



FROM HEAVEN DISTILLED A CLEMENCY:  
PROGRAM NOTES, March 4 & 5, 2017

Requiem

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

- I. Introit
- II. Kyrie
- III. Domine Jesu Christe  
*Matthew Siebenhuhner*
- IV. Sanctus
- V. Pie Jesu  
*Emilie Bishop*
- VI. Agnus Dei
- VII. Lux Aeterna
- VIII. Libera Me  
*Matthew Siebenhuhner*
- IX. In Paradisum

INTERMISSION

Four Lenten Motets

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

- I. Timor et tremor
- II. Vineam electam
- III. Tenebrae factae sunt
- IV. Tristis est anima mea  
*Rachel Clark Fountain*

I Got a Robe

Paul Carey (b. 1964)

CHAMBER SINGERS

Angel vopiyashe

Pavel Chesnokov (1877-1944)

*Laura Quinn*

General William Booth Enters Into Heaven

Fenno Heath (1926-2008)

*Matthew Shurts*

Saints Bound for Heaven

arr. Alice Parker (b. 1925) &  
Robert Shaw (1916-1999)

From Heaven Distilled a Clemency

Tarik O'Regan (b. 1963)

*Rachel Clark Fountain*

ORCHESTRA

Organ: Christopher Jennings  
Harp: Merynda Adams  
Violin II: Nancie Lederer, Amy Soto  
Cello: Terrence Thornhill, Peter Lewy  
Timpani: Adrienne Ostrander

Piano: Helen Raymaker  
Violin I: Ruth Zumstein, Rebecca Harris  
Viola: Maggie Speier, Mary Babiarz  
Bass: James Buchanan

DURUFLÉ *REQUIEM* (Notes by Dennis Keene, used with permission)

It was Easter Sunday, 1912, and young **Maurice Duruflé** and his father were traveling from their home town of Louviers to the great city of Rouen. It was the most exciting trip the ten-year-old boy had ever taken. One can almost imagine his eyes bulging as they arrived in that great metropolis and came upon the huge and ancient Gothic cathedral. What a day he must have had, getting the grand tour, including a visit to the boychoir school and a talk with its director. But his excitement at all this was completely dashed at the end of the day when his father informed him that he wouldn't be returning home, but, starting that very night, living there for the next several years! In Duruflé's own words, "I needn't say what was my reaction. That night in the dormitory I sobbed on my bed."

Fortunately, the kind choirmaster of the Cathedral heard the boy crying, and raised his spirits by telling him of all the exciting things in store for him: how he would get to study music all the time, be a part of all the great High Masses and ceremonies of the Cathedral, and one day play the organ. Duruflé said of this turning point in his life, "A great page opened in front of me." And what a page it was! His life for the next six years was centered on one of the glories of France, the Cathedral of Rouen. Built in the 1200s, the magnificent cathedral had attracted countless visitors down through the centuries. One famous visitor, Claude Monet, was painting his famous Rouen Cathedral paintings just eighteen years before Duruflé arrived.

Although life at the choir school was strict (up at 6:00 every morning, no heat in the dormitories, prayers at 6:30, studies and rehearsals all day), young Maurice was thrilled by all the musical activity and he was quite overwhelmed by the great liturgies of the Cathedral. His years there were to have an extraordinary influence on him, arguably the single strongest artistic influence of his life. For the world of the Gregorian chant - its melodies, modal harmonies, the rise and fall and supple contours of the lines, and the spiritual and mystical aesthetic - this special world remained at the core of his artistic soul for his entire career.

Every morning of the week the choirboys would study and rehearse the chants for the upcoming Sunday. There were evening rehearsals as well, when the boys would be joined by tenors and basses. On Sundays they sang at the High Mass in the morning and Vespers in the afternoon. At the end of the Vesper service was the liturgy of the Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament, for which the Rouen townspeople packed their ancient cathedral week after week. Duruflé described the grand procession as follows: it was led by two Swiss men in specially-designed uniforms, followed by the boychoir, then fifty seminarians, dozens of canons and clergy of the cathedral, all dressed in white and grey ermine, and finally by a large velvet canopy under which processed the Archbishop carrying the Holy Sacrament. Directly in front of the canopy were eight thurifers - men carrying pots of incense which they waved regularly, creating great clouds of smoke. This was the kind of ceremony he lived with every week during this part of his life. And it is important to remember that the central musical component of this and all other liturgies was Gregorian chant. This influence was to become a part of his very being.

In 1918 World War I was over and it was time for Duruflé to move on. That meant Paris and its famed conservatory. So Duruflé, now sixteen years old, moved to Paris to study with the great Tournemire, who would prepare him for his entrance examination.

Charles Tournemire and Louis Vierne were the two most important French organist-composers of the day. Both born the same year (1870), they were classmates in César Franck's organ class. Duruflé was to study with both of them. First it was the impulsive, temperamental, brilliant Tournemire, organist at Saint Clothilde, where Franck had played. Particularly celebrated as an improviser, Tournemire would fill each week's Mass with inspired improvisations that heightened the liturgical drama. Most of the improvisations were based on the Gregorian chants of the day. The impulsive emotion, the color, the mysticism and drama of the liturgy were the cornerstones of his art. After a year of lessons, Tournemire felt Duruflé was ready for the conservatory and told him to go spread his wings and fly on his own.

Duruflé, ever humble and self-effacing, wanted more preparation, whereupon he began his studies with Louis Vierne. A total contrast to Tournemire, Vierne was a charming, cultivated man. And, instead of improvising personal, mystical statements at a parish church, Vierne presided over the Grand Organ of Notre Dame Cathedral, the most important post in France, where state occasions were commonplace. With Vierne, Duruflé learned impeccable structure and architecture, a far more rigorous and disciplined compositional style. It was Duruflé's greatness that he was able to combine the exceptional imagination of Tournemire with the perfection of formal compositional techniques of Vierne into his own style, and ultimately surpassed his two masters.

