

What Did Beethoven Really Say About the Mozart Requiem?

Mozart's and Cherubini's Requiems; Beethoven's, Holz's, and Seyfried's Views

WILLIAM MEREDITH

In the liner notes to Nikolaus Harnoncourt's 2004 recording of the Mozart Requiem, he makes the following statement, which is of particular interest to Mozart and Beethoven enthusiasts: "Even Beethoven, who was himself nothing if not a radical musical spirit, found it 'too wild and terrible.' He was going to write one himself, but more 'conciliatory' in manner."¹ This information, given partly in quotes that suggest the words came straight out of Beethoven's mouth, is transmitted without attribution. The history of what Beethoven may, or may not, have said about Mozart's Requiem is much more complex than this single quote suggests and warrants sorting out.

Harnoncourt probably encountered the quote in the entry on "Requiem" in the second volume of Theodor Frimmel's *Beethoven Handbuch* of 1926.² The quote was published in a set of reminiscences of Beethoven's friend Karl Holz that originally appeared in an obscure book from 1906 by Eduard Castle titled *Lenau und die Familie Löwenthal: Briefe und Gespräche, Gedichte und Entwürfe*. The quotation marks in Frimmel's *Handbuch*, which is on the whole carefully documented, indicate direct citations from Castle's book, not actual words as Beethoven spoke them.

Castle's monograph, divided into two "books," contains letters from the German poet Nikolaus Lenau (1802-50) to Count Max and Countess Sophie von Löwenthal, as well as accounts of Max's reminiscences, conversations, Lenau's poetry dedicated to Sophie, and drafts of his poems. Lenau's full name was Nikolaus Franz Niemsch von Stehlenau, and he is referred to as "Niemsch" in Max's notes.

The entry in Castle's book containing the quote is dated March 8, 1839, and occurs as no. 53 in the first book in a section titled "Aus Maxens Notizen."³ (See the facsimile.) The information contained in no. 53 came from a meeting on the previous day: "A local competent musician and quartet player named Holz was a close friend of Beethoven and is probably the closest expert and keenest admirer of the master and his work in Vienna. Holz naturally found himself also in possession of extensive materials about Beethoven's biography, of which yesterday he gave our Niemsch some of the best."⁴ (The materials concern the projected biography. Beethoven had given Holz a letter on August 30, 1826, authorizing him to write his biography; Holz never completed the task and transferred the authorization to Ferdinand Simon Gassner on November 4, 1843. Gassner as well failed to complete the project.⁵)

Before I turn to Lenau's version of Holz's 1839 reminiscence—which was the first of three times that he discussed Beethoven's opinion of Mozart's Requiem with others—I should add some information on "Niemsch's" views on Beethoven and Mozart. According to R.H. Thomas, "Beethoven's music became to Lenau a spiritual necessity and was one of the few rocks in a storm-tossed life."⁶ After hearing *Fidelio* for the first time, Lenau wrote to his biographer Anton Schurz, "Friend, you know Beethoven's music. Beethoven's spirit drove you too like a storm on the rising waves of song, past wild and sublime cliffs, past nocturnal forests and gruesome dungeons; it

drove you ever more quickly and more tempestuously until a stream entered a smiling sea of love and joy. God Almighty, what a mind is Beethoven's!" Lenau's profound love of Beethoven's music led him, however, to disdain most other composers; Thomas concluded that Lenau "had nothing but contempt for Mozart, who, he said, was to Beethoven as a hill to a mountain. He accused the Requiem of hypocrisy and said that serious music was not Mozart's *métier* [specialty]."⁷ Lenau's harsh critique of Mozart's Requiem may indeed have been ignited by what he had heard from Holz on March 7, 1839.

The original German of the Lenau-Max Löwenthal version of Holz's statement is:

Das Requiem war ihm zu wild und furchtbar, und er hatte in seinem letzten Lebensjahre selbst noch vor, eines im milden, versöhnlichen Geiste zu schreiben; wie er denn überhaupt in dieser letzten Zeit, wo er das Klavier haßte, nicht anderes mehr zu komponieren gedachte als jedes Jahr ein Oratorium. Cherubini's Requiem stellte er über das Mozartsche und hatte für jenen Komponist, allein aus allen lebenden, wahre Achtung.⁸

(The Requiem was for him [Beethoven] too wild and terrible, and in the last years of his life he had planned to write one in a mild and conciliatory spirit; just as in these final years, when he hated the keyboard [fortepiano], he thought of composing nothing at all besides one oratorio each year. He put Cherubini's requiem above Mozart's, and had true esteem for him,⁹ alone above all living composers.)

