

A Requiem, at its core, is a prayer for rest- traditionally, for the deceased. The five movements of Dan Forrest's *Requiem for the Living*, (2013), however, form a narrative just as much for the living, and their own struggle with pain and sorrow, as for the dead. The opening movement sets the traditional Introit and Kyrie texts- pleas for rest and mercy- using ever-increasing elaborations on a simple three-note descending motive. The second movement, instead of the traditional Dies Irae, sets Scriptural texts that speak of the turmoil and sorrow which face humanity, while yet invoking musical and textual allusions to the Dies Irae. This movement juxtaposes aggressive rhythmic gestures with long, floating melodic lines, including quotes of the Kyrie from the first movement. The Agnus Dei is performed next (a departure from the usual liturgical order) as a plea for deliverance and peace; the Sanctus, following it, becomes a response to this redemption. The Sanctus offers three different glimpses of the "heavens and earth, full of Thy glory", all of which develop the same musical motive: an ethereal opening section inspired by images of space from the Hubble Space Telescope, a stirring middle section inspired by images of our own planet as viewed from the International Space Station, and a closing section which brings the listener down to Earth, where cities teem with the energy of humanity. The Lux Aeterna which then closes the work portrays light, peace, and rest- for both the deceased and the living.

*Requiem for the Living* was commissioned by the Hickory Choral Society (Hickory, NC), as part of their ongoing commitment to funding new major works for the choral repertoire. The work is Dan Forrest's largest piece to date, and was written over a period of approximately 10 months in 2012. It will be published in August 2013 by Hinshaw Music (Chapel Hill, NC), in both the full orchestral scoring, as well as a chamber scoring for smaller ensembles with organ and solo instruments. Several other performances are already planned, including one in Raleigh, NC, in August 2013, and one with full orchestra in Carnegie Hall in January 2014.