

(revised October 2016)

PROGRAM NOTE

*Kathleen McGuire, Andy Payne
and Jonathon Welch, 2014*

STREET REQUIEM (2014) was composed in Melbourne, Australia, by Kathleen McGuire, Andy Payne and Jonathon Welch. The complete ten-movement work was premiered at the Melbourne Recital Centre's Elisabeth Murdoch Hall on the 7th of June 2014, conducted by Jonathon Welch and Kathleen McGuire.

Jonathon Welch conceived of STREET REQUIEM with the aim of bringing a sense of peace, remembrance and hope to communities struggling to come to terms with street violence, war and a loss of safety on our streets. It is a highly accessible, contemporary work including English, African and Persian lyrics alongside a modern setting of the traditional Latin texts. While at times deeply moving, the work is essentially optimistic and uplifting. As composers we utilised gospel, Celtic, neo-Romantic, neo-Baroque, Indigenous and contemporary genres and instrumentation to reflect the multicultural and multi-faith traditions of modern city living. The harmonic language finds common ground in the work's multiple styles by building upon chant and folk music-influenced open fourth and fifth intervals, with melodies drawn from pentatonic scales and various modes.

From the outset we endeavoured to create an inclusive work to which people from various backgrounds and traditions could relate. Although it is anchored in the Latin of the traditional requiem mass, we incorporated English texts relevant to a modern day context. STREET REQUIEM is deliberately neither secular nor religious, intended instead to be deeply spiritual, allowing listeners to find their own faith or meaning in the context of the words.

Because there were several highly publicised deaths on the streets of Melbourne during the composition period, we were asked if any specific events are referenced in the work. The answer is best understood by our intent to write inclusively. There is no doubt that specific events profoundly affected us – and we

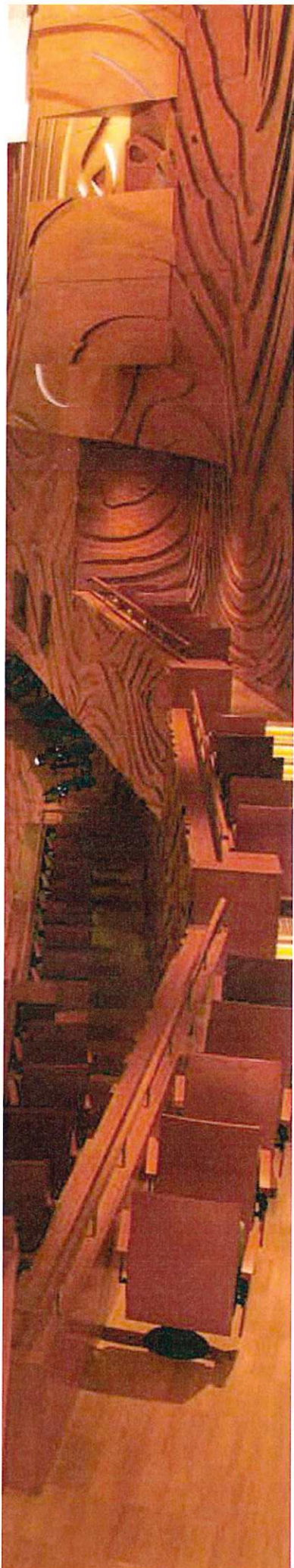
*“As part of the human race,
we must find compassion for
those we never knew who’ve
died senselessly on the street,
whether they were young or
old, in war or in peacetime,
in violence or in illness.
Through remembering them,
we are reminded to value
all life. Lest we forget.”*

– KATHLEEN, ANDY & JONATHON

indeed discussed whether we should write for or dedicate particular sections to specific individuals – but we decided that the STREET REQUIEM would be for *all* those who died on the streets.

As well as remembering street deaths, we also want to challenge the audience to do something about their situation, whether it is for those who are forced to live on the streets or in regard to society's general attitudes to violence. The tone of the STREET REQUIEM is often confronting, encouraging listeners to examine their own attitudes and beliefs.

