

Concert in Memory of JFK: Immortality in the Presidency

by Dennis Speed

I was Twenty-three years old at the turn of the century. It was a time of brave expectations. Many believed that a new epoch was at hand—that the dawn of the twentieth century would prove to be a turning point in the affairs of men. They cited recent scientific advances and predicted a future of great social progress. The era, they said, was approaching when poverty and hunger would at last disappear. In the way people make fervent resolutions at the start of a new year, the world seemed to be resolving at the start of a new century to undergo a change for the better. Who then foresaw that the coming decades would bring the unimaginable horrors of two world wars, concentration camps, and atomic bombs?

Pablo Casals, 'Joys And Sorrows'

Jan. 22—Those capable of foresight—and for civilization to survive, the American population must become so capable—will recognize the truth in Casals' observation. Yet, it is our duty to shape the future, and thus to know it. To paraphrase another slain U.S. President: We are now engaged in a 150 years war, testing whether any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, as is the United States, can long endure. Assassinations against American Presidents, have been the preferred criminal method of choice, for dealing with the problem of the American Cultural Exception. So it was with John Kennedy, his brother Robert, and Dr. Martin Luther King.

To respond to the challenge of reproducing and increasing the power of foresight for civilization's survival in the short and long term is the unique mission of the Schiller Institute, a mission which the Institute brought to the City of Boston on Sunday, Jan. 19. The Schiller Institute Chorus, augmented by additional singers and an orchestra largely comprised of volunteers from the New England Conservatory of Music, presented Mozart's *Requiem* in its entirety to an audience of 1,200 at Boston's Cathedral of the Holy Cross, performed exactly 50 years to the day, of a 1964 Solemn High Requiem Mass specially requested by the Kennedy family.

One year after his October 1962 defiance of that faction of "principalities and powers," including Britain's Lord Bertrand Russell, that dared to believe that nuclear war against the Soviet Union was not only conceivable, but winnable (the Cuban Missile crisis), John Kennedy was murdered in Dallas. His assassination, along with that of his brother Robert, and of Martin Luther King, has hung "like a dead hand upon the brain of the living," until now. Four generations have been unable to shake off their effects. That is because there is only one reliable method for doing so: People must be elevated above and beyond their own pre-selected, limiting self-expectation. People require, not "the facts" of "what really happened," but the fire of insight needed to reverse our unending national trauma. No preaching, slogans, or imprecations will cause a terrorized people to have courage. Only their own voices, heard as through the mirror of a great artistic performance, can



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The Schiller Institute Chorus, joined by singers and an orchestra largely comprised of musicians from the New England Conservatory of Music.

move the despairing to a higher place, a mountaintop where their souls, much to their surprise, actually live.

Conductor and Schiller Institute Music Director John Sigerson, in an interview with a reporter from *The Pilot*, newspaper of the Boston diocese, was asked whether the Schiller Institute believes that “Classical music can create a change in our culture.” Sigerson’s answer to this was “No.” Rather, he asserted, it was the juxtaposition of the “musical” with the “non-musical,” in this case several excerpts of speeches by JFK, heard at precisely selected points in the *Requiem*, that would allow members of the audience to be provoked to change their minds, and thus hear the music. Sigerson said: “The JFK speeches alone wouldn’t work, and the music alone wouldn’t work. It’s the uncomfortable juxtaposition of the two that works,” this by creating an unexpected cognitive discomfort and tension for the audience.

The Schiller Institute has employed for the second time—the first being in Vienna, Va., on Nov. 22, the 50th anniversary of the President’s assassination—the spiri-

tual and therapeutic power of the Mozart *Requiem* to restore the power of cognition to Americans. As Schiller Institute Founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche said in her remarks, such a Classical revival is *necessary* to inspire Americans to take up Kennedy’s mission again, even as the world currently stands at the edge of thermonuclear war.

The Preparation of the Audience

Master of Ceremonies Matthew Ogden provided a prelude to the music, using a selection of speakers, messages, and quotations to allow everyone in the audience equal access to the depth of meaning contained in the moments they were about to experience, “not in time, but in the Idea,” as Nicholas of Cusa says. For those two and one-half hours, the “virtual reality” brainwashing that accounts for the toleration of a Nietzschean “all is permissible” popular “culture” was interrupted. Those who might have objected that “it’s too long for the audience to concentrate” were once again proven wrong. It

was essential that they be prepared to listen, and not merely hear, the Mozart composition. But why?

