



I DIED FOR BEAUTY: Will Cole's representation of the structure of the work

He quotes DOSTOEVSKY : *Beauty is a fearful and terrible thing! Fearful because it's undefinable, and it cannot be defined, because here God gave us only riddles. Here the shores converge, here all contradictions live together.*

He writes: I received the commission for '*I Died for Beauty*' in November 2008. But it was not until Christmas 2009, still without a text for the work, that I finally began to read the poetry of Emily Dickinson, the mysterious 19th-century American poet. My copy of Dickinson's complete poems is I think the only volume of poetry I own in which the poems themselves are listed by theme as well as indexed - this concept of linking a series of meditations on a particular subject close to Dickinson's thoughts, such as Death, or Resurrection, through her work I found particularly striking, especially as one of these subjects was Beauty. In reading through the 'Beauty' poems, I conceived a work in which a musical narrative would effect the same process as Dickinson's poems, considering the problematic nature of Beauty from a musical angle, with Dickinson's poem 'I Died for Beauty', one of her most moving and representative, as its focal point. The choir in this piece become therefore not the powerful narrator or commentator of many oratorios, but instead a voice from afar, from beyond the grave and on a higher plane of experience and understanding, as Dickinson herself was, than the work's main protagonist, the orchestra, and us listeners too.