the tenor voice in measure 64 (Figure 4.1). The alto voice sings the subject at measure 69 and is answered by the soprano in the relative mi-

\(^{36}\) Ibid.
nor. The subject is stated once again in the tenor and bass voice in the relative minor at measure 74 (Figure 4.2). The episode is stated in a sequence in measures 78-82 in the alto and bass, followed by the soprano and tenor. The use of stretto can be found on measure 82-89 in the original key of C major (Figure 4-3). The episode is stated again in measures 90-94 (Figure 4-4). In measure 95 the accompaniment resembles the prelude in the bass clef (Figure 4-4).
Figure 4.1 Scott, *Requiem*, mm. 53-61, movement 1.
Figure 4.2 Scott, Requiem, mm. 74-77, movement 1.
Figure 4.3 Scott, *Requiem*, mm. 82-89, movement 1.
Figure 4.4 Scott, *Requiem*, mm. 90-109, movement 1.
“Blessed are the Dead” is firmly rooted in C major. He visits F# major and E-flat major briefly at measure 43-52 (Figure 4.5) and returns to C major in measure 53 to begin the fugue (Figure 4.1). In measure 73 the key changes to the relative minor (Figure 4-2). Scott returns to the original key of C major in measure 82 (Figure 4.3) and remains there until the last five measures of the piece which move through the harmonies of A minor, A-flat, G-flat and finally returning to C major on the final two measures (Figure 4.8)
Figure 4.5 Scott, *Requiem*, mm. 44-52, movement 1.
The fugue that begins at measure 53 comes to a climax at the episode in measure 90. (Figure 4.7) The bass and alto are singing an octave apart as are the tenor and soprano, the fugue ends reflecting on the word “rest,” by moving through the harmonies of A minor, A-flat Major, and G-flat Major. The accompaniment then returns to original harmony of C major on the final chord (Figure 4.8).
Figure 4.8 Scott, *Requiem*, mm. 95-109, movement 1.
Rhythm

The composer indicates a tempo marking of (quarter note = 44), largo. He uses a triplet figure throughout the entire movement to provide rhythmic fervor. In measure 34 he chose to highlight and elaborate the word “Blessed” by using the triplet figure. (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9 Scott, *Requiem*, mm. 30-38, movement 1.
Scott describes this movement as one of the most challenging in the entire work, and was the next to the last piece written. He states that the introduction reminded him of the music composed during the Elizabethan era. This piece is written for SATB chorus with a soprano solo. Scott is extremely fond of the texts of John Donne. *At the Round Earth’s Imagin’d Corners* is a familiar text to many. However unlike many composers, Scott set this text to driving rhythms and mixed meter to bring out the excitement of the resurrection.

**Text**

At the round earth's imagined corners, blow
Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go,
All whom the flood did, and fire shall, o'erthrow,
All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance, hath slain, and you whose eyes,
Shall behold God, and never taste death's woe.
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space;
For, if above all these, my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of thy grace,
When we are there. Here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent; for that's as good
As if thou'hadst seal'd my pardon with thy blood.
John Donne
Musical Form

This selection is through-composed. The musical form unfolds in a series of three sections, beginning with the organ introduction (mm. 1-16). Table 4.2 below shows the overall structure of the second movement “At the Earth’s Imagin’d Corners.”

Table 4.2 The overall structure of the second movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>MM #</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Dynamic Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>Organ Introduction</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17-31</td>
<td>At the round earth’s imagin’d corners…</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>32-65</td>
<td>All whom the flood did, and fire shall overthrow…</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>66-End</td>
<td>But let them sleepe, Lord, and mee morn a space…</td>
<td>Slow</td>
<td>mf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Harmony

At the Round Earth’s Imagin’d Corners is fixed in f minor. A sense of forward motion is created through the use of mixed meter. To add a sense of drama and to highlight the importance of the text and to create word-painting opportunities beginning at
measure 36, Scott moves through non-functional harmonies of A minor, F minor, A minor, F minor, C# minor, A major, C# minor, B minor, G minor (Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11 Scott, Requiem, movement 2.
Rhythm

When asked about the rhythmic ideas in this piece, Scott says that he asked, “How would this person speak this particular text?” With this in mind, he set much of the text using mixed meter. Although the tempo is slow throughout, the composer provides a unique nuance to each section by changing meters. For example, while keeping the eighth note constant, measures 1-16 are in 2/4; measure 17 is in 6/8; measure 18 is 5/8; measure 19 is in 9/8 and measures 20-22 are in 6/8. With the changing meters for different sections of the music, the tempo remains fairly constant throughout the work (66 beats per minute) making the meter changes feel subtle.

