The Requiem Mass and Sacred Jazz: A Study of Catholic Liturgical Forms in
the Genre of Sacred Jazz

By
John Lamar White

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Abstract

This exegesis examines the role of religious and spiritual influence on works by jazz composers as related to my composition, *Requiem: a Suite of Jazz Orchestra*, a jazz suite based on the Requiem Mass. The exegesis details the Catholic origins of the Requiem and the Mass as musical forms and traces their lineages into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as concert works and memorials not bound by liturgical function. These forms and their lineages frame the development of both religious and religion-inspired musical works in the cultural climate of 1960s America. In particular, I focus on two composers, Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington, both of whom composed large-scale sacred works related to the jazz idiom. This project situates religion, primarily Catholicism, and spirituality in the context of jazz composition, and discusses music composed in this vein, including my own work influenced by the Catholic liturgical tradition.
Introduction

This exegesis centres on an examination of the liturgical forms of music within the Catholic Church and their relationship with jazz music. In particular, I focus on the Requiem Mass, the funeral rite of the Catholic Church. This body of research supplements the Requiem-inspired work that I have composed for jazz orchestra entitled *Requiem: a Suite for Jazz Orchestra*. In this exegesis I discuss works of jazz with liturgical leanings both within and outside of liturgical worship, focusing mostly on cases related to the Catholic Church. I first address the development of the Requiem Mass in the Catholic Church, and then present two case studies of jazz composers who have composed sacred works: the case of Mary Lou Williams (1910–1981) and the case of Duke Ellington (1899–1974). Finally, I discuss my composition through the lens of my research, considering both the history of the Requiem Mass and Williams’ and Ellington’s work of sacred jazz.

I document the Church’s development through a historical review of its musical forms against centuries of changes in the Church, and with regard to the growth of secularism and its permeation of the Catholic liturgy. Two periods of reformation of Church doctrines, the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), frame the Church’s relationship with the world outside of the Church. These periods of reform had significant effects on the liturgy of the Church and on musical forms related to the liturgy.

I discuss these periods of reforms over two separate chapters. Chapter 1 surveys the Requiem Mass from before the Council of Trent to the beginning of the Second Vatican Council. Chapter 1 also provides the first seeds of secularism’s influence both on the liturgy and on other music inspired by the Church. The discussion around the Requiem Mass broadens to encompass other musical forms that serve as dedications and memorials, extending the contexts that a liturgical form can occupy.

Chapter 2 continues the survey of the Catholic landscape during and after the period of the Second Vatican Council, exploring its effects on liturgical music and the introduction of jazz into the Catholic liturgy. The discussion in Chapter 2 also turns to the life and sacred jazz works of Mary Lou Williams, a composer who wrote her sacred jazz compositions within a Catholic context. I frame her work in dialogue with the Second Vatican Council’s reforms, examining both her compositions that are liturgically inspired and those that are liturgically functional.
In Chapter 3 I continue to address the genre of sacred jazz, turning to the case of the music of Duke Ellington. I explore how his liturgically-inspired work adapts to Christian contexts outside of Catholicism. In general, I frame both Williams’ and Ellington’s music within the social and political climate African Americans faced in the 1960s, particularly as related to the role African American musical traditions played in their works for sacred jazz.

The last chapter of this exegesis focuses on a brief overview of the structural components of the Requiem suite I composed. I also provide personal background for the work and a commentary on the Requiem suite, situating it in the context of jazz and liturgical music discussed in the previous chapters. My underlying argument is that there were a range of interrelated conditions in the 1960s that saw sacred jazz thrive in the works by Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington. Through this research, I have recognized precedents in the realm of jazz music that is liturgically tinged through the models of sacred jazz compositions of Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington, and I place my own work in line with their legacies.
Chapter 1: The Requiem Mass

Introduction

For as long as there has been life on our world, death has been our companion following each us along our journeys and meeting us at the conclusion of our time on Earth. For nearly as long as humans have been able to observe death and its effects on the living, we have celebrated the lives of those who have departed and honoured, or at the very least marked, their passing. Practices such as these can offer consolation to those who have survived the dead and provide forms of concluding actions on the behalf of those lost in the form of solemn recognition or prayers for them as they face what lies ahead after death. In the Catholic Church, such acts of intercession developed into the Requiem Mass.

Throughout this chapter I detail the history and structure of the Church’s funeral rite as a musical form from the inception of the Requiem Mass to the present. This is coupled with an examination of the burgeoning influence of secularism throughout time on the musical form of the Requiem Mass and on the Catholic Church. This resulted in the commencement of two ecumenical meetings of Catholic leaders to address how the Church would respond to secularism’s influence. In this chapter I discuss the shared parallels of internal and external factors that brought about each Council’s formation and compare how the two Councils’ reformative measures answered similar questions of secular influence. I also address the effects of each Council’s reformative edicts on the music of the liturgy. I discuss how those edicts affected the ways composers throughout music history would write and employ the musical forms of the Church and extend them beyond the contexts of the liturgy. In the final part of this chapter, I present other musical forms that serve as types of memorials and relate these forms to the Requiem Mass.

Requiem

Taking its name from the Introit that opens the mass, Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine [“Grant them eternal rest, oh Lord”],¹ the Requiem Mass is defined by the texts of prayers (including the Introit) that composers have set to music dating back to around the tenth

century. These canonical prayers were embodied in Gregorian plainchant melodies that set the two sections of the Mass, the Mass Ordinary and Mass Proper, albeit with some exclusions and alterations. The Requiem Mass, like the standard Catholic mass, consists of these two sections, the Mass Ordinary and the Mass Proper. The Mass Ordinary refers to the parts of the mass that are included at every celebration of the rite and maintain the same texts throughout the liturgical calendar. It consists of five parts: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. The Mass Proper refers to the chants that change their text throughout the liturgical calendar. It consists of six chants: an Introit, a Gradual, an Alleluia or a Tract (depending on the occasion), an Offertory, a Communion, and a Sequence.

Requiem Masses exclude the Gloria and Credo from the Ordinary and the text of the Agnus Dei is altered. The Requiem Agnus Dei reflects the spirit of the service by changing the concluding words of its three repetitive stanzas. Within the first two lines of the Agnus Dei, its text Miserere nobis ["have mercy on us"] is replaced by dona eis requiem ["grant them rest"] Agnus Dei concludes with dona eis requiem sempiternam ["grant them eternal rest"] replacing dona nobis pacem ["grant us peace"] from the third stanza. The chants of the Requiem Mass Proper also correspond to the occasion as a funeral rite on behalf of the dead. Its parts include the Introit, Requiem aeternam; the Gradual, Requiem aeternam; the Tract, Absolve, Domine, in place of an Alleluia; the Sequence hymn, Dies Irae; the Offertory, Domine Jesu Christe; the Communion, Lux aeterna; and a Responsory to the Communion, Libera Me, each one named for its incipit text. (Even though the Responsory is featured in every mass it is not part of the Ordinary). The text In Paradisum is often included as a sort of recessional that accompanies the coffin of the departed as it leaves the church and is taken to the cemetery. When setting the Requiem musically, composers have typically followed the structure as follows: Introit, Kyrie, Gradual, Tract, the Sequence hymn Dies Irae, Offertory, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, Communion and Responsory, and In Paradisum. Composers have often included additional, separate settings of some of these parts. A common example

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3 Chase, Dies Irae, xiii.
5 McKinnon, “Mass.”
6 Ibid.
7 Chase, Dies Irae, 2.
8 Ibid., 2-9.
of this is including an individual setting of the Benedictus taken from the Sanctus and the final prayer the Requiem Sequence, *Pie Jesu Domine*. The Sequence *Dies Irae* contains a number of verses that composers have often set as individual sections or movements in their work, examples of which I discuss later in this chapter. How composers have chosen to set these texts has varied throughout the history of the form and the way they do so is related to the time and context surrounding their work.

**The Medieval and Renaissance Requiem**

At its roots the Requiem Masses of the Medieval Period (400–1400) did not conform to a specific structure, dictated by the Church or otherwise. By the late centuries of the Middle Ages (1200–1300) with the flourishing development of the votive mass—the celebration of the mass outside of the liturgical calendar marking special occasions or people—the repertoire of Gregorian plainchants used in the liturgy had swollen. The chants associated with the Requiem alone had expanded to 105 known prayers. As a result, composers had myriad plainchants available to them when selecting and setting texts to the parts of the Mass Proper. Their decisions were often guided by regional practices of worship across Europe. The centuries-long proliferation of chant and unwieldy evolution of the liturgical practice was compounded in the Renaissance with the added weight of secularism’s emergence and the abuses of Church doctrine such as the practice of indulgences. This resulted in an ecumenical backlash known as the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, breaking the Church’s hold over Europe.

The commencement of the Council of Trent in 1545 was the Catholic Church’s answer to the Protestant Reformation and served both as a period of self-reflection with regard to Church doctrine and as a vehicle of reform to the Church’s practice of worship. This reformation of the liturgy, the Counter-Reformation, codified the music of the Mass and in turn, the Requiem Mass, into a structure that would last into the mid-twentieth century until the Second Vatican Council (also known as Vatican II). There were other ecumenical meetings of the Church, such as the First Vatican Council that took place during the late-nineteenth century, but these did not play a role in reshaping the music of the liturgy.

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10 Chase, *Dies Irae*, 263, 265.
11 Ibid., 1.
12 McKInnon, “Mass.”
13 Ibid.
The reforms published under the doctrines of the Council of Trent attempted to restore a rite of the Church that exalted a “living Tradition”\textsuperscript{14} of the Mass, free of secular influence. The Church accomplished this by publishing \textit{Decretum de observandis et etintandi in celebratione Missae}, Canon IX that “the Council recommended that all secular influences be eliminated from any music performed as part of the mass.”\textsuperscript{15} With this decree the Church established a series of mandates towards the composition of music for the liturgy and its existing repertory that, in addition to being without secularity, also “…must serve to uplift the faithful, . . . its words must be intelligible,…”\textsuperscript{16} The Catholic Church sought to accomplish this by emphasizing the recognition of traditions held by churches across Europe that could demonstrate a 200-year or longer history of their individual practices.\textsuperscript{17} In doing so, this directive afforded the Church the ability to elevate Gregorian chant over secularly entrenched liturgical polyphony, albeit without completely expunging it from Catholic worship. Polyphony would remain in the music of the Church, but the texts were mandated to be decipherable to the listener in Latin, the language of the Roman Rite.\textsuperscript{18}

Further implications of the Council’s 200-year measure of antiquity resulted in the near-elimination of the “sequence” from the celebration of the Eucharist. But the \textit{Dies Irae}, a primary distinguishing element of the Requiem form, was elected to remain in practice with three other prayers as sequences in the liturgical calendar.\textsuperscript{19} Each of the other parts of the Mass Proper (the Introit, the Gradual, the Tract, the Offertory, the Communion, the Alleluia) had multiple chants associated it when it appeared as part of a Requiem Mass. The reformatory measures of the Council of Trent parsed down the parts of the Mass Proper so that each part comprised a singular prayer text. Those singular prayer texts are the incipit texts for the parts of Mass Proper listed earlier in this chapter;\textsuperscript{20} those texts remained in the Requiem Mass into the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{21} An established or predominant Requiem form, however, cannot be completely ascertained after the Council of Trent; a codified Requiem

\textsuperscript{14} Alcuin Reid, \textit{The Organic Development of the Liturgy} (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 41-42.

