Fauré's Requiem has a varied history. Officially starting in 1887, Fauré composed what he called "a little Requiem" in five movements: Introit and Kyrie, Sanctus, "Pie Jesu," Agnus Dei, and "In Paradisum." Fauré said that it was "simply for the pleasure of it," but his circumstances may have had a large impact on the composition as his father died in 1885 and his mother died just two years later.

He completed this first version early in 1888 with the first performance taking place on January 16 of that same year. The first performance was listed as a "first-class funeral" service for an architect of the area. The Requiem's first hearing that was not part of a liturgy took place in May of 1888, but the composer asked his friends in attendance to not sit together so that it didn't look like a performance.

In 1889, Fauré added the "Hostias" portion of the Offertory, and in 1890, expanded the Offertory again and brought in the *Libera me* movement, originally composed back in 1877 as a stand-alone movement. This second, expanded version, was finished in 1893. They both call for baritone solo and organ. It was also in this expanded version that Fauré added trumpet and horn parts. The violin part may also have been added to the *In Paradisum*, but it is unlikely that Fauré would have expected to have an entire violin section sit and wait through six movements.

At the request of his publisher, Hamelle, Fauré was urged to prepare a symphonic version to secure more performances, turning it into a concert piece, instead of a liturgical piece. This third version of the *Requiem*, published for full orchestra, was premiered in 1900 at the Trocadéro Palace during the Paris World Exhibition. What's confusing is that this version has the most questions about Fauré's involvement. In 1898, Fauré promised his publisher to prepare the score for publication but did not mention anything about adding instruments or making it a grander production. Instead, he asked if he could delegate the reduction of the orchestra parts for piano, a common practice, to one of his students. It is this delegation where the confusion begins. It may not have been Fauré's student, but there are numerous reasons why it looks like someone reorchestrated the Requiem. The first reason is that Fauré was known for delegating the scoring or orchestration of his pieces to others. The second reason was that he was occupied with a full-time job of teaching and administrative duties at the Church of the Madeleine in Paris and was gradually gaining a reputation as a composer. The third reason is that the published score has "literally hundreds of misprints and other inaccuracies which the normally meticulous Fauré would never have let past had he been sent printer's proofs for correction." While there is no concrete evidence that Fauré did not do the reorchestration, as the manuscript of the 1900 version is lost, there are plenty of reasons to assume that he did not. Does that mean that this last version is "unofficial?" By no means.

The version you will hear performed is the closest to what Fauré wanted in his original performances. The orchestra is quite different, especially when compared to other notable requiems. The orchestra requires two sets of violas, two sets of cellos, bass, solo violin, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, organ, mixed choir, and soprano and baritone solo.

What sets Fauré's requiem aside from his contemporaries like Verdi, Mozart, and Berlioz, is the atmosphere of the piece. While those other Romantic requiems are more dramatic and showcase

what an operatic setting of the Requiem text sounds like, Fauré's setting veers away from the overly dramatic. In 1921, almost three decades after the premiere of the first version, he said that "everything I managed to entertain by way of religious illusion I put into my Requiem, which moreover is dominated from beginning to end by a very human feeling of faith in eternal rest." While the overall atmosphere of the Requiem is not overly Romantic, there are clear moments of drama, emotion, and tension.