

Alessandra Salvati

# RQM

A S u d o k u R e q u i e m

f o r s o l o v i o l a



# RQM

## A SUDOKU REQUIEM

The title RQM comes from the elimination of vowels from the word **REQUIEM**. This work uses the shapes of letters as a compositional strategy for the development of themes, and proposes a miniature, a sort of ‘chemical precipitate’ of the Requiem in a performance that lasts less than five minutes and is played by a solo instrument.

In RQM profane and a sacred elements – a game and a mass - are connected and blended through sequences of numbers, as in nature everything comes from the same vibration and substance.

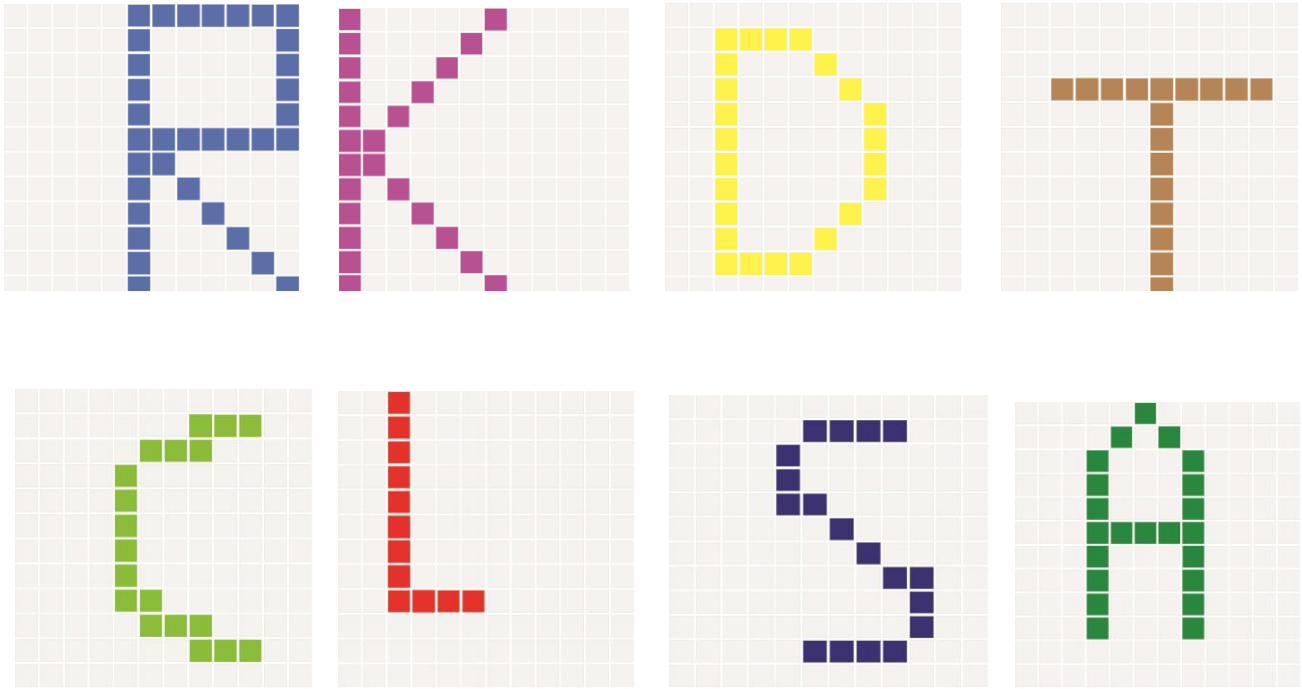
The starting point of RQM is a 12×12 sudoku square. To the eye of a composer, at a first glance, it looks like a 12-tone matrix, but its structure is different. According to the Sudoku game, in this square each column and 3×4 subgrid from top to bottom must contain digits 1 to 12 only once.

In order to translate the numbers in pitches (on the basis of the set theory method), all digits were shifted from 0 to 11 instead of 1 to 12.

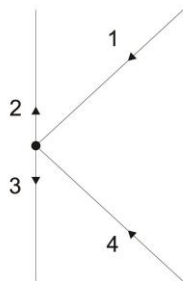
7	10	8	5	6	9	12	11	2	1	3	4
6	12	11	1	2	3	4	10	7	9	5	8
2	4	9	3	7	5	1	8	6	11	10	12
11	7	4	8	5	6	9	1	3	2	12	10
12	5	1	6	3	11	10	2	9	4	8	7
10	2	3	9	4	7	8	12	1	6	11	5
4	3	7	12	9	10	6	5	11	8	2	1
8	11	6	10	1	4	2	3	5	12	7	9
9	1	5	2	12	8	11	7	10	3	4	6
5	8	12	7	11	1	3	9	4	10	6	2
1	6	10	11	8	2	5	4	12	7	9	3
3	9	2	4	10	12	7	6	8	5	1	11