\textsuperscript{15} Chase, \textit{Dies Irae}, 40.


\textsuperscript{17} Reid, \textit{Organic Development}, 42.

\textsuperscript{18} Chase, \textit{Dies Irae}, 39-40.

\textsuperscript{19} Reid, \textit{Organic Development}, 42.

\textsuperscript{20} These prayers again are: The Introit, \textit{Requiem aeternam}; the Graduale, \textit{Requiem aeternam}; the Tract, \textit{Absolve}, \textit{Domine}, in place of an Alleluia; the Sequence hymn, \textit{Dies Irae}; the Offertory, \textit{Domine Jesu Christe}; the Communion, \textit{Lux aeterna}; and a Responsory to the Communion, \textit{Libera Me}.

\textsuperscript{21} Karp, “Requiem Mass.”
Mass structure did not emerge until 1880.\textsuperscript{22} Even after the decrees of the Council of Trent, regional variances of the Mass Proper persisted.

The Church encouraged composers to write music within the bounds of the post-Tridentine polyphonic style. This led to the promulgation of new settings of the Sequence, \textit{Dies Irae}, and of the Responsory, \textit{Libra Me},\textsuperscript{23} though this is seen as a Baroque-period development.\textsuperscript{24} The prominence and popularity of the \textit{Dies Irae}'s plainchant melody and text —and with it, the associative characteristics of the Requiem that it carries— seems to be a result of this push for newly composed music and of the Church’s isolation of the text as the lone Sequence for the funeral rite. Expanding this idea to encompass the entire Requiem Mass, composers of the period of common practice and onwards inherited a mostly codified and singular Requiem form. While religious allegiances in Europe splintered in the sixteenth century, the sphere of influence and exposure of the Catholic Church and its practices persisted in the lives and colonial efforts of many Europeans. In the 400-year span of time between the Council of Trent and Vatican II, composers of both Protestant and Catholic denominations continued to compose liturgical forms informed by the long history of Church precedents before them. But despite the efforts of the Counter-Reformation, the Church was unable to mend the fraying of musical styles and evolution of the increasing secular influence over life in Europe as it approached the Age of Enlightenment.

\textbf{The Requiem in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries}

If the charge that the Council of Trent bestowed upon future generations was to uphold its reforms and its restoration of the celebration of the Eucharist in the sixteenth century, the impetus of artistic innovation in the seventeenth century proved too formidable for the Church to maintain its attempt at impermeability. The arrival of the Baroque period carried with its developments in vocal and instrumental styles that integrated into seventeenth-century life for the “entertainment” of the emerging social classes of the time. Secularism’s blooming in the seventeenth century was facilitated through a fledgling middle class, which began to provide fiscal support to art and entertainment alongside the Church and royal

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}
\item\textsuperscript{23} Chase, \textit{Dies Irae}, 40.
\item\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid.}, 97.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
courts that had long lent their patronage.\(^{25}\) Seventeenth-century liturgical music and practice thus bent again to the secular environment surrounding the Church.

The functional role music had been resigned to fulfill, in part to promote the simplification of the religious ceremony of the Mass, became gradually eclipsed by the stylistic influences of the music that had grown in popularity outside the Church, taking its inspiration partially in the form of decorative flourishes.\(^{26}\) The matter of polyphony stabilized as composers set the texts of the Requiem within two frameworks, stile antico and stile moderno. These frameworks embodied the style and spirit of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, respectively, and each worked under the guidelines set in place by the Council of Trent. Stile Moderno, though, operated as the vehicle that introduced the secular practices found in opera into the liturgy. Its writing for the voice highlighted bel-canto singing\(^{27}\) and instrumental accompaniment that achieved independence from vocal subservience,\(^{28}\) that it was its own unique compositional parameter, that mirrored music in the liturgy’s own release from strict ceremonial duty.

As advancements in the arena of style in compositions for the Requiem Mass grew, so did composers’ treatment of its texts resulting in the earliest developments and expansion of form of the Council of Trent’s codified funeral rite. Composers’ adherence to the Tridentine preference of Gregorian chant waned through the course of the century; the medieval melodies of the Requiem Mass Proper are found relegated to the subject of paraphrase in larger polyphonic settings.\(^{29}\) Because of the increasing decorative nature of both vocal and instrumental music in the liturgy, the texts of the Requiem became subject to a similar stylistic flare witnessed in the treatment of these larger musical elements. Chase writes, “...musical considerations were viewed as more pivotal to a requiem’s success than the previously required mass text,”\(^{30}\) further indicating the gradual supplanting of music’s liturgical function in favour of the artistic endeavours of composers of the period.

This treatment of the text carries with it influences from the micro level of structure (e.g., the recitation of the chant melody) to the macro level (e.g., movement structure), influences that appeared towards the end of the Baroque era. Passages of music became elongated by the simple repetition of the chant text in the service of musical impetus rather

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\(^{25}\) \textit{Ibid.}, 89.
\(^{26}\) \textit{Ibid.}, 90.
\(^{27}\) \textit{Ibid.}
\(^{28}\) \textit{Ibid.}, 94.
\(^{29}\) \textit{Ibid.}, 94.
\(^{30}\) \textit{Ibid.}, 93.
than of the liturgical action. The result of this shift of paradigm resonates on a near exponential level: as the phrases grew longer so did the Requiem’s length. When the words, through stile moderno, began to serve the spirit of the period rather than serving the forward trajectory of the Mass, the form itself expanded beyond the capacity required of the liturgy, laying the foundation for the music to manifest into works that can exist in contexts outside of the Catholic Church.

On the largest level of form, Baroque composers were the first to merge and separate sections of the texts from the Mass Ordinary and Proper to create multi-movement structures and set trends for future composers to follow. Prominent combinations of Mass parts included the joining of the Introit and Kyrie together and the Agnus Dei with the Communion while the segmentation of the Dies Irae’s verses into individually composed sections added another level of significance to the Sequence contributing to its diverging evolution into an entity of its own in later eras as stated previously, further discourse of the Dies Irae is included later in this chapter and acts as a link to the broader discussion of music as a memorial. Baroque composers took the convention of interchanging settings of the Dies Irae’s verses between chant and polyphony and expanded their treatments to a wider palette of vocal styles and textures. Though these settings began as small sections that showcased the combination of voices available within a choir, ranging from soloists up to a full setting of the choir, one can observe the trajectory of structural delineation wherein Dies Irae verses grew into individual movements of Requims typical of the eighteenth century onwards.

The ability of the Council of Trent to rein in the musical aesthetics of the liturgy was fleeting at best. Requiem Masses were commissioned to commemorate the passing of individuals of the upper social strata. Though this is not without precedent across the dominion of the Church’s influence, the continuation of Requims dedicated to high profile individuals suggests a departure and a level of dismissal of the efforts of the Church to curb areas of possible abuse, such as the misuse of votive masses playing a crucial role in triggering the Protestant Reformation. While adhering to a majority of the principles set in place by the Council, namely in the treatment of polyphony, composers departed from the Council’s decrees in areas of style and liturgical function, as detailed above. Baroque developments in these arenas of music and its place in worship illuminate the threads that

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31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 94.
34 Ibid.
35 Karp, “Requiem Mass.”
weave the Requiem Mass’s transformation from a Church-bound ritual to a concert work, a memorial that can exist beyond the confines of the liturgy. The basis of the Council of Trent’s restoration of the liturgy resided under the direction of instilling its rites in the “living Tradition” of the Church in hope that its doctrines would guide the liturgy and maintain its integrity with foresight of the ever-developing ages to come. The expansion of what a Requiem has become and what it serves—and perhaps all music encompassed for the liturgy and the meanings associated with it—embodies the ethos of a “living Tradition,” even though the Requiem as a form is no longer aligned with the ecumenical council’s grand intention.

The Requiem works of many later nineteenth-century composers demonstrate a tangential trajectory away from works in service of the Catholic rite. These works represent a broader landscape of religious orientation following the Baroque period. The first development in this direction is the nineteenth century’s concert mass—also referred to as a Requiem—defined by Robert Chase as, “...designed for performance in the concert hall and on the operatic stage.”36 As nineteenth-century composers built upon the styles, larger forms, and orchestras that had grown in size since the Classical period, a truly independent mass emerged as an entity separate from the Church.

This schism of genre is the culmination of the aforementioned encapsulation of secular influences and societal factors seen in masses and requiems of the Baroque period that continued through the centuries. Due to the swelling of these external effects, composers of the nineteenth century were afforded the ability to flex their compositional prowess unencumbered by the restraints of liturgical practice, and to place musical considerations at the forefront concerning matters of structure and text setting. Composers continued established trends concerning which parts of the Mass Ordinary and Proper were combined, but as these concert works were released from any sort of liturgical confine, composers could opt to omit sections like the Sequence entirely from their settings37 or introduce new texts from outside of the Catholic tradition.

The Nineteenth-Century Requiem

The liberation of liturgical forms such as the Mass and Requiem Mass from liturgical practice in the nineteenth century is perhaps the hallmark of artistic achievement in the development

36 Chase, Dies Irae, 237.
37 Ibid., 238.
of these forms into works of their own genre. Settings of Catholic rites that served the liturgy were still composed in the Romantic era and a counter movement that echoed the spirit and decrees of the Council of Trent, known as the Caecilian Movement, emerged in response to the engorged symphonic settings that had become popular during this time. However, the Catholic Church no longer set the course of musical evolution within these forms, nor did the Church make attempts to rein in such advancements until the next era of liturgical reformation, the commencement of Vatican II. The existence of compositions of liturgical forms for secular contexts and the Church’s decision to not attempt to regulate these works is paramount in understanding what now is a Requiem if not an entity defined by liturgical and inherently Catholic identity.

The nineteenth-century concert Requiem manifests itself as type of musical memorial, one that carries with it the weight of nearly a half-millennium worth of traditions by a singular religion in its practices of valediction on behalf of those who have departed by those who have survived them. The emotions that are associated with a Requiem, emotions that stretch across the plane of loss and the Catholic tenets of life, death, and resurrection, are purposefully connoted by composers that set Requiems for the concert hall today for these very reasons. Composers of the Romantic period could also conjure such imagery through the invocation of the Dies Irae’s plainchant melody in other non-liturgical settings, establishing a trend that persists into the present. The strength of the Requiem and the Sequence Dies Irae as a vehicle of emotional impact lay not only in the subject matter, but also in the shared exposure and experience of this form and its texts among the overall population of Europe across time and social class. This funeral rite and its texts were the predominant ritual that penetrated the lives of Europeans in one form or another since before the Middle Ages. It also informed the funeral rituals of the branches of European Protestantism that branched off from Catholicism beginning with the Protestant Reformation.