Given the surprising nature of the "too wild and terrible" indictment, it is worth comparing the Lenau 1839 version with two others, one from 1852 and one from 1858.

On October 4, 1852, the archeologist, philologist, and music historian Otto Jahn interviewed Holz. According to Jahn's notes, which became part of his *Nachlass* (estate) that went to the Berlin library, Holz told him, "He also moved ahead with a requiem; he was of the opinion that he was more satisfied with Cherubini's first requiem than with Mozart's. A requiem should be a melancholic remembrance of the dead, one must not make too much of the final judgment."¹⁰

A third account of Holz's conversations with Beethoven about the Mozart Requiem dates from June 1, 1858. It is found in the diary of Fanny Linzbauer, who visited Holz in Baden specifically to collect his reminiscences about his days with the composer. She even went over her notes with Holz after she had written them down to confirm that they were accurate representations of what he had told her. According to her account of what Holz said: "Beethoven's views on the requiem show that it should be peaceful [or calm] music, that no 'last trumpets' would be necessary; remembering the dead does not require a thunderous noise. He valued the direction Cherubini took in his first requiem the most."¹¹

What do the three versions of what Holz told three different people in 1839, 1852, and 1858 have in common?

1. Beethoven "most valued" the direction that Cherubini had taken in his first Requiem in C Minor of 1815-16, which had been written for the anniversary of the death of Louis XVI. Both the Löwenthal and Jahn accounts mention Mozart's Requiem by name (Cherubini's second requiem, which is in the key of D Minor, was composed in 1836):

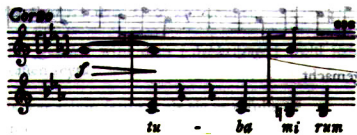
2. Beethoven believed that a musical remembrance of the dead should be melancholic, calm, or conciliatory.

Two of the three accounts agree that:

1. Beethoven believed that one should not make "too much" of the *Dies irae* final judgment movement.

Given the discrepancies between the three versions—particularly the appearance of the "too wild and terrible" description in only the first version—it is important to try to locate any sources that might confirm the multiple versions of Holz's account. Fortunately, Holz's close friendship with Beethoven only dates from the years 1825-26, years for which the conversation books provide a rich, though of course not complete, portrait of daily life and conversations.

Three conversation book entries from August and December 1825 and January 1826 concern requiems and Cherubini's requiem and masses. In early August 1825 Holz and Beethoven discussed the composition of requiems, including Cherubini's first requiem. On August 3 Holz wrote, "A requiem must, however, be something that summons the devil from hell. // Et incarnatus est Et vitam venturi seculi // Do you know the requiem by Cherubini?"¹² A few months later, around December 20, 1825, Holz copied three measures (mm. 33-35) of the *Dies irae* of the Cherubini first requiem into a conversation book, preceded by the words, "Cherubini hat [example]"; the top line is for horns, marked *forte*, and the accompanying line for voices with the words "tu-ba mirum."¹³ Holz and Beethoven were perhaps talking about counterpoint in passages in C Minor with eighth-note accompaniments, because the preceding page has a two-measure, two-voice example from *The Magic Flute*.¹⁴ Holz was apparently writing down the Cherubini from memory, as he cited the text "tuba mirum" but wrote down notes that have the rhythm but not the pitches of the setting of the text "mors stupebit, et natura" at mm. 54-59.



Holz's misremembered transcription of the "tuba mirum" of the Cherubini Requiem no. 1 in C minor.

Near the beginning of January 1826, Holz told Beethoven, "tomorrow I will receive the promised masses by Cherubini."¹⁵ Thus, it appears that Holz may have been responsible for introducing Beethoven to Cherubini's first requiem in 1825. This makes sense as the work was composed in 1816 and premiered in 1817, the year that Beethoven's deafness was near total and at the beginning of a period when he did not regularly attend public concerts. (Beethoven could have also become acquainted with Cherubini's first requiem through an edition with fortepiano accompaniment published in 1819 by his old friend in Bonn, Nikolaus Simrock. There is no evidence, however, that he ever saw a copy.)¹⁶

The next set of entries related to Cherubini and Mozart come from February and March 1826 and concern a *Concert spirituel* of February 23, organized by Ferdinand Piringier and Geisler, that contained Beethoven's *Consecration of the House Overture*, Opus 124; Mozart's "seelenvoller"

