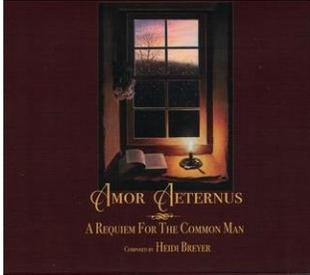


Heidi Breyer

Amor Aeternus - A Requiem for the Common Man



The Requiem did not begin with Bach, but his is one of the most notable undertakings of the form. Until now. More than a lifetime in the making, pianist and composer **Heidi Breyer's** latest release, **Amor Aeternus - A Requiem for the Common Man** is her most complex and creative release to date. Breyer is usually known for her contemporary and New Age piano compositions, but Amor Aeternus is a work that, especially in 2022, is a prayer for all mankind. This is music that touches us in the deepest parts of our souls. Places we never reveal to anyone else. Breyer's reverent and passionate ten track recording is our primal scream in the wilderness that is today. It beseeches our God(s) to give us hope, give us peace, and give us life. Traditionally, a requiem is a mass for the dead, but truthfully, music is performed to console the living.

Heidi Breyer's requiem follows some of the traditional structure of the form, but not all. She chooses to omit the Dies Irae and gives us instead, an expansive Lacrimosa, (Day of Mourning). She begins with the Introit which has an introductory mix of sorrowful strings as the chorus sings "*Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine*". "*Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord*". Breyer's sparse notes give way to impassioned voice and dolorous strings in a delicate entreaty.

Kyrie Eleison is a plea for mercy. What more can this poor soul do Lord, once I am yours? This simple prayer is infused with Breyer's hauntingly beautiful piano in a lament that is, if anything, quite soul searching. Baritone Nathan Halbur sings the simple prayer combined with Jill Haley's English horn and the chorus to make the spirit weep with emotion. Lord, have mercy on us.

Breyer offers a somber piano introduction on **Domine Jesu Christe**. Together with the Sanctus, this section of the requiem features a complex polyphonic choral part with soaring vocals and a full string background that is as deep as it is soul stirring. The polyphonic weaving continues throughout the Sanctus and ends with a sculptural string accompaniment expressed in a complex form. Hosanna in the Highest.

My favorite track on Amor Aeternus is the one called **Lacrimosa**. The Tears. One cannot avoid the powerful sentiment encountered in this epiphanic lament. Breyer's strong hand at composition is evident in this emotionally driven piece. It represents all of mankind weeping for the desolation, the void, and the sadness that each soul finds when faced with loss. The substantial piano overlay is intermixed with the chorus, creating a sense of ebb and flow in an ocean of tears.

Lux Aeterna, or Perpetual Light is one of the more tender tunes. Soothing angelic chorus and a soft, poignant piano ostinato decorated with gentle strings make this a comfort for any troubled soul.

Deliver Me or **Libera me** is a responsive piece of overlapping polyphony and strong violin vying for the attention of God's ear. There is more than one time change as glory is discovered and a state of grace envelops the petitioner seeking eternal life. "*Deliver me, O Lord, from death eternal on that fearful day*".

In Paradisum, a beautiful chant, finds the supplicant in a place of eternal peace and spiritual bliss. Breyer's heavenly lead-in is diaphanous and full of light. The chorus affects a celebratory tone. The music is achingly beautiful as the angels declare, "*Aeternam habeas requiem.*" "*May you have eternal rest. Amen.*" I did not want it to end, but it did. Other tracks include Pie Jesu and Agnus Dei.

This love, this eternal love...this fervent, passionate work should grace not only the towering heights of Liverpool Cathedral, but every empty space where a sadness dwells. It should be heard and be recognized as a reverent celebration during the ascension of every soul.

Amor Aeternus - A Requiem for the Common Man is not in the New Age genre by any definition, but it combines World, Sacred, and classical music written for a modern age. This monumental work is not just to marshal the emotions of the single man or woman, but to effortlessly become the spiritual anthem for mankind. Bach, Brahms, Britten, and Breyer. It has a nice ring to it. Even if you are not a follower of liturgical based music, you are going to want to hear this. Your soul with thank you for it. This is a most excellent recording.

<https://www.heidibreyer.com/>

- R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews

Nota Bene: The World Premiere of Amor Aeternus will be in Stern Auditorium/Perleman Stage at Carnegie Hall, NYC, on July 21st, 2022.