Though not all Requiems composed for the concert hall served as memorials, Romantic composers laid the seeds of development towards the practice of memorialization through the Requiem vis-à-vis other contemporary forms and genres. Two principal examples of nineteenth-century requiem settings that embody the act of memorialization and present the plurality of what such an act encompasses are the Verdi-led collaborative effort of thirteen Italian composers Messa per Rossini (1869, first performed 1988) and Brahms’ Ein Deutsches Requiem (1868). Messa per Rossini stands out for its intentions as a work to

38 Ibid., 243.
39 Chase, Dies Irae, 239.
“...commemorate the life and work of Gioachino Rossini.” Verdi’s choice to employ the Requiem form is emblematic of the long tradition of the form conflated with all of the symbolism it comprises: a work to mark the passing of Rossini (he himself a prominent societal figure for whom a votive mass would be offered for), Catholicism’s prominence in Italian society, and the segmentation of the mass parts including the verses of the Dies Irae into individual movements so that each composer could offer their own intersession. The interplay of these elements in Messa per Rossini demonstrates the versatility and power of the form as a poetic device that takes all of the associative parts of what comprises a Requiem and erects a monument and independent body of work to honour the passing of an individual.

Ein Deutsches Requiem stands in almost complete contrast to the above elements that define both a traditional Catholic Requiem and its nineteenth-century ancestry in works like Messa per Rossini and other requiem compositions be they for the concert hall, the liturgy, as memorials, or otherwise. Brahms’ setting is a concert work that exists outside even the Lutheran Church, a Protestant denomination to which many Germanic composers belonged. (Brahms was not a practicing Lutheran.) The texts of his requiem omit any traces of the Latin liturgy with passages from the Lutheran Bible in their place. To say, “in their place,” though, is a misnomer, as Ein Deutsches Requiem comprises seven movements whose texts bear no semblance to the Latin Requiem text, nor to other Lutheran settings that often rhyme with their Catholic counterpart. The nature of the text eschews both assumed contexts of death and larger Christian overtones despite its source material. Brahms opts to commemorate “‘humanity’ by comforting those who remain in the world rather than praying ceremonially for the souls of the dead in the form of a sung liturgy.” Ein Deutsches Requiem sets an important precedent for the works that carry the title Requiem in the era to come, not only concerning the use texts outside of the Latin liturgy, but also in the arena of what is and can be memorialized under that guise.

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40 Ibid., 302.
41 Chase, Dies Irae, 539.
43 Bozarth and Frisch, “Brahms, Johannes.”
The Twentieth-Century Requiem

The concert requiem of the nineteenth century in all of its permutations was a harbinger of what the Requiem became in the twentieth century. The nineteenth-century Requiem repertoire consists of a continued tradition of both liturgical and non-liturgical works that subdivide further into secular requiems and war requiems with areas of gray between these requiems and broader liturgical practice and influence. Following in the footsteps of the Romantic departure from adherence to Latin texts, twentieth-century requiems featured increased proliferation of external source material pulling from secular and religious texts and frequently reflecting regional identity. One example of this is Penderecki inserting a Polish hymn into one of the movements of Dies Irae verses in his Polish Requiem.45 This recalls the pre-Tridentine tradition of regional variances inflecting the structure of funeral rites across Europe. The influx of textual diversity also changed the macro-structure of requiem design as movements were added around these new texts, sometimes in combination with the parts of the Mass Ordinary and Proper, sometimes supplanting them. Even more frequently, many of the once integral parts of the requiem were removed entirely.

Due to the tumultuous periods of war and the horrors against human life that they bred in the first half of the twentieth century, many works were composed as responses, dedications, and memorials through the form of the Requiem Mass. The subgenre of the war requiem emerged from this era of violence and, while not bound to commemorate the two world wars alone, its impetus is partially taken from Britten’s War Requiem (1962), a monument of music and poetry juxtaposed against the backdrop of the Latin liturgy and anti-war texts.46 Paul Hindemith contributed another example of a related requiem that serves both as a memorial and war requiem in his When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed: A Requiem “For those we love” (1946). This work demonstrates an invocation of the associated elements of the Requiem while abandoning its constituent texts in place of poetry by Walt Whitman in memory of Franklin Roosevelt and the soldiers lost in World War II.47

Throughout this chapter I allude to the gradual progression of the Requiem from an exclusively liturgical musical memorial for the dead into a genre of its own that is an embodiment of memorialization in broader context. The later development of the Requiem

45 Chase, Dies Irae, 349.
46 Chase, Dies Irae, 349.
47 Ibid., 464.
genre as a memorial relies upon the invocation of the entire history of the form through its title alone as its rise to musical independence from the boundaries of the liturgy lifted its reliance on the liturgy and its mandate to set the its Latin texts. In the remaining portions of this chapter I detail other musical memorials as they relate the Requiem and its twentieth-century incarnation. This leads to establishing the framework to discuss music, music as memorials, and liturgically inspired music in contexts within and against the backdrop of the mid-to-late twentieth century Catholic Church.

**Conclusion: Music as Memorial**

Alec Robertson presents the Requiem Mass manifesting in three forms: memorial music, elegiac works, and laments. He defines memorial music as I do, simply as music for dedication, often for marking the passing of someone’s life. While elegies and laments share similar bonds, in the Grove Encyclopedia, Malcolm Boyd defines an elegiac form as: “A setting of a poem, or an instrumental piece, lamenting the loss of someone deceased.” This straightforward definition contrasts with James Porter’s definition of a lament as:

> A term associated not only with mourning rites for the dead but also with ritual leave-taking, as in the case of a bride parting from her family or a mother’s farewell to a son recruited on war service... ...The ritual character of laments embodies notions of transition to another state or world and the possibility of symbolic renewal. Funeral laments, although they mark a universal fact, are not found throughout the world; nor, where they are found, are they analogous in structure or style. On the contrary, they differ just as the rites associated with them vary from one region to another.

The lament as defined above, then, resonates within the purview of the Requiem Mass genre that I have established in this chapter. I suggest per this definition that Requiems’ liturgical and non-liturgical forms exist in near complete alignment in the broader category of a lament. Robertson provides an example of the the intersection between of the liturgical and non-liturgical elements that can exist within laments in the motets and madrigals of the Renaissance. His clearest example is represented in a motet by Josquin des Prez lamenting the passing of Johannes Ockeghem. In this motet he employs a liturgical tenor based on a line

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48 Robertson, *Requiem*, 213
taken from the texts of the Requiem Mass beneath and against—as was the convention of the period—a French, secular poem in the upper voices that served as tribute to the composer as well.  

Taking a lament as an embodiment of musical memorial it is extended and overlaps contexts surrounding the Requiem Mass that appear in the form of solo settings of the Dies Irae and in the form of Requiems that abandon all forms of text completely. Penderecki’s oratorio setting of the Dies Irae (1967) offers an interesting case study that runs parallel to some twentieth-century settings of a Requiem in that it relies on the connotative nature of its title that summons death-related imagery in tandem with the new music composed. This composition stands as a monument to commemorate the victims of Auschwitz. Some twentieth-century instrumental requiems without words petition similar mandates of memorialization in their titles only. One such example, Britten’s Sinfonia da Requiem (1940), dedicated to the Japanese Emperor and later Britten’s parents after the emperor’s refusal, sets a precedent for my own composition, Requiem: a Suite for Jazz Orchestra.

Requiem settings of the twentieth century are unified by what is endemic to a great deal of music, art, culture, and societal life at that time, the release from the institutional confines of style, aesthetics, and doctrines that had dictated much about art and culture previously. This liberation of ideologies occurs in varying degrees over ranging periods of time and struggle. In the mid-twentieth century at the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church undertook a massive upheaval of its liturgy and its musical doctrines. This was an effort to align to the volatile secular climate that surrounded the Church, in contrast to previous attempts by former ecumenical councils that had performed the opposite.

The Second Vatican Council convened nearly 400 years after the Council of Trent in 1962 to once again assess the Church’s practices within the world around it. While reformation was at the heart of both of the commencements, Vatican II approached its reforms with conciliatory action of its communities and the Church’s place among other Christian denominations and faiths in contrast to Tridentine decrees based in restoration. The immediate consequences of the Second Vatican Council’s reforms as they relate to the Requiem are demonstrated by the Church’s abandoning of the Latin rite, thus altering the Church’s funeral practices that had existed to that point. Other ramifications of Vatican II’s doctrines that applied to the music of the liturgy are explored in the next chapter in a study of

51 Robertson, Requiem, 213.
52 Chase, Dies Irae, 512.
53 Ibid., 440.
the Catholic and religious-inspired works of jazz composer Mary Lou Williams, an example of the role jazz can play in this redefined context of the Church. To understand jazz’s place in a liturgical context, Chapters 2 and 3 shift focus from the European “classical” tradition of composition and composers to the Mass and Requiem Mass as musical forms adapted by composers to American forms of music.

New Requiem Masses continued to be composed in a Latin tradition—at least to the extent that composers wished to emulate elements of their choosing—after the Vatican II changes to the liturgy. Twentieth-century developments and departures from the Latin-based Requiem only cemented the path laid by composers following the reforms of the Council of Trent. These developments established the Requiem as a vehicle for musical monuments and memorializations, laments and dedications, elegies and commemorations.
Chapter 2: The Second Vatican Council and the Music of Mary Lou Williams

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss liturgical musical forms in the work of jazz pianist and composer Mary Lou Williams (1910–1981), focusing on her works of sacred jazz, a body of repertoire taking inspiration from the Catholic liturgy. She composed these works in what is defined as her “sacred period” in the 1960s producing a series of pieces that are liturgically inspired, such as her hymn Black Christ of the Andes (1962), and liturgically functional, such as her four jazz masses The Pittsburgh Mass (1966), Mass for Lenten Season (1968), Mass for Peace and Justice (1969), and Mary Lou’s Mass (1970). I frame her sacred period compositions against the backdrop of the Second Vatican Council to locate a secular musical form like jazz within a liturgical context, arguing that while the Church’s reformations opened the liturgy to jazz, a force like Mary Lou Williams was required solidify the place of jazz within Catholic worship.

Reforms of the Second Vatican Council and the United States in the 1960s

The Church convened the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II, 1962–1965) in order to again address the issue of secular influences on the practice of worship. Nearly 400 years had passed since the Council of Trent and its reformation of Catholic doctrine, and, in the mid-twentieth century, the swelling of external cultural influences surrounding the Church culminated in a period of reformation in the form of the Second Vatican Council. Vatican II reexamined Church doctrine and, in turn, the music of the liturgy.

Vatican II’s commencement coincided with a period of tumultuous political, cultural, and social change across Europe and the United States in the 1960s, but unlike the Council of Trent the efforts of Second Vatican Council and its doctrines would result in reforms towards a more harmonious relationship between the Church and the rest of the world. This was, to an extent, due to binate influences of secularism in the form of the waning role of the Church in postwar Europe and of the growth of the Catholic Church outside Europe’s borders. By this point the sphere of the Church now encompassed congregations of worshippers on a global
scale and the Church, through Vatican II’s doctrines, opened the liturgy to those communities by incorporating their traditions—often secular ones—into the practice of worship.  