Ein hiesiger tüchtiger Musiker und Quartettspieler namens Holz war ein genauer Freund Beethovens und ist in Wien wohl der genaueste Kenner und wärmste Verehrer des Meisters und seiner Werke. Natürlich befindet er sich auch im Besitze der reichhaltigsten Materialien zu Beethovens Biographie, von denen er gestern unserem Niembösch einige zum besten gab. Beethoven war in Haupe äußerst wunderbar, sogar tyrannisch. Er liebte besonders Brotsuppe mit Eiern, die er jedoch roh bringen ließ und selbst in die Suppe schlug. Holz aß eines Tages bei ihm. Man trug für sie beide eine Brotsuppe und dazu zwölf Eier auf. Beethoven zerbrach das erste, fand es, ungeachtet Holz das Gegenteil versichert, stinkend, ließ nun die Wirtschafterin nahe genug herantreten, um ihr alle zwölf Eier eines nach dem andern auf den Rücken werfen zu können, was er zu seinem eigenen großen Ergötzen wirklich vollbrachte. — Im Jahre 1807 oder 1808 traf Beethoven mit Goethe in Karlsruhe zusammen, sie lernten sich kennen und verabredeten einstens eine gemeinschaftliche Spazierfahrt. Als die beiden großen Männer in einem Wagen ausfahren, war vieles Volk auf der Straße versammelt und grüßte ehrerbietig zu beiden Seiten. Es ist doch lästig, sagte Goethe, so berührt zu sein; nun grüßen mich alle Leute. Machen sich Euer Erzellenz nichts braus, bemerkte Beethoven, vielleicht geht's mich an. — Mozarts Don Juan und Figaro konnte Beethoven nicht leiden. Man soll die heilige Musik nicht zu solchen Schweinereien mißbrauchen, sagte er. Die Zauberslöte gefiel ihm am besten. Das Requiem war ihm zu wild und fürchtbar, und er hatte in seinen letzten Lebensjahren selbst noch vor, eines im milden, verführenden Geiste zu schreiben; wie er denn überhaupt in dieser letzten Zeit, wo er das Klavier haßte, nichts anderes mehr zu komponieren gedachte als jedes Jahr ein Oratorium. Cherubini's Requiem stellte er über das Mozartsche und hatte für jenen Komponist, allein aus allen Leben, wahre Achtung. Spontini, der ihn besuchen wollte, ließ er gar nicht vor sich und entschuldigte sich mit Unwohlsein. Ich mag ihn nicht, sagt er aber zu Holz, der Kerl prahlt mit mir seinen Orden entgegen, und ich habe keinen. Am liebsten ließ er sich nicht durch Musik, sondern durch eine andere Kunst begeistern. So las er mit Entzücken den Homer, strich sich Stellen darin an, ging dann zum Klavier, las wieder, komponierte wieder. — Diesen letzteren Zug bezeichnete Niembösch als den ihm merkwürdigsten mit dem Beisatze, daß das Verhältnis wohl ein gegenseitiges sein müsse, denn auch er selbst habe in seiner Kunst von keinem Dichter so viel gelernt als von Beethoven. — Übrigens forderte Niembösch Holz auf, seine Materialien zu sammeln und ihm zur Redaktion zu geben, da er mit Freude die Biographie dieses großen Mannes schreiben möchte. Holz entgegnete aber, daß es noch zu früh sei und noch zu viele Menschen leben, die dabei unangenehm beteiligt sein würden.

Count Max von Löwenthal's entry on Karl Holz's Beethoven reminiscences (from Eduard Castle's *Lenau und die Familie Löwenthal*, 1906).

All.^o marcato.

Timpani

Trombe in C
(UT)

Corni in F
(FA)

Trombone
Alto e Ten.

Trombone
Basso

Oboe

Clarinetti

Fagotti

Violino 1.^{mo}

Violino 2.^{do}

Viola 1.^{ma}

Viola 2.^a

All.^o marcato.

CORO

Violoncelli

C. Basso

Clavicembalo

All.^o marcato.

Simili

PP

Simili

PP

Unis

All.^o marcato.

Coup de
Tantam

ff

PP

ff

Coup de
Tantam

PP

51

1689

The beginning of the *Dies irae* movement of Cherubini's Requiem in C Minor in a later printing of the edition of 1819 published by Nikolaus Simrock in Bonn (gift of the American Beethoven Society; from the collection of The Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies).