When Duruflé finally auditioned for the Paris Conservatoire in 1920, he apparently impressed the jury so strongly that they predicted he would be a first-prize winner. In fact, he won five first-prizes - in organ, harmony, accompaniment, counterpoint and fugue, and composition. Duruflé was in the organ class of Gigout and in Paul Dukas's class, where he learned much about orchestration and composition. (A classmate of his in Dukas's class was the young Olivier Messiaen.) Duruflé's student years in Paris came at the end of the Impressionists' era. Most of the impressionist painters had died several years before; a few (Degas, Renoir, Monet) passed away around the time of his arrival in Paris. Claude Debussy, who was such a colossal influence on virtually all twentieth-century French composers, died in 1918. The more classical, traditional music influence, Gabriel Fauré, retired as Director of the Paris Conservatory right as Duruflé entered.

During his student years Duruflé was named Assistant Organist to Tournemire at Ste. Clothilde and later to Vierne at Notre Dame. Upon graduation his career progressed brilliantly. He quickly became a popular concert organist and was appointed Titular Organist at St. Etienne-du-Mont in Paris, a post he held for the rest of his life. In addition, he became a highly-respected composer whose works were published by the prestigious firm, Durand, and were performed by major performers and ensembles.

In 1939 he gave the world premiere of Poulenc's Organ Concerto and advised Poulenc on the organ registrations. Duruflé's recording of the work (with George Pretre conducting) is still the classic performance. During much of Duruflé's career he played with orchestras, and was considered the orchestral organist par excellence.

In the 1940s he was named Professor of Harmony at the conservatory ("The best we ever had," said Messiaen) and assisted Marcel Dupré with his organ class. It was in this organ class that he

came to know a particularly attractive and brilliantly-gifted young organ student, Marie-Madeleine Chevalier. In 1953 they were married and she became co-titulaire at St. Etienne-du-Mont. He was twenty years older than she.

For many years the Duruflés toured widely, giving joint organ recitals. They were received everywhere with packed houses and exceptional enthusiasm from both professionals and the general public alike. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the Duruflés were so highly regarded and in such great demand they could practically name where they would perform.

Then, tragically, in 1975 they were critically injured in a head-on auto collision in Southern France. Each of them underwent a long and painful series of operations. Mme. Duruflé eventually recovered enough to resume playing at church services - her first was Christmas Eve, 1976. During the next ten years, Maurice Duruflé seldom left his bed in their apartment, across the street from St. Etienne-du-Mont. He died in 1986.

Of the *Requiem*, Duruflé wrote:

This Requiem is entirely composed on the Gregorian themes of the Mass for the Dead. Sometimes the musical text was completely respected, the orchestral part intervening only to support or comment on it, sometimes I was simply inspired by it or left it completely, for example in certain developments suggested by the Latin text, notably in the *Domine Jesu Christe*, the *Sanctus*, and the *Libera Me*. As a general rule, I have above all sought to enter into the particular style of the Gregorian themes.

Therefore, I have done my best to reconcile, as far as possible, the Gregorian rhythms, that which has been fixed by the Benedictines of Solesmes, with the demands of modern meters. The strictness of barline structure, with its strong beats and weak beats returning at regular intervals, is in effect difficult to be compatible with the variety and suppleness of the Gregorian line where there is only a succession of impetus (rising) and falling. The strong beats had to lose their dominant character to take the same degree of intensity as the weak beats, in such a manner that the rhythmic Gregorian accent of the stressed Latin syllables could be placed freely on whichever beat of our modern meter.

As to the musical form of each of the pieces composing this Requiem, it was generally inspired by the same form set forth by the liturgy. The organ has only an episodic role (in the original orchestration). It intervenes, not to support the choirs, but only to underline certain accents or momentarily to disguise the orchestral sonorities that sound too human. It represents the idea of tranquility, faith, and hope. This Requiem is not an ethereal work which sings detached from worldly anxiety. It reflects, in the unchangeable form of the Christian prayer, the anguish of man facing the mystery of his last ending. It is often dramatic, or filled with resignation, or hope, or terror, like the same words of the scripture used in the liturgy. It tries to translate the human feeling in front of their terrifying, inexplicable or consoling destiny. This Mass consists of the nine parts of the Mass for the Dead: *Introit*, *Kyrie*, *Domine Jesu Christe*, *Sanctus*, *Pie Jesu*, *Agnus Dei*, *Lux Aeterna*, *Libera Me*, and finally, *In Paradisum*, the ultimate response of faith to all the questions, by the flight of the soul toward Paradise.

Durufié scored three different accompaniments of this work: 1) the original version for large orchestra; 2) a version for solo organ accompaniment; and 3) a second orchestral version (three trumpets, timpani, harp, strings, and a major organ part). It is this final version that we have chosen for this performance, except that the organ can also take the role of the trumpets.

**Introit:** The Requiem begins with the gentle-running sixteenth notes of the violas and organ, which seem as if they have been flowing on for centuries. On top of this, one measure later, Durufié gently places the ancient Gregorian melody - so familiar to the faithful, so comforting. Thus the timeless ritual begins, the procession of generations, those who passed away since the beginning of time and are now at peace, and those on earth or yet unborn who will one day join them.

This is one of the great openings in music. It is also a perfect example of Durufié's art at its best. To begin with, Durufié was one of those rare composers who could express a lot with simple means. Here, with very little happening, and in the briefest time, he has evoked so much for us. These measures also show his trademark gift of combining the beautiful impressionist orchestral background with the ancient Gregorian chants. These two elements fuse together in a unity that is at once luxuriously beautiful in a worldly sense and utterly, profoundly spiritual. Durufié portrays in his music a loving theology where one element does not negate the other.