The Second Vatican Council commenced to reexamine the doctrines of the Catholic Church enacted during the Counter Reformation and in the centuries leading up to Vatican II to reflect the twentieth-century relationship of the Church with the world and the many communities of worshippers it now held across it. Vatican II’s mission was to guide the Church into a state of renewal (rinnovamento), and modernization or “bringing up to date,” (aggiornamento), realized through edicts passed by the Church beginning with an edict called Sacrosanctum Concilium, passed in 1963. With this opening edict the Church initiated a process of embracing its peripheral congregations around the world by dissolving centuries of liturgical traditions predating even the Tridentine Rite.

Two tenets of Sacrosanctum Concilium that charged the momentum of ecumenical inclusion were the introduction of the vernacular into liturgical action and an increased focus on the participation of the laity in worship. Several articles within Sacrosanctum Concilium and its chapter devoted to music, Musicum Sacrum, dictated the initial mandates concerning language and “indigenous” traditions of congregations beyond the scope the Church’s European sphere, but left the implementation of these new decrees in the hands of churches and their bishops. Joseph Dyer writes of the intense degree of these conciliar reforms stating the Latin Rite established after the Council of Trent “…was eliminated virtually overnight and replaced by a revised eucharistic rite in the vernacular.” The near elimination of an entire body of repertoire in a wave of sweeping reforms necessitated the Church produce new music for worship liberated from previous constraints regarding style, instrumentation, and the use of Gregorian chant.

The new music composed for worship placed a strong impetus in the creation of works to include the laity in the celebration of the Eucharist and in incorporating

57 Murchison, “Black Christ,” 600.
58 Dyer, “Roman Catholic Church Music.”
indigenous forms of music. To further espouse its distanced congregations, the spirit of
eccumenical unity embodied by Second Vatican Council’s reforms stressed the “adaptation of
the liturgy to the customs and traditions of the congregations in regions outside Western
Europe”, facilitating the introduction of these communities’ musical traditions into the
liturgy. The United States presents a unique case for the reforms of Vatican II due to the
myriad of ethnic communities participating in the cultural landscape of the country’s Catholic
believers. Cultural representation becomes difficult to locate as multiple demographics may
make up the population of any given dioceses across the United States. While the reformative
doctrines opened the liturgy to various forms of representation, many styles of music that
bore clear markers of cultural identity through a secular musical style were met with scrutiny.

Conservative and liberal factions emerged in the wake of Vatican II with regard to
church music. In these early years following Sacrosanctum Concilium (from 1965 into the
early 1970s) and other edicts, the liberal faction advocated for experimentation in genre and
instrumentation while conservative factions clung to the chants that had been the tradition
before being usurped by ecclesiastical reform. The mandates of these decrees lacked
directives to guide any one direction of reform, which allowed experimentation to thrive in
this period. The issues that arose for either side of the church music camps rested in the
question of what kinds of music maintained the solemnity of the rite. For Black communities
in the United States, the liberal lens through which to view the reforms of music for worship
inspired the first forms of acknowledgement by the Catholic Church that the musical forms of
African American Catholics could be incorporated into church music. Mary Lynn Kernodle
explains:

The inclusion of African American musical forms in worship services
during the 1960s and 1970s was a continuation of the efforts of Black
Catholics throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to
create their own identifiable religious services but maintain Catholic Church
order.

Experimentation in liturgical music resulted in the development of a Black liturgy that
mirrored the representation long held by African American Protestants, one that provided

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61 Ibid
62 Koegel, Summers, Cayward and Grady, “Roman Catholic Church.”
Tammy L. Kernodle, “This is My Story: The Historiography of Vatican II, Black Catholic Identity, Jazz, and
the Religious Compositions of Mary Lou Williams,” U.S. Catholic Historian Vol. 19, no. 2 African American
64 Kernodle, “This is My Story,” 94.
65 Ibid., 85.
links between their lives in their communities and their lives within the Church.\textsuperscript{66} Musical forms such jazz, blues, and gospel were invited into the liturgy promoting the emergence of a Black Catholic American identity.\textsuperscript{67}

The reforms of the Second Vatican Council brought the Church into the present-day of the 1960s by broadening the liturgy so that it reflected the traditions and heritages of all who worship under Catholicism. The new voices and identities that surfaced through musical worship during this period were those of communities who were long silent beneath centuries of Catholic tradition in the years of globalized evangelism leading up to Vatican II. Mary Lou Williams emerged as a prominent voice for jazz and Black culture within the Church with a degree of serendipity that the period of her sacred compositions (1962–1970) coincided with the reformation of the Catholic liturgy and its music. The Church’s reformation afforded Williams the opportunity to place jazz directly into a functionally liturgical setting, challenging racial biases that jazz music was too profane for worship\textsuperscript{68} and positioning Black culture in front of the eyes of a broader Catholic public.

**Mary Lou Williams**

Before becoming a leading figure in the arena of sacred jazz within Catholic liturgical music, Mary Lou Williams had a long career as a jazz pianist and composer beginning at the age of 12.\textsuperscript{69} She developed her skills as a composer and arranger from the 1920s into the late 1930s through an association with Andy Kirk’s Kansas City-based group, the Twelve Clouds of Joy, due initially to her husband’s position as the band’s baritone saxophonist.\textsuperscript{70} At first Williams received instruction under Kirk, developing her compositional abilities while maintaining a separate existence as a Kansas City musician. Williams later joined the group as their pianist, and contributed a number of arrangements that solidified her place within the jazz community.\textsuperscript{71} By the 1940s, her prominence as an arranger, developed in Kirk’s band, brought her and her work to the attention of other renowned jazz figures of the period such Benny Goodman and Duke Ellington, both of whom adopted her pieces into their

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 84.  
\textsuperscript{67} Kernodle, “This is My Story,” 84.  
\textsuperscript{68} Murchison, “Black Christ,” 600.  
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
performance repertoire.\textsuperscript{72} Later, in the 1960s, Ellington also explored sacred works for jazz, though outside of any sort of liturgical setting. In Chapter 3, I compare both figures’ approach to jazz within sacred contexts.

Mary Lou Williams maintained her position as a fixture in jazz music as the swing era ended and the bebop style emerged. During the bebop era Williams also developed into the role of a “nurturer.” She formed mentoring relationships with emerging artists of the period such as Dizzy Gillespie, Bud Powell, and Thelonious Monk. She is also credited with advancing the early careers of Charlie Christian and Art Blakey.\textsuperscript{73} The bonds Williams cemented with these jazz musicians who began their careers in the bebop era proved to be fortuitous in what awaited her musical career in the decade to follow.

In the beginning of the 1950s Williams joined the flock of jazz musicians who left the United States for Europe to pursue better career opportunities performing for European audiences and to escape the prejudices African Americans faced at home.\textsuperscript{74} Williams’ European tenure, first in London, then Paris, was marked as a tumultuous period of personal and professional struggle. The red tape surrounding work laws in England stifled her performance opportunities, which relegated her talents to variety halls and a reliance on recording to provide financial stability. Williams’ discontent with her unsatisfying and economically fruitless career in England forced her move to France to pursue more profitable work.\textsuperscript{75} But her financial and personal hardship continued. These woes compounded and sometime around 1954 she took a three to four-year retirement (sources differ on the duration of and other details about this time period) from her professional performance career and returned to the United States.\textsuperscript{76} Dejected by her failures in Europe, Williams refocused her energies upon her return into two areas, religion — in the form of spirituality and eventually Catholicism — and humanitarianism. This dual focus shaped her personal and, later, her professional life in the years following her self-imposed musical retirement.

Williams’ spiritual awakening began earlier than her arrival back to New York in 1954; Gayle Murchison notes that the gentle nudging towards Christian prayer by friends and acquaintances during her time in Europe provided the impetus for Williams to begin to turn to prayer during this time of instability abroad.\textsuperscript{77} She followed her friends’ encouragement to

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} Murchison, “Black Christ,” 592.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 593.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 594.
“investigate various religions” when she returned to the U.S. Williams eventually came to Catholicism in 1956, converting in 1957 from the Baptist faith she had been baptized into as a child. Williams entered into a period of personal and spiritual renewal, forming relationships with clergy members, specifically Father Anthony Woods and John Crowley, who supported the efforts of her humanitarian ministry within her community and her eventual return to music, which involved a reconciling of her faith with jazz and her music. Catholicism, humanitarianism, and music became intertwined elements of Mary Lou Williams’ life as each inspired and enriched the other.

In the year following her conversion to Catholicism, Williams established the Bel Canto Foundation, a music ministry with the purpose of helping musicians struggling with drug and alcohol addiction. The foundation operated out of her New York City apartment, becoming a halfway house for the musicians she was helping include notable jazz pianists such as Bud Powell and Willie “the Lion” Smith. Williams found fulfillment in this charity within the jazz community, supporting people from the community not only with assistance, but also with her efforts “to reform them, to teach.” This form of outreach to a marginalized demographic parallels some of the missions of the Vatican II reforms that would arrive in the following decade; this is not the first instance where the work of Mary Lou Williams — musical or charitable— would resemble and reflect the Church.

The mission of the Bel Canto Foundation not only facilitated her endeavours in social activism, but also provided the catalyst to return Williams to performance. At first, Williams’ performances were a means to fund her ministry, but her increased musical activity became amplified by the worlds she orbited, jazz and Catholicism. The priests she had become close with continued to push her along the avenue of jazz performance and it was Dizzy Gillespie, one of the musicians to wander under her mentorship before she departed for Europe, that persuaded her to perform and record a concert at the 1957 Newport Jazz festival. Though the Bel Canto Foundation would eventually fold under financial burdens, Mary Lou Williams’ return to music afforded her a new vehicle to promote her humanitarian efforts while providing her a medium to explore her own relationship with spirituality through jazz

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78 Ibid., 594.
79 Kernodle, “This is My Story,” 87.
80 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
85 Murchison, “Black Christ,” 595
86 Pickeral, “The Masses of Mary Lou Williams,” 52.
and the Catholic liturgy. Williams explored this relationship in the works of sacred jazz she composed within the era of reformation of the Catholic Church in the years soon after her Newport resurgence.

**Jazz in the Liturgy and the Sacred Works of Mary Lou Williams**

While the reforms of the Second Vatican Council opened the liturgy to the introduction of secular forms of music that embodied the heritage of the mass’ celebrants, many styles of music, jazz included, were met with a degree of skepticism regarding their appropriateness in Catholic worship. For Mary Lou Williams to integrate jazz and her compositions into the liturgy, she would have to answer questions that surrounded jazz music’s associations with the secular and the profane. In the pieces that were written over the course of her sacred period (1962–1970), Williams addressed these questions by defining her spirituality through jazz and jazz through her spirituality.

The work she produced over this period included a number of hymn-like compositions: *Black Christ of the Andes (Hymn in Honor of St. Martin De Porres)* (1962), *The Devil* (1963), and *Anima Christi* (1963), and also included four masses: *The Pittsburgh Mass* (1966), *Mass for Lenten Season* (1968), *Mass for Peace and Justice* (1969), and *Mary Lou’s Mass* (1970). This fourth mass was elicited by choreographer Alvin Ailey for an American Dance Theater production of Williams’ work, and was actually a rescoring of *Mass for Peace and Justice* with the addition of additional movements.87 Ailey had contemporaneous involvement in productions incorporating the music of Williams’ peer Duke Ellington and another liturgically charged work, *Mass*, by Leonard Bernstein. This positioned *Mary Lou’s Mass* in the public eye and amongst the dialogue around liturgical musical forms in the decade that followed Vatican II. Through these compositions Williams distanced jazz from the negative stereotypes that remained among Church clergy and congregations that had prevented jazz’s acceptance into the liturgy.