Mozart Requiem

CONTINUED

(soulful) Symphony in G Minor, presumably K. 550; and Cherubini's *Krönungsmesse* [Coronation Mass] in A Major for three-voice chorus and large orchestra.¹⁷ Around February 8, Holz told Beethoven in a conversation book entry that "Today is the rehearsal of Cherubini's *Krönungsmesse*."¹⁸ Around February 19-20, Holz told Beethoven that "Piringer is again organizing the *Concerts spirituel*," "They are beginning with Cherubini's Mass in A on Thursday," "your overture in C will be given [the Galitzin's]," and that Lannoy gave the beat so poorly that the cellist Joseph Linke jumped up and cried out loudly, "Beethoven should have heard that."¹⁹ The day after the concert, Holz critiqued Cherubini's work on an entire page of a conversation book, ending, "He seeks the sublime, the grandiose in a racket of brass-instruments, and thus it was *multum clamoris, paulum lanæ*."²⁰ The Latin phrase literally means "great cry, little wool" and is often translated as "much ado about nothing."²¹ On February 27 Beethoven's brother Johann was visiting and wrote in a conversation book entry: "nothing in the whole mass was repeated[,] the march pleased the most, the whole work received little applause, and all connoisseurs were unanimously of the opinion that the first mass of Cherubini is better than [Cherubini's] *Krönungsmesse*."²² A short review of the concert appeared in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* on April 12, which pointed out that, while the mass had some pleasing sections, it was inferior to Cherubini's "solennem Missa No. 2 in D [minor]."²³

The third set of entries of conversations directly concerns Mozart's Requiem. In March and April of 1826, Beethoven and his friends discussed the work on several occasions. They also apparently spoke once again about whether Beethoven was thinking about composing one himself: an entry from around March 1 written by his friend Karl Holz reads: "Requiem von Beethoven!!!"²⁴ In the middle of March, Holz and Beethoven discussed a potential republication of Mozart's Requiem.²⁵ At the end of March, Abbé Stadler shared with Beethoven the news that "I have the entire *Dies irae* in Mozart's manuscript" [sic];²⁶ he had received pp. 11-32 of the autograph as a gift the previous week, perhaps in gratitude for his monograph on the work's authenticity published in 1826.²⁷ Beethoven expressed a desire to see the manuscript. On April 11 Holz informed Beethoven, "today the Requiem by Mozart was poorly performed in the Hofkapelle."²⁸



Engraving of Cherubini by J. Bolly, 1820
(gift of the American Beethoven Society;
from the collection of The Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

I should mention that the possibility of Beethoven writing a requiem predates the years 1825-26. On March 29, 1820, for example, Johann Schickl, the editor of the *Wiener Zeitung*, asked Beethoven, "When will you write the Requiem?"²⁹ Schickl returned to the subject on April 26, 1824, when he wrote, "If you set a Te Deum and a Requiem, then you would certainly make them greater! You have never made settings of them? You must set a *Dies irae*."³⁰ The cloth merchant Johann Nepomuk Wolfmayer had tried to commission a requiem from Beethoven in April 1818 for 100 ducats,³¹ but nothing came of that plan either. It has been suggested that the composition of the *Missa solennis* over the years 1819-23 diverted Beethoven's attention away from the composition of a requiem, but given the number of times it was discussed in his life—and the presence of a lucrative commission—there must have been something else holding him back.

Returning to my comparison of the three versions of Holz's recollections and the conversation book entries, none of them confirm any of the main points in Holz's account of what Beethoven might have said. It is, in fact, unlikely that they would, since Beethoven normally only replied orally to what had been written to him. But we do learn, however, that the two men discussed both requiems in 1825 and 1826, that Holz may have introduced the Cherubini requiem to Beethoven and may have shared scores of Cherubini's masses with him, and that Beethoven spoke to Abbé Stadler about the Mozart Requiem and his ownership of part of the manuscript.

We also discover that it was Holz himself who complained about the brass parts in Cherubini's *Krönungsmesse* in words that are suspiciously reminiscent of what Beethoven supposedly said about the "thunderous noise" of the last trumpets of Mozart's Requiem: "He seeks the sublime, the grandiose in a racket of brass-instruments, and thus it was *multum clamoris, paulum lanæ*."

One important aspect of the three versions of Holz's reminiscences is confirmed in a statement from Beethoven's longtime friend Ignaz von Seyfried (1776-1841), a composer, conductor, teacher, and writer who was in close acquaintance with Beethoven since 1803. Seyfried's statement was published in 1832 in his *Ludwig van Beethoven's Studien* and thus is our earliest source for Beethoven's views of Cherubini's first Requiem: "Cherubini is the most praiseworthy of all living opera composers. I am completely in agreement with his approach to the requiem, and if I ever decide to write one myself, I will openly adopt several of Cherubini's ideas [or approach]."³²

Seyfried's account of what Beethoven said about Cherubini's Requiem aligns with what Holz reported on three occasions, that is, that Beethoven was most sympathetic to Cherubini's approach. What Seyfried's account is missing, of course, is the direct comparison to Mozart's Requiem, noisy brass instruments, or the final judgment.