The Gregorian melody unfolds, one phrase at a time, punctuated by the "ahs" of the women's voices. The first real crescendo occurs on the words "luceat eis" ("and let perpetual light shine upon them!"). A brief second section provides contrast. Here the chant is intoned first by sopranos, then altos, to a very simple organ accompaniment.

The running notes of the violas and organ return for the third section. This time the chant melody is given to the first and second violins, in canon, one note apart, as the choir comments: first, the tenors and sopranos with repeated "c" pedal points followed by a simple downward melody, then the full choir in harmony (for the first time) with a large crescendo, again on the words "let perpetual light shine on them!" The movement concludes quietly, as the running sixteenth notes slow down, little by little, and lead us straight to the next movement.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,  
et lux perpetua luceat eis.  
Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion,  
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.  
Exaudi orationem meam,  
ad te omnis caro veniet.

Grant eternal rest to them, Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
A hymn befits you, God in Zion,  
and a vow to you shall be fulfilled in Jerusalem.  
Hear my prayer,  
for unto you all flesh shall come.

**Kyrie:** This movement represents perhaps the most inspired music Durufié ever composed. It is written in the traditional three parts of a *Kyrie*. The first and third parts are composed in a style inspired by Renaissance contrapuntal motets. Durufié had so absorbed the Renaissance idiom and had developed such a mastery of contrapuntal composition (independently-moving voice parts) that he was able to compose in this antique style with complete naturalness. And, rather than using Renaissance harmonies, he spoke with his own harmonic language, thus creating music that was both ancient and twentieth-century.

The first section begins most simply with just voices and organ. The Gregorian melody is heard in the bass and alto voice parts, with commentary melodies sung by the sopranos and tenors. After all four parts are going, Duruflé superimposes the chant melody (played by trumpets) in “cantus firmus” style, one slow note at a time. In this and the similarly-composed third section, Duruflé follows in the line of other great composers who chose the most formal, rigid musical forms to express their most profound musical thoughts.

The middle section is freer, more personal; the sopranos’ and altos’ pleas for mercy are intertwined, accompanied by very expressive string writing.

Then, with great emotion, almost as if they can’t contain themselves, the women build up to the stunning re-entry of the basses and tenors. Then the sopranos and altos enter again with the entire orchestral ensemble, as the whole community sings to God from the very depths of their souls, with all the emotions and feelings they can ever express. As this movement concludes in a profoundly touching, prayerful way, the listener is aware that he has experienced one of the great moments in music.

Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy.
Christe eleison.	Christ, have mercy.
Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy.

***Domine Jesu Christe:*** The compositional formality of the *Kyrie* is contrasted by the freer, highly imaginative third movement. Intended for the Offertory of the Mass, it is by far the longest movement of the piece. It travels through such a variety of imaginative terrain that it is practically an epic journey in itself. Much of this movement is reminiscent of the impulsive, highly-charged, dramatic music of Tournemire.

It begins in a dark, mystical world, conjured up first by the organ and then by the deep tones of the bass and celli. The altos enter with a rich chant-like melody (“Deliver the souls of the faithful people.”). Suddenly the whole ensemble bursts forth, “Save them from the lion’s mouth!” What follows is one of the most dramatic sections of the whole work. As the chorus cries out that the souls of the departed be saved from the horrors of hell, the orchestra is heard in fast, jagged, flamboyant music. After a ferocious peak, the music subsides, and eventually comes upon a new world, ethereal, distant, mystical. Here the pure tones of the sopranos are cushioned on soft string chords. (The chords are off-beat and irregular, producing a nebulous effect.) A variety of delicate instrumental colors accent the section: an organ oboe stop, trumpet chords played with mutes on, a solitary flute note on the organ. The section is concluded by the comforting “Quam olim” of the sopranos and altos.

The next section is highly imaginative. It begins with the violas playing two notes pianissimo, with a very fast tremolo “près du chevalet.” Duruflé has asked them to move their bows back and forth as fast as possible in tiny little strokes at the spot where the viola strings meet the bridge. This produces an eerie, nervous effect. An organ stop is then heard, obscure, unsettling. The men enter, mysteriously, in unison. Suddenly, the entire string section opens up with a giant crescendo - all of them in a wild tremolo. The men soar up to the highest notes. This, too,

subsides, in a most *misterioso* manner. The section, and the whole movement, conclude with the comforting refrain of the women, “quam olim Abrahae.”

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex Gloriam,  
libera animas omnium  
fidelium defunctorum  
de poenis inferni,  
et de profundo lacu.  
Libera eas de ore leonis,  
ne absorbeat eas tartarus,  
ne cadant in obscurum.  
Sed signifer sanctus Michael  
repraesentet eas  
in lucem sanctam,  
quam olim Abrahae promisisti  
et semini ejus.  
Hostias et preces tibi,  
Domine, laudis offerimus;  
tu suscipe pro animabus illis,  
quarum hodie memoriam facimus.  
fac eas, Domine,  
de morte transire ad vitam,  
quam olim Abrahae promisisti,  
et semini ejus.

Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory,  
free the souls  
of all the faithful departed  
from infernal punishment,  
and from the deep abyss.  
Free them from the mouth of the lion,  
do not let Hell swallow them up,  
do not let them fall into the darkness.  
But let Michael,  
the holy standard-bearer,  
bring them into the holy light,  
as you once promised to Abraham,  
and to his seed.  
Sacrifices and prayers of praise  
we offer to you, O Lord;  
receive them for the souls of those  
whom we commemorate today;  
grant them, Lord,  
to pass from death to life,  
as you once promised to Abraham,  
and to his seed.

