

Early Music Ensemble

David Nutter, *director*

Commemoratio: Johannes Ockeghem †Anno Domini 1497

Program:

Nymphes de bois - Requiem
La déploration de la mort de Jehan Ockeghem

Josquin Desprez
(ca 1440-1521)

Salve Regina

Johannes Ockeghem
(ca 1410-1497)

interval

Missa Pro Defunctis (Requiem)

Ockeghem

Introit: *Requiem aeternam*
Ps. Te decet hymnus

Kyrie

Gradual: *Si ambulem * in medio umbrae mortis*
V: Virga tua

Tract: *Sicut cervus*
V: Sitivit anima mea
V: Fuerunt michi lacrimae

Offertory: *Domine lesu Christe*
*V: Sed signifer * Quam olim*
*V: Hostias et preces * Tu suscipe*
Quam olim

Sanctus
Agnus Dei
Lux aeterna (Communion)

Kyrie Le Roy (Emma Gavenda, director)

John Taverner
(ca 1490 – 1545)

UC Davis Early Music Ensemble

Soprano

Britney Haapanen, Amy Harris, Carole Hom, Emily Murakami, Hanya Shatara, Tess Weathers

Alto

Jacki Amos, Charlsie Berg, Emma Gavenda, Hilary Hecht, Helen Nutter, Susanna Peebles

Tenor

Dominic DiCarlo, Joseph Espena, Tucker Fisher, Tom Hall, Dan Phillips, Dillon Tostado

Bass

Dave Jones, Ron Holmberg, Arbel Bedak, Richard Mix, Neil Willits, Matt Zavod

Program note

Remembering Ockeghem

This concert commemorates - a very medieval custom - the composer Johannes Ockeghem on the 512th anniversary of his death. His birthdate remains unknown (estimated to have been around 1410); recent archival evidence has shown that he was a native of Saint-Ghislain (province of Hainault) and thus a speaker of Picard, a dialect of French. He may have received his early training at the nearby cathedral at Mons. He was a singer in the cathedral of Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe (Our Lady) in Antwerp in 1443, and later served at the court of Charles I, Duke of Bourbon, in Moulins. Around 1452 he moved to Paris and by 1454 he had risen to the pre-eminent position of premier chapelain of the royal chapel, a position he maintained under three successive kings: Charles VII, Louis XI and Charles VIII. His appointment as treasurer of the Abbey of St. Martin, Tours, and of which the king of France was titular abbot, is a measure of the esteem Ockeghem enjoyed. (Molinet's *déploration* on Ockeghem's death, "Nimphes des bois," and set by Josquin, punningly refers to the composer as "Le vray tresoir de musique".) Ockeghem was an exceptional singer. Erasmus, in his epitaph (*Ergone conticuit*, set to music by Johannes Lupi), lamented the passing of the "vox aurea Okegi" (the golden voice of Ockeghem); Teofilo Folengo, for whom Ockeghem's music was comparable to Donatello's sculpture, was more pragmatic: "You would say upon hearing him that he must be a Fleming, for his gullet is disposed as it were like a great organ pipe; it is nothing for him to sing low G (gamma-ut); he will sing lower, down to the very bottom of the cellar."

Ockeghem's style is characterised by flowing melodic lines, asymmetrical rhythms, sparing use of imitation, elided cadence points that create a sense of continuous motion, and a gradual shortening of note durations in the approach to the final close. For Tinctoris (*Liber de arte contrapuncti*, 1477), Ockeghem's works were distinguished by their extraordinary sweetness and beauty. Though Ockeghem's "subtle songs, artful masses, and harmonious motets" (Molinet) place him first among the most celebrated composers of his time, his musical output, or what survives of it, is not vast: a dozen masses, a handful of motets, and some 20 chansons. His Requiem is the earliest extant polyphonic setting of the Mass for the Dead (*Missa Pro Defunctis*). A three-voice setting by Guillaume Dufay (died 1477), mentioned in the composer's will, is now lost. Renaissance composers enjoyed some freedom in setting the established liturgical order of the Requiem. Ockeghem left the sequence (*Dies irae*), Sanctus, Agnus Dei, and Communion (*Lux aeterna*) to be sung in plainsong. Before the liturgical reforms enacted in 1563 by the Council of Trent, the Gradual (*Si ambulem*) and the Tract (*Sicut cervus*), deriving from Sarum use (the rite of Salisbury Cathedral in England), were alternatives to the usual Gradual (*Requiem aeternum*) and Tract (*Absolve, Domine*).

The movements of Ockeghem's Requiem mass are based on the appropriate plainsong melodies that, embellished and given rhythmic shape by the composer, are heard for the most part in the highest voice. Traditional liturgical usage also determines the shape of each movement, following the alternation of soloist(s) and full choir of the chants. The Gradual, for instance, follows the scheme: *Si ambulem* (solo); *in medio umbrae mortis* (choir); *Virga tua* (solo verse = duet); *consolata sunt* (choir). The enhancement of mood by musical gestures expressive of the words is in general responsive to mood (*ubi est Deus tuus?*, "Where is thy God?") and at times graphically illustrated (the singer's stark terror of the "hand of hell and the deep pit") as the music suddenly unravels during the Offertory. Gradually as the work unfolds the brighter sounds at the outset give way to somber lower registers, leaving the listener with a profound sense of brooding contemplation of the hereafter.