STREET REQUIEM was originally intended for performance by community choirs. It can be performed with piano-only accompaniment, but will be considerably enhanced by the additional instrumentation of a didgeridu, string quartet and percussion.



PERFORMANCE AND COMPOSITION NOTES

*Kathleen McGuire, Andy Payne
and Jonathon Welch, 2014*

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND DEDICATION

It is customary in parts of Australia to formally acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which major ceremonies and events take place. The words are often read by an authority figure before the main business commences, paying respect to ancient peoples especially when land may have been forcefully acquired. In honouring those who have died on the street, we also wanted to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which the streets have been built. As such, the Acknowledgement has been integrated as part of *STREET REQUIEM*'s opening movement.

At the premiere performance, the Choir of Hope and Inspiration – the street choir that began as the Choir of Hard Knocks in 2006 – performed the Acknowledgement. Many of the choir's members have experienced life on the street or other forms of significant disadvantage. For the choir, their relationship with the street is problematic; for some it has been a place to call home or a place to find friends and companionship. It is often a place of sadness, violence and rejection, and – for some – a final resting place.

Individuals from the choir stepped forward as solo voices and emphatically recited the Acknowledgement, and then all members of the street choir joined together to restate the message. All participants took this responsibility seriously. In preparation, the choir members talked about the meaning of the words and showed tremendous empathy for the feelings of Indigenous communities. In this way, the *STREET REQUIEM* commenced with one often marginalised group formally and symbolically acknowledging the position of another. When the *STREET REQUIEM* is performed in other countries, we hope that local custom can be adopted to acknowledge indigenous communities in a similar manner during this introductory passage.

As the Acknowledgement concludes we hear the deep drone of an Indigenous instrument, known by a variety of regional names and commonly as the didjeridu. This is doubled by sustained notes on strings, which may suffice alone if a didjeridu player is unavailable.



Above: Ron Murray, didjeridu player.

After the Acknowledgement, a new solo voice is heard from the balcony as if calling from a rooftop in the city, chanting an improvised vocalisation in the style of a Muslim call to prayer. The words sung in Farsi (Persian) entreat us to remember those who have died on the street. In the premiere, this solo was intoned by a young man far from his home in the Middle East. The violent deaths on the streets of his native city caused him to seek sanctuary in a new land.

Our pairing of the didjeridu with a Farsi chant is an unusual one, although they are both rooted in ancient cultures. The inspiration for the juxtaposition arose particularly from the work Jonathon and Andy were doing with *Voices Without Borders* – an asylum seekers choir in Melbourne – in the months leading to the premiere.

While learning songs in English, the asylum seekers were also keen to share their own music traditions. Morteza Teimouri, the young man who sang the Farsi chant in the premiere, was one of the first to sing for the group. The unusual tonality and hauntingly beautiful nature of his delivery was a perfect fit. His joy and delight in performing was a special feature of the premiere. In it he found a recognition and acceptance that had yet to be formalised by the authorities. He remains optimistic that he will one day officially be allowed to call Australia home.

2. INTROIT – REQUIEM AETERNAM

As the sung Dedication dies away, the full choir gradually enters with a pulsing ostinato. The words, in Latin, pray for eternal rest for the souls of the departed. There is an underlying tension in the music that reflects the sudden and sometimes violent nature of death on the streets.

The ostinato heard here was the first thematic material composed for *STREET REQUIEM*. Introduced by Jonathon at our first composers' meeting, it underpins the intent of the work; Jonathon described the uneasiness felt in the theme as 'the voice of the streets.' It is heard again in a revised and elongated form in the final movement.

3. UBI CARITAS – CHARITY AND LOVE

In the third movement, the audience is addressed directly by the voices of people living the street. The Choir of Hope and Inspiration sang the almost accusatory message at the premiere. The music is upbeat and challenging. The refrain incorporates words taken from an ancient hymn, but the syncopated rhythm could not be further from the Gregorian chant with which they are usually associated: "Ubi caritas et amor deus ibi est" – where there is charity and love, there will you find the spirit of god.