In the words of the German conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler, “As far as music is concerned, there is nothing about which the so-called ‘public’ knows less than about its own mind. Above all, there is one prior condition needful to the listener—whether as an individual or as an audience—if he is to formulate a judgment of real value: and that is, he must have enough *time*.” This essential pre-condition having been met before a single note was sung, the audience was thus pre-organized to respond at a higher level than it would otherwise have been capable, even with the best musical performance.

There was more to the audience preparation, however. This audience was assembled through a thorough, consistent political intervention and fight. This audience recruitment was the result of an intense organizing effort conducted over about six weeks or so. There was a successful “outreach” campaign throughout the Boston metropolitan area. One portion of the audience had come because of ads in the *Boston Globe* and other news outlets. *The Pilot* was cited by many as their source of news. Several Boston schools and colleges were represented, along with senior centers and various community organizations. Leaflets and posters were distributed in Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, Portuguese, English, and French. Several foreign consulates attended the concert, as well as state representatives from Maine and Rhode Island. There were messages from Michael D. Higgins, President of the Republic of Ireland; Boston City Councilman Steven Murphy; and from Nicholas Di Virgilio, tenor, the only surviving soloist from the 1964 concert (see below for his remarks).

Many who attended recalled having been at the 1964 performance: it must be remembered that for the then-largely Catholic Boston, Holy Cross was their local church. Ray Flynn, former Boston Mayor, and later, Ambassador to the Vatican, who had also attended the 1964 performance, expressed the sense of gratitude and true happiness that the citizens of Boston felt for the thoughtfulness that went into ensuring that the historic nature of the occasion did not go unrecognized (see box).



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The soloists (l. to r.): Soprano Nataly Wickham, Mezzo-Soprano Heather Gallagher, Tenor William Ferguson, and Baritone Ron Williams.

The Performance, and the ‘Pitch’

The Schiller Institute Chorus, soloists Ron Williams (baritone), William Ferguson (tenor), Heather Gallagher (mezzo-soprano) and Nataly Wickham (soprano), and the largely New England Conservatory of Music-based freelance orchestra constituted for Sunday’s performance, accomplished its primary task: to present the Mozart *Requiem* as a single, unified Idea. The *unity of effect* of the performance allowed the words of President Kennedy, the which worked to punctuate and underscore Mozart’s presentation of the idea of immortality, to pose a dialogue about the nature of immortality’s triumph over death with each audience member, as well as the audience as a whole. Maestro Sigerson also noted that the performances of the “Recordare” and “Benedictus” sections of the piece, both set for vocal quartet, were “of a piece” with the entirety, and were delivered with the exact meaning that Mozart intended them to convey.

The performance was conducted at a tuning of A=432, nearly a quarter tone lower than most modern performances, and is a standard feature of Schiller Institute musical practice. While this is sometimes referred to as the “lower” tuning, that designation is imprecise. It is the *proper* tuning; it is merely “lower” than what is currently practiced as the wrong, “higher” tuning. The tuning range for music is perhaps more clearly stated as middle C=256 cycles per second, which yields an A=427-432. The C=256 is the tuning at which the Mozart *Requiem* was composed, designed,

and intended to be heard.

The next day, The Boston Music Intelligencer, self-described as a “virtual journal and essential blog of the classical music scene in greater Boston,” ran an extensive positive review under the headline, “[JFK Remembered in Musical Tribute](#),” characterizing it as “a polished traditional performance.”

One of the supporters of the Schiller Institute, conductor Anthony Morss, who has worked with, and conducted experiments demonstrating the reasons for insisting on what is also referred to as, “the Verdi pitch,” supplied an essay that appeared in the concert program intended to provide some background on the matter (see below).

Art as Necessity

The *necessity* of art—not only its moral, but physical necessity—was stressed in the brief and precise remarks directed to the audience by Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

“It is *necessary* to commemorate the celebration of Mozart’s *Requiem* which was performed for John F. Kennedy, 50 years ago in this cathedral. It is urgent to evoke again the divine spirit of beauty of Mozart’s composition *in order to reconnect us with the better world which both Kennedy and Mozart represent*,” she said. Zepp-LaRouche insisted, along with the “Poet of Freedom” Friedrich Schiller, after whom the Institute, which celebrates its 30th year in 2014, was named and

Zepp-LaRouche: ‘To Inspire A New Hope for Mankind’

Here are Helga Zepp-LaRouche’s remarks to the Schiller Institute Memorial Concert.