**Sanctus:** After the dark mysteries of the third movement, the effervescence of this famous Sanctus is most appealing. Against the rippling organ ostinato the chant melody is heard in three part chords in the violins and violas and in the women’s voices. The bass and cello pizzicatti (plucked notes) add to the buoyancy. For this writer, this music has always conjured up the picture of a choir of angels singing - angels who have had a bit of champagne - like the famous sculpture, “The Smiling Angel,” on the façade of Reims Cathedral (in the capital of the Champagne district).

The Holy, Holy, Holies are sung three times: *piano*, *mezzoforte*, *forte*. Then the music quiets down and the celebrated build-up begins. Against a jazzy rhythmic background of plucked instruments and the rippling organ part, the first hushed Hosanna is sung by the altos. The sopranos enter, a bit higher but still pianissimo. The tenors can’t wait any longer. They charge in, mezzo-forte, in another key with a whole new accompaniment. Then the basses, second violins, and trumpets. Then the altos, timpani, harp, first violins, sopranos. A trumpet fanfare. A gigantic crescendo. And, as the bass line plummets to the bottom, the rest of the ensemble explodes into the stratosphere in one of the most extraordinary climaxes in twentieth-century music. The happy angels conclude the movement as it began.

Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth;  
pleni sunt coeli  
et terra gloria tua.

Holy, Lord God of hosts;  
the heavens and earth  
are filled with your glory.

Hosanna in excelsis.  
Benedictus, qui venit  
in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

***Pie Jesu***: The *Pie Jesu*, which comes in the center of this Requiem, is the only completely solo movement of the work. This is actually a solo for two musicians, a mezzo-soprano (or contralto) and a cello. The first time many people hear Duruflé's *Requiem*, they are reminded of Fauré's *Requiem*. Of course, the more they get to know the Duruflé, the less similar they appear. They are, in fact, completely different, and no more so than in their *Pie Jesu*'s. Fauré's, written for soprano - and probably sung by a boy - is profound. But there is a purity, almost an innocence to it. Duruflé's *Pie Jesu*, on the other hand, is the utterance of a mature person who has experienced the joys and sorrows of life. It is intense, very deeply felt, and very personal, perhaps the expression of a mother who has lost a child. There is deep sorrow and loss, but also consolation, as she knows the child is at peace. As the movement accelerates suddenly, she cries out with a mixture of deep grief and perhaps uncertainty at the fate of the loved one. Finally, there is resignation and ultimate belief in the peace.

Pie Jesu, Domine,  
dona eis requiem sempiternam.

Merciful Lord Jesus,  
grant them eternal rest.

The next two movements are the prayerful, meditative movements of this Requiem.

***Agnus Dei***: The *Agnus Dei* is testament to Duruflé's gift of balance. After the stark intensity of the *Pie Jesu*, we are given here a most beautiful quietude. We have been through so many strong emotions thus far in the Requiem; we need now some moments of peace and quiet. He achieves this by slow instrumental themes that provide wonderful counterparts to the vocal chant melodies, by the soft undulations of the harp and organ, and by a slow harmonic rhythm (the rate of change of harmonies is slow). There are, periodically, entire measures where nothing occurs except one chord, gently undulating. We need these quiet moments.

Amidst this background, Duruflé presents the haunting *Agnus Dei* chant in various voices, in various keys, and sometimes accompanied by newly-composed string melodies of the most beautiful nature. Unlike many *Agnus Dei*'s that beg for mercy, this one is imbued with an inner serenity, luminous and loving.

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

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

***Lux Aeterna***: The *Lux Aeterna* goes even further in the meditative vein. It is personal and intimate, incredibly understated, and deeply touching. It begins with a beautiful, simple organ solo followed by an *a cappella* choral section. The sopranos' melody rests on top of chords sung on "oo" by the rest of the choir. Another organ solo follows, this time a bit higher. Then the choir again, a fifth higher, and with the soprano melody played in canon on the organ flute stop.



Then Duruflé's master hand appears. Soft octave Cs appear in the strings, sustained for several measures, while the organ plays a chordal melody in an ancient fauxbourdon style and the sopranos and tenors intone, on a single note, the words "Give them rest and perpetual light." With such simplicity he turns our personal, private meditation into a timeless, universal prayer.

The organ music appears again, more extended this final time, followed by a short abbreviation of the *a cappella* choral material. Then the timeless music reappears, now in a lower, more touching key for the altos and basses.

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine, cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es. Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.	May eternal light shine on them, Lord, with your saints, for eternity, for you are merciful. Grant eternal rest to them, Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
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The *Libera Me* provides the last great dramatic moments of the Requiem. It begins with a surprising trumpet note, low and almost ugly (the "last trumpets" of the Judgment Day, no doubt). The basses sing a plaintive melody, with an underpinning of urgency and uncertainty in the strings. The tenors enter, and the world is more anxious and confused. Next the altos and then the sopranos. The music becomes still more frantic and chaotic until it spews forth in a brief fortissimo. A smoldering, swirling, agitated string undercurrent continues, while the men sing a rather desperate cry, "Tremens factus" ("I am trembling"). Sudden string attacks announce the Day of Wrath (Dies Irae), at first sung only by the men, then by the whole chorus with the *tutti* of the orchestra rumbling underneath.

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna in die illa tremenda, quando caeli movendi sunt et terra, dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem. Tremens factus sum ego, et timeo, dum discussio venerit, atque ventura ira. Dies illa dies irae, calamitatis et miseriae, dies magna et amara valde. Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine et lux perpetua luceat eis.	Free me, Lord, from eternal death on that day of dread, when the heavens and earth shall move, when you shall come to judge the world by fire. I am made to tremble, and to fear, when destruction shall come, and also your coming wrath. Day of mourning, day of wrath, of calamity and misery, the great and exceedingly bitter day. Grant eternal rest to them, Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
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This music eventually calms down and we find ourselves in a new, ethereal world. Pure soprano tones sing the chant, "Requiem aeternam," accompanied by the soft celeste stop (undulating strings) of the organ. After a brief orchestral interlude, the full chorus sings the principal *Libera* melody, in octaves, with great feeling. The movement concludes with seriousness and resignation.

