

Lift Up Your Heads was written in memory of my friend Murray Bean, and is a prayer for the safe passage of a dead soul. The text comes from Psalm 24: 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors', with further material written by me in collaboration with Andrew Hammond. The litany is inspired by all the descriptions in the Bible of moments when God walked on the Earth, and ends with a plea for God to walk with us at the hour of our death.

The piece is inspired by the alabaster sarcophagus of Seti I, which is inscribed with the Book of the Gates, a series of spells and rituals for the safe passage of a dead soul through the treacherous Egyptian Underworld. I loved the idea that this object was at once a coffin, a book, a spell and a vessel, and I wanted to create a similar object, to ensure the safe passage of Murray's soul. Murray was a proud New Zealander, and in the transition to the spoken section, I use a recording of the *Karanga*. This is a call that forms part of a Maori welcoming ceremony, and one of its functions is to honour the spirits of the dead.

In order to perform this piece, you will need a sound system, an organist, and a reader. Electronic amplification for the reader is recommended. Although there are some moments of careful choreography in the score, overall I have purposefully left a good deal of space for creativity on the part of the performers. Go wild!

The piece consists of four sections:

1. Introduction
2. Litany
3. Cortege
4. Epilogue

Introduction

To begin the piece, play track 1 through the sound system. The organ part should begin when the second voice enters on the recording. The second section (beginning at bar 17) should increase in intensity throughout, both texturally and dynamically. Some suggested textures, and moment of textural change, are indicated. The moment the organist hears the *Karanga* begin, they should play a short cluster chord with the hands, and move the pedals down to a bottom C. From there, they should gradually add notes to create a cluster chord at the bass of the pedal-board underneath the *Karanga*. The aim is to create a throbbing effect, which should increase in volume until it is nearly unbearable. When the *Karanga* stops, the pedal should become a *pianissimo* bottom D, on the 32'. Hold the note for a while, and then begin the litany.

Litany

This should be a very spacious section of the piece; there is no rush. The litany begins with the organist playing the theme. After that has been played once, the spoken litany can begin (see p.5 for the text), with the organist improvising unobtrusively beneath. The improvisation should remain in the background, but reflect the imagery of the litany, and the left hand ostinato should, in some form, be present throughout. The litany can be performed as a responsory, with the audience/congregation giving the response in bold.

Cortege

After the words 'pass through the gates of Death', the organist should begin the cortege immediately.

Epilogue

This is another semi-improvisatory section. Once the organist has reached D major, the reader should repeat the phrase 'Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them' as many times as feels appropriate, with plenty of space between each statement. This could be performed as a responsory. The organist will play from the material on page 7, improvising freely around it if desired. To finish the piece, play track 2. Underneath the track, the organist should play the three final chords, holding each one for a substantial amount of time.

Lift Up Your Heads

Play track 1

(c. ♩=60)

As menacing as possible

Introduction

Edward Picton-Turbervill

Organ

p

molto legato

Pedals

mp

mf

f

(c. ♩=90)

Register as if for Philip Glass (brighter than before)

p, poco a poco cresc. *sim.*

mp *sim.*

Musical score system 1. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. It begins with a *mf* dynamic marking. The first four measures contain chords. The fifth measure starts a *f* dynamic section with sixteenth-note runs in both hands, each measure marked with a '6' above and below the staff. The lower staff contains a single bass line with a slur over the first four measures.

Musical score system 2. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a *sim.* dynamic marking, followed by a *ff* dynamic marking in the fourth measure. It contains a sequence of chords in both hands. The lower staff contains a single bass line with a slur over the first four measures.

Musical score system 3. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a sequence of chords in both hands. The lower staff contains a single bass line with a slur over the first four measures.

Litany

Theme for improvisation:

molto legato

Reader:

Lord God of our pilgrimage:

You walked in the garden
in the cool of the day,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You made the clouds your chariot
and walked upon the wings of the wind,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You came forth from your dwelling
and trod the high places of the earth,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You walked in search of the depths
and shattered the gates of bronze,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You promised your faithful people
'I will walk among you and be your God'
as we journey onward
walk with us.

In the fourth watch of the night,
You came to your disciples
walking on the sea,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You walked the sorrowful way
to the cross, beaten and scourged,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You trod the depths of Hell
and led captivity captive,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You walked unknown alongside your friends
and broke bread for them in Emmaus,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You walked a beach in Galilee
and strengthened your closest friends,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

You share our yoke
and lighten our load,
as we journey onward
walk with us.

O God, you are present at all times and in all places. Watch with us, wait with us, weep with us.
And when our final hour is come, go with us as we pass through the gates of Death. [*Attacca*]

Cortege

[c. ♩=90]

mf molto cresc.

fff

f

p

Epilogue

Reader: 'Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord,
and let light perpetual shine upon them'.
[Repeat as many times as feels appropriate]

warm, comforting

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a piano (*pp*) dynamic marking. It features a series of chords in the right hand and sustained notes in the left hand. The middle staff is a single bass clef staff with a few notes. The bottom staff is a single bass clef staff with a few notes. A large brace spans the bottom two staves across the first two measures.

The second system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a grand staff with piano (*pp*) dynamics. It continues the chordal texture from the first system. The middle and bottom staves are single bass clef staves with notes. A large brace spans the bottom two staves across the first three measures.

Play track 2

The third system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a grand staff with a *morendo* dynamic marking and a *(solo flute)* instruction. It features a series of chords in the right hand and sustained notes in the left hand. The middle and bottom staves are single bass clef staves with notes. A large brace spans the bottom two staves across the first three measures.