It is necessary to commemorate the celebration of Mozart’s *Requiem* which was performed for John F. Kennedy, 50 years ago in this cathedral. It is urgent to evoke again the divine spirit of beauty of Mozart’s composition in order to reconnect us with the better world which both Kennedy and Mozart represent. Kennedy’s assassination marks the deep cut, the change of paradigm, from which the world suffers since. For the short years of his leadership, the nation and the world were inspired by his trust in the limitless perfectibility of man and his ability to face all challenges, due to the confidence in God, as well as in the creative ability of man to apply scientific and technological progress for the benefit of mankind.

President Kennedy was committed to guide America to contribute to the elimination of poverty in the whole world, and to build a lasting peace among all nations. With his assassination, not only

was he murdered, but also, the hope to achieve these goals. Today, 50 years later, world peace is in danger, large parts of the world are gripped by despair and poverty, and many youth are lacking a future.

Recently, Pope Francis issued the Apostolic writing *Evangelii Gaudium*, in which he insisted that the Sixth Commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” must also be applied to the economy, and that we are living today under an economic system which idolizes money, and which does kill people. He then called on the political leaders of today to have an energetic change in their basic attitude, and called on them to change that economic system with decisiveness and vision, into one that provides for the welfare of all people on the planet.

In Kennedy’s memory, we must, therefore, not only mourn the torment of the world, but it is our responsibility to follow the call of Pope Francis, to inspire new hope for mankind, by bringing the minds of people together, and generate a movement of inspiration devoted to bring about a revival of humanity from the looming destruction.

Let us therefore participate in this concert with the solemn commitment, to passionately devote ourselves to Kennedy’s vision, and carry out his vision for the future, and in that way, partake in his immortality.





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The 1,200-person audience, which filled the beautiful Holy Cross Cathedral, experienced what was unanimously judged to be an historic performance, and a fitting commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Requiem mass.

founded by her, that death is swallowed up in the victory of the power of musical immortality as Mozart, Bach, and Beethoven exemplify, and as the power of the Kennedy Apollo Project also demonstrates. Kennedy's optimism allowed every American, and, with the successful landing of the human species on the moon, everyone on the planet, to know, by demonstration, that the mind, though contained in a body, is not that body; the mind has no physical limits (see box).

Zepp-LaRouche's reference to "reconnection to a better world" highlighted the inevitable and necessary Ideas that were not merely evoked, but provoked, by the performance. And, it must needs be so: Kennedy's appreciation for and promotion of the Classical arts and of Classical artists was at the very foundation of his Presidency, though this has been largely ignored in these intervening years. Who, for example, would even today recognize these as the words of JFK, given on the occasion of a commemoration of the poet Robert Frost at Amherst College, October 26, 1963, less than a month before his death?

"Our national strength matters, but the spirit which informs and controls our strength matters just as much. This was the special significance of Robert Frost. . . . it is hardly an accident that Robert Frost coupled poetry and power, for he saw poetry as the means of saving power from itself. When power leads men towards arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When

power narrows the areas of man's concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of his existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleanses. For art establishes the basic human truth which must serve as the touchstone of our judgment."

Now, and Then

There were some key differences between the 1964 and 2014 performances. In 1964, it was an astonishing step to include the Mozart *Requiem* in the context of the Catholic Solemn High Requiem Mass ceremony—the first time that that had ever been done in the United States.

There was another important difference. In the case of this performance-commemoration, 50 years of erosion of the thinking capacities of the American people, particularly by means of the cacophonous obscenity known as "popular entertainment"—including in the form of the post-2000 American Presidencies—required a uniquely insightful rendering of the music by the performers.

It is essential to note, that the chorus was composed of non-professional Schiller Institute singers, many of whom are involved in daily organizing work with both Helga and Lyndon LaRouche. Initially, many Boston-based semi-professional and professional singers had volunteered to be part of the performance, but withdrew because of a campaign denouncing the Schiller Institute, carried out by certain local members of the Democratic Party to intimidate singers. Some refused to listen, and thus "qualified" themselves to participate. Importantly, not only did the local organizers of the event, composed primarily of former members of the LaRouche Youth Movement who were assisted by an experienced and older group of LaRouche Political Action Committee organizers, not attempt to conceal in any way "who they were." In fact, the organizers insisted that everyone they speak with fully understand *why* it was that *only* the Schiller Institute, and Lyndon and Helga LaRouche, out of everyone in the United States, had insisted that this 50th anniversary commemoration take place.

To answer that question, we pose a seemingly unrelated question, actually identical to the first.