***In Paradisum***: As soon as we hear the first organ chord and gentle harp notes, we know we are in another world. We have left the turmoil of earthly life. In what may be the finest setting ever composed for this text, Duruflé has created an extraordinary world, luminous, universal, timeless. The sopranos enter with the ancient chant, the chant that has been sung at requiem masses for centuries. At first their accompaniment is just organ and harp. Then a shimmering string halo appears. The final phrases of the chant are given to a flute stop on the instrument of the Church, the pipe organ. The chorus finishes the text in a ritualistic manner. As the voices fade away, lower and lower, the strings ascend, disappearing into the heavens. The centuries-old ritual is once again over, as the souls move on to their eternal Paradise.

In Paradisum deducant te Angeli.  
In tuo adventu  
suscipiant te martyres,  
et perducant te  
in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem.

May angels lead you into Paradise.  
At your coming  
may martyrs receive you,  
and may they lead you  
into the holy city, Jerusalem.

Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat,  
et cum Lazaro quondam paupere  
aeternam habeas requiem.

May the chorus of angels receive you,  
and with Lazarus, who once was a pauper,  
may you have eternal rest.

- Dennis Keene, *Voices of Ascension* (student of Mme. Duruflé)

#### PROGRAM NOTES by Dr. Anne Matlack

**Francis Poulenc** was a child of Paris, and a mixture of eclectic influences. His cosmopolitan, cultured mother taught him piano beginning at age 5, while his provincial father was a devout Roman Catholic. His mother and uncle hosted actors and artists at their apartment, and took him to concerts and galleries in the vibrant cultural life of the early twentieth-century Paris of Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, Proust, Picasso and Diaghilev. His summers were spent in the suburb of Nogent-sur-Marne, where he heard the wild accordion music of river boats and cafés with which he later sought to infuse his own music. His musical training began with the Spanish pianist Ricard Vines, who introduced him to Satie, the surrealist Jean Cocteau, and Stravinsky. By the time he was 17, he became part of an avant-garde group of young composers dubbed “Les Six”—Poulenc, Auric, Durey, Honegger, Milhaud and Tailleferre—who rebelled against the grandiosity of Wagner and the vagueness of Impressionism. They sought clarity and more emotional restraint, and celebrated the primitive, the everyday, and self-mockery.

James Reel of the *Arizona Daily Star* has a wonderful website called The Timid Soul’s Guide to Classical Music in which he states, “Poulenc and his circle hit the 1920s classical music scene with the same biting, nihilistic force with which the punk rock movement slammed into popular music in the 1970s.”

As Poulenc developed his largely self-taught style into a full-blown career, he was influenced by the neoclassic works of Stravinsky, the Dadaism of Satie, the surreal poets Apollinaire, Cocteau,

and Éluard, and such contrasting influences as Schubert's *Winterreise* (as he accompanied the baritone Pierre Bernac). Says Reel, "as his career progressed, Poulenc did retain his taste for tart harmonies and unexpected turns of phrase. But he also developed a fondness for traditional French qualities of grace, charm, and light melodiousness."

A huge turning point in Poulenc's life came in the summer of 1936: while he was vacationing in Uzerche, news reached him that his close friend, musician Pierre-Octave Ferroud, had been killed in a car accident. Severely shaken, he drove to a pilgrimage site at Rocamour, a place his father had told him of. The statue of the Black Virgin here had such a profound emotional and spiritual impact that he found himself returning to the faith of his childhood, and began work that night on his *Litanies à la vierge noire*, a work of "country devotion." For the rest of his life, Poulenc espoused and was inspired by his rediscovered religious fervor, and turned more and more to sacred music. Poulenc composed the ***Four Lenten Motets*** shortly after finishing his *Mass in G* in 1937. The texts are very old poems conflating and adapting Biblical passages from Psalm 55 ("Timor et tremor"), the Gospels ("Tenebrae factae sunt" and "Tristis est anima mea"), and Isaiah 5 ("Vinea mea electa").

These motets include high levels of dissonance alternating with sweet and diatonic moments, chosen to illuminate the emotional impact of the text. Poulenc said he thought his sacred choral music represented "the best and most genuine part" of himself: he used great care and variety of range (highs and lows), divisi (from single line and 2-part to 8 and 9 voice textures), dynamics (louds and softs) to serve the text. These motets seem to be very much set in the point of view of the sacrificial Jesus on the cross.

***Timor et tremor*** alternates impassioned *forte* outcries with spooky hushed *piano* sections. Dissonant outcries and chromatics are also used to create the urgent plea.

Timor et tremor venerunt super me,  
et caligo cecidit super me.  
Miserere mei, Domine, miserere,  
quoniam in te confidit anima mea.  
Exaudi Deus deprecationem meam,  
quia refugium meum es tu et adjutor fortis;  
Domine, invocavi te,  
non confundar.

Fear and trembling have taken hold of me,  
and darkness has descended upon me.  
Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy,  
for my soul has trusted in you.  
Hear, O God, my supplication,  
for you are my refuge and strength;  
O Lord, I have called upon you,  
let me never be confounded.

***Vinea mea electa*** begins with lush, poignant harmonies of C-sharp major, with the almost unbearably beautiful love for the sacrifice of the "vineyard I have chosen." The metaphors continue into the bitterness of dissonant betrayal as Barabbas is freed, returning to the opening theme so sadly, followed by betrayal again.