When the composer indicates to move the tempo ahead or indicates more motion, he often increases the rhythmic activity in the accompaniment. Examples of this are found below with an eighth-note/sixteenth note melodic pattern that is added for rhythmic fervor.

![Figure 4.12 Scott, Requiem, mm. 28-30, movement 2.](image)

37 Ibid.
"Search Me, O God"

Text

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Where Shall I go from your Spirit? And Where shall I go from your presence? If I ascend up to the heav’n, you are there; If I make the grave my bed, you are there. If I rise on wings of the morning and dwell in the lands across the sea, even there will your hand uphold me; And there will your right hand sustain me. Psalm 139:23-24, 7-10 KJV, alt.

Musical Form

This section is ABA or ternary form. The musical form unfolds in a series of two sections, beginning with the organ introduction (mm 1-2). Table 4.3 shows the overall structure of the second movement “Search Me O God.”

Table 4.3 The overall structure of the third movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>MM #</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Dynamic Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Organ Introduction</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-15</td>
<td>Search me, O God, and know my heart…</td>
<td>Adagio</td>
<td>mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>16-44</td>
<td>Where shall I go from your spirit…</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>45-End</td>
<td>Search me, O God, and know my heart…</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Harmony

This section is primarily in the key of E-flat Major with the use of the relative minor. The harmonic language in this movement is unlike previous sections. Scott employs smooth harmonic transitions to create word painting and dramatic effects in the music. An example of both of these concepts can be found in the middle section of part B. Scott uses word painting in the harmony to illustrate the text “If I make the grave my bed” in E-flat minor and “If I rise on the wings of the morning” in C-flat major (Figure 4.13).

Rhythm

The rhythmic devices in “Search Me, O God” relate to tempo, more specifically the use of tempo changes moving from phrase to phrase. Scott indicates that the A section should be slow enough for the quarter note to receive the pulse (quarter = 60). In measure 15, he suggests a marking (quarter = 76), a little faster. In measure 35, he requests “Faster with great vigor” (quarter = 88) (Figure 4.14). Below is an example of how the tempo, articulation, unison, and two part writing reflect the activity and meaning of the text “Even there will your hand uphold me your right hand sustains me”.
Figure 4.13 Scott, *Requiem*, mm. 22-31, movement 3.
Figure 4.14 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 32-39, movement 3.
"A Vision of Heaven"

This movement was written previously and commissioned by All Saints’ Episcopal Church in Morristown, TN for the celebration of its 100th Anniversary, November 1, 1992 and first performed on that day, All Saints’ Day. Scott states that setting the text from Revelation became challenging at times due to “speech like” rhythm. With that in mind, Scott chose to set “A Vision of Heaven” in a declamatory, through-composed form. Most of the solo and choral material is recitative.

Text

Then one of the elders asked me, “These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?” I answered, “Sir, you know.” And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, “they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord, the God Almighty, who was and is and is to come. Hosanna in the highest.

Revelation 7:13-17, 4:8 KJV, alt.
Matthew 21:9b KJV, alt

Musical Form

The musical form unfolds in a series of five sections, beginning with the organ introduction (m. 1-4). Table 4.4 shows the overall structure of the fourth movement “A Vision of Heaven.”
Table 4.4 The overall structure of the fourth movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>MM #</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Dynamic Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>Organ Introduction</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>Mp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5-28</td>
<td>And one of the elders answered and said unto me…</td>
<td>Adagio</td>
<td>Mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>28-70</td>
<td>Therefore, Are they before the very throne of God.</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>Mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>71-86</td>
<td>And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes…</td>
<td>Adagio</td>
<td>Mp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>86-91</td>
<td>Who was and is to come…</td>
<td>Adagio, a little faster.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>92-106</td>
<td>Hosanna in the Highest</td>
<td>Adagio</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Harmony**

“A Vision of Heaven” begins in C Major and moves to E Major at measure 15. The tempo markings in the B section influences the chord structure in measure 36 through 43 by alternating between the D-flat and E-flat7 chords. The choral recitative is continued throughout much of this passage (Figure 4.15).
Figure 4.15 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 36-46, movement 4.

