

In this clip—from a 1984 performance of Verdi's *Requiem*—Herbert von Karajan conducts the Vienna Philharmonic (*Wiener Philharmoniker*) and two choirs—the Vienna Opera Choir (*Konzertvereinigung Wiener Staatsopernchor*) and the Sofia National Opera Choir (*Chor der Nationaloper Sofia*, from Sofia, Bulgaria)—at the famous [Musikverein concert hall in Vienna](#).

They are performing the first part of *Dies Irae* ("Day of Wrath"). The bass-baritone soloist is [José van Dam](#), from Belgium.

Together with Amsterdam's Concert Hall (the *Concertgebouw*), Berlin's *Konzerthaus* and Boston's Symphony Hall, [the Great Hall](#) of Vienna's *Musikverein* (where this recording was performed) is known as one of the finest concert halls in the world. All four are especially known for their superb acoustics.

The following are the lyrics (in Latin) which the choirs and van Dam are singing;

Choir:

*Dies irae, dies illa,
solvat saeculum in favilla,
teste David cum Sibylla.*

*Quantus tremor est futurus,
quando iudex est venturus,
cuncta stricte discussurus!*

*Tuba mirum spargens sonum,
per sepulcra regionem,
coget omnes ante thronum.*

Bass soloist:

*Mors stupebit et natura,
cum resurget creatura,
judicanti responsura.*

These are the lyrics, translated into English:

*The day of wrath, that day will
dissolve the world in ashes,
as David and the Sibyl prophesied.*

*How great will be the terror,
when the Judge comes
who will smash everything completely!*

*The trumpet, scattering a marvelous sound
through the tombs of every land,
will gather all before the throne.*

Bass:

*Death and Nature shall stand amazed,
when all Creation rises again
to answer to the Judge.*

As he often did, von Karajan is conducting this performance without a musical score in front of him.

Five years after this concert, [the maestro](#) died of a heart attack at his home in [Anif](#) (a village just south of his native Salzburg, Austria). He was 81 years old and left behind more than 800 recordings and several video projects.

The full performance, from which this clip is excerpted, is [available from Amazon](#). The famous Spanish tenor, Jose Carreras, is one of the soloists.

Credits:

Clip from the performance, described above, online via YouTube.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Verdi-Dies-Irae-Conducted-by-von-Karajan>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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