Why was Kennedy, despite his flaws, seen as exceptional by people who were often critical (and sometimes pitiless) judges of human character, such as Charles de Gaulle, Douglas MacArthur, and Eleanor Roosevelt? Posed another way: Why did Kennedy embody for these severe critics of human character, as well as for many “normal Americans,” an efficient deployment of the U.S. Presidency on behalf of furthering the progress, not merely of the United States, but of mankind?

The answer to this is posed as follows.

A statement from his Jan. 20, 1961 Inaugural Address, differentiated Kennedy then, and differentiates Kennedy now, from all the Presidents who have served after him: After listing all of the tasks his Administration will aspire to accomplish, including “a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, ‘rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation’—a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself,” Kennedy observed:

“All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even

perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.”

Kennedy forecasted his “willed fate” truthfully, and acted accordingly. Despite all the things he did not live to accomplish, in that thousand days, Kennedy managed to save the world from nuclear destruction, and send to, and put the human race on the Moon. The capacity to access the revolutionary principle embedded in the American Constitution and its Declaration of Independence, on which the Lincoln and Kennedy Administrations built their respective commitments and contributions to American progress, has simply not emanated from the Presidency as the guiding policy outlook of any U.S. Administration since Kennedy’s assassination.

In fact, today, the opposite commitment now exists, in the form of the Obama Administration, and the predecessor Bush Administration, and must be reversed by an American people made culturally competent to do so.

That is the reason that the Schiller Institute was uniquely qualified to propose, organize, and perform the Nov. 22 and Jan. 19 Kennedy remembrances. We refuse to submit to voluntary amnesia. There is a connection between courage and intelligence. Kennedy lived up to his own studies of courage under adversity. None of us can do less.

Flynn: This Cathedral Is Full of History

Raymond Flynn is the former Mayor of Boston (1984-93). Following that, he served as U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican (1993-97).



Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to Boston. Welcome to this historic Cathedral, the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, built by immigrants who came to this country and settled in Boston, and history books are filled with their accomplishments, their successes, their families.

And so, we are so proud that all of you, and particularly this ensemble, could be with us here on this very historic day. This Cathedral has hosted many

incredible events, talking about the John Kennedy visit here, and John Kennedy’s memorial service here in 1964. I was here.

And you mentioned Richard Cardinal Cushing. I guess in South Boston, where I’m from, they say my claim to fame is not being Mayor, not being the United States Ambassador, but I used to be Richard Cardinal Cushing’s newspaper boy—I used to sell newspapers to him. Well, he was here; this Cathedral is full of history.

And I know I speak for all the people of Boston when I welcome you here, thank you for being here, and thank you for sharing your talents on this historic day that meant so much to the people of the City of Boston.

So have a wonderful concert, have a wonderful afternoon, welcome to Boston. I’m sure I speak on behalf of the Cardinal Archbishop of Boston Seán Patrick O’Malley, a wonderful, wonderful leader of the Roman Catholic Church, in welcoming you all, as well as the Pastor here, Kevin O’Leary here at the Cathedral, welcoming you all. And let’s have a great concert. God bless all of you. Thank you.

Recalling the 1964 Requiem Mass for JFK

On Jan. 19, 1964, just two months after we lost our beloved President John F. Kennedy to assassins, a Requiem Mass was held at the Holy Cross Cathedral in Boston for the Kennedy family and guests. Maestro Erich Leinsdorf chose the Mozart Requiem in D minor, and invited Sara



Mae Endich, soprano; Eunice Alberts, contralto; Nicholas Di Virgilio, tenor; and Mac Morgon, baritone, to sing the solos. The 180-voice choir accompanying the Boston Symphony Orchestra included the New England Conservatory, the combined Harvard Glee Club-Radcliffe Choral Society, and the Chorus Pro Musica.

Nicholas Di Virgilio, the tenor soloist at that momentous event, regretting that he is unable to attend in person, sent this reminiscence to the Schiller Institute, on the occasion of its tribute to JFK, to be held exactly 50 years later, at the same Holy Cross Cathedral, featuring Mozart's Requiem in D minor.

The day of the memorial mass at Holy Cross Cathedral was somber, to say the least, and Maestro Leinsdorf's comment before the quick tempo run-through was that he chose Mozart's Requiem because both men were "young" at death, and for that reason, appropriate for the occasion. Cardinal Cushing was the officiate, aided by the Brother Monks singing Gregorian Chants; after each appropriate chant, the Boston Symphony, a large choral group, and we soloists, Sara Mae Endich, Eunice Alberts, Mac Morgon, and I, sang Mozart's corresponding part of the Mass.