In measure 66, word painting is placed in the accompaniment to enhance the text “water” (Figure 4.16). The key changes to B minor briefly at 71 and changes to A-flat major in measure 81 (Figure 4.17). D major is the key at measure 98. In measure 101 to the end Scott remains in A minor with an A major Picardy 3rd as the final chord (Figure 4.18).
Figure 4.16 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 63-71, movement 4
Figure 4.17 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 80-82, movement 4.
Rhythm

The meters in this movement predominantly are in 3/4 with changes to 2/4 and 4/4. The final section is in 6/8. This piece calls for much use of rubato. The homophonic phrases are carefully marked, showing breathing, changes in tempo, and changes in dynamics. Scott utilizes more movement in the baritone solo starting in measure 8 (Figure 4.19).
Figure 4.19 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 1-18, movement 4.
The choral parts enter in measure 29, and continue to employ more movement (Figure 4.20).

He indicates acceleration in tempo beginning at measure 36 (quarter note = 76) (Figure 4.21). In measure 80, Scott requests a starting tempo of (quarter note = 60). The text “Holy, Holy, Holy,” is employed in the same manner as “Blessed” in the first movement. Once again, he selected the triplet figure (Figure 4.22).

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Figure 4.20 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 27-30, movement 4.

Figure 4.21 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 36-40, movement 4.
Figure 4.22 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 80-82, movement 4.

Measure 86 accelerates to quarter note at $= 69$, on the text “who was and is and is to come” (Figure 4.23).
Figure 4.23 Scott, *Requiem* mm 86-91, movement 4.
In measure 92-98 he changes the rhythm pattern in each measure to emphasize the text “Hosanna in the Highest.”

Figure 4.24 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 92-100, movement 4.
“A City Radiant as a Bride”

The fifth movement is dedicated to the Adult Choir of Crossroads Church in Overland Park, Kansas in memory of Ed Wiberg.

Text

And the angel carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, holy Jerusalem, descending out of the heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her radiance was like a precious jewel, like jasper, clear as glass. It had a great and high wall with twelve gates and twelve angels. And the twelve gates were of twelve pearls: each of a single pearl. And the street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Revelation 21:10-12a, 21, 22 KJV, alt.

A city radiant as a bride and bright with gold and gem, a crystal river clear and wide, the new Jerusalem; a city wrought of wealth untold, her jeweled walls a flame with green and amethyst and gold and colors none can name. A holy city, clear as glass, where saints in glory dwell. Through gates of pearl her people pass to fields of asphodel. In robes of splendor, pure and white, they walk the golden flood, where God himself shall be their light and night shall be no more. A city ever new and fair, the Lamb's eternal bride; no suffering or grief is there and every tear is dried. There Christ prepares for us a place, from sin and death restored, and we shall stand before his face, the ransomed of the Lord.

Musical Form

This movement is through-composed. The form unfolds in a series of three sections, beginning with the baritone solo in measures 1-12. Table 4.5 shows the overall structure of the fifth movement *A City Radiant as a Bride*.

Table 4.5 The overall structure of the fifth movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>MM #</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Dynamic Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-54</td>
<td>And the angel carried me away in the Spirit…</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>mp-f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>55-94</td>
<td>A city radiant as a bride and bright with gold and gem…</td>
<td>Adagio</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>94- end</td>
<td>A city new and fair, the lambs eternal bride…</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>mf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Harmony

“A City Radiant as a Bride” begins in A minor with open fifth's in the first five measures in order to create a hollow, open sound. The baritone solo is in the form of a chant, during the introduction (Figure 4.25). As the text is speaking about “Heaven,” Scott uses a mixture of non-functional harmonies in the introduction, a minor, c# minor, b-flat and g minor. In measures 15-16 and 21-22 the organ plays sixteenth notes to evoke the emotion of the text “radiance like a precious jewel, like jasper, clear as glass” (Figure 4.26).
5. A City Radiant as a Bride
And the Angel Carried Me Away

K. Lee Scott (ASCAP)

Revelation 21:10-12a, 21-22
Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1987

Mysteriously, freely \( \frac{j}{4} = 60 \)

BARTONE SOLO

Organ

Fed.

S.A.

T.B.

Figure 4.25 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 1-13, movement 5.
Figure 4.26 Scott, *Requiem* mm 14-22, movement 5.
He then moves to D minor at the start of the hymn at measure 55. (Figure 4.27)

Figure 4.27 Scott, Requiem, mm 51-61, movement 5.
Rhythm

The changing meters in this movement predominantly alternate between 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4, with 3/4 serving as the primary movement until measure 55. In order to sustain weight and gravity, Scott changes meter at measure 55 to 3/2 and continues throughout the remainder of the movement.
“The Lord is My Shepherd”

The sixth movement was written in loving memory of James L. Hutton.