For jazz’s inclusion into liturgical action, the new music composed for worship had to be oriented within what the articles established in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* deemed appropriate. Gayle Murchison cites two articles in her text that relate Vatican II provisions to the sacred music Mary Lou Williams composed for the liturgy as follows:

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Article 118 reminded musicians of the most important requirements for hymns: they had to be orthodox, short, simple in text and tune, and created chiefly out of biblical psalms and chants. Article 121 contained an appeal to poets and musicians to use their talents in service to the church.\(^88\)

Williams was aware of the Church’s stipulations and maintained through a deft understanding of jazz’s heritage that “jazz had always sustained a spiritual component.”\(^89\)
This laid at the heart of the compositions she crafted for use in and around the liturgy. This is further validated as continued in the Murchison text:

Williams herself had no such conflict over the use of jazz as sacred music. For her, secular jazz, rooted as it was in the African American experience—particularly the experience of suffering—had great spiritual content and therefore was appropriate for the Mass and other religious settings.\(^90\)

Sacred jazz, in Williams’ words, was “jazz for healing.”\(^91\) This aligns Williams’ relationship between her music and faith with the social activism she pursued in her time retired from professional performance. These tenets held by Williams, that jazz is a source of healing and spirituality, fulfill Article 121’s mandate. Williams’ sacred jazz’s acceptance into liturgy also represented the embracing of Black worshippers by the Church through the acknowledgement of their own music traditions, an area in which Williams contended to find “validation of her African heritage within a mostly White denomination.”\(^92\)

Acknowledgement and validation of all of the demographics of the Church was one of the directives at the centre of the Second Vatican Council’s reforms. In order to see this implemented for Black Catholics in the United States, Williams championed a movement to deliver this form of representation through her jazz compositions for the Catholic liturgy.

Williams’ first effort in composing a jazz composition for a liturgical setting was 1962’s *Black Christ of the Andes or Hymn in Honor of St. Martin de Porres*. Williams composed this hymn in honour of the canonization of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Peruvian Dominican monk Martin de Porres (1579–1639).\(^93\) There are stark, poetic parallels between Williams and De Porres, considering given their missions of healing in life and their

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\(^88\) Murchison, “Black Christ,” 605.
\(^89\) Pickeral, “The Masses of Mary Lou Williams,” 90.
\(^90\) Murchison, “Black Christ,” 621.
\(^91\) Kernodle, “This is My Story,” 87.
\(^92\) *Ibid.*, 93
cultural identities within the church, parallels that Williams recognized. In his lifetime Martin de Porre, a trained surgeon, administered his skills to the impoverished and, beyond his earthly life, he has served as a patron saint figure to a number of global communities. In the United States, de Porres became a central Catholic model for African Americans pursuing lives in the Church, while in Latin America, he became a representation of social justice.

While Martin de Porres’ canonization provided the impetus for Williams to compose this work, her inspiration was derived from what he represented within the Catholic Church. Mary Lou Williams emulated many of the traits that de Porres embodied as prominent Catholic figure, notably the humanitarian activism she strived to achieve when she was running the Bel Canto Foundation. The forms of social activism she pursued at the time extended past the musicians she cared for in her New York City apartment as she became entrenched in political activism in the context of the Civil Rights Movement. At the same time the Church was able to utilize de Porres and his canonization to make a statement on their stance concerning race relations specifically towards its congregations in the United States.

The composition Black Christ of the Andes was a collaborative effort between Williams and the clergy she had become close within the formative years of her conversion to Catholicism. Father Anthony Woods, one of the priests who encouraged Williams’ ministry efforts and return to music, provided texts for the hymn in the form of a short simple poem for Williams to set on her insistence. The work is a choral piece that Williams conceived as a type of ballad with a formal structure as an ABA' form. Muchison describes this as a setting of the ballad as the A Section contrasted by a B Section in text and texture with return of the A Section through paraphrases. The form is reminiscent of her earlier arrangements that brought her success in the 30s and 40s. Williams injected a jazz vocabulary with regard to melody and harmony into the hymn through the incorporation of chromatic alterations to the upper extensions of her harmonies that resonated in the contemporary jazz context of the 1960s.

95 Ibid., 603.
96 Murchison, “Black Christ,” 603..
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid., 604.
99 Ibid., 606.
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
While including the sounds of a jazz style the hymn lacked any real moments of improvisation save for two conjoined instances within the work. The B Section features a fleeting ad-libbed piano interlude that introduces a section of material meant to allude to improvisation through a composed vocal part emulating jazz scatting.\textsuperscript{103} Williams attributes the absence of improvisation to the music setting, acknowledging that \textit{Black Christ} is a nearly through-composed piece of music to be realized in the form of a classical composition and performance idiom as opposed to a jazz one.\textsuperscript{104}

\textit{Black Christ}'s jazz conception inevitably invokes the feeling of a spiritual and this feature of music for worship is also familiar among other Christian denominations within the United States. African American music styles had long been intertwined with Protestant worship, but this was one of the earliest instances where an African American musical style would enter into a Catholic context. This work, while liturgically inspired, did not receive a performance within a mass, but rather as part of a service that celebrated de Porres' inaugural feast day.\textsuperscript{105} Despite \textit{Black Christ} not being included within a mass, many of the decisions Williams made when conceiving the work from its texts to the implementation of a jazz language regarding her harmonic and melodic choices were chosen to reflect the spirit of the Vatican II reforms prescribed in the articles of \textit{Sacrosanctum Concilium}. \textit{Black Christ} received a concert performance in 1962 and was recorded in 1963. As a result, Williams realized that her music, jazz music and \textit{Black Christ}, could “...be used to draw persons [sic] closer to God and inevitably towards peace”,\textsuperscript{106} providing the momentum to propel her sacred period forward.

The works of sacred jazz that Williams completed in this period built upon the momentum and experiences she had gained from \textit{Black Christ of the Andes}. Her music eventually found itself inside of the liturgy with the masses she completed between 1967-1969. Williams achieved the integration of her music into functional liturgical practice with the first two of these masses, the \textit{Pittsburgh Mass} and the \textit{Mass for the Lenten}. This, coupled with the success she received by including a number of her hymns on her tour programmes, became a subject of interest by leaders in the Catholic Church as high as the Vatican. In 1969 Williams received a commission from the Vatican to compose a mass; the work became known as 1969’s \textit{Mass for Peace}.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 608.
\textsuperscript{104} Murchison, “Black Christ,” 605.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., 601.
\textsuperscript{106} Tammy L. Kernodle, “‘Anything You Are Shows Up in Your Music:’ Mary Lou Williams and the Sanctification of Jazz” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1997), 96.
With the first three of her masses Williams continued to grapple with what was deemed appropriate for liturgical purposes. This was only amplified by the circumstances that led to her third mass, the Mass for Peace. Tammy Lynn Kernodle writes:

Although the composition employs harmonics closely associated with jazz, there are very few instances where a connection to the art form is visible. This apparent change in approach may indicate that Mary Lou's main concern was creating a mass that the Vatican would find acceptable. The only safe assumption is that despite the aims of Vatican II, the Church was still not interested in incorporating music that seemed too "radical" into worship services.107

The Mass for Peace was first performed in 1969 as a memorial for an assassinated Kenyan leader, Tom Mboya.108 Despite Williams’ stylistic reservations for the composition of this third mass, she incorporated forms of secularism in the guise of a rhythmic language drawing from popular music of the late 60s and early 70s.109 Williams felt empowered to do so after a period of self-reflection regarding what her previous offerings of sacred jazz compositions achieved and demonstrated in liturgical context, in the form of jazz as spiritual healing.110 The Mass for Peace, —still a conversative outing for Williams— stands in her repertoire as the precursor to the mass that she would be best known for, Mary Lou’s Mass. Mary Lou’s Mass expanded upon the third mass with the addition of several movements for the Alvin Ailey dance production for the American Dance Theater. With this fourth mass, Williams continued to liberate herself from previous stylistic restraints dipping back into forms of secularism in her music with the increased presence of secular styles outside of even jazz, including elements of rock music.111 The American Dance Theater’s production elevated Williams’ work, resulting in further public exposure, a recording, and Mary Lou’s Mass becoming a frequent performance piece in the final decade of her life.112

As I stated earlier in this chapter, the Vatican II doctrines Sacrosanctum Concilium and its Musicum Sacrum laid out a general mandate for the new liturgy of the Catholic Church without leaving specific instructions to define its implementation. Experimentation in the musical developments of worship flourished in the nearly ten years to follow the Sacrosanctum Concilium, affording Mary Lou Williams’ work, specifically her series of masses, to shape the forms of music the liturgy could encompass. Sacrosanctum Concilium

108 Kernodle, “This is My Story,” 90-91.
110 Ibid., 280.
placed the arbitration of what was appropriate in the hands of its Church’s dioceses and parishes and beginning in the 1970s the leaders of individual Catholic nations would legislate their own interpretations of the reform. Catholic leadership in the United States produced several documents to determine their explication of Vatican’s II reformative doctrines on music of the liturgy in American Catholic worship. Directives for the Use of the Vernacular at Mass and A Memorandum on Music for the Vernacular Liturgy were issued in 1964 to explicate the Church in Rome’s reforms of the liturgy\textsuperscript{113} and in 1972 Music in Catholic Worship was published to solidify a set of “guidelines for the selection of music and performance of liturgy.”\textsuperscript{114}

With the first two of these documents from 1964, Mary Lou Williams’ masses were able to comfortably fit within the prescribed guidelines and operate within the liturgy. The changes made in 1972 could have jeopardized the progress Williams made in securing jazz’s place in the Church, but her works exhibited many of the traits the Bishops' Committee on Liturgy of the United States Catholics decided on implementing themselves.\textsuperscript{115} Three years after the publication of Music in Catholic Worship, Mary Lou’s Mass, the secularly charged expansion of the Vatican-commissioned Mass for Peace, received its own liturgical performance in Saint Patrick’s Cathedral in New York.\textsuperscript{116} Tammy Lynn Kernodle writes of the event:

This performance ushered in a new era of Catholic worship music. The positive reviews and the accolades given to the work suggest that the sanctification of jazz was in full swing by 1975. Through biblical scriptures and simple melodies, Mary Lou Williams managed to reinvent conceptions about both sacred music and jazz.\textsuperscript{117}

The success of this 1975 concert in conjunction with the energy that had been building since her first liturgically inspired work, Black Christ of the Andes, carved out a place for not only jazz music in the music for Catholic worship, but for Black Catholics in the United States.

