

for everything you keep losing

Angélica Negrón

Commissioned by Dallas Symphony Orchestra
World Premiere Performance October 16, 2025, Dallas, TX

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Libretto by Roque Raquel Salas Rivera, Ricardo Alberto Maldonado,
Nicole Delgado & Amanda Hernández

I. Requiem Aeternam: *for everything you keep losing*

II. Kyrie: *Under the stars*

III. Benedictus: *Smell and Sky*

IV. Agnus Dei: *Reaching the tantamountainous coral deserts*

V. Lux Aeterna: *Soar through the air*

VI. Libera Me: *They poured out the music of the world*

VII. In Paradisum: *To know the names of fruits and sow by heart*

Estimated Duration: 37 min.

PROGRAM NOTES

“for everything you keep losing” is a new requiem for orchestra, SATB chorus, and four soloists that explores sonic loss and the erasure of sonic diversity, tied to habitat destruction, species extinction, and climate change. The piece also reflects on the loss of language due to colonialism, the displacement of communities, and the silencing of voices, particularly those impacted by the climate crisis.

The libretto weaves together poetry by Roque Raquel Salas Rivera, Ricardo Alberto Maldonado, Nicole Delgado, and Amanda Hernández, touching on themes of grief, ecological and cultural loss, displacement, extinction, resistance, transformation, liberation and remembrance. A meditative cycle, the piece also asks how music and technology can help us reconnect with what has been lost and imagine new ways forward. As David Haskell writes, “The vitality of the world depends, in part, on whether we turn our ears back to the Earth, hear both the beauty and brokenness of the living world, then act.”

The first movement, *Requiem Aeternam*, is an atmospheric eulogy for all that has been unjustly displaced, lost or forgotten. It includes recordings of the final days of an ancient ice block, Germany’s Schneeferner glacier, as well as sounds from extinct baleen whales, and the last song of the Kaua’i ‘ō’ō bird, whose extinction was driven by environmental destruction.

In the *Kyrie*, the Afro-Puerto Rican tradition of *bomba* sets a rhythm of resistance. The music features the distinctive call of the *Coquí guajón*, a rock frog native to Puerto Rico that has been endangered since 1997 due to habitat loss. *Benedictus* enters a musical trance that reflects on our relationship to nature and language, focusing on presence and hope as forms of connection. *Agnus Dei* includes the haunting silence of depleted coral reefs, where biological life has disappeared due to dredging and pollution. This movement dwells in the discomfort of irreversible loss while asking for peace and rest for those no longer with us.

Lux Aeterna continues to pray for rest and light, with heightened awareness of our connection to the natural world and to all living beings. *Libera me* brings back the driving rhythms of *bomba*, joined by field recordings from El Yunque rainforest in Puerto Rico. The movement echoes the resistance heard in *Kyrie*, now with greater urgency. It addresses the impacts of gentrification and disaster capitalism as they intersect with climate injustice and the ongoing displacement of both human and non-human communities.

The final movement, *In Paradisum*, imagines a peaceful return to our roots. It features the song of the San Pedrito, the only endemic tody in Puerto Rico, which is not currently threatened. In this imagined paradise, the San Pedrito sings beautifully, evoking the peace that comes with being able to return home.

With immense gratitude to writer and biologist David Haskell and marine ecologist Elliot Ma for sharing their field recordings and to Roque Raquel Salas Rivera, Ricardo Alberto Maldonado, Nicole Delgado, and Amanda Hernández, for letting me borrow their words.

TEXT:

The text for this piece combines excerpts from the traditional Latin Requiem Mass with selected writings by poets Roque Raquel Salas Rivera, Ricardo Alberto Maldonado, Nicole Delgado, and Amanda Hernández.

I. REQUIEM AETERNAM: *for everything you keep losing*

*Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.*

This was my home, not my origin, these eons
were moths building albums inside a guitar
whose usual emptiness grew full with music.¹

for everything you keep losing²

for us I sing³

for everything you keep losing

for us I sing

II. KYRIE: *Under the Stars*

*Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.*

That time we existed because we were dying

What is a record

¹ Text from *Algarabía: The Song of Cenex, Natural Son of the Isle Alarabíyya* by Roque Raquel Salas Rivera. Copyright © 2025 by Roque Raquel Salas Rivera. Used by permission of The Permissions Company, LLC on behalf of Graywolf Press, graywolfpress.org. All rights reserved worldwide.