Text

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
Psalm 23 KJV, alt.

Musical Form

This section is in ABA form. The musical form unfolds in a series of three sections, beginning with the introduction and flute accompaniment in measure 1-13. Table 4.6 shows the overall structure of the sixth movement “The Lord is My Shepherd.”

Table 4.6 The overall structure of the sixth movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>MM #</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Dynamic Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-13</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>14-36</td>
<td>The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want…</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>mp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>37-61</td>
<td>Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death…</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>mp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Harmony

“The Lord is my Shepherd” is in G major. It moves to E major in the second half of the A section (mm. 24-36). The B section begins in E minor at measure 37 (Figure 4.28).

Figure 4.28 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 18-25, movement 6.
Figure 4.29 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 35-41, movement 6.
In measure 41 (Figure 4.30) the piece rests in D# minor and returns to the original key of G major in measure 61 (Figure 4.31).

![Figure 4.30 Scott, Requiem, mm 39-41, movement 6.](image)

**Rhythm**

Although the tempo is slow throughout the movement, a unique nuance to each section is accomplished by changing meters. Measures 1-29 are in 6/4; measures 31-32 are in 3/2; measures 33-39 returns to 6/4; measure 40 is in 9/4; followed by one 3/2 measure, and then returning to the original meter of 6/4. With the changing meters for
different sections of the music, the pulse remains fairly constant throughout the work (112 beats per minute) making the meter changes feel subtle.

"The Blessed Dependancy"

“The Blessed Dependancy” is dedicated to The Reverend Dr. James Hoyt Slatton on the occasion of his 30th Anniversary as Pastor of River Road Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia, December 2, 2001. The text is the last paragraph of the final sermon “Death 's Duel” of John Donne in 1631.

Text

There wee leave you in that blessed dependency, to hang upon him that hangs on the Crosse, there bath in his tears, there suck at his woundes, and lie downe in peace in his grave, till hee vouchsafe you a resurrection, and an ascension into that Kingdome, which hee hath purchas'd for you, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood. Alleluia! Amen.
John Donne

Musical Form

This section unfolds in a series of three sections, beginning with the introduction and flute accompaniment in measure 1-13. Table 4.7 shows the overall structure of the seventh movement “That Blessed Dependancy.”
Table 4.7 The overall structure of the seventh movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>MM #</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Dynamic Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-25</td>
<td>There wee leave you in that blessed de-</td>
<td>Largo</td>
<td>mp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pendency…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>26-36</td>
<td>Till hee vouch-safe you a res-</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>urrection, and ascension…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>37-</td>
<td>A city new and fair, the lambs eternal</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>mf</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>End</td>
<td>bride…</td>
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Harmony

This movement begins and ends in C major. The introduction is reminiscent of the first movement. The dissonance in measure 4 between the soprano/alto and tenor/bass recalls movement 1 (Figure 4.32).

In measure 20, open fifths are used to place emphasis on the word “grave.” Word painting in the accompaniment once again features the triplet figure, stressing the text “peace in his grave” (Figure 4.33).
Figure 4.33 Scott, Requiem, mm 16-22, movement 7.
Leading up to the climax and final measures of the movement, non functional harmonies are displayed in measure 39 and 40 (Figure 4.34).

Figure 4.34 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 39-46, movement 7.
In the final 5 measures, open fifths and octaves are given to the choir with an augmented 9\textsuperscript{th} and augmented 11\textsuperscript{th} to provide harmonic color and give the feeling of no final rest (Figure 4.35).

![Musical notation]

Figure 4.35 Scott, Requiem, 59-63, movement 7.

**Rhythm**

The composer indicates a tempo marking of quarter note=44, largo, just as he did in the first movement (Figure 4.36). Scott utilizes the dotted quarter and eighth notes to create excitement that accelerates to a tempo marking of quarter note=54 to measure 36. “Alleluia” accelerates to the end of the movement. Scott employs rhythmic techniques to portray the text approaching the climax (Figure 4.37).
Figure 4.36 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 1-10, movement 7.
Figure 4.37 Scott, *Requiem*, mm 29-38, movement 7
Keaton Lee Scott is a widely published, commissioned, and performed contemporary composer of choral music. A study of the composer’s compositional style characteristics, along with analysis of his major work Requiem provide insight into his approach to choral music. More than a mere consideration of his technical style, this study has attempted to show Scott’s desire to create music that becomes an extension of the text.