This movement was written specifically for performance by the Choir of Hope and Inspiration. Their story and the work of Jonathon and Kathleen with people who are homeless or disadvantaged was central to the audience's expectations of the work. Knowing that learning a large, formal work with foreign language in a short time frame would prove a challenge for some in the choir, Andy suggested we incorporate Latin text that the singers already knew from a previous song. He knew they could pronounce the words and – most importantly – that they understood and could empathise with the meaning. The English words of the movement were written for what Andy envisaged as a gentle lullaby, but when Jonathon received the draft he had very different ideas. Jonathon composed the driving, accusatory arrangement that you now hear.

Sung by a street choir, the movement has a particular poignancy, but other contexts are also possible. At a subsequent performance when sung by a high school boys' choir, for instance, the singers wore caps and 'hoodies' to represent and challenge our image of youth on the streets.

4. KYRIE ELEISON – CITY HYMN

The City Hymn starts with the traditional Greek prayer: Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison – Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy – used almost in exasperation. It is as if, in our name, municipal officials are anxious to preserve the image of the city even in the face of death on the street. Juxtaposed is the hymn in praise of the city. The words of John Newton are unchanged but reinterpreted. The city is likened to Sion, idealised as a utopia providing wealth and sustenance to its inhabitants. The uneasy rhythms of the hymn suggest that all is not well. The movement concludes on a single sustained note, which continues *attacca* into the judgement of the *Dies Irae*.

Violent death on the street is not uncommon and many innocent people have been killed by random acts of violence, but it was a single incident during the composition period that led Andy to the blunt chorus of the Kyrie. A man well known to homeless charities in Melbourne was killed under a popular bridge in the city. The young man accused of the killing had attended one of Melbourne's most prestigious schools. The obvious headlines were written, but in the days following the incident the city authorities were criticised when the papers reported that the man's possessions, and indeed his blood, were still on the street where he had been killed.

Melbourne, in common with many cities, covets its reputation as 'The world's most livable city', but as with many cities there is an uncomfortable side to Melbourne's story. Andy wanted to write an ironic hymn in praise of the city. Having an idea for the basic rhythm and tune, Andy was thumbing through *Hymns Ancient and Modern* when he came across John Newton's "Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken." 'Sion' became Melbourne, and the sentiment was perfect. The words of the hymn suggest that the glorious city has been given to its residents by god, but in the *STREET REQUIEM*'s context these words may be interpreted with an ironic twist.

5. DIES IRAE – DAY OF JUDGEMENT

The sustained, unison B-flat that concludes the Kyrie gives way to the Dies Irae motif, which opens the fifth movement. The simple theme becomes increasingly insistent as the choral parts develop. At the moment of crescendo, the repeated theme is interrupted by a new tune and words: “Nolite iudicare et non iudicemini,” a Latin translation of the gospel writer Matthew’s words: “Do not judge others for this will bring judgment upon you.” When the main theme returns, the words are now in English. At first we hear a restatement of the idea of being called to account in a final judgment, but as the theme shifts in intensity, the words move to a modern reflection of our judgment of others, especially those who we do not know or do not understand. Matthew’s words return to remind us of the danger in judging others and the judgement theme from the next movement is previewed. The movement ends suddenly as if in judgement of itself.

The Dies Irae sat unwritten for much of the composition period. How do composers tackle a text setting with such an illustrious history? In the end, the piece almost wrote itself. As the team sat down together after a long and particularly taxing day, there was only the original Latin and a few scraps of English text on the table. Somehow, two hours later the piece was all but finished. There were ideas bouncing around the group, a snippet here, a lyric there, while Kathleen recorded, arranged and referenced musical motifs from other STREET REQUIEM movements as we went. The result was a movement reminiscent of a rock anthem; a truly collaborative effort.