Vinea mea electa, ego te plantavi:  
quomodo conversa es in amaritudinem,  
ut me crucifigeres  
et Barabbam dimitteres?  
Sepivi te

O vineyard, my chosen one, I planted you:  
How have you been changed into bitterness,  
that you would crucify me  
and set Barabbas free?  
I built a fence around you

et lapides elegi ex te,  
et ædificavi turrim.

and picked the stones from you,  
and built a watchtower.

*Tenebrae factae sunt* begins with the darkness of the low alto and bass voices against a pedal tone, growing in dissonance and chromaticism at “Jesus cried out in a loud voice.” Jesus’ “my God, My God” is beautiful, restrained and in minor key, and followed by a single descending line depicting the bowing of his head and his death.

Tenebrae factae sunt,  
dum crucifixissent Jesum Judaei,  
et circa horam nonam  
exclamavit Jesus voce magna:  
“Deus meus, ut quid me dereliquisti?”  
Et inclinato capite emisit spiritum.  
Exclamans Jesus voce magna, ait:  
“Pater, in manus tuas  
commendo spiritum meum.”

Darkness covered the earth  
when the Jews had crucified Jesus,  
and about the ninth hour  
Jesus cried out with a loud voice:  
“My God, why have you forsaken me?”  
And with his head inclined, he gave up his spirit.  
Jesus, crying out again with a loud voice, said:  
“Father, into your hands  
I commend my spirit.”

*Tristis est anima mea* begins with the soprano soloist in the words of Jesus to his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane. Again, sweet sections alternate with “crunchy” piquant dissonance, to show an alternating plea and resignation to betrayal. This motet also includes the fastest and most difficult sections, which depict the fleeing of the disciples. The final sonorous section breaks into nine parts across three octaves, with the soprano floating luminously above.

Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem;  
sustinete hic, et vigilate mecum.  
Nunc videbitis turbam,  
quæ circumdabit me.  
Vos fugam capietis,  
et ego vadam immolari pro vobis.  
Ecce appropinquat hora,  
et Filius hominis tradetur  
in manus peccatorum.

My soul is sorrowful even unto death;  
stay here and watch with me.  
Now you shall see the mob  
that will surround me.  
You shall take flight,  
and I shall go to be sacrificed for you.  
Behold the hour approaches,  
and the Son of man will be betrayed  
into the hands of sinners.

To lighten the mood for a moment, and take another look at heaven, we present this up-tempo African-American spiritual, *I Got a Robe*, which not only rejoices in what awaits us in heaven (beautiful robes, new shoes, golden harps...) but also pokes fun at those who may not be allowed through just ‘cause they “talkin’ about it.” In the hard life of the slave, there was certainly comfort in the thought of the egalitarian justice of heaven (similar to Booth’s vision in Fenno Heath’s *General William Booth Enters Into Heaven*). **Paul Carey** studied composition with Alfred Blatter and Ben Johnston at the University of Illinois, and graduate studies at Yale University. He is an award-winning choral composer/arranger who has been commissioned by the national ACDA Women’s Choir Consortium, the world-class Incheon City Chorale of South Korea, Elysian Voices, Prometheus, Cambridge Madrigal Singers, Mid-Columbia Mastersingers and many more. He presented interest sessions at many state, division, and national conferences for ACDA and other professional teaching organizations. He is especially committed to creating

artistic arrangements of African-American spirituals in the hope of fostering and preserving this national musical heritage.

I got a robe, you got a robe, all God's chillun got a robe.  
When I get to heaven gonna put on my robe,  
I'm gonna shout all over God's heaven.

I got-a wings, you got-a wings, all God's chillun got-a wings.  
When I get to heaven gonna put on my wings,  
I'm gonna fly all over God's heaven.

I got a harp, you got a harp, all God's chillun got a harp.  
When I get to heaven gonna take up my harp,  
I'm gonna play all over God's heaven.  
Oh, ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heaven ain't goin' dere;  
I'm gonna play all over dat heaven.

I got shoes, I got-a shoes, all o' God's chillun got shoes.  
When I get to heaven gonna put on my shoes,  
I'm gonna dance all over God's heaven.  
Oh, ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heaven ain't goin' dere;  
I'm gonna walk all over God's heaven.

**Pavel Chesnokov** wrote over 500 choral works, fed by his experience as teacher of church singing at the Moscow Synodal School, precentor in several Moscow churches, and, from 1920 to 1944, professor of choral music at Moscow conservatory. This Easter exultation, *Angel vopiyashe*, exploits the dramatic elements of the text with the soprano soloist as the angel and the chorus as commentator. Chesnokov uses the extreme of range, both vocal and emotional, which are characteristic of Russian sacred music.

Angel vopiyashe Blagodatney:  
chistaya Devo, raduysia;  
I paki reku, raduysia:  
Tvoy Sin voskrese tridneven ot groba,  
i mertviya vozdvignuviy,  
liudiye, veselitesia!

The Angel cried out to the Lady Full of Grace:  
“Rejoice, O Pure Virgin!  
And again I say: Rejoice!  
Thy Son is risen from His three days in the tomb!  
With Himself He has raised all the dead!  
Rejoice, all ye people!”

Svetisia, svetisia, noviy Iyerusalime:  
Slava bo Ghospodnia na tebe vozsiya:  
likuy nine i veselisia, Sione!  
Ti zhe Chistaya, krasuysia, Bogoroditse,  
o vostanii rozhdestva Tvoyego.

Shine! Shine! O New Jerusalem!  
The glory of the Lord has shone on you!  
Exult now and be glad, O Zion!  
And thou, O Pure Theotokos<sup>1</sup>, be radiant  
in the resurrection of thy Son.