All artists develop an individual signature related to their work. This may reflect their individual perspectives and values. Scott was immersed in a love of literature and music. It was his parents and college professors who instilled this love in him, and through them he found his voice as a composer in choral music. After an in-depth investigation and analysis of the Requiem and choral works of Scott, several compositional traits were found that describe his style.

Scott sets both sacred and secular texts from some of the world’s greatest poets, as well as a number of biblical texts. He has a desire to introduce and share the texts that he is passionate about with those who perform his music. The composer believes that poetry is the “mother of music.” The text dictates both the form and the style of music.
Scott uses traditional forms; the majority of his works are ternary form. Many of his folk song and hymn arrangements are strophic or modified strophic. Scott’s melodies are created out of the harmonic structure, and are the “personality” of each of his works. His melodic phrases are clearly marked for breathing and changes in tempo. Melodic leaps are used to bring out the most important words and syllables in phrases. The majority of his melodies are traditionally set in the top voice and the composer often presents a melody in unison before breaking into parts.

Scott frequently uses rhythm to emphasize the speech rhythm. With poetry or biblical text that is rhythmically free, he accomplishes this by using mixed meters with slow and fast tempos. He regularly creates drama, agitation, excitement or tension by setting triple rhythms against duple rhythms.

His work is well constructed in form, harmony, melody, and rhythm. The union of text and music will provide the performers and listeners with an experience that goes beyond the notes and words to touch the heart and soul. His works are accessible but also provide appropriate musical challenges to both performers and listeners. His music provides insight into universal experiences, emotions, and events.

This analysis of K. Lee Scott’s Requiem will hopefully familiarize his musical style to choral conductors. In doing so, it is hoped that conductors and singers will be able to perform his compositions more effectively and with greater understanding.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A

A CONVERSATION WITH K. LEE SCOTT

DW: What were the conditions that led you to write a Requiem?

LS: My two degrees are both in choral literature and conducting, so I knew the great works in the form by the great masters. Although I can think of two Requiems in German, there are virtually none completely in the English language. It was my desire to write such a work reflecting my Reformed view of Holy Scripture concerning both living and dying. This seemed to me a reasonable idea since many churches cannot or will not perform Latin Masses for the Dead. In other words, it seemed to me as a Christian composer, it was a project that begged to be written. It has been gratifying to read two accounts online of Presbyterian pastors who have evaluated the theological content of my Requiem in notes to their congregations in preparation for performances of the same. Furthermore, after seeing in a private showing the original score of the Mozart Requiem in Vienna in 1976, I was smitten and purposed from that day to create something in some way comparable in my own range of style and abilities. I am aware of how he outclasses me as a composer, but that did not stop my determination to give it my best shot. Coming that close to greatness changed me.

DW: Was the Requiem a commission or dedication?

LS: Since I did not receive a single commission for it, I worked over a long period of time piecing it together from several separate commissions. Finally, after the final five movements were finished, a friend commissioned the first two movements in honor of his late parents. In this way I was able to relate the first movement to the last thematically. In a couple of cases with the pre-existing movements from previous separate commissions, the key relationships were not desirable, so adjustments were made for maximum continuity in their new context within my Requiem.

DW: Was your compositional process different than it was in other works?

LS: Not really. I studied composition both as a student and privately from time to time, but I do not have any degree in composition. I, therefore, am somewhat unorthodox in my compositional technique. Several times you have asked me which comes first, melody or harmony. I tend to conceive them at one time with a strong desire that all parts be interesting to sing. If there is a difference in this work from my standpoint, most my commissions and compositions are individual pieces, and here the relationship and contrast from movement to movement emerges, as am important factor. Not only is the form within each movement important, but the overall architectural effect is important as well. This
stretched me considerably as a composer.

**DW:** Were any of the movements, or was any of the material, pre-existing?

**LS:** After writing "Search Me, O God" in the early 1980's, I knew that it would work well in the context of such a work. After that, I sought other texts, which I could include and work into other commissions. In at least one case "That Blessed Dependancy", I discovered years after its creation that it would work nicely as the concluding piece in the work. In some ways it is a patch-work quilt.

**DW:** Many conductors will excerpt movements of various pieces. What is your opinion in regarding excerpting from this work?