\textbf{Conclusion}

In the final work of her “sacred jazz” period, Mary Lou Williams managed to cement a legacy of social change within the Church through persistent forms of social activism that

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\textsuperscript{113} Koegel, Summers, Cayward and Grady, “Roman Catholic Church.”
\textsuperscript{114} Kernodle, “Anything You Are,” 318.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., 320.
\textsuperscript{116} Kernodle, “This is My Story,” 95.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 321.
\end{flushleft}
transcended into the heart of her music. Through her compositions she embodied the mission of the Second Vatican Council’s reformative doctrines of ecumencial inclusion of all its worshippers for Black Catholics in the United States. Beyond this, she established precedents in liturgical music by supplanting entrenched notions of what jazz music represented and how it can serve the liturgy through on her beliefs in spirituality in jazz. These precedents served as a model for *Music in Catholic Worship*, paving the way forward for other stylistic genres to emerge in worship.\footnote{Ibid., 94.}

Williams’ music established her influence on jazz in the Catholic liturgy. In the 1960s other forms of sacred jazz were developing, and concurrently with Vatican II and the work of Mary Lou Williams, Duke Ellington was premiering his body of sacred repertoire in series of Sacred Concerts. Ellington’s sacred jazz works run in parallel with Williams’ in the form jazz based in spirituality, but unlike Williams, who had to carve a place for her music within the institution of the Catholic Church, Ellington’s work was unencumbered by such hurdles. I turn now to Ellington and his sacred repertoire in Chapter 3.
Chapter 3: Duke Ellington

Introduction

Up to this point in my exegesis, I have illustrated contexts in which composers have taken liturgical musical forms of the Catholic Church, the Mass and the Requiem Mass, and employed them for both religious and secular purposes. I have also observed composers blending religious and secular forms of music together, primarily in the mid-twentieth century. In the last decade of his life, jazz composer Duke Ellington (1899–1974) produced a series of three sacred works for his jazz orchestra that became known as his Sacred Concerts (1965, 1968, 1973). These works embody Ellington’s relationship with his own spirituality and are representative of that relationship’s development across his oeuvre beginning two decades earlier in Come Sunday (1942) and Black, Brown, and Beige (1943). In this chapter, I explore the factors that led to Ellington’s works of sacred jazz music by examining elements of his life and by discussing a number of his earlier compositions that I, following David Schiff, consider his “proto-sacred” works. The discussion leads to an examination of each of the three Sacred Concerts, and I provide a contextualized historical overview of each work and its reception.

This chapter also compares Ellington’s Sacred Concerts with the contemporaneous sacred jazz compositions of Mary Lou Williams. I explore the function and operation of their compositions in the bounds of Christian worship both inside and outside of the liturgical and Catholic contexts discussed in earlier chapters. Throughout this chapter, I frame the impact of the social and cultural backdrop of Black music and life in the 1960s as manifested in the shared themes of the sacred jazz works of Ellington and Williams. By exploring these two composers’ periods of sacred jazz and by comparing their approaches to reflecting spirituality through liturgical forms in jazz music, I reveal how both composers shaped the way later jazz artists have embraced and expressed their own relationships with spirituality.

The Genesis of Duke Ellington’s Sacred Concerts

Research into Ellington’s spiritual life reveals a dynamic relationship with various Christian religions that Ellington carried throughout his life. Ellington was raised in two churches in

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Washington, D.C.: his mother’s Methodist church and his father’s Baptist church, and he attended services of both each Sunday as a child.\textsuperscript{120} Though maintaining the teachings and lessons he received as a boy, Ellington did not hold an association with a particular denomination of Christian faith into his adult and professional life.\textsuperscript{121} Instead, his continued relationship with religion — Christian religion — developed through a personal faith he sustained through his regular reading of the Bible and a subscription to a weekly Episcopalian faith magazine. His faith was also enriched by the relationships he formed with clergy members of different denominations he encountered and befriended around the United States and the world in his years touring.\textsuperscript{122} Ellington’s spiritual life remained mostly private until the years that his Sacred Concerts premiered. But the seeds of development of these sacred works can be seen across his musical material beginning as early as the mid-1930s.

Though many authors cite 1942’s Come Sunday and 1943’s Black, Brown, and Beige as Ellington’s first works with the initial traces of spiritual leanings, Jason C. Blivens argues that Ellington received a renewed spiritual awakening with the death of his mother in 1935, resulting in period of biblical study and the composition of an elegy for her.\textsuperscript{123} The next decade followed with Ellington’s Come Sunday and Black, Brown, and Beige — the former being incorporated in the opening movement of Black, Brown, and Beige — as the first of his significant proto-sacred compositions. Black, Brown, and Beige and Come Sunday remained constant fixtures in the development of his sacred repertoire manifesting themselves in various forms, some of which developed into portions of The First Sacred Concert. Originally Black, Brown, and Beige was a near programmatic suite that detailed the history of African American people through Black music; Come Sunday was included to represent the religious experiences of African Americans in that history.\textsuperscript{124}

In 1958, Ellington recorded a revised version of Black, Brown, and Beige that included a new version of Come Sunday with lyrics penned by the composer. This new Black, Brown and Beige also modified the musical programme of the original work in its representation of Black culture. For the 1958 recording, Ellington employed the gospel singer Mahalia Jackson who sang his new texts and its lyrics tinged with gospel, reframed the

\textsuperscript{121} Lloyd, “The Revival,” 3.
\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Ibid.}, 3.
\textsuperscript{123} Jason Blivens, \textit{ Spirits Rejoice!: Jazz and American Religion} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 157. Blivens does not provide a specific title or date for this composition.
\textsuperscript{124} Wilbert Weldon Hill, “The Sacred Concert of Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington” (PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 1994), 44.
depiction of Black America as a “picture of ascending faith” and existing “in the church, not in a Sugar Hill penthouse.”

The sifting of the gospel elements into the narrative echoes gospel’s larger diffusion of Black political movements in the United States across popular music forms and the work of civil rights activists.

Ellington continued upon the evolution of the expanded version 1958 version of Black, Brown, and Beige with My People (1963), a musical theatre production that was performed in Chicago for the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. The production included choreographed dancing, new compositions and reworked material from Black, Brown, and Beige including the vocal version of Come Sunday, and even a staged set. My People developed the reshaped narrative of the suite’s programme, continuing the interwoven themes of spiritual faith and politics of the 1960s represented through Ellington’s continued inclusion of gospel elements. With its ambitious artistic goals straddling the boundaries between sacred and secular, the work was ill-suited for performances beyond the centennial celebration, despite its engagement with contemporary social and political struggle. To that end, David Schiff describes the work as, “Too religious to run on Broadway, too full of the blues to be performed as a church service,” ultimately rendering it completely non-viable to stage outside of its original setting.

For jazz music with liturgical leanings in the 1960s, it was a challenge for composers and audiences to locate a setting for music that combined forms of worship with forms of entertainment or concert music. With the overt gospel nods of the proto-sacred My People, the sacred elements saturate Ellington’s work in this case, so that the cultural portrayal of a Black American narrative is inseparable from music for worship. Conversely, as I illustrated in the challenges of placing jazz in the Catholic liturgy, Mary Lou Williams had to combat the ways jazz was seen as secular in order to distinguish it as appropriate for worship. Both composers, in the early stages of developing their works of sacred jazz grappled not only with the dichotomy surrounding sacred and secular forms of music that determined what was appropriate and inappropriate for worship, but also with how to incorporate African American music for worship into secular and liturgical contexts. My People, acting as a sort of spiritual predecessor, foreshadows the next stages in Duke Ellington's approach to these issues with the arrival of The First Sacred Concert in 1965.

125 Schiff, “‘Heaven’: God,” 249.
126 Ibid., 250.
127 Schiff, “‘Heaven’: God,” 250.
128 Ibid., 252.
129 Ibid.
The Sacred Concerts

In 1962, one year before the premiere of My People, Ellington was approached while on tour by the clergy of the Anglican Grace Cathedral in San Francisco to compose a work for the cathedral’s dedication.\footnote{Schiff, “‘Heaven’: God,” 252.} Though Ellington allowed the invitation to lapse, he was ultimately persuaded to pursue the project through a clergy member of the parish that he had befriended. This resulted in the composition of The First Sacred Concert, composed as a part of the Cathedral’s year-long celebration, the “Festivals of Grace.”\footnote{Hill, “The Sacred Concerts,” 49.} Ellington was given free rein to compose in his own musical style, with the only mandate being that the music for the concert to be sacred. At the same time, the Cathedral had reservations about whether Duke Ellington’s concert in a jazz style would be appropriate.\footnote{Ibid., 49-50.}

The Dean of Grace Cathedral, Julian Bartlett, while holding those reservations, placed a great deal of faith in Ellington. Wilbert Hill quotes Bartlett in his programme notes for the concert addressing many of the concerns of the Cathedral’s inclusion of secular music for worship in liturgical settings. Bartlett describes public forms of prayer as being encompassed within a larger sphere of worship, asserting that among those of forms of prayer, works of artistic expression may also be included.\footnote{Ibid., 51.} His stipulation for these acts of artistic celebration is that they would be an offering “to the service of God.”\footnote{Ibid.} He continues by elucidating reasons why secular forms of art within liturgical worship might be deemed sacred or profane, stating that defining something as sacred or profane depends on “whether an act is an offering to God!”\footnote{Ibid.}

This statement by the Dean of Grace Cathedral offers a form of acknowledgement that jazz music can be appropriate within liturgical settings of worship, as well as inside the Anglican cathedral itself for a church-sanctioned concert. It is important to distinguish that Ellington’s music secured a place in a liturgical setting, but not as part of the liturgy itself. This is not without precedent as the sacred jazz hymns of Mary Lou Williams found a place within the Catholic Church outside of the celebration of the mass only a few years before Ellington’s first full sacred composition. The differences between Anglican and Catholic approaches to incorporating secular forms of music in the liturgy in these instances are subtle as both enter church settings through a clergy member’s insistence that the work of these...
composers be present for forms of worship, but the Catholic Church required a considerable period of reformation to reframe its position on music in the liturgy. Duke Ellington had no personal or religious reservations concerning the place of his First Sacred Concert within the context of the Church.

The First Sacred Concert was not functionally liturgical, but rather a work set to occupy the space where the liturgy was celebrated, liberating Ellington from having to utilize traditional mass texts in favour of writing his own. The work itself is another expansion of Black, Brown, and Beige and its successor, My People. It includes a number of movements from both works, notably incorporating both the vocal form and the instrumental form of Come Sunday and retaining the dance elements of My People. Its success in San Francisco resulted in subsequent performances around the world in both secular and liturgical arenas, indicating a level of acceptance of jazz music, and its proliferation, across a range of Protestant churches. Despite the high regard the work garnered, it still carried its own group of detractors who were concerned about The First Sacred Concert being performed in liturgical settings. Their concerns centred around what was appropriate to perform in a church; any form of secularism encroached upon the sanctity of a church’s boundaries with potentially lasting effects. Despite the criticisms surrounding The First Sacred Concert, Duke Ellington further established jazz’s place in sacred contexts in the two additional Sacred Concerts that followed.