Ockeghem's few surviving motets are among the most diverse and inventive of his works. *Salve regina*, a complex and richly ornate setting of the Marian antiphon, paraphrases the chant melody in the bass voice. Though this procedure, typical of the medieval motet, determines basic harmonic progressions, Ockeghem's setting is unconstrained, exploring as it does distant modal reaches with surprising ingenuity.

Texts and translations

Nymphes des bois - Requiem

Nymphes des bois, déesses des fontaines,
Chantres experts de toutes nations,
Changez vos voix tant clères et haultaines
En cris tranchantz et lamentations.
Car d'Atropos, très terrible satrappe,
A votr'Ockeghem attrappe en sa trappe,
Vray trésorier de musique et chief d'oeuvre
Doct, elegant de corps et non point trappé;
Grant dommaige est que la terre le coeuvre.

Acoutez vous d'abits de deuil,
Joaquin, Brumel, Pierchon, Compère,
Et plorez grosses larmes d'oeil,
Perdu avez vostre bon père.
Requiescant in pace. Amen.

Cantus firmus:

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Requiescant in pace. Amen.

Salve Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae:
Vita, dulcedo, e spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exsules, filii Hevae,
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes,
in hac lacrimarum valle.
Eia ergo, advocata nostra, illos
tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis virgo semper Maria.

Missa pro defunctis (Requiem)

Introitus

Requiem * aeternum dona eis Domine:
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Ps. Te decet hymnus in Sion, * et tibi
reddetur votum in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam;
ad te omnis caro veniet.
Requiem * aeternum dona eis Domine:
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

Wood-nymphs, goddesses of the springs,
Skilled singers of all nations,
Change your clear and lofty voices
Into sharp cries and lamentations.
For Death, terrible satrap
Has caught your Ockeghem in his trap,
True treasurer of Music and master,
Learned and handsome in appearance, and not stout;
Great pity that the earth should cover him.

Dress yourselves in clothes of mourning,
Josquin, Brumel, Pierchon, Compère;
And weep great tears from your eyes,
Who have lost your good father.
May they rest in peace. Amen.

Rest eternal give to them O Lord,
And let the perpetual light shine on them.
May they rest in peace. Amen.

Hail, O Queen, mother of mercy
Our life, sweetness and hope.
We banished children of Eve call to thee,
To thee do we sigh, mourning and weeping
In this vale of tears.
O you, our advocate,
Turn on us thy merciful eyes.
And after this our exile show unto us Jesus,
the blessed fruit of thy womb.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Introit

Rest eternal give them, O Lord,
and perpetual light shine upon them.
Thou shalt be hymned O God in Sion, and unto
thee shall a vow be paid in Jerusalem.
Hear my prayer;
unto thee shall all flesh come.
Rest eternal give them, O Lord,
and perpetual light shine upon them.

Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

Graduale

Si ambulem * in medio umbrae mortis
non timeo mala:
quoniam tu mecum es Domine.
Virga tua et baculus tuus
ipsa me consolata sunt.

Tractus

Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum,
ita desiderat anima mea ad te Deus.
Sitivit anima mea ad Deum vivum,
quando veniam et apparebo
ante faciem Dei mei?
Fuerunt mihi lacrimae panes et die ac nocte
dum dicitur mihi per sigulos dies:
ubi est Deus tuus?

Offertorium

Domine Iesu Christe, * Rex gloriae,
libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum
de manu inferni, et de profundo lacu;
liberas eas de ore leonis,
ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadent
in obscura tenebrarum.
Sed signifer sanctus Michael
repraesentat eas in lucem sanctam;
Quam olim Abrahae promisisti,
ex semini eius.
Hostias et preces tibi Dominum offerimus,
tu suscipe pro animabus illis,
quarum hodie memoriam agimus; fac eas,
Domine, de morte transire ad vitam:
Quam olim Abrahae promisisti,
ex semini eius.

Sanctus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth;
pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Agnus Dei

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

Communio

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

Postcommunio

Requiescant in pace. Amen

Gradual

Yea though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death I will fear no evil:
for thou art with me, O Lord.
Thy rod and thy staff
they comfort me.

Tract

Like as the hart desireth the water brooks,
so longeth my soul after thee, O God.
My soul thirsteth for the living God,
when shall I come and appear
before my God?
My tears have been my meat day and night,
while they daily say unto me:
where is thy God?

Offertory

Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory,
free the souls of the faithful departed
from the hand of hell, and from the deep pit;
free them from the lion's mouth,
lest hell swallow them up, lest they
fall into darkness.
But let the standard-bearer Saint Michael
bring them into the holy light;
which of old Thou didst promise to Abraham
and his seed.
Sacrifice and prayer to thee Lord we offer,
receive them for the souls
whom this day we commemorate; make them,
O Lord, to cross over from death into life;
which of old Thou didst promise to Abraham
and his seed.

Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God of hosts;
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world,
grant them eternal rest.

Communion

Light eternal shine upon them O Lord,
with thy saints for ever
for thou art gracious.
Rest eternal give unto them, O Lord,
and perpetual light shine upon them
with thy saints for ever,
for thou art gracious.

Post communion

May they rest in peace. Amen.