The most telling moment for me was during the soloists' "Benedictus" section, which came during the communion distribution at the altar rail. The Kennedy family and close relatives, as well as close friends,

came to the altar to receive communion. Jacqueline Kennedy came to the altar and knelt no more than nine feet in front of me. To me, the "Benedictus" is the most beautiful and most moving part of Mozart's Mass, and a joy to sing under ordinary circumstances.

Seeing her kneeling in prayer, and seeing mascara streaming down her cheeks during the "Benedictus," struck me with such a strong emotional bolt that I had no recollection of having sung.

The Cathedral was filled to capacity by an invited congregation; the only member absent was Robert Kennedy, who was in the Far East.

Congratulations to all of you in remembering this occasion in this very appropriate way.

My best wishes to you and all pertaining to this project.

*Nicholas Di Virgilio
January 5, 2014*

Anthony Morss

Why the Verdi Tuning Must Be Restored

The following statement was sent to the Schiller Institute Tribute to John F. Kennedy by Anthony Morss, the Music Director and Principal Conductor of the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera, Inc.

On Sunday, January 19, 1964 a performance was given of Mozart's Requiem Mass in Boston honoring the recently assassinated John F. Kennedy. The Mozart had been specifically requested by his widow, Jacqueline Kennedy. And on January 19, 2014 the Schiller Institute will present another performance of the Mozart Requiem in memory of President Kennedy—50 years later, to the day—at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston. This event will honor Kennedy's legacy of inspiration, especially in young people, of the patriotism and soaring idealism which produced the Apollo Moon project and the Peace Corps, and the entire climate of hope and confidence associated with Kennedy's Presidency.

One of the most significant features of the January

19 performance will be its tuning pitch of A=432 [Hz], thereby forging a powerful link to a tradition of deep authenticity beyond the awareness of the average concertgoer. It will be useful to examine some of the history of tuning in order to realize its significance for us today in participating fully in our magnificent cultural heritage.

The Dilemma of Tuning Pitch

It is not at all surprising that when the high art music of the Renaissance and Baroque was emerging, Europe was so politically divided and communication so slow that there was no consistent tuning pitch. This situation continued well into the nineteenth century. Different cities tuned to different pitches, and different churches within the same city tuned to different pitches. Since the most important music was overwhelmingly vocal, sometimes the only real clues to knowing where to tune came from the range of the vocal parts: voices do have limitations, especially those of church singers not always professionally skilled.

The various tuning pitches were almost always lower than modern tuning, an extreme example being the prestigious Paris Opera at the time that several of Gluck's operas were premiered there: it is known that the tuning at the Paris Opera then was a minor third lower than modern A=440. Music written in F major would thus sound to modern ears in D major. The only solution for a modern performance would be to transpose the whole opera down a minor third. Otherwise some of the solo tenor parts, which are written very high, would be excruciating. By the way, during this period, Rome used the same tuning as the Paris Opera; Naples was a half-tone even lower, and Venice tuned to our modern 440. Most emphatically, one size obviously does not fit all.¹

1. If we assume that all the best composers everywhere in Europe knew how to write for voice effectively, then perhaps much of their vocal writing achieved very comparable results in pitch, by having composers in the low tuning cities write high, and composers in the high tuning cities write low. When Bach guest-conducted outside of Leipzig, he always took with him different wind transpositions to set the actual pitch of his pieces very close to the Leipzig conditions for which he had composed them.



Anthony Morss

Today we face the choice of where to tune in order to do justice to the standard repertory. Bach and Handel both worked in some cities where the pitch was a whole tone down from 440, and later on in places where it was only half a tone down. Modern orchestras that play Baroque music have agreed internationally to use modern copies of Baroque instruments tuned to 415, which is a half a tone down from 440. Those orchestras that play Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Mendelssohn by common consent tune at 430, which is nearly a quarter of a tone down from 440. (A full quarter-tone would be 427.)

Laboratory tests conducted in the nineteenth century and repeated in the twentieth (including by the legendary Amadeus Quartet's first violinist, Norbert Brainin, also in collaboration with the Schiller Institute), confirmed that the great stringed instruments of the old Italian masters such as Stradivarius, Guarneri, and Guadagnini achieve their maximum resonance (which is to say their maximum roundness and beauty of tone) between 427 and 432. Actually 432 is ideal because it derives from middle C at 256, a major scientific constant: for example, the characteristic vibratory rates of the subatomic particles are all within this same scale of values.