By 1968, Ellington had lost his longtime compositional companion, Billy Strayhorn (1915–1967). He was prompted to compose his Second Sacred Concert, quoted as “the most important thing I have ever done,” by another befriended clergy member, this one from the Episcopal Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in Harlem. As part of the initial production of the work, Ellington was given the right to select all of the final works in the concert. This afforded him the freedom to programme his own work, and a freer context to compose than with the San Francisco commission. Ellington wrote the texts for this Sacred Concert, as he had for the first Sacred Concert; this time mostly new original works comprised the concert. In his efforts to honour his departed friend, Ellington composed and wrote the lyrics for the piece “Freedom,” which included a spoken word recitation of Strayhorn’s tenets of

137 Schiff, “Heaven: God,” 254.
139 Ibid., 5-7.
140 Blivens, Spirits Rejoice! 158.
141 Schiff, “Heaven: God,” 6
142 Hill, “The Sacred Concerts,” 58.
freedom that Ellington had included in his eulogy at Strayhorn’s funeral.143 Strayhorn’s “freedoms” were modelled after President Franklin Roosevelt’s own “Four Freedoms” and Thomas Lloyd details them as:

According to Ellington’s recitation during “Freedom No. 1,” Strayhorn’s “four major moral freedoms” were “freedom from hate unconditionally, freedom from self pity, freedom from fear of possibly doing something that might benefit someone else more than it would him, and freedom from the kind of pride that could make a man feel that he was better than his brothers.”144

The inclusion of these texts that centre a subject like freedom in themes of The Second Sacred Concert demonstrates how Ellington expanded the bounds of a sacred mandate in an increased blending of secular influences that echo his proto-sacred work My People.145 Ellington further extended his reliance on secularism in this work through including a dance element as he had in his previous sacred works, this time expanding the presence of dance in the composition so that it included two sets of dancers involved in the action of the music throughout the composition. The two dance groups represented different aspects of the music: the first group danced among the audience in a style of modern dance reflecting the symbolism of worship, while the second group danced in a swing style near the musicians.146 The Second Sacred Concert achieved a degree of success equal to or greater than The First Sacred Concert. It remained a part of Ellington’s performance repertoire over the course of the five years that followed into the twilight of his life.147 The work, like its predecessor, was performed in a range of venues, both secular and sacred, in Europe and the United States.

In 1972, Ellington received another commission to compose a third Sacred Concert despite being in the advanced stages of cancer that he succumbed to a year after the work’s 1973 London premiere.148 The work commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations for United Nations Day, and was performed in Westminster Abbey as part of the celebrations.149 Ellington’s health did not allow for the same level of preparation as for his previous Sacred Concerts. This directly influenced the composition of the work, which is

143 Schiff, “‘Heaven’: God,” 258.
145 Ibid., 6.
146 Schiff, “‘Heaven’: God,” 261.
148 Ibid., 9.
149 Hill, “The Sacred Concerts,” 59
more sombre and pensive in its musical material than his previous spiritual compositions. One review described a general sense of movement through the Sacred Concerts from the first to the third as a movement, “from preaching and toward prayer.” The Third Sacred Concert then fittingly serves as a musical epitaph for the composer himself, similar to how the first Sacred Concerts served epitaphs for departed figures in Ellington’s life. Ellington would live to perform The Third Sacred Concert once more at the end of 1973, before passing in 1974.

**The Genre of Sacred Jazz and Conclusion**

Duke Ellington and Mary Lou Williams composed their works for sacred jazz in overlapping eight-year periods during the 1960s and 1970s; Ellington’s period of sacred jazz compositions ranged from 1965 to 1973 and Williams’ lasted from 1962 to 1970. During this time, they faced converse challenges in adapting jazz for sacred contexts and sacred jazz into secular contexts. Both composers did so, operating within a changing social and political climate of 1960s America that placed African American musical traditions, such as jazz and church music, to act as agents for a form of cultural acknowledgment within religious institutions that were integral elements of American life. Ellington and Williams were able to take jazz music and implement it within two separate religious contexts, both establishing lasting precedents.

The starkest contrast between these composers is in the specific settings within which they were working in terms of the types of liturgical contexts. For Mary Lou Williams, the Catholic Church presented a rigid obstacle as Catholic doctrine imposed a pre-eminent authority over the music to be included in functional liturgical contexts. As I have illustrated in previous chapters, Vatican II liberated the Church to embrace forms of music that better represented its constituent congregations. Through the reforms of Vatican II, Williams could introduce jazz into the liturgy, which not only represented the Black community of the Catholic Church, but also broadened liturgical contexts for future composers to compose in this setting.

Duke Ellington faced different obstacles in his proto-sacred and sacred works that culminated with his Sacred Concerts. In his sacred jazz compositions, all of which were

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151 Schiff, “‘Heaven’: God,” 262.
interrelated with Protestant denominations, Ellington operated outside of the Catholic liturgy, free of any doctrines constraining his music. Secular forms of Black American music had been a part of Protestant worship long before Vatican II opened the Catholic liturgy, and Ellington’s early works invoke depictions of sacred representation through the genres of African American music used in worship. The Sacred Concerts refined his use of African American music for worship and incorporated jazz, forming a trinity of compositions that found an equilibrium between contexts of the liturgy and the concert hall. Not having to adapt his music to strict liturgical forms and performing within Protestant contexts, Ellington received invitations to perform his sacred jazz more broadly, making it visible and audible, to audiences around the world.

Both Williams and Ellington played an integral part in the development of sacred jazz in the 1960s. While not alone in this field, they both helped established a framework for music that leans on forms of spirituality for performance both inside and outside of the walls of a church or other religious institution. Their explorations of their own relationships with spirituality manifested themselves in their respective repertoires that future composers can build on. While I established in Chapter 1 that liturgical doctrines no longer bound twentieth-century composers to operate in accordance to liturgical functions when composing in liturgical forms, Ellington and Williams demonstrate that secular forms and music for the concert hall can also adapt and become an integral aspect in settings of prayer and worship.
Chapter 4: Requiem: a Suite for Jazz Orchestra

Introduction

The work at the center of this Master’s degree is my original large-scale composition *Requiem: a Suite for Jazz Orchestra*. *Requiem* is a multi-movement suite for jazz orchestra that draws on the form of the Requiem Mass as a structural guide to craft a narrative from the elements of the form associated with its meanings as the Catholic funeral rite. In this chapter I illustrate the thematic nature and structure of my work in a discussion of the musical elements of the *Requiem*. I also discuss my personal background to help contextualize this composition from its inception to its completion. This chapter concludes with a brief commentary where I discuss my *Requiem* as a liturgically-inspired jazz composition in light of the Requiem Masses and musical memorials that I discuss in Chapter 1. I also situate my work in the context of the bodies of sacred jazz literature by Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington that established precedents for sacred jazz in the 1960s, as I describe in Chapters 2 and 3.

Background and Structure

I composed my *Requiem* in 2018 and 2019 as a form of commemoration to mark the tenth anniversary of my father’s passing in 2008. The form of the *Requiem* is not a functionally liturgical one, but rather a large-scale instrumental narrative, told over the course of four movements that depict the memories I have of attending my father’s Catholic funeral. My ability to recall what I remember of myself, of my family, and of the liturgical action throughout the funeral rite has ebbed in the waves of life in the course of the decade that has passed since then. What I have kept are memories of a few fleeting moments of the mass and its music, and a palpable recollection of the overwhelming grief experienced by my 16-year old self during the service, a feeling that I now recognize as a suspended state of shock. The music of my *Requiem* captures what I can remember of that day as an adult in my late twenties.

My father did not receive a Requiem Mass in the tradition of the Latin Church, but rather a funeral rite that corresponds with the post-Vatican II landscape that had eliminated Latinic elements from Catholic liturgical rites. It was important for me to compose within the
pre-Vatican II Requiem Mass form not only because of the long-standing compositional
tradition of Requiem settings, but also because I wanted to use the form to represent the
Catholic faith of my father and of my family when erecting this musical memorial to him. To
reflect the structure of the Requiem Mass, I set the memories I hold from the day of my
father’s funeral in four movements that include various parts of Catholic Mass liturgies. I
include three parts of the Mass Ordinary that occur in the Requiem Mass (the Kyrie, the
Sanctus, and the Agnus Dei) and four parts of the Mass Proper (the Introit, the Sequence, the
Dies Irae, and the Communion). I follow the precedent established by composers as early as
the seventeenth century in linking together parts of the mass form to create singular
movements, favouring musical considerations over liturgical ones. The resulting
movement structure of my Requiem Mass is as follows:

I. Introit/Kyrie
II. Dies Irae
III. Sanctus
IV. Agnus Dei

While the music in my Requiem comprises original material I developed over the
course of my Master’s programme, it incorporated with elements of the Requiem texts as
source material to construct the melodies and harmonies found throughout the work. This
approach began as a mostly syllabic adaption of the Gregorian Chant texts associated with
the Requiem. Once the texts had shaped the framework of a melodic passage, I allowed for
my own compositional intuition to develop the material. The melodies throughout the
Requiem emerge from their textual origins, taking their influence from the Requiem Mass’
texts to ground the work in the source material that I am employing to compose my narrative
suite. All musical examples provided here are notated in concert pitch.

It was paramount that I develop a number of motives that I could employ to establish
the sense of recollection that persists throughout the entire work and in the compositional
process for the Requiem. For the first motive, I composed a melody based off the six syllables
at the beginning of the text taken from the Introit that opens the Requiem Mass, Requiem
aeternam eis, “Grant them eternal rest”, through a series of six pitches. This melody first
appears in the opening movement, the “Introit/Kyrie” mm.1-2 (Ex. 1). In the course of the

155 Ibid., 2.
composition, it is always performed by two trumpets, and is a compositional device that appears frequently throughout the *Requiem*.

These six pitches, or a subset of the first three that denote “*Re-qui-em,*” appear in the various sections of the jazz orchestra in each movement either in direct quotation or in more subtle implementation through compositional devices such as inversion and retrograde, to form accompaniment material. The melodic contour of the first three pitches, an ascending perfect fifth followed by a descending major second, creates a harmonic sonority akin to a suspended-fourth chord that is found in trombone voicings of a larger brass structure that harmonizes a melodic line (see mm. 364–374 in the first movement for one example). A slight variation of the three-note “*Re-qui-em*” motive also appears the second section of the opening movement, mm. 40 in the tenor sax (Ex. 2), where the opening perfect fifth is answered by a major second above, forming a second compositional treatment of the “*Re-qui-em*” motive.

The second motivic device I employed throughout the *Requiem* is the quotation of *Dies Irae* chant melody (Ex.3)\(^{156}\) in various permutations that are subjected to the same compositional procedures that I used for the “*Re-qui-em*” motive. In my quotations of this chant melody, I often directly follow the contour of melody’s first four notes. This Gregorian chant melody is also the only use of a chant melody used within my *Requiem Suite* that also forms the harmonic and melodic material for its respective movement. As I detailed in Chapter 1, the *Dies Irae* became a focal point of many Requiem settings and developed into separate entity altogether. The powerful association of the Catholic funeral rite connoted by

\(^{156}\) Chase, *Dies Irae*, 645.
its melody and texts contribute to its prolific prominence and I felt it important to include the motive within my *Requiem* suite to frame the suite within the liturgical form from which I am drawing.