**LS:** The narrative movements drawing from the Revelation will probably not lift as easily as individual pieces. Also, the Donne setting of "At the Round Earth's Imagined Corners" will be harder to program separately. Otherwise, the remaining movements would work well separately in worship and concert. I have know of performances of "A City Radiant as a Bride" being lifted as an individual piece.

**DW:** One of the most original and personal elements of your Requiem is the text selection. Please describe your thought process and the decision making in that regard.

**LS:** Text selection was, by far, the most difficult and challenging aspect of its creation. By not using the pre-existing Latin Mass for the Dead, I was faced with creating a meaningful sequence of scriptural passages laced with a couple of Donne texts and one hymn text by Timothy Dudley-Smith. Since I am coming from the Reformed perspective, the texts deals with the need for preparation for the world to come in this life. It is important to take careful note of the Collect from The Book of Common Prayer which I quoted on the title page. This is not placed there in any sense of piety, but as an indication of the meaning to be enfolded with in the work. Otherwise, it deals with comfortable words about the blessed condition of those departed into the company of God. A simple reading of the texts in sequence will reveal its straightforward and direct message.

**DW:** Were there other texts that you almost chose? If you were to do it again would you choose the same texts?

**LS:** Most of the texts seemed logical. The biggest challenge was selecting passages from The Revelation. Passages from this book are difficult to set and can easily get away from you as a composer. I am pleased with how my two selections turned out, but I searched long and hard to find just the right passages. Overall, I am very pleased with the texts and find the final Donne passage to be a powerful ending for the work.

**DW:** Conductors often view themselves as the composers advocate. What would you tell conductors and choirs as they approach your Requiem?
I would encourage all who approach it to see its overall architecture, and at the same time see individual details. It is like a fresco, which is somewhat large in its completeness, but there are many details which add to the overall design. I would encourage them to draw the listener carefully along with them as they reveal the form and shape and to thereby reveal its spiritual meaning. I like to think about the feeling I would like to leave hanging in the air when the piece is completed.

**DW:** What was your decision to have different available accompaniment?

The full orchestration or organs alone were my first choices. The smaller, chamber version was created for smaller choirs and for those on a budget. After completing the smaller version, it became my favorite version of the accompaniment. This came as a great surprise to me. Some who have performed this version have commented that it must have been conceived with this in mind. I attribute its success partly to my love for Bach Cantatas and my careful study of them. I think the tightness of the chamber version shows that influence clearly. Players often comment on their enjoyment of playing it as well. This still amazes me.

**DW:** Is this work a personal statement of faith?

**LS:** Of course. What else would propel me to spend so much time on a work which would make so little money? It was a labor of love and was dreamed of for a long time. It is deeply gratifying to hold a score in my hand and realize it as a dream fulfilled.
APPENDIX B

A CONVERSATION WITH DR. DONALD TROTT

DW How was your experience with K. Lee Scott as the composer of “Lux Aeterna” conducting the premiere performance?

DT My experience with K. Lee Scott was terrific. He is a very considerate person and excited for his works to be performed.

DW Can you discuss the process for this project? Did Scott attend any of the rehearsals? Were there any interpretation issues that you discussed with the composer?

DT I believe “Lux aeterna” was a work he has just completed or was close to finishing and wanted a recording of the work that would be sold along with the score by Hinshaw. He approached me about the project and I was very interested, especially since it involved my Men’s Chorus. K. Lee Scott actually conducted the work, which I again believe was my suggestion. I always feel if the composer is interested in conducting the piece, then the students will have a better experience; certainly more informative in terms of interpretation, etc. There were no interpretation issues.

DW What advice would you give to conductors when approaching this work?

DT I don’t have any specific advice, other than it is a wonderful multi-movement work for a men’s choir. It does require a good tenor soloist and fine cellist.

DW Have you programmed and conducted other works by Scott other than “Lux Aeterna”?

DT Yes. I have performed several of his octavos in the past. We commissioned a piece called ‘Who is gonna make up my dy’in bed’ and he came and conducted that a couple of years prior to “Lux…”

DW What elements of his music are challenging for the group and conductor and what elements of his writing are accommodating to the voice and musical performance?

DT Most of his music is written with great knowledge of choral singing as he has created hundreds of pieces. The challenges are similar to those we experience often which are created by the challenge of the line or harmony, etc.
DW Did Scott contact you about working together, or did you contact him?

DT He contacted me, but we had worked on another project prior.