

1 Script for NYP 15-26

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3 (NATIONAL UNDERWRITING CREDIT #1)

4 (AMBIENCE UP AND UNDER)

5 AB: **Hello and welcome to another broadcast by the New**  
6 **York Philharmonic. I'm Alec Baldwin and in a just**  
7 **a few moments, Music Director Alan will lead a**  
8 **performance of Giuseppe Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*.**  
9 **Joining Mr. Gilbert and the orchestra are The New**  
10 **York Choral Artists, Soprano Angelia Meade; Mezzo-**  
11 **Soprano Lilli Paasakivi [pahs-ah-KEY-vee], tenor**  
12 **Russell Thomas, and Bass-Baritone Eric Owens.**

13 (ACTUALITY:AG)

14 AB: **Music Director Alan Gilbert**

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16 **When Gioacchino Rossini passed away in 1868,**  
17 **Giuseppe Verdi felt the loss deeply. Verdi never**  
18 **forgot his indebtedness to his distinguished**  
19 **"operatic fore-father," writing to his friend**  
20 **Countess Clara Maffei quote, "A great name has gone**  
21 **from the world! His was the most widespread, most**  
22 **popular reputation of our time, and was the glory**  
23 **of Italy! When the 'other one' is no longer with**  
24 **us, what will remain?"**

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26 The "other one" to whom Verdi referred was  
27 Alessandro Manzoni, a poet and novelist of  
28 international reputation and, like Verdi, a patriot  
29 for an Italian country in the throes of national  
30 unification. Manzoni's nationalist spirit is well-  
31 represented in what is perhaps his most famous  
32 work, *I promessi sposi* (or *The Betrothed*) in which  
33 he writes, "It is not only our object to represent  
34 the state of things in which our characters will  
35 shortly be placed; but at the same time to develop  
36 an event in the history of our country more  
37 celebrated than well known."

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39 Armed with the clout of his powerful publisher  
40 Ricordi, Verdi approached the city officials of  
41 Bologna with an ambitious project to pay tribute to  
42 Rossini on the anniversary of his death. Bologna  
43 was the city with which Rossini had been most  
44 closely associated and Verdi proposed to the city  
45 fathers that twelve Italian composers should  
46 collaborate with him in writing a composite *Requiem*  
47 *Mass*...with each composer contributing a single  
48 movement. Verdi himself would compose the final  
49 movement—the fugue, "Libera me."

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51 The project was given a "go" by the city council,  
52 but political bickering, as well as inconsistencies  
53 of style and outlook led to the work never being  
54 fully realized. When a friend at the Milan  
55 Conservatory saw Verdi's portion, however, he  
56 suggested that Verdi consider writing a complete  
57 Requiem himself. Verdi made some sketches, but  
58 lost interest in the idea as he began to  
59 concentrate on his opera, Aida.

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61 Some years later, in 1873, Verdi's other cultural  
62 hero, Alessandro Manzoni, died at the age of 88  
63 after taking a serious fall down the steps to the  
64 church of San-Fedele. Verdi was so deeply affected  
65 by Manzoni's death that he felt incapable of going  
66 to the funeral. It is said that Verdi instead made  
67 a secret visit to Manzoni's grave a few days later.  
68 After some further reflection and some  
69 consultations with Ricordi, it was decided that  
70 Verdi would honor the memory of Manzoni with a  
71 Requiem Mass.

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76 The first performance of the work took place on the  
77 anniversary of Mazoni's death: May 22, 1874, with  
78 the composer conducting. The success the piece  
79 enjoyed not only at its premiere but at subsequent  
80 performances was overwhelming. Verdi and his  
81 published Ricordi had to take special precautions  
82 to prevent unauthorized performances: In Bologna,  
83 for example, it was performed by four pianos rather  
84 than by an orchestra..while in Ferrara it was given  
85 by a local military band.

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87 During 1875, Verdi took the Requiem on tour,  
88 visiting Paris, London, and Vienna.

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90 The Requiem is filled with everything that makes  
91 Verdi great: searing melodies fused with good taste  
92 and expert craftsmanship. Conductor Hans von Bülow  
93 called it "an opera in church vestments" and  
94 Johannes Brahms didn't hesitate to call it a work  
95 of genius.

101 In May, 1923, Arturo Toscanini conducted a  
102 memorable performance of the Verdi Requiem in Milan  
103 to mark the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Manzoni's death.  
104 Toscanini also conducted the New York Philharmonic  
105 premiere of this piece on January 15, 1931. The  
106 soloists on that occasion were Elisabeth Rethberg,  
107 Margarete Matzenauer, Mario Chamlee, and Ezio  
108 Pinza.

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110 Since the Verdi Requiem is a lengthy piece, we're  
111 going to give stations a chance to break for ID  
112 now. When we return, we'll hear the work played  
113 without interruption. You're listening to the New  
114 York Philharmonic This Week.

115 (ID)

116 AB: And now we hear The Messa da Requiem by Giuseppe  
117 Verdi. As soloists, we hear Soprano Angela Meade,  
118 Mezzo-Soprano Lilli Paasikivi, tenor Russell Thomas  
119 and Bass-Baritone Eric Owens with the New York  
120 Choral Artists. Alan Gilbert conducts...The New York  
121 Philharmonic.

122 (MUSIC)

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126 (APPLAUSE)

127 Recorded live, at Avery Fisher Hall, that was the  
128 *Messa da Requiem* by Giuseppe Verdi. The New York  
129 Philharmonic was joined by the New York Choral  
130 Artists along with soloists: Angela Meade, Lilli  
131 Paasikivi, Russell Thomas, and Eric Owens. Lorin  
132 Maazel conducted. The conductor was Alan Gilbert.

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134 AB: ...and if you enjoyed that performance, you'll be  
135 happy to learn that it is scheduled to be released  
136 as part of the orchestra's digital download series  
137 on iTunes. More information is available at  
138 nyphil.org. While you're there, we hope that  
139 you'll also check out our Watch & Listen section,  
140 where you can hear broadcasts on demand and other  
141 content. And, of course, there is also plenty of  
142 information on tickets for upcoming concerts. Once  
143 again, the address is nyphil.org.

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151 PROMO for THIS program:

152 AB: **Next time, on the New York Philharmonic This Week:**

153 (MUSIC)

154 (GILBERT ACTUAL)

155 AB: **We hear the *Messa da Requiem* by Giuseppe Verdi.**

156 **I'm Alec Baldwin. Please join me for this concert**

157 **featuring the New York Choral Artists plus Angela**

158 **Meade, Lilli Paasakivi, Russell Thomas, and Eric**

159 **Owens as soloists. Music Director Alan Gilbert**

160 **will conduct...The New York Philharmonic This Week.**

161 (MUSIC UP AND OUT)

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