² Text from *while they sleep (under the bed is another country)* by Roque Raquel Salas Rivera. Used by permission of Roque Raquel Salas Rivera.

³ Text from *Como lavael corazön; La comedia de la estructura; Tres Poemas italianos; Six Words I Had to Use Today* by Ricardo Alberto Maldonado. Used by permission of Ricardo Alberto Maldonado.

If not a scar

We speculate
Under the stars
Naming each
After someone
We may not find⁴

III. BENEDICTUS: *Smell and Sky*

*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Osanna in excelsis.*

While I connect the stone to the star
they balance each other / smell and sky.⁵

What names would the flowers have then,
in the ruins of language?⁶

IV. AGNUS DEI: *Reaching the tantamountainous coral deserts*

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem sempiternam.*

Unreachably trapped here
Unreachably trapped there⁷

⁴ Text from *while they sleep (under the bed is another country)* by Roque Raquel Salas Rivera. Used by permission of Roque Raquel Salas Rivera.

⁵ Text from *Con el cuerpo leo los ciclos de la naturaleza/With my body I read the cycles of nature* by Nicole Cecilia Delgado, translated by Carina del Valle Schorske. Used by permission of Nicole Delgado and Carina del Valle Schorske. This poem first appeared in *Puerto Rico en mi corazón* edited by Erica Mena, Ricardo Maldonado, Roque Raquel Salas Rivera, and Carina del Valle Schorske.

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Reaching the tantamountainous coral deserts
of the upper regions, we passed dolphin crews,
that were busy harassing sharks, passed
those, who like us, were endangered⁸

Rage as a passive form of mourning
Mourning as an active form of rage⁹

V. LUX AETERNA: *Soar through the air*

*Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
quia pius es.*

soon enough i feel treelike
and grow leaves
my heart palpitates
and pumps blood
thru all these branches
the days accumulate in different ways
some days
one is simply
not ready
ready to die
somehow i take
in my mouth the word
offering and then
it's the moment
i won't wait for

⁸ Text from *Algarabía: The Song of Cenex, Natural Son of the Isle Alarabíyya* by Roque Raquel Salas Rivera. Copyright © 2025 by Roque Raquel Salas Rivera. Used by permission of The Permissions Company, LLC on behalf of Graywolf Press, graywolfpress.org. All rights reserved worldwide.

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nothing
from nobody¹⁰

Either you walk on earth or swim in water or soar through the air.¹¹

VI. LIBERA ME: *they poured out the music of the world*

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna

A reverse trajectory, my epic begins with death,
for I was born dead and died in life, with my friends
(held together) in apartments with steep rent,
NO PETS, and NO LOCALS.

I can only warn that you will need
the other birds, your chorus.

And what will happen to the trees?
but they are already cut and became earth
that slides, flooding cities and their subways.

The fish have colonized sunken cities.
From the plane we see the reefs.¹²

*they poured out the music of the world.*¹³

¹⁰ Text from *Con el cuerpo leo los ciclos de la naturaleza/With my body I read the cycles of nature* by Nicole Cecilia Delgado, translated by Carina del Valle Schorske. Used by permission of Nicole Delgado and Carina del Valle Schorske. This poem first appeared in *Puerto Rico en mi corazón* edited by Erica Mena, Ricardo Maldonado, Roque Raquel Salas Rivera, and Carina del Valle Schorske.

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¹³ Text from *Como lavael corazón; La comedia de la estructura; Tres Poemas italianos; Six Words I Had to Use Today* by Ricardo Alberto Maldonado. Used by permission of Ricardo Alberto Maldonado.

VII. IN PARADISUM: *To know the names of fruits and sow by heart*

In paradisum deducant angeli

a desert whose trees dropped cloned, seedless fruit.¹⁴

We're breathing in light¹⁵

I will gather my things
Run toward the mountain
Forget how to speak English

Será necesario buscar entonces de la tierra.
Saberme el nombre de los frutos y sembrar de memoria.
Buscar del silencio.¹⁶

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¹⁵ Text from *Islas Adjacentes/Adjacent Islands* by Nicole Cecilia Delgado, translated by Urayoán Noel. Used by permission of Ugly Duckling Presse, 2022.

¹⁶ Text from *Tough Fruit* by Amanda Hernández. Used by permission of Amanda Hernández.