One final comparison throws doubt on Holz's statement about Beethoven's dislike of "thunderous noise" in Mozart's Requiem: the *Dies irae* movement of Cherubini's first requiem opens using the brass in exactly the same "terrifying way" as does Mozart's—and Cherubini added a special effect to enhance the terror that earned the work official censure. The brass instruments begin the movement *fortissimo*, and a *fortissimo* tam-tam gong announces the "terrible day" in m. 7. (The tam-tam is a gong thought to be of Indian, Chinese, or East Asian origins.) The movement builds to an impressive climax at the "tuba mirum" at m. 33 with every instrument of the orchestra playing *fortissimo* and the chorus at a *forte* dynamic level as they sing, high in each voice's register, "The trumpet, scattering an awesome sound among the graves in every land, will summon all before the throne."³³ (The tam-tam stroke may have been intended to symbolize the cracking open of the graves.) As Rudolf Lück wrote in his edition of the work, "Fame has been achieved by the isolated stroke of the gong in the seventh bar of the *Dies irae*—an exceptional device for those days, and one with which Cherubini incurred censure for having introduced a theatrical effect into a sacred work. Against this censure it can be argued that Cherubini is here concerned with a dramatic accent, which matches absolutely the character of a *Dies irae*."³⁴ (If

Mozart Requiem

CONTINUED

you would like to listen to the work to confirm this point, several recordings of the movement are posted on YouTube.³⁵) It can be argued that Cherubini added the tam-tam to increase the temperature of the opening of the *Dies irae*, which Mozart had previously heated up with the “noisy” brass instruments.

It’s worth taking a moment to review the history of the use of the tam-tam in Western European music because it relates directly to the topic of the wildness of the opening of Cherubini’s *Dies irae*. According to a fascinating 1973 essay by David Charlton, the tam-tam was introduced into French music via the massive public festivals of the French revolution. Gossec’s short *Marche lugubre* in D Minor, which features the instrument, was first performed on September 20, 1790, at a festival in memory of soldiers killed in an army rebellion against Royalist officers.³⁶ The work was repeated at the interment of the political leader Count Honoré Gabriel Riqueti Mirabeau on April 4, 1791; an engraving of the time depicts the instrument near the front of the procession.³⁷ Charlton notes that the march was “an extraordinary conception for its time ... because it eschewed anything like continuous melody” and was “played on many occasions, even after the revolution.” The tam-tam is used “not so much as a reinforcement of the wind instruments as an unearthly adjunct to the silences falling periodically between the phrases.”³⁸ *The Monitor* reported on its striking effect: “The lacerating harmonies, broken up with silences and marked by veiled beats of the tam-tam, truly chilled the public and spread a religious terror in the soul.”³⁹ Parisian composers, including Cherubini, Méhul, Spontini, Kruetzer, and others, immediately adopted the instrument, particularly for theater pieces. Cherubini incorporated the instrument in his *L’Hymne du Panthéon* of 1794, *Hymne funèbre sur la mort du Général Hoche* of 1797, and the *March funèbre* in D Minor of 1820.⁴⁰ In the *Marche funèbre*, the tam-tam plays a prominent and appropriately lugubrious role, opening the work and filling the silences between the musical phrases on many occasions.⁴¹ Charlton concludes, “For over ten years after [Gossec’s] *Marche lugubre*, the associations of the instrument with death and ceremonial remained almost paramount.”⁴² Thus, when Cherubini incorporated the tam-tam in his requiem composed in 1815, he was re-using an instrument he had previously adopted on at least two occasions. The audience at the requiem’s French premiere on January 21, 1816, in the crypt at St. Denis was probably not as shocked as the censor, since they had been hearing the tam-tam on occasion for more than two decades in the context of death and funerals. Nonetheless, the tam-tam indeed functioned as an intruder in a requiem mass performed in a church, and its incorporation certainly enhanced the wildness of Cherubini’s *Dies irae* setting—even if Cherubini limited himself there to a single stroke.