1- Mary, Mother of Jesus

**Fenno F. Heath, Jr.**, my mentor and teacher, began a lifetime of music as a student at Yale and later served as director of the Yale Glee Club from 1953 to 1992. We always enjoyed performing

his compositions and arrangements, as well as the masterworks to which he introduced generations of students. Harmonium's first ever commission was *Do Not Go Gentle* by Fenno on a text by Dylan Thomas, which we performed in 1995 and took on our very first tour to England.

Raised in Hampton, VA, his Yale college career was interrupted by service in the U.S. Army during World War II, and he graduated with the Class of 1950. During his days as a student, he conducted the Apollo Glee Club and sang with the Yale Glee Club, the Spizzwinks and the Whiffenpoofs. Heath then went on to the Yale School of Music, where he earned his Mus.B. in 1951 and his Mus.M. in 1952 as a student of Quincy Porter and Paul Hindemith. He remained at Yale to work with student musicians, eventually becoming the first Marshall Bartholomew Professor of Choral Conducting. Heath brought international recognition to the Yale Glee Club through the many tours he led nationally and worldwide. His compositions included major works for the inaugurations of four Yale presidents: Kingman Brewster, A. Bartlett Giamatti, Benno Schmidt and Richard C. Levin. Fenno enthusiastically embraced Yale's going co-ed in 1969, and when the Yale Glee Club became SATB by 1971, Fenno enthusiastically set about re-arranging decades of TTBB into mixed repertoire, from the football medley to his own serious compositions, such as ***General William Booth Enters Into Heaven***, which was originally performed in the 1959-60 season for TTBB, was then turned SATB in the 1970s and brought out about every 4-5 years or so. The musical language is typical Fenno—which is a rather original sound—influenced by Hindemith, the whole tone scale, his love for “crunch” and for interesting poetry.

Vachel Lindsey (1879-1931) considered himself the founder of “singing poetry” – poetry meant to be sung or chanted out loud. He cared deeply for social justice and racial equality; he spent much of his life traveling, and performing poetry for a meager living. *General William Booth Enters into Heaven and Other Poems* (1913) was his first trade volume (not self-published) and enjoyed a certain popularity. William Booth (1829-1912) was a British Methodist preacher who founded The Salvation Army and became its first General. This Christian movement with a quasi-military structure spread from London to many parts of the world and is known for being one of the largest distributors of humanitarian aid. Thus, the poem describes the motley crew of every kind of redeemed vagrant, drunkard, “drab and vixen,” mixing with “kings and princes by the Lamb set free.” The poem includes the instruction [To be sung to the tune of *The Blood of the Lamb* with indicated instrument] (an 1878 hymn by Elisha Hoffman), and includes actual instrumentation indications by Lindsay (“Bass drum beaten loudly”/“Banjos”) which Heath used as inspiration for the piano part. At the end, the poem calls for “reverently sung, no instruments” and the composer goes into an *a cappella* double choir structure, building and building until allowing for the piano to rejoin for the final refrain, “Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?”

This piece was a favorite of any Yale Glee Club singer who ever sang it, and according to one, Robert Shaw praised the ending. There is a famous orchestra/voice setting by Charles Ives (another Yale) which it seems likely that Fenno knew—its last phrase seems to be the starting place for his. Those who sang it on tour in the 70s remember a parody version including the lines “6ths and 7ths in a flash made whole,” and “up and down the mighty whole tone scale”—and at the end (when Booth meets Jesus) Fenno meets Shaw. (I like to think that is now true and they are both tuning up the heavenly choir!) Most sang it from Fenno's handwritten version, which

was always an added challenge, then it was published (readably) by Lawson-Gould in 1997, and can still be reprinted with permission. We hope you enjoy this rare performance.

Booth led boldly with his big bass drum—  
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)  
The Saints smiled gravely and they said, “He’s come.”  
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)  
Walking lepers followed, rank on rank,  
Lurching bravos<sup>1</sup> from the ditches dank,  
Drabs<sup>2</sup> from the alleyways and drug fiends pale—  
Minds still passion-ridden, soul-powers frail—  
Vermin-eaten saints with moldy breath,  
Unwashed legions with the ways of Death—  
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Ev’ry slum had sent its half-a-score,  
The round world over. (Booth had groaned for more.)  
Ev’ry banner that the wide world flies  
Bloomed with glory and transcendent dyes.  
Big-voiced lasses made their banjos bang!  
Tranced, fanatical they shrieked and sang—  
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)  
Hallelujah! It was queer to see  
Bull-necked convicts with that land make free.  
Loons with trumpets blowed a blare, blare, blare  
On, on upward thro’ the golden air!  
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Booth died blind and still by Faith he trod,  
Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God.  
Booth led boldly, and he looked the chief,  
Eagle countenance<sup>3</sup> in sharp relief<sup>4</sup>,  
Beard a-flying, air of high command  
Unabated in that holy land.

Jesus came from out the courthouse door,  
Stretched his hands above the passing poor.  
Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there  
Round and round the mighty courthouse square.  
Then, in an instant all that blear<sup>5</sup> review  
Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.  
The lame were straightened, withered limbs uncurled  
And blind eyes opened on a new, sweet world.

Drabs and vixens in a flash made whole!  
Gone was the weasel-head, the snout, the jowl!

Sages and sibyls<sup>6</sup> now, and athletes clean,  
Rulers of empires, and of forests green!

The hosts were sandalled, and their wings were fire!  
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)  
But their noise played havoc with the angel-choir.  
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)  
Oh, shout Salvation! It was good to see  
Kings and Princes by the Lamb set free!  
The banjos rattled and the tambourines  
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of Queens.