![Example 3. Dies Irae Gregorian Chant Melody](image)

I also created an original motivic device not taken from any sort of liturgical inspiration. I composed a seven-note pitch set (Ex. 4) that I used primarily to form the bass notes of harmonic progressions that I incorporated into aspects of each movement. This bass line is subject to constant reharmonization and intervallic patterns within the seven-note set are often segmented into other harmonic progressions that constantly allude to this pattern, enforcing the theme of recollection throughout the suite. The pattern also forms the opening melody of the third movement “Sanctus,” where a version of the opening that ascends by two consecutive minor thirds forms the bass lines at the beginning of the harmonic progression. The continuous recycling of this material and its fragmentation reflect the churning through a series of memories as I return to a particular moment in time in my thoughts.

![Example 4. Original Pitch Set](image)

The final unifying motive of my suite is less of a motive and more of a persistent rhythmic device that I use to create “minimalist” textures and sections within different sections within the jazz orchestra in each movement. This aspect of the suite reflects my own compositional tastes, but I have incorporated different types of procedure to shade each movement in a distinct way to demonstrate how I remember that part of the mass, if in blurred ways.

My assimilation of these compositional elements work together to depict the narrative structure of my *Requiem* suite, a portrait of my emotions and memories that surround the day of my father’s funeral rendered through my own musical language. I choose the form of the
Requiem Mass to memorialize my father’s passing through a liturgical tradition that my family’s faith is located within, but through a distinct lens. My *Requiem* is an instrumental composition of a secular nature—a work for jazz orchestra—taking inspiration from the liturgy to produce a musical memorial rather than functioning as a piece within a liturgical context.

**Commentary and Conclusion**

The funeral service for my father, while not a Requiem Mass in the Latin tradition, also did not incorporate elements of a jazz mass or any sort of service that integrated overtly secular forms of music into the act of worship. To commemorate the tenth anniversary of his passing with a work inspired by the funeral rites of the Catholic liturgy, it was my goal to compose a work founded in musical models established by Williams and Ellington, the traditions of liturgical forms in the concert hall, and musical memorials. The content of this exegesis has focused on these areas so that I may locate my work against a backdrop of musical precedents.

In the 1960s Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington helped redefine the place of a jazz work that draws upon liturgical influences within those liturgical intuitions. The reformation of that Catholic Church liturgy and its practices surrounding music for worship also played a significant part in redefining how jazz can be situated in relation to liturgical settings. The goal of Vatican II’s reformation of music in the liturgy was to broaden musical boundaries of worship to encompass the musical traditions of Catholics around the world. Williams composed sacred jazz music within a Catholic context at the time of Vatican II and challenged the scope of just how far the Church’s boundaries of inclusion could be extended. Her efforts resulted in carving out a place for jazz inside of the Church with liturgically functional masses. Duke Ellington, in contrast, wrote music inspired by his relationship with spirituality and religion in his *Sacred Concerts*, finding audiences in both secular and liturgical settings, concert halls and churches, concurrently with Williams.

*My Requiem* fits somewhere between the two models of sacred jazz established by Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington. My composition draws upon a Catholic liturgical form without attempting to place it within functionally liturgical setting. I find myself and this work resonating within the framework of Ellington’s *Sacred Concerts* where I pull from my Catholic background and my relationship with my own spirituality to depict a narrative that is deeply entrenched in my experiences with Catholicism and its traditions. In a way, my
Requiem relates to a work that originates farther back into Ellington’s career, extrapolating upon the narrative purpose of Come Sunday, to portray African American religious life through the music engrained in Black forms of worship. My Requiem in no way attempts the historical mission of such a work that brought African American life in front of audiences in the United States and later, the world. Instead, I build on the platform provided by Come Sunday, which allows for a personal expression of one’s relationship with spirituality and religion through music and musical traditions associated with those relationships.

This sentiment of spiritual and religious expression is what I attempt to achieve in my Requiem suite. It is a memorial to my father embodied by the musical representation of my memories and emotions. Drawing from the definitions of the musical memorials I discussed in Chapter 1—the lament, the elegy, and memorial music—the Requiem suite parallels the character and scope of such memorials. In an example from Chapter 1, Josquin des Prez set a Requiem Mass text against secular texts within a lament to memorialize the composer Ockeghem. In a similar way, my Requiem sets the form of the Requiem within and against a secular medium, an instrumental work for jazz orchestra, outside of a liturgical setting to memorialize my father.

It is yet to be seen if this work ever finds itself performed within the walls of a church to test its liturgical buoyancy. Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington solidified that jazz music has a place inside of a church, but the jazz works they contributed in establishing that norm are considered “sacred” jazz. I hesitate to identify my work under terms like “sacred jazz” or “liturgical jazz” as the Requiem suite is a liturgically-inspired work and there is a long-held place for music incorporating liturgical forms in secular settings like the concert hall. Wherever this piece may lie, it does so somewhere between the sacred and the secular, and it stands tall in the form of musical memorial that I erected it to be.
Conclusion

In the course of this exegesis I have examined the liturgical musical forms of the Catholic Church, primarily the Requiem Mass, through a variety of contexts beginning with a survey of Church music from Antiquity into the twentieth century. Keeping in mind that throughout the centuries, secularism’s influence on the Catholic liturgy has varied greatly, I centred the lens of my discussion on jazz music and its place within forms of liturgical worship. The case studies of Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington model the adoption of jazz into liturgical contexts in their sacred jazz works of the 1960s. Their sacred music, as I have argued, situates jazz as a vehicle for the expression of one’s faith or spirituality in liturgical or secular settings, though there have been many other forms of spiritual expression in jazz that developed after Williams and Ellington pursued spiritual representation in their music. For example, jazz music in the 1970s expanded upon John Coltrane’s explorations of spirituality in the 1960s. Artists like Alice Coltrane, Pharoah Sanders, and Don Cherry traversed a range of spiritual expression outside Christian denominations. Jazz artists have continued to expand upon how the Christian faith can serve as an artistic medium as many composed in a vein similar to Williams and Ellington. Works like Wynton Marsalis’ The Abyssinian Mass (2008) and In this House, On this Morning (1994) parallel Williams’ and Ellington’s established compositional models, and twenty-first century composers have continued composing jazz masses and other religious works. Ike Sturm composed his Jazz Mass in 2007 and jazz flutist James Newton has contributed his own catalogue of sacred work including a setting of the Catholic rite, Mass (2007).

The sacred jazz models of Williams and Ellington also provide a framework for my composition, Requiem: a Suite for Jazz Orchestra, a contemporary jazz work taking inspiration from a liturgical form, but in the form of a musical memorial. My work as a modern jazz composition stands upon these precedents, though not all jazz artists wishing to express their relationships with their spirituality do so through these models.

I present these examples, and the example of my work, to illustrate the plurality of spiritual representation in the works of jazz artists and to demonstrate the trajectory of Williams’ and Ellington’s influence over the genre of sacred jazz music. Their work formed a foundation upon which to expand the contexts in which jazz music can reach audiences, and it challenged the boundaries of where music associated with secularism, like jazz, can or cannot be heard. Contemporary works of jazz that take religious and liturgical inspiration,
like my *Requiem* suite, draw upon the work of these and other composers, continuing to broaden the scope of jazz’s ability to express one’s relationship with spirituality even further.
Bibliography


REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT

JOHN WHITE
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE

I. INTROIT

Score

John White
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE

[Sheet music notation with various instruments indicated, including Fl. 1, Fl. 2, T. Sr., B. Cl. 1, B. Cl. 2, Tpt. 1, Flghn. 1, B. Cl. 2, Tpt. 2, Flghn. 2, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, Tbn. 3, Tbn. 4, Vib., Gtr., A.B., Drums, Pno.]
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

T. Gk.

Bb Cl. 1

Bb Cl. 2

Tpt. 1

Flghn. 1

Bb Tpt. 2

Flghn. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Tbn. 4

Vib.

Gtr.

A.B.

Drums

Pno.

Active Blowing Abandoning Previous Section, Tone

Deux Sole

96 97 98 99 100 100 100 100
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
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REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
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REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
Fl. 1
Fl. 2
T. Sn.
Bb Cl. 1
Bb Cl. 2
Bb Tpt. 1
Bb Tpt. 2
Flghn. 1
Flghn. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
Tbn. 4
Vib.
Gtr.
A.B.
Drums
Pno.

Open Drum Solo, Gradually Accel. to Fast Swing
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
REQUIEM MASS: INTROIT/KYRIE
REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE

JOHN WHITE
REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE
REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE
No Time, Just Cymbal Hits
REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE

"Rock" Feel With Solo Fills & intermittent "Half-Time"
REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE

Tuba in E flat

Tuba in B flat

Three octaves below

End solo

To top w/ Harp

Vibraphone

Guitar

Drums

Sparce Comping, 5ths/2nds Voicings, Add9 “Power Chord” Shapes Diatonic

Gigue

Third Time through Technical Riffs (from Dorian Swaying Cuttime)
REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE
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REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE
REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE
REQUIEM MASS: DIES IRAE
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS

JOHN WHITE
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS

A. Sx. 1
A. Sx. 2
T. Sx. 1
T. Sx. 2
B. Sx.

Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3

Gtr.
Vib.

Drums
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS

Solo

Pno.

A. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 1

B. Tbn.

Gtr.

Drums

Tpt. 1

Tbn. 2

Gtr.

Pno.

A.B.

Tpt. 4

Tpt. 3

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 1

Drums

A. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 1

B. Tbn.

Gtr.

Pno.

A.B.
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
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REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
REQUIEM MASS: SANCTUS
REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI

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REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI
REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI

Vib.

Gtr.

Pno.

A.B.

Drums

Solo

Half-time Rock Feel, Open Hi-Hat
REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI
REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI
REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI

**A. Sx. 1**

**A. Sx. 2**

**T. Sx. 1**

**T. Sx. 2**

**B. Sx.**

**B**

**Tpt. 1**

**B**

**Tpt. 2**

**B**

**Tpt. 3**

**B**

**Tpt. 4**

**Tbn. 1**

**Tbn. 2**

**Tbn. 3**

**Tbn. 4**

**Vib.**

**Gtr.**

**A.B.**

**Drums**

**Pno.**

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\1\2\3\4\5\6\7\8\9\10\11\12\13\14\15\16\17\18\19\20\21\22\23\24\25\26\27\28\29\30\31\32\33\34\35\36\37\38\39\40\41\42\43\44\45\46\47\48\49\50\51\52\53\54\55\56\57\58\59\60\61\62\63\64\65\66\67\68\69\70\71\72\73\74\75\76\77\78\79\80\81\82\83\84\85\86\87\88\89\90\91\92\93\94\95\96\97\98\99\100\101\102\103\104\105\106\107\108\109\110\111\112\113\114\115\116\117\118\119\120\121\122\123\124\125\126\127\128\129\130\131\132\133\134\135\136\137\138\139\140\141\142\143\144\145\146\147\148\149\150\151\152\153\154\155\156\157\158\159\160\161
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REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI
REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI

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- A. Sx. 1
- A. Sx. 2
- T. Sx. 1
- T. Sx. 2
- B. Sx.
- Bpt. 1
- Bpt. 2
- Bpt. 3
- Bpt. 4
- Tbn. 1
- Tbn. 2
- Tbn. 3
- Tbn. 4
- Vib.
- Gtr.
- A.B.
- Drums

Continue Straight 8th Build to w/ Hits and Lead Fills
REQUIEM MASS: AGNUS DEI