

# Brahms requiem presentation outline

1. What is the requiem? Recall berlioz requiem. Other famous pieces: Mozart faure.
2. brief introduction of brahms.
3. the significant points of this piece, why is this piece so special, so important? On the whole. Say sth about each movements.
4. analyze fourth movement, with score.  
First, focus on text. Second, analyze the accompaniment and the melody.
5. conclusion, overall comment.

Ein deutsches Requiem, nach Worten der heiligen Schrift

En do jertz ' hrek fi em// na 喝 wa den de a 'he lin shrift

A German Requiem, to Words of the Holy Scriptures

Slide 2: Brahms

Traditionalist and Innovator: structure of classical and baroque, he created new harmony and used different chords. Embedded within his meticulous structures, however, are deeply romantic motifs.

I once heard from a contemporary composer, and he said that the pieces from Beethoven or Mozart are a bunch of fragments, but Brahms' pieces always make him moved because of the

chord and harmony he used.

[ˈluːθərənizəm]

Pianist: he premiered many of his own works. He worked with some of the leading performers of his time, including the pianist Clara Schumann and the violinist Joseph Joachim

Perfectionist: After piano trio number one was done for 37 yrs, he rewrote it again. Symphony no 1, 10 years. German requiem began when he was 24. Until 1861, 4 movements were done. To mourn his mother's death, he added two movements. Finally, it took him 11 years to complete this work.

Slide 3: Requiem

Witness: His friends and relatives passed away, especially his teacher Schumann and his mother.

Largest: In terms of both length and musical content, it is his largest single work, almost 80 mins long.

Break the tradition:

Structure & Text: the requiems before or after, usually used fixed Latin text and similar structure, and liturgical [ɪˈtʃɹdʒɪk(ə)]. but in his work, he totally discarded this tradition. He used the text which was translated from Bible by Martin Luther [ˈmætiːn ˈlute]. So the text is German.

So this work promoted the [ˈluːθərənizəm]. to some extent.

Idea: Unlike traditional requiem, like fear. Brahms' main idea is blessing the dead, peacefully

Premiere: [priˈmiə] The first three movements was conducted in Vienna on 1 December 1867. This partial premiere went poorly due to a misunderstanding in the timpanist's score. The first performance of the six movements premiered six months later in April 1868, with Brahms conducting. The performance was a great success and marked a turning point in Brahms's career.

Instrumentation: As we can see, it is bigger than Mozart, a bit similar than Berlioz.

Movements: I don't have much space on the slide, so I put the translation of the subtitles on your handouts. From the names, we can probably see that 5<sup>th</sup> movement responds to third, and 6 to second, and 7<sup>th</sup> to first. In the middle, 4<sup>th</sup> movement is the core of this piece.

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen

Wee lib lish de ner 'wo nu men



(How amiable [ˈɛɪmiəb(ə)] are thy tabernacles [ˈtæbər,næk(ə)]) 你的居所何等可爱

In the fourth movement a dovetailing of II and VI on the flute in bars 1 to 3 is answered symmetrically by their inversions I and V on the sopranos in bars 4-7. The symmetry of the progression.

Techniques:

The fugue subject (ex.5) not only begins with the basic motif, but also recalls the original extension of it, shown in ex.1. Still more remarkable is the way Brahms transforms this robust, assertive fugue theme into the gentle soprano melody with which the following movement begins (ex.6) altering the key, the rhythm and the tempo, but preserving most of the notes. The four bars of introduction which precede the chorus present the same melody in its inverted form. (Ex 7)

Comparison with Bach

It was not just the form of the Bach cantatas which must have interested Brahms but Bach's particular use of the chorale and its associated texts. Since he had himself written a funeral march using this chorale melody in the sonata/symphony and was aware of its textual

associations, it must have struck Brahms very forcibly indeed to discover in the first movement of Cantata 27 that Bach had arranged the chorale in a remarkably similar way, setting it in the same marching rhythm and framing it within a similar bass pattern and descending figures in the upper strings and wind:

the orchestral accompaniment to the chorale being used in the introduction in both cases, although with greater freedom than Bach.