6. PIE JESU

The original Latin is used without alteration in the hauntingly beautiful Pie Jesu. Jesus – an important figure in many religious beliefs and revered by Christians as the Son of God – is implored to grant eternal rest to those who have died. Soloist and choir repeat the imploration, which concludes in a note of hope.

While mastering new music software, Jonathon wrote the Pie Jesu as a stand-alone exercise. It was not originally intended to be part of the STREET REQUIEM, but Kathleen and Andy loved it from the moment they heard it. The team soon agreed that the Pie Jesu would serve as the work’s specifically Christian offering.

The Pie Jesu is unusual amongst the movements in the STREET REQUIEM because it contains no English translation or interpretation. The Latin text is a prayer addressed to Jesus and as such might be said to be relevant only to particular religious groups, however we felt that any further adornment would be unnecessary for the movement. The soloist with the choir’s sopranos and altos provide particular peace and tranquility, a welcome contrast after the turbulence of the Dies Irae.

7. AGNUS DEI – LAMB OF GOD

The supplication of this movement is repeated to the ‘Lamb of God.’ As one who has known great suffering, the Lamb is called upon to give peace to us all. Our English interpretation references the prayer to the street as the Lamb of God is entreated to find the supplicant ‘somewhere to sleep’ as a prelude to ‘eternal peace.’

Arranged for two solo voices in a neo-Baroque style, this is the only movement without choral input. The performance score includes parts for a string quartet, which provides a delicate richness. Should resources not be available, the movement can be performed with piano accompaniment and possibly one solo instrument. The additional line for a solo violin (as shown in the piano-vocal score) could be substituted by a reed instrument.

8. GLORIA – ANTHEM OF EMPOWERMENT

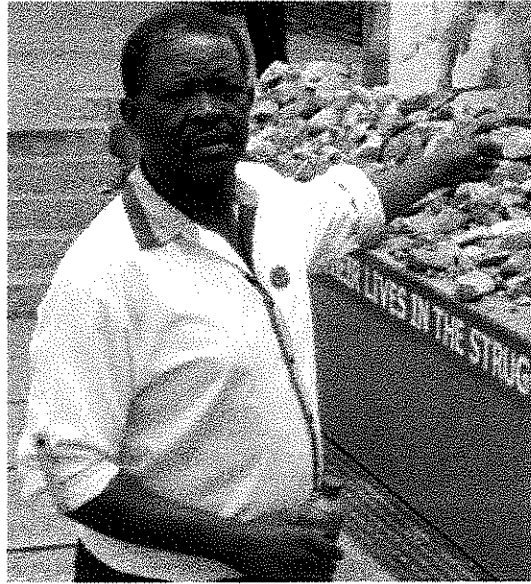
The Gloria, an unexpected inclusion in a requiem setting, is included here to remember and to offer empowerment to street children everywhere. The setting is African in style, from a continent on which children have suffered greatly. The movement begins with a jubilant chorus of praise, initially in the traditional Latin. As the movement progresses we hear the Zulu “Akanamandla” interposed with the traditional Latin text. Two of the beatitudes, “Blessed are the meek” and “Blessed are the poor”, form a bridge to the reflective “senzeni na” – “what have we done?” repeated in Zulu and then in English, then sped up to symbolise reclamation. The movement concludes with a joyous return to the original theme, representing hope even in the face of tragedy. The Gloria’s accompaniment is scored for piano and multiple percussion and no strings. As such, the string players may be utilised to play percussion instruments. Although not performed in the premiere, *ad lib* ululations embodying unbridled joy are encouraged – as shown in the score – if a suitable singer is available. It is recommended that the choir should sing this movement from memory so that they may comfortably clap and sway.

