

The Keeping of the Soul

Words on the Time of Death from Around the World
This work was commissioned by The National Lutheran Choir & Cantus

JAY GORDON
JANUARY 2009

KASHMIRI-PANDIT: Are you hungry father?

(Are you thirsty mother?)

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Baritone

Bass

tam-tam

bass drum

with fitful anguish, not too measured ♩ = 64

(solo) *p* /WITH NASAL TONE/ (SCOOP UP TO NOTE) *mp*

Boch - (ch) - hi ma la ji, ba - bo? Tresh ma la ji, ma ji?

(rehearsal piano only)

(Are you feeling cold?)

6

mf *subito p* *mp*

Ba - bo, ma ji, ba bo? Tur ma la ji? Ba - bo, ma -

serenely, very measured

PALI (Buddhist): birth is suffering, aging is suffering and death is suffering

11 *p* *sub. pp* *p* *pp* *mf* *p* *p* *pp*

S.1 Ja - ti - pi duk - kha, ja - ra - pi duk - kha, ma - ra - nam - pi duk - kha, ma - ra - nam - pi duk - kha,

T.1 jiṃ?

serenely, very measured

T.2 *p* *sub. pp* *p* *pp* *mf* *p* *p* *pp*

T.2 Ja - ti - pi duk - kha, ja - ra - pi duk - kha, ma - ra - nam - pi duk - kha, ma - ra - nam - pi duk - kha,

smoothly

LATIN: May choirs of angels escort you into paradise.

20 *mp*

S.1 *mp* In pa - ra - di - sum, in pa - ra - di - sum de - du - cant te an - ge - li. Cho - rus an - ge - lo - rum,

28 *mp*

S.1 *mp* In pa - ra - di - sum, in pa - ra - di - sum de - du - cant te an - ge - li.

S.2 *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *mf*

S.2 Ja - ti - pi duk - kha, ja - - ra - pi duk - kha, ma - - ra - nam - pi

T.1 *mp* (measured this time)

T.1 Boch - (ch) - hi ma la - jiṃ, ba - bo? Tresh ma la - jiṃ, ma - ji?

T.2 *p* *sub. pp* *p* *pp* *mf*

T.2 Ja - ti - pi duk - kha, ja - - ra - pi duk - kha, ma - - ra - nam - pi

(May the holy angels welcome you)

33

S.1 *Chorus an-ge-lo rum, an-ge-lo rum te su - sci-pi-at.*

S.2 *duk - kha, ma - ra - - - nampi duk - kha, Ja - ti pi duk - kha, ja -*

T.1 *Ba - bo, ma ji, ba bo? Tur ma la jiy?*

T.2 *duk - kha, ma - ra - - - nampi duk - kha, Ja - ti pi duk - kha, ja -*

(may you have everlasting rest.)

(father)

38

S.1 *Ae - ter nam*

S.2 *ra - pi duk kha, ja - ti - pi duk - kha, ja - - - ra - pi duk - kha,*

T.1 *Ba - bo?*

T.2 *ra - pi duk kha, ja - ti - pi duk - kha, ja - - - ra - pi duk - kha,*

(mother) (may you have everlasting rest.) (DEATH...)

44 *pp* niente

S.1 *ha be - as re - qui - em. mm nam*

p *pp* niente

S.2 *ma - ra - nam - pi duk kha. Ma ra nam...*

44 *pp* niente

T.1 *Ma ji? mm nam*

p *pp* niente

T.2 *ma - ra - nam - pi duk kha. Ma ra nam...*

"The Death Experience"

51

T.1

51

BT.1

51 *count slowly, but with a random feel (not measured)* *(hit as hard as possible)*

tam-tam *ppp* *fff* *l.v.*

51 *l.v.* *fff* *l.v.* *(hit as hard as possible)* *fff* *l.v.*

bass drum *p* *fff* *fff* *fff*

The percussion is meant to be the death experience. It should be unsettling to the listener. This can be worked out anew depending on the exigencies of individual performance spaces. Feel free to bring your creativity to the moment, just as long it frightens the bajeebers out of people. Tempo should be slow and dramatic. The percussion should be off stage. If in a sacred space, the percussion should come from the front. The tam-tam and bass drum(s) should be as large as possible. Can you make the drum(s) sound like a volley of cannon fire?

LAKOTA: In the West..., in the North...

(after generous pause, begin while perc. is still receding into space)

56 *p* *mf* (long pause) *p* *mf* (long pause)

T1
 Wi - yoh - pe ya ta, Wa zi ya ta,

BT1
 Wi - yoh - pe ya ta, Wa zi ya ta,

(in the East...,)

62 *p* *mf* (long pause)

T1
 Wi yoh - i yan po ta,

BT1
 Wi yoh - i yan po ta,

(in the South...)

66 *p* *mf* *gliss* *mf*

T1
 I to - ka ga ta, ka - ga ta.

BT1
 I to - ka ga ta, ka - ga ta.

with great warmth

(Friend, I will send a voice, so hear me.)

slightly broaden

70 *mf* (non solo) *mp*

S.1 Ko - la, ho - ye wa - yin k - ta, ho - ye wa yin k - ta ca na - ma - hun we.

S.2 *mf* (non solo) *mp*

A.1 *mf* *mp*

T.1 *mf* (non solo) *mp*

BT.1 *mf* (non solo) *mp*

B.1 *mf* *mp*

77 *pp* (solo) HEBREW: mourners, mourners

S.1 *pp* (solo) *ppp* (solo)

S.2 *ppp* (solo)

A.1 *ppp* (solo)

A.2 *ppp* (solo)

Av - - - el - ah, av el ah.

83 *mp* ARABIC: There is no god but God.

T.1 *mp* *p* *mp*

BT.1 *mp* *p* *mp*

B.1 *mp*

La il - la - hah a - lah, la i, la il - la - hah al - lah. La il - la - hah al - lah, la i, la il - la - hah

al lah, la hah

CHINESE: Humans flow into life, and ebb into death.

(♩ = ♪)

niente

89 *mp (non solo)*

S.1
Chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru,

A.1
mp (non solo)
Chu sheng, chu sheng, chu sheng, sheng, sheng, sheng, sheng...

89 *p*
T.1
al - lah,

(non solo) *mp*
T.2
Chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru, chu sheng ru,

(non solo) *mp*
T.3
Chu sheng, chu sheng, chu sheng, sheng, sheng, sheng, sheng...

89 *p*
BT.1
al - lah,

92 *mp*
T.1
La il la - hah al lah, la i, la il la hah

92 *mp*
BT.1
La il la - hah al lah, la i, la il la hah

B.1
La il la - hah al lah, la i, la il la hah