

Anthem for Doomed Youth

Text: Wilfred Owen

Music: Michael Winikoff

Anthem for Doomed Youth Nation 17

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
- Only the monotonous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.

No { music for all them, nor } prayers or bells;
No { mockeries for them; from } mourners save the choirs,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,
The shrill ~~democratic~~ ^{entertained} choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling sad across the shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
And The pallor of girl's brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of ~~silent patient~~ minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Image:%22Anthem_for_Doomed_Youth%22_by_Wilfred_Owen_%28English%29.jpg

Performance Notes

The poem *Anthem for Doomed Youth* paints in vivid imagery the funeral of soldiers in the great war.

Those who fall like cattle do not have the usual trappings of a funeral: passing bells, prayers, bells, mourning voices, bugles or candles. Instead, they have only the guns' monstrous anger, and the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle. The voice of mourning is that of the shrill demented choirs of wailing shells.

I have set this text as a funeral march which follows Wilfred Owen's text and paints the guns' rapid rattle, the bugles, and the wailing demented choirs. The march closes with a quiet *a capella* section, bringing peace to the fallen.

Like Owen's poem, I hope this piece of music manages to evoke the horrific nature of war, and perhaps encourage us all (and especially our leaders, elected or otherwise) to try harder to avoid war and seek peaceful solutions instead.

The piece was composed in 1995 and revised in February 2008

Performance notes:

The pianist should add octaves as appropriate to the acoustics and volume of the choir.

In bars 18-21 each singer should freely repeat the words "rapid rattle" over and over at their own individual speed until they cut off (at the start of bar 21 for sopranos and altos, and at the end of that bar for tenors and basses).

Michael Winikoff

February, 2008

Melbourne, Australia

Anthem for Doomed Youth

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Anthem for Doomed Youth

Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)

Composed 1995, revised February 2008. Duration: approx. 5:10

Michael Winikoff

13

guns as cat-tle on - ly the stut-ter-ring ri-fles' stut-ter-ring ri-fles' rapid rattle ... rapid rattle ...
 guns on - ly on - ly the stut-ter-ring ri-fles' stut-ter-ring ri-fles' rapid rattle ... rapid rattle ...
 guns on - ly on - ly the stut-ter-ring ri-fles' stut-ter-ring ri-fles' rapid rattle ... rapid rattle ...
 guns on - ly on - ly the stut-ter-ring ri-fles' stut-ter-ring ri-fles' rapid rattle ... rapid rattle ...

20

... rapid rattle ... can pat-ter out their has-ty o-ri-sons ____
 ... rapid rattle ... can pat-ter out their has-ty o-ri-sons ____
 ... rapid rattle ... rapid rattle ... their has-ty o-ri-sons ____ no pp
 ... rapid rattle ... rapid rattle ... no rit.

28

A little faster ($\text{♩} = 58$)

no prayers nor bells no
 no prayers nor bells no
 no ____ mo - cke - ries for them no prayers nor bells no
 no ____ mo - cke - ries for them no prayers nor bells no

34

a - ny voice ____ of mour-ning save ____ the cho - irs Ah _____

a - ny voice ____ of mour-ning save ____ the cho - irs the shrill de - men-ted choirs of

a - ny voice ____ of mour-ning save ____ the cho - irs the shrill de - men-ted choirs of

a - ny voice ____ of mour-ning save ____ the cho - irs the shrill de - men-ted choirs of

f

42

Ah _____ Ah _____

wail ____ ling shells ____

wail ____ ling shells ____

f

50

cal - ling bu - gles ____ cal - ling

bu - gles cal - ling

bu - gles cal - ling

ff

cal - ling and bu - gles ____ cal - ling

cal - ling

67

Ah _____ Ah
Spoken

rat-tle as cat-tle rap-id rat-tle as cat-tle as cat-tle rap-id rat-tle ra-pid rat-tle as cat-tle

Spoken

rat-tle as cat-tle rap-id rat-tle as cat-tle as cat-tle rap-id rat-tle ra-pid rat-tle as cat-tle

what

73

Ah __ Ah _____

Sung gradual cresc.

ra-pid rat-tle as cat-tle ra-pid rat-tle ra-pid rat-tle on - ly

ra-pid rat-tle as cat-tle ra-pid rat-tle ra-pid rat-tle

gradual cresc.

pas-sing bells for these who die what pas-sing bells

79

85

92

102 *mp*

what can-dles may be held to speed them all? shall
mp

what can-dles may be held to speed them all? Not in the hands of boys but in their eyes

mp

Mm —

108

shine the ho ly glim - mers of good - byes The pal-lor of girls' brows shall
 shine the ho ly glim - mers of good - byes The pal-lor of girls' brows shall

Mm —

113

be their pall — their flowers the
 be their pall — their flowers the

shall be their pall — their flowers the

shall be their pall — their flowers the

117

Slower *rit.*

ten - der - ness of pa - tient minds and each slow dusk a dra - wing down of blinds

ten - der - ness of pa - tient minds and each slow dusk a dra - wing down of blinds

ten - der - ness of pa - tient minds Mm —

ten - der - ness of pa - tient minds Mm —