Given Holz’s own prejudicial statement about Cherubini’s racket of brass instruments in the *Krönungsmesse* and the fact that the *Dies irae* of Cherubini’s Requiem contradicts two of Holz’s versions, it may well be that Holz was combining his own opinion of Cherubini with Beethoven’s respect for Cherubini’s general approach. No sources confirm that Beethoven found the Mozart Requiem “too wild and terrible,” and his own deep appreciation of the work and of Mozart perhaps argue against such an opinion.

We cannot rule out the possibility, however, that Beethoven did tell Holz he thought the Mozart Requiem was “too wild and terrible,” even with all the caveats mentioned above. It may even be true that what might be called the “*Dies irae* problem” is what prevented Beethoven from ever working seriously on a requiem of his own, although his own friends seemed to be eagerly anticipating a Beethovenian version (“Requiem from Beethoven!!!” and “You must set a *Dies Irae*”) and even though he had a solid commission to write one in 1818. Perhaps the only way to avoid writing a requiem with a “too wild and terrible” *Dies irae* was either to take Brahms’s route—reject the entire traditional Latin text and chose your own—or not write one at all.⁴³

Notes

- 1 “Mozart Requiem,” *Concentus musicus Wien*, Arnold Schoenberg Chor prepared by chorus master Erwin Ortner. Nikolaus Harnoncourt, director, with Christine Schäfer, soprano; Bernarda Fink, alto; Kurt Streit, tenor; Gerald Finley, bass. Program notes in English, German, and French: “Mozart and His Requiem: A Musician’s Reflections and Feelings” by Nikolaus Harnoncourt (pp. 4-7) and “Wolfgang Amade Mozart: Requiem in D Minor, K. 626 (Unfinished), completed by Franz Xaver Süssmayr; new, revised edition by Franz Beyer” by Benjamin-Gunnar Cohrs (pp. 7-11). ©2004. Deutsche harmonia mundi 82876 58705 2. Harnoncourt’s statement appears on p. 6. I must thank Theodore Albrecht and John Wilson for their generous assistance with this essay.
- 2 Theodor Frimmel, *Beethoven Handbuch* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1926), 64.
- 3 Max Löwenthal’s notes are not included in the magisterial *Beethoven aus der Sicht seiner Zeitgenossen in Tagebüchern, Briefen, Gedichten und Erinnerungen*, ed. Klaus Martin Kopitz and Rainer Cadenbach, 2 vols. (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 2009) under the entries for Karl Holz.
- 4 Eduard Castle, *Lenau und die Familie Löwenthal: Briefe und Gespräche, Gedichte und Entwürfe* (Leipzig: Max Hesses Verlag, 1906), 77. “Ein hiesiger tüchtiger Musiker und Quartetsspieler namens Holz war ein genauer Freund Beethovens und ist in Wien wohl der genaueste Kenner und wärmste Verehrer des Meisters und seiner Werke. Natürlich befindet er sich auch im Besitze der reichhaltigsten Materialien zu Beethoven’s Biographie, von denen er gestern unserem Niembsch einige zum besten gab.”
- 5 Peter Clive, “Holz, Karl,” *Beethoven and His World, A Biographical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 169.
- 6 R. H. Thomas, “Lenau and Beethoven,” *Music and Letters* 18 (1937): 377.
- 7 Thomas, 377.
- 8 Castle, *Lenau und die Familie Löwenthal*, 78. The complete monograph is available online at no charge. The Beethoven-Holz information occurs on pp. 77-78.
- 9 This remark aligns with an entry by Beethoven’s nephew Karl that appears in a conversation book entry from around September 5, 1825: “Ich sagte, daß du Cherubini / sehr schätzezt.” (“I said that you highly esteemed Cherubini.”) *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationsbeife*, 8:99, Heft 94, fol. 13v. Presumably Karl meant that this is what he had just told the visiting publisher Maurice Schlesinger, whose entries in the conversation book surround Karl’s at this point.
- 10 This version of Jahn’s original comes from *Beethoven aus der Sicht seiner Zeitgenossen in Tagebüchern, Briefen, Gedichten, und Erinnerungen*, ed. Klaus Martin Kopitz and Rainer Cadenbach, 2 vols. (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 2009), 1:461. “Auch ein Requiem hatte er [ich] vorgesezt, war mit der Auffassung von Cherubini’s erstem Requiem mehr zufrieden als mit Mozarts. E[in] Requiem solle e[ine] wehmüthige Erinnerung[un]g an den Toten sein, mit dem Welgerichte müsse man nicht zuviel machen.” It was first published in the fifth volume of *Ludwig van Beethovens Leben von Alexander Wheelock Thayer*, ed. Herman Deiters and Hugo Riemann (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1908), 329. The word *zuviel* is mistranscribed as “zulieb (?)”. The correct version with the abbreviations filled in appears in Friedrich Kerst, ed., *Die Erinnerungen an Beethoven*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Julius Hoffman, 1913): 2:183.
- 11 This is the version first published in Ludwig Nohl, *Beethoven, Liszt, Wagner* (Vienna: Wilhelm Brumüller, 1874), 111. “Beethovens Ansichten über das Requiem gingen [zeigen] dahin, daß es eine ruhige Musik sein sollte, keine Weltposaune nöthig sei; die Erinnerung an die Toten verlange kein Getöse. Die Richtung in Cherubini’s Requiem No. 1 schätze er am meisten, überhaupt stand ihm Cherubini als lebender Meister am höchsten.” Nohl transcribed them himself from her pencilled diary. In *Beethoven aus der Sicht seiner Zeitgenossen*, the version appears on 1:473. In *Ludwig van Beethovens Leben*, the verb *gingen* is transcribed as *zeigen*.