And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer  
He saw his Master thro' the flag-filled air.  
Christ came gently with a robe and crown,  
For Booth the soldier, while the throng knelt down.  
He saw King Jesus. They were face to face,  
And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place.  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

- 1- villains
- 2- prostitutes
- 3- likeness
- 4- to become very evident
- 5- dull/indistinct
- 6- female prophets

Composer, conductor, and teacher **Alice Parker** was born in Boston in 1925. She graduated from Smith College, and received her master's degree from the Juilliard School where she studied choral conducting with Robert Shaw. Her life-work has been in choral and vocal music, combining composing, conducting and teaching in a creative balance. Her arrangements with **Robert Shaw** of folksongs, hymns and spirituals form an enduring repertoire for choruses around the world. Robert Shaw was an American conductor most famous for his work with his namesake Chorale, with the Cleveland Orchestra and Chorus, and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, and as choral giant, mentor and teacher to almost all choral musicians of our era either directly or indirectly. The 223 choral arrangements created in the collaboration between Parker and Shaw were written between 1950 and 1967 for seventeen RCA Victor recordings made by the Robert Shaw Chorale.

The enduring quality of this repertoire is credited to Shaw's comprehensive grasp of both classical and popular music, and Parker's mastery of Shaw's arranging approach and technique; also supremely important were Parker and Shaw's continual desire to select folk-based music of high quality, to be faithful to the spirit of the melody and text, and to entertain the listener. The document concludes that Parker and Shaw's greatest contribution to the choral repertoire was their arrangements of early American folk hymns. Though these folk hymns were not originally intended for choral application, the Parker-Shaw arrangements preserve the spirit of the original hymn while making full use



of the resources of a four-part chorus, and thus providing the choral world with a significant repertoire. – James Edward Taylor *DMA Thesis, 2012, University of Alabama*

***Saints Bound for Heaven*** is found in Southern Harmony (shape-note hymnal) 1840, attributed to William Walker (1809-1875), its compiler, master American Baptist song leader; and J. Walker (no information). The rollicking text celebrates death as a release from earthly bondage.

Our bondage it shall end by and by.  
From Egypt's yoke set free,  
Hail the glorious jubilee,  
And to Canaan we'll return by and by.

Our Deliv'rer He shall come by and by.  
And our sorrows have an end,  
With our three-score<sup>1</sup> years and ten,  
And vast glory crown the day by and by.

And when to Jordan's floods we are come,  
Jehovah rules the tide,  
And the waters He'll divide,  
And the ransom'd host shall shout, "We are come."

Then with all the happy throng we'll rejoice.  
Shouting glory to our King,  
Till the vaults of heaven ring,  
And thro' all eternity we'll rejoice!

1- sixty

**Tarik O'Regan**, "one of the leading British composers of his generation" (*Gramophone*) who is writing "music of startling beauty" (*The Observer*), grew up in London, where he was born in 1978. Since 2007, he has divided his time between New York City and Cambridge, England. He recently taught at Rutgers, and the Harmonium Chamber Singers had the honor of working with him on *Threshold of Night* in 2014. Recent projects include *Suite from Heart of Darkness* for the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; a third solo album on the Harmonia Mundi label, *Acallam na Senórach*; and the premiere of his first opera, *Heart of Darkness*, at the Royal Opera House, London. Currently he is working on a full-scale opera about the life of Lorenzo Da Ponte commissioned by Houston Grand Opera for 2019. This season sees the release of two recording projects: *A Celestial Map of the Sky*, orchestral music performed by the Hallé Orchestra (on the NMC label); and *Mata Hari*, an evening-length ballet commissioned by the Dutch National Ballet and premiered in 2016 (on DVD/Blu ray for Euro Arts). O'Regan's father was a big band jazz aficionado, while his mother was interested in British rock bands *Led Zeppelin* and *The Who*. This influence is heard in ***From Heaven Distilled a Clemency***. "The bass lines were incredibly syncopated, even if the tune was quite simple. I'm attracted to that interplay," said O'Regan of *The Who*.

*From Heaven Distilled a Clemency* is the final movement of *Triptych*, three movements on texts from Jewish, Islamic and Christian writers connected by the theme of the after-life. *Threnody*, the first movement, was commissioned and premiered in 2004 in London. Movements II & III were written to commemorate those fallen in war, and premiered in 2005 in Portsmouth, England, a place whose long association with the British Navy makes Remembrance Day especially important. It was performed with the Fauré *Requiem*.

James Brown explains in a 2016 article in *The Choral Scholar*:

Realizing that the Fauré had a rather slow aesthetic, O'Regan composed *Triptych* to be more vibrant, sometimes displaying a dance-like quality. During his research he found that many cultures don't memorialize death in a slow manner...He decided to set texts from different cultural backgrounds, so it would have a more universal appeal.

Movements I (*Threnody*) and II (*As We Remember Them*) incorporate texts from Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn and English poet John Milton. *From Heaven Distilled a Clemency* uses texts from Hindu poet Bundahis-Bahman Yast, Sufi poet Rumi, and fragments of English poets Wordsworth and Hardy.

*Each shall arise in the place where their life [spirit] departs,*

Bundahis-Bahman Yast; (ninth century) [adapted], from "Sacred Books of the East," translated by Edward W. West (1860)

*[So] Why then should I be afraid? I shall die once again to rise an angel blest.*

Rumi (thirteenth century), from "Masnavi," Book III, translated by Edward H. Whinfield (1898)

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;*

*The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,*

*Hath had elsewhere its setting.*

*And cometh from afar.*

William Wordsworth (1770-1850), from "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" (1807)

*Calm fell. From heaven distilled a clemency;*

*There was peace on earth, and silence in the sky.*

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), from "And There Was a Great Calm"—on the signing of the Armistice (1919)

Before researching these program notes, I chose this piece specifically as a fast-paced foil to the mostly slow and lyrical aesthetic of the Duruflé *Requiem*. It was fun to find out that O'Regan shares my idea that there is too much slow choral music in the world!

We hope this journey into different ways of looking at the afterlife has brought you comfort and pleasure in our common humanity. Thank you for supporting the arts with your presence!