Why did we include an African-inspired movement in the *STREET REQUIEM*? The answer lies in a trip to South Africa that Kathleen made in January and February 2014. In particular, Kathleen was profoundly moved by her visit to Soweto and the Hector Pieterse Museum. As an educator herself, the story of police killing 12-year-old Hector Pieterse and many other children on the 16th of June 1976 was particularly confronting. A local guide named Neo showed Kathleen around the Soweto and Johannesburg. Neo, himself just a boy on the streets in 1976, was present at the shooting and the 18 months of school strikes and police brutality that ensued. He introduced Kathleen to the song “Senzeni Na” and explained the deep meaning the words meant to him, to his people and to this tragic moment in history. He entreated her to share this important story with others. Shortly after she returned to Melbourne, Kathleen wrote the Gloria. The choir’s music represents children rising up against oppression, while the soloist exclaiming “Amandla” represents Winnie Mandela inciting the masses to take action.

9. LACRIMOSA – NIGHT TEARS

The gentle opening of the *Lacrimosa* comes as an emotional relief after the frenetic Gloria. Through the introduction of the traditional Celtic folk song “She Moved Through The Fair” we follow a beautiful but elusive woman on her way home through the city streets. A presence lurks in the shadows but it is no monster; he is somebody’s son, a reminder that the violence which is about to be committed is a part of us all. The English story then gives way to the Latin *Lacrimosa*, a text originally part of the *Dies Irae*. It warns of the day of weeping when the guilty will rise from the dead to be brought to account for their actions.

There were a number of highly publicised attacks on women in Melbourne in 2013 and 2014. Direct action ensued, including protest marches designed to enable women to reclaim the streets. It was inevitable that our audience would reference these incidents in the *STREET REQUIEM*. Andy wrote the English words of the *Lacrimosa* to reference the words of the Celtic ballad, the ambiguity of which intrigued him. He wanted people to think about the complexity of the issues relating to violence against women. Kathleen, also intrigued by melodic elements of the original ballad, chose to source the traditional tune when setting the text.



Above: Neo in Soweto, South Africa, at the site of 1976 shootings, photographed by Kathleen McGuire February 2nd, 2014.

10. LUX AETERNA – REMEMBER THEM

STREET REQUIEM concludes with a hymn of remembrance. The soloist begins in Latin “Lux aeterna luceat eis” – may the dead find eternal light. The voices of the choir, singing in English, wish peace, tranquility and a final resting place for those who have died. The simple tune – derived from the “Requiem aeternam” theme of the 2nd movement – is repeated before the choral voices peal like bells as if welcoming those who have died to their final resting place. In this act of remembrance, we hope to contribute to their final peace.

The work concludes with a solemn and peaceful yet essentially optimistic tone. *STREET REQUIEM* is about moving towards peace for those who have died and also for those who remain. The Latin text reflects this; “Give *them* peace – give *us* peace” is the sentiment.

LYRICS AND TRANSLATIONS

Words and music by McGuire, Payne and Welch, unless stated otherwise. Latin text from the traditional requiem mass. English translations or interpretations shown bracketed in Italics.

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND DEDICATION

[Traditional Australian Acknowledgement of Country. Farsi translation by Sara Khorshidi.]

We would like to acknowledge the people of the Kulin nation, who are the traditional custodians of this land. We would also like to pay respect to the elders past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal people present.

تشاد می‌هاوخ دایب ار اهن آ ام

دن تش گین زاب زگره اما دن داهن مدق اهن ابای خ نی مهب مک ی اهن آ

(We will remember them; those who walked upon the streets but did not return.)

2. INTROIT – REQUIEM AETERNAM

Requiem aeternam. *(Bring them eternal rest.)*

Bring them peace. Dona eis pacem. *(Give them peace.)*

Honoured now, not forgotten.

Requiem sempiternam et lux perpetua luceat eis.

(Give them everlasting rest. Let perpetual light shine upon them.)

3. UBI CARITAS – CHARITY AND LOVE

[Words: Payne. Music: Welch. Arrangement: McGuire]

What is it that scares you when it's change I'm looking for?

What is it that scares you that makes you bar the door?

What is it that scares you when my hand's stretched out this way?

What is it that scares you that makes you turn away?

Why do you spend your time now watching life from the stalls?

While all the drama happens outside the concert hall.