- 12 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler and Grita Herre, 11 vols. (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1981), 8:45-46, Heft 92, fol. 23r. "Das Requiem müßte aber eines / werden, das den Teufel aus der / Hölle citirt. // Er incarnatus est [/] Et vitam venturi seculi // Kennen Sie das Requiem von / Cherubini?" Since the words "et incarnatus est" and "et vitam venturi seculi" are part of the text of the Credo of the mass, it appears that the conversation moved away from the subject of the requiem for a moment. The sign / indicates a line break on the page; the sign // indicates an underlining that separates entries. Line breaks are not indicated in the English translations. The underlinings allowed Beethoven to focus on the most recent comment.
- 13 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 8:234, Heft 100, fol. 37v. "Cherubini hat [music example]."
- 14 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 8:234, Heft 100, fol. 37r.
- 15 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 8:243, Heft 101, fol. 5r. "Morgen werde ich ver- / sprechener massen die / Cherubinische Messe / bekommen."
- 16 The only work by Cherubini in Beethoven's *Nachlass* was the opera *Medea*. The list of his printed music contains works by (in alphabetical order) J.S. Bach, Cherubini, Nicholas Dalayrac, Gluck, Handel, Haydn, Mehul, Mozart, Paisiello, Joseph Preindl, Anton Reicha, Salieri, and Giuseppe Sarti. The inventory is far from complete, and some scores went missing before it was compiled. See *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, ed. Eliot Forbes, rev. ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 1069-70.
- 17 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 8:404, fn. 814. It was composed for the coronation of Karl X of France (1757-1836, ruled 1824-1830). Mozart's *Krönungsmesse* is the most famous with that title.
- 18 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 8:311, Heft 103, fol. 17r. "Heute ist die Probe von / der Cherubinischen / Krönungsmese."
- 19 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, ed. Grita Herre and Günter Brosche, 11 vols. (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik), 9:43-44, Heft 104, fol. 34r. "Pringer gibt wieder die / Concerts spirituels. // Donnerstags fangen sie an / mit der Messe von Cherubini / in A. // Auch ihre Ouverture in / C wird gegeben (die / Galzinische). // Sie ist bey der Probe schlecht / genug gegangen. Lannoy / taktirte so schlecht, daß / Linke vom Platze auf- / sprang, und laut auf- / schrie: Das sollte Beet- / hoven hören!"
- 20 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 9:54, Heft 105, fol. 3v. "Er suchte das Erhabene, / Grandiose in einem Lärmen / von Blech- Instrumenten, / und so war es *multum l clamoris, paulum laeae*."
- 21 It normally appears today as *multum clamoris, parum laeae*. In Frederick James Crowest's *Beethoven*, the following statement appears without citation: "'What good,' Beethoven is reported to have said, 'can result from all this? *Multum clamoris, parum laeae*! Possibly I may try my hand at it some of these days when I have nothing of a more reasonable nature to occupy my time. At present, thank Heaven, I am not in that predicament, and it will be a pretty long time, I suspect, before I am'" (London: Dent & Co., 1903, 125-26). The discussion is before the chapter on canons in Albrechtsberger's *Gründliche Anweisung zur Composition*.
- 22 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 9:68, Heft 105, fol. 27r. "nichts in der ganzen / Meße repetirt worden / den Marsch hat am besten / gefallen, das ganze is mit / wenigem Beyfall auf- / genommen, und alle / Kenner war[en] darüber ein- / stimmig daß die 1te Meße / von Cherubini besset / sey also die Krönings Meße"
- 23 No. 15, cols. 249-50.
- 24 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 9:82, Heft 105, fol. 84v.
- 25 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 9:113, Heft 106, fol. 34r.
- 26 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 9:119, Heft 107, fol. 4r.
- 27 For more information on Stadler's monograph, see my review of the two recordings of the Mozart Requiem in this issue, pp. 31-32.