	V	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
O →	1	fa <sup>1</sup>	la	sol	mi	fa	la <sup>b</sup>	si	si <sup>b</sup>	re <sup>b</sup>	do	re	mi <sup>b</sup>	1 ← OR
2	fa	si	si <sup>b</sup>	do	do <sup>1</sup>	re	mi <sup>b</sup>	la	fa <sup>1</sup>	sol <sup>1</sup>	mi	sol	2	
3	re <sup>b</sup>	mi <sup>b</sup>	la <sup>b</sup>	re	fa <sup>1</sup>	mi	do	sol	fa	si <sup>b</sup>	la	si <sup>1</sup>	3	
4	si <sup>b</sup>	sol <sup>b</sup>	mi <sup>b</sup>	sol	mi	fa	la <sup>b</sup>	do	re	re <sup>b</sup>	si	la	4	
5	si	mi	do	fa	re	si <sup>b</sup>	la	do <sup>1</sup>	sol <sup>1</sup>	re <sup>1</sup>	sol	fa <sup>1</sup>	5	
6	la	do <sup>1</sup>	re	la <sup>b</sup>	mi <sup>b</sup>	sol <sup>b</sup>	sol <sup>1</sup>	si	do	fa	si <sup>b</sup>	mi	6	
7	mi <sup>b</sup>	re	fa	si	sol <sup>1</sup>	la	fa	mi	si <sup>b</sup>	sol	do <sup>1</sup>	do <sup>1</sup>	7	
8	sol	si <sup>b</sup>	fa	la	do	mi <sup>b</sup>	re <sup>b</sup>	re <sup>1</sup>	mi	si	fa <sup>1</sup>	sol <sup>1</sup>	8	
9	la <sup>b</sup>	do	mi	do <sup>1</sup>	si	sol	si <sup>b</sup>	sol <sup>b</sup>	la	re	mi <sup>b</sup>	fa	9	
10	mi	sol	si	fa <sup>1</sup>	la <sup>1</sup>	do	re	la <sup>b</sup>	mi <sup>b</sup>	la	fa	re <sup>b</sup>	10	
11	do	fa	la	si <sup>b</sup>	sol	do <sup>1</sup>	mi	mi <sup>b</sup>	si	fa <sup>1</sup>	sol <sup>1</sup>	re	11	
12	re	la <sup>b</sup>	re <sup>b</sup>	mi <sup>b</sup>	la	si	fa <sup>1</sup>	fa <sup>1</sup>	sol	mi	do	si <sup>b</sup>	12	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	VR													

The initial letters of the words Requiem, Kyrie, Dies irae, Tuba mirum, Confutatis, Lacrimosa, Sanctus and Agnus Dei, inscribed in the squares in specific positions, generate sets of pitches that were strictly used as thematic materials. The picture below shows the position chosen for each letter in the square. The placement of letters as well as the direction of reading selected for the paths defined by the letters obey to musical choices, though a degree of unpredictability is intrinsic in this method. The challenge (and the game) was using these shapes and paths in a rigorous way to create the piece



For each letter specific paths were adopted to generate the themes. They are indicated by arrows. As an example, the picture below shows the paths for letter K and the obtained theme.



This theme includes two quotations of the incipit of Bach's *Musical Offering* theme. More in general, the use of this method allows a mixture of styles and musical languages that were adopted on purpose. As a result, tonal passages and gestures alternate with atonal materials that in some passages require advanced techniques of the instrument. The piece includes miniatures of the sections of the Requiem mentioned above. They are played as a continuous flow, one after the other.

The first lines of the Latin text of these sections are mentioned in the score in squared brackets and they are not meant to be sung, but just to be thought by the performer in their meaning and beauty.

ALESSANDRA SALVATI

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## A SUDOKU REQUIEM

for solo viola

### LEGEND



molto vibrato



very fast tremolo



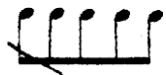
play between bridge and tailpiece



Both the wood and the hair of the bow touching the string while the left hand plays the written notes



accelerando. ritardando



play the passage in the fastest possible way

Accidentals refer to the individual pitches, but some courtesy accidentals are provided.

Approximate duration: 5 min.



# RQM

## A SUDOKU REQUIEM

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### REQUIEM

Freely ♩ = c. 80

*mf* *(mf)* *f*

[Re - qui - em re - qui - em

*p subito* *pp* *p*

ae - ter - nam do - na e - is]

*pizz.* *arco sfz* *p espr.* *ff*

[et lux per - pe - tu-a]

Deciso (lo stesso tempo ♩ = 80)

*ff* *f*

*fff* *pp* *fff* *pp*

2 **Poco più mosso** ♩ = 92  
 pizz. **KYRIE** ♩ = 88  
 pont. *ppp*

*p* [Ky - ri - e e - le

*ff subito* arco ord.  
 i - son]

**Calmò**

*fff* *p*

*p* (legato) DG

**DIES IRAE**

*mp* *fff* *mf*

♩ = 112  
*fff e marcatissimo*

arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz.

[Dies irae, dies illa]

arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz.



arco pizz. arco pizz. arco *ad libitum*<sup>3</sup>  
**fff**

**TUBA MIRUM**

Moderato ♩ = 112  
*p espr. e legato*

[Tu - ba mi - rum spar - gens so - num] *mp*

**CONFUTATIS**

A tempo ♩ = 100  
*f cresc.*

*ppp* *f cresc.* *pizz.* *pont.* *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco*  
 [Confutatis maledictis, flammis acribus addictis]

*fff* *Attacca subito:*  
*pizz.* *arco* *tr*

**LACRIMOSA**

Lo stesso tempo (♩ = 100)

*f*

[Lacrimosa dies illa, qua resurget ex favilla judicandus homo reus.]

4 Più mosso ♩ = 144

rallentando - - - - -

SANCTUS

Largo ♩ = 62

AGNUS DEI

Lo stesso tempo

R Q M

Roma, novembre 2016