Ubi caritas et amor deus ibi est.

(Where there is charity and love, there you will find the spirit of god.)

What is it that makes you rush past me, who can tell?

Can it be you see now our lives in parallel?

What is it that scares you that makes you turn away?

What is it that scares you when I'm dying in this way?

4. KYRIE ELEISON – CITY HYMN

[Verses by John Newton (1725–1807). Music and additional words: Payne. Arr. McGuire]

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison (*Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy*)

Wind back the tape from the road so that traffic can run.

Wash all the blood from the street so the tourists still come.

Glorious things of thee are spoken, Sion, city of our god;

He, whose word cannot be broken,

Formed thee for his own abode.

On the Rock of Ages founded, what can shake thy sure repose?

With salvation's walls surrounded,

Thou mayst smile at all thy foes.

See the streams of living waters, springing from eternal love.

Well supply our sons and daughters,

And all fear of want remove.

Who can faint while such a river

Ever flows their thirst t'assuage?

Grace, which from the love, the giver,

Never fails from age to age.

Saviour, if of Sion's city, I, through grace, a member am,

Let the world deride or pity, I will glory in thy name.

Fading is the worldling's pleasure,

All his boasted pomp and show.

Solid joys and lasting treasure, none but Sion's children know.

5. DIES IRAE – DAY OF JUDGEMENT

Dies irae, dies illa, solvet saeculum in favilla.

(That day will be the day of judgement, when the world will dissolve into ashes.)

Nolite judicare ut non judicemini.

(Do not judge others lest you be judged yourself.)

Day of judgement, day of fury, time to face the final jury.

Raise the dead to judge the living, final ending, no forgiving.

Read the paper, point the finger,

Close your mind, opinions linger.

Judge your neighbour, close the border,

Put the blame on law and order.

6. PIE JESU

[Music: Welch]

Pie Jesu domine, dona eis requiem.

(Merciful Jesus, O lord, grant them rest.)

7. AGNUS DEI – LAMB OF GOD

[Words: Payne. Music: McGuire, Payne]

Lamb of god, who taketh away the sins of the world,
Find me somewhere to sleep.
Lamb of god, who taketh away the sins of the world,
Grant eternal peace.
Agnus dei. (*Lamb of god.*)

8. GLORIA – ANTHEM OF EMPOWERMENT

[Music: McGuire. “Senzeni na” – traditional South African anti-apartheid folk song.
Additional words: McGuire, Payne, Welch]

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Hosanna in excelsis Deo.
(*Glory to God in the highest. Praise God in the highest.*)
Akanamandla. (*Evil has no power over us.*)
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are the poor, for they’re worth so much more.
Senzeni na? (*What have we done?*)
We are your daughters, we are your sons, we’re innocent, our lives are young.
What have we done, what have we done? What have we done, what have we done?
Amandla awethu! (*Power to us!*)

9. LACRIMOSA – NIGHT TEARS

[Words: Payne. Music: McGuire; traditional Celtic folk song]

She moved through the street as she moved through the fair.
With footsteps behind her, the wind in her hair.
The swan on the river, the shark in the bay.
And life, like the tide, slowly ebbing away.
She could be your daughter; he could be your son.
With footsteps beside her, an evil is done.
The stars keep on shining, they’ve nothing to say;
The angels are weeping as god looks away.
Dies illa lacrimosa, qua resurget ex favilla.
Dies illa lacrimosa, judicandus homo reus.
(*That day is one of weeping, when the guilty man shall rise from the ashes to be judged*)

10. LUX AETERNA – REMEMBER THEM

Lux aeterna luceat eis, cum sanctis tuis, in aeternum.
(*May an eternal light shine upon them, with the angels forever.*)
May you find a resting place, safe in love’s embrace.
Dona eis pacem. (*Give them peace.*)
Remember them. We remember them.
May you come to rest in peace, you will be remembered.
Dona eis pacem. Dona nobis pacem.
(*Give them peace. Give us peace.*)
We remember them.