- 28 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, 9:180, pp. 31-32. Heft 108, fol. 5r.
- 29 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler and Grita Herre, 11 vols. (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1972), 1:395, Heft 10, fol. 56r. "Wann machen / Sie denn das / Requiem?" I would like to thank Theodore Albrecht, who is preparing an English language critical edition of the conversation books, for guiding me to these entries.
- 30 *Ludwig van Beethoven Konversationshefte*, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler and Grita Herre, 11 vols. (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1972), 6:77, Heft 63, fol. 14v. "Wenn Sie ein Te / Teum [sic] und ein / Requiem setzen, / so machen Sie / sich gewß grös- / ser! [/] Diese Satz fehlen / von Ihnen [/] Ein Dies irae von / Ihnen müße:"
- 31 See letter no. 1252 in Sieghard Bandenburg, ed., *Ludwig van Beethoven, Briefwechsel Gesamtausgabe*, 7 vols. (Munich: G. Henle, 1996), 4:182-83.
- 32 "Cherubini ist mir unter allen lebenden Operncomponisten der achtungswerthe. Auch mit seiner Auffassung des Requiem's bin ich ganz einverstanden, und will mir, komme ich nur einmahl dazu, selbst Eines zu schreiben, Manches ad notam nehme." Ignaz Seyfried, "Anhang. Biographische Notizen," *Ludwig van Beethoven's Studien im Generalbasse, Contrapuncte und in der Compositions-Lehre* (Vienna: Tobias Haslinger, 1832), 22. The last sentence is difficult to translate. Beethoven seems to have been saying that he would enjoy, consciously, or admittedly adopt several ideas or approaches to the text in Cherubini's requiem. I am grateful to Theodore Albrecht for his assistance with this sentence.
- 33 The dynamic markings are taken from Luigi Cherubini, *Requiem für gemischten Chor, Partitur* (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, n.d.), Edition Peters No. 2004, plate number 6473.
- 34 Rudolf Lück, ed., *Klavierauszug, Luigi Cherubini Requiem C=Moll* (Frankfurt: C.F. Peters, n.d.), [iv].
- 35 Listen, for example, to the excellent recording of Martin Perlman conducting Boston Baroque: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laO7Zi6Zm8>
- 36 On the history of the tam-tam, see David Charlton, "New Sounds for Old: Tam-tam, Tuba Curva, Buccin," *Soundings* 3 (1973, University of Wales): 39-47, and his dissertation, "Orchestration and Orchestral Practice in Paris, 1789 to 1810" (University of Cambridge, 1973). See p. 39 for his statement about its first use. A recording of the work made be heard on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foXNGSX1aMk>
- 37 Charlton estimates that the tam-tam in the engraving "appears to be between 2 feet 2 inches and 2 feet 6 inches in diameter, and possesses a shallow rim." See p. 42. Most of the gongs used on modern performances of Cherubini's first requiem, including those on Youtube, sounds like they are made with much larger instruments, which are correspondingly more terrifying in sound.
- 38 Charlton, "New Sounds for Old," 42.
- 39 See Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 128.
- 40 A set of parts for the last work, including the tam-tam part, is listed at: http://data.bnf.fr/14805300/luigi_cherubini_marche_funebre_orchestre_re_mineur/
- 41 A fine performance on modern instruments can be heard at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54LQR_DVPP
- 42 Charlton, "New Sounds for Old," 43.
- 43 Beethoven did, in fact, find a way to write music that has been heard as a way of "remembering the dead" (quoting the Linzbauer version of what Holz is supposed to have said), but not in the traditional form of a requiem for soloists, choir, and orchestra. The very year that Wolfmayer tried to commission such a requiem (1818), Beethoven completed work on the *Hammerklavier* Sonata, whose slow movement Wilhelm von Lenz famously called a "mausoleum [tomb] of the collective suffering of the world." A few years later, in 1821, Beethoven composed the famous "Klagender Gesang" ("Lamenting Song") of the Sonata in A-flat Major, Opus 110. Both are clearly tragic, not gentle or mild.