What was Bach's own preference in tuning pitch? As it happens, we know that, because Bach was a famous organ consultant, as well as a famous composer and organ virtuoso, and drew up the specifications for building several new organs. One of them was installed in his Thomaskirche in Leipzig six years after his death in 1750, and all his organs are tuned to A=430 or 431. Note how astonishingly close this is to the ideal pitch of A=432!

Why didn't Bach tune to 430 during his time in Leipzig? Because the organ in the Thomaskirche was tuned to 440, a half tone higher than his pitch for the choir, 415. There had been a long tradition in Europe of high tuning for organs in church music and low tuning for chamber music. Retuning an organ was, then as now, an immensely expensive undertaking, and although several organs were indeed tuned down, starting in the seventeenth century, normally you were stuck with whatever pitch your organ was tuned to. Your only recourse then was to do what Bach actually did: have the organ transposed down a half a tone whenever it played with the choir. He did not want his choir to sing a whole tone down, although he had been forced to use that low tuning in Weimar and Cöthen, again at the mercy of the local organ's tuning. Bach's own superb taste and intellect, however, and his view of the ideal tuning, is evidenced in his cited organ specifications.

Cardinal Cushing (1964) On Kennedy and Mozart

Here are excerpts from the remarks by Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, at the Jan. 19, 1964, Mass held for the assassinated President:



A few words will not, I hope, intrude unduly on the solemnity of this occasion....

The day has a special meaning for all of us by the presence of our late, beloved President's wife, valiant Jacqueline, who has taken herself from her sorrow for a few hours to pray to God with us in sacrifice and song....

He and his dear Jacqueline enriched the White House with the best in art and culture and in music....

No tribute, therefore, my dearly beloved, to our departed President and his charming wife, could be more fitting than the spiritual, artistic, and the liturgical service of this morning....

No one will fail to note also the appropriateness of selecting Mozart's *Requiem*, sung by outstanding choral groups and accompanied by the world-famous Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of its able conductor [Erich Leinsdorf], for America's martyred President. The genius of art and the genius of leadership are joined together in this single event.

Separated by centuries, they were both touched by a creative instinct uncommon in any generation; both brought out of their youth a shining light which will illuminate the ages; both were summoned to eternity at a moment which to us mortals certainly seems untimely.

The President had hardly started on his most promising career to guard the country and the world for peace; Mozart died before he finished his *Requiem*. Yet the memory of men still enshrines both names among the great of this world. Today, in the unforgettable music of Mozart, we have heard again in our hearts the stirring voice of our once-youthful leader; in the artistic expression of Mozart we have caught the unmistakable accent of John F. Kennedy....

II. The most compelling reason to tune at 432, championed by the great Giuseppe Verdi himself, is not just its scientific and theoretical significance, but rather the extremely obvious gain in beautiful tone for stringed instruments, as we have seen, and even more important, for the singing voice. Nor is this improvement noticeable only to connoisseurs: the average concertgoer is immediately aware of the added glow of warmth and mellowness, especially if there is an opportunity to compare it directly with the modern higher tuning.

Such an opportunity was provided in April 1993 by the Schiller Institute during a seminar conducted by the renowned Carlo Bergonzi at New York City's Carnegie Hall, in its Weill Recital Hall, entitled "Save the Art of Bel Canto—Return to the Verdi Tuning." A parade of singers of all voice categories sang each an aria with a piano tuned to 440 and then repeated it with a different piano tuned to 432. Both singers and the public found this comparison startlingly favorable to the 432 tuning.

One can build wind and brass instruments to tune up at any pitch one chooses, but the human voice cannot be so tuned. The great Italian Maestro Tullio Serafin deplored the modern high tuning (at 448 and up) and prophesied that if it continued, it would result in "the death of the Italian Lyric Theatre." This high tuning is currently burning out voices, shortening careers, and forcing opera companies to cast lighter, lyric voices with easy high notes in roles demanding darker and heavier voices, ones that can no longer reach the too-high top notes. No matter how supportive the conductors may try to be in keeping down the orchestral accompaniments for lighter voiced singers, the heavy orchestrations meant to support heavier voices will eventually destroy the lighter voices, which are in any event all the wrong color for the heavy roles, and thus seriously misrepresent the music they are singing.

Whichever tuning most favors the human voice must be the standard one for all music, with due exceptions made for transpositions of music composed to be performed at startlingly lower tunings. But the vast majority of works in the standard repertory will be found to be best served by the 432 tuning.

*Anthony Morss
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