

Kurt Mortensen

Lament For A Dead Acquaintance

For String Orchestra



Full Score

Lament For A Dead Acquaintance

For String Orchestra

Duration: ca. 7 minutes

First performance:
April 29, 2000
at Northern Illinois University
by:

Members of the String Section of the NIU Philharmonic
Amy Crabtree, conductor

for more information about Kurt Mortensen's music visit:
<http://www.kurtmortensen.org>

Program Notes By The Composer

Kevin Gilbert (1966-1996) was an incredibly talented rock musician who left us way before he should have. He was a brilliant song writer and lyricist, a multi-instrumentalist, a master in the recording studio, not to mention that he had one of the most amazing singing voices I have ever heard. In a world of predominantly no-talent pop/rock artists, Gilbert's genius was never fully appreciated. Most of his commercially available recordings were issued independently or on small labels with one major exception. This was Toy Matinee, a onetime project with Madonna's producer/collaborator Patrick Leonard (This was much cooler than it sounds). Although the album was played heavily in Los Angeles (where I first came to know his music), it did not sell that well and fell into obscurity. It seems that at every step of his career, fame and fortune eluded him and Kevin became known to music industry insiders as the most famous unknown rock musician. How many people knew that he won a Grammy for co-writing the music on Sheryl Crow's first album? (not one of his most impressive musical achievements so don't judge him by this) I have long held the opinion that popular rock music has been in steady decline since about the early 1980s. Kevin Gilbert to me represented the hope for my generation which has produced virtually nothing in terms of great rock musicians. But now he's gone.

His accidental death in 1996 has bothered me for some time and I always wanted to pay tribute to this great musician. Now four years later I offer this short lament in his memory. Essentially this work is a collage comprised of short fragments from songs by Kevin Gilbert. None of the melodies used are my own.

The ostinato which opens and closes the piece is derived from the piano accompaniment of a tune called "Song for a Dead Friend" which Gilbert wrote about someone close to him who committed suicide. My title is obviously a take-off of Gilbert's. The rest of the melodies used in this piece are taken from a five other Gilbert songs. These fragments are subjected to augmentation (never retrograde as the melodies are intended to remain audible) and combined in various ways, thus evolving into expansive textures. In the middle there is an uplifting five-part canon which to me sonically represents a celebration of all that Kevin Gilbert left for posterity to enjoy. The subject of the canon, which is musically taken completely out of context from the original, is a tune ironically called "Tears of Audrey." Audrey was apparently the mother of the person for whom "Song for a Dead Friend" was written.

Kevin and I had a number of mutual friends and through these contacts we were in a number of social situations together. I wish I could have called him a friend, but in truth I only really know him through his music. In determining a title for this piece, I decided to based it on the aforementioned "Song for a Dead Friend." However "friend" did not seem appropriate.

In his short 29 years, Kevin Gilbert left behind a huge body of work, a large portion of which has never been released to the public. This is slowly changing as his estate is working towards reissuing many of his recordings. They have also set up a memorial fund in Gilbert's name to help "young people who are musically gifted, but financially challenged, to realize their musical potential" by way of providing instruments and/or money for and scholarships. For more information about Kevin Gilbert, check out the following websites:

<http://www.kevingilbert.com>

<http://www.shadowself.com>

In Memory of Kevin Gilbert

Lament For A Dead Acquaintance

For String Orchestra

Kurt Mortensen

2000

♩ = 80

1st Violin

2nd Violin

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

mp

mp

mp

1 2 3 4

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

5 6 7 8

1st Vl.

2nd Vl.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

9 10 11 12

1st Vl.

2nd Vl.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

13 14 15 16

1st VI. *mp*

2nd VI. *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

Db. *mp*

17 18 19 20

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Db. *mf*

21 22 23 24

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI. *f*

Vla. *mf*

Vc.

Db.

25 26 27 28

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI.

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *f*

Db.

29 30 31 32

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mf

33 34 35 36

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f *mf*

37 38 39 40

1st VI.

2nd VI. *mf*

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

41 42 43 44

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

Db. *f*

45 46 47 48

1st VI.

2nd VI. *f*

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

49 50 51 52

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Db. *f*

53 54 55 56

1st VI.

2nd VI. *f*

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

Db.

57 58 59 60

1st VI.

2nd VI. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf*

Db. *mf*

61 62 63 64

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI. *f*

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

65 66 67 68

1st VI.

2nd VI. *mf*

Vla. *mf* *mf*

Vc.

Db. *mf*

69 70 71 72

1st VI. *f*

2nd VI. *f*

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

73 74 75 76

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *f*

Db.

77 78 79 80

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

81 82 83 84

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

85 86 87 88

1st VI. *f*

2nd VI.

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *f*

Db.

89 90 91 92

1st VI. *mf* *f*

2nd VI.

Vla. *f*

Vc.

Db.

93 94 95 96 97 98

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f *mp* *f* *mp*

99 100 101 102 103 104

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mf

105 106 107 108

1st VI. *mp*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

109 110 111 112

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

113 114 115 116 117

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