

University of California, Davis  
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## UCD Early Music Ensemble

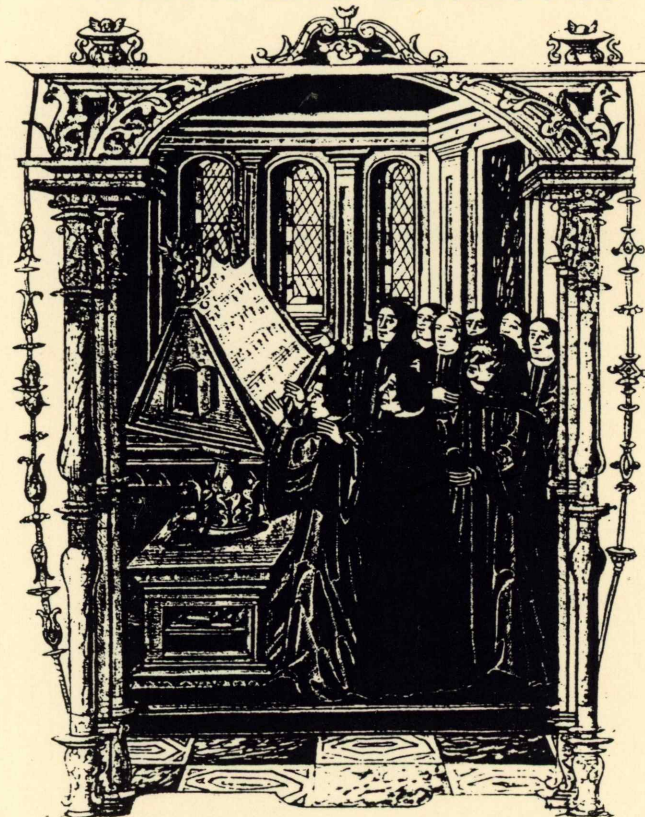
David Nutter, *director*

# Johannes Ockeghem

(ca. 1410–1497)

## *Missa Pro Defunctis*

Motets and Chansons



FRIDAY, 2 DECEMBER 1988  
8:00 P.M.

ST. MARTINS EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
HAWTHORN LANE, DAVIS  
ADMISSION FREE.

CONCERTS  
CONDUCTED  
51

The University of California, Davis  
The Department of Music  
presents the

## UCD EARLY MUSIC ENSEMBLE

David Nutter, *director*

in a program of works by

### JOHANNES OCKEGHEM

(ca 1410-1497)

#### PROGRAM

*Mort, tu as navré de ton dart*

INTEMERATA DEI MATER

*Petite Camusette*

*L'aulture d'antan*

*Je n'ay dueil*

SALVE REGINA

\* intermission \*

MISSA PRO DEFUNCTIS (REQUIEM)

Introit: *Requiem aeternam*

Kyrie

Gradual: *Si ambulem*

Tract: *Sicut cervus*

Offertory: *Domine Iesu Christe*



# UCD EARLY MUSIC ENSEMBLE

David Nutter, *director*

*Soprano:* Stephanie Holm, Carole Hom\*, Sue Kim, Helen Nutter\*, Hannah Wolf

*Alto:* Violet Grgich, Pam Lindquist, Rebecca Littman, Mary Kramer

*Tenor:* Calvin Fan, Shane Snyder\*, Brook Ostrom\*, Neil Willits\*

*Bass:* Ron Alexander\*, Chris Johnson, Simon Justice, Don Meyer\*, Lee Riggs

\* = *soloist*

## PROGRAM NOTE

Flemish by birth, Johannes Ockeghem spent most of his creative career at the court of the French monarchy. His early life is sparsely documented; he served at the Cathedral of Our Lady, Antwerp in 1443 and three years later he had joined the chapel of Charles I, Duke of Bourbon, at Moulins. Shortly thereafter he became attached to the French court. 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. The esteem he enjoyed at the French court is indicated by his appointment as treasurer of the Abbey of St. Martin, Tours, and of which the king of France was titular abbot (Molinet's lament on Ockeghem's death, *Nymphes des bois*, punningly refers to the composer as the "true treasurer of music").

Ockeghem's name is invariably linked with those of Binchois, Busnois and Dufay by contemporary writers. 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 of which we present a sampling tonight.

Ockeghem's chansons are set to the French *formes fixes* of rondeau (*Je n'ay dueil; L'autre d'antan*), ballade (*Mort, tu as navré*) and bergerette (*Petite Camusette*), lyric constructs in which the same music serves successive verses. *Mort, tu as navré de ton dart*, a lament on the death of Gilles Binchois (died 1460), has an archaic flavor with its combination of treble-dominated style, dual text, and tenor cantus firmus technique (the melody and words of the tenor are traceable to the *Te Deum* and to the *Dies irae*, the sequence of the Mass for the Dead).

Ockeghem's motets are among the most diverse and inventive of his works. *Intemerata Dei mater* is one of the most extended free compositions of the period. Each of the three sections reveals a careful sense of symmetry and climax achieved through a characteristic stretto-like acceleration of melodic and harmonic rhythm. The control of pace and texture is masterly, varying complex polyphony with luminous chordal passages. The downward expansion of musical space is innovative. The dark, sombre, low tessitura explores the lower range of male voices, descending to sub-bass C (we sing it transposed up a fourth). Ockeghem was apparently a fine bass singer. Teofilo Folengo remarked of him:

"You would say upon hearing him that he must be a Fleming, for his gullet is disposed as it were 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."

*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.



Ockeghem's Requiem is the earliest extant polyphonic setting of the Mass for the Dead. A setting by Guillaume Dufay (died 1477), mentioned in the composer's will, is now lost. However, it has recently come to light that Dufay's Requiem, for three voices compared to Ockeghem's four, was sung during the week-long convocations of the Order of the Golden Fleece, a chivalric order founded in 1430 by Philip the Good of Burgundy. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that masses based on a popular French tune known as "The Armed Man" (*L'homme armé*) were sung at the order's meetings. The unique source of Ockeghem's Requiem, the Chigi codex, a presentation manuscript originating at the Burgundian court and now in the Vatican library, contains five *L'homme armé* masses, including Ockeghem's own, as well as the motet, *Intemerata Dei mater*, an altogether extraordinary work whose text is humanistic rather than biblical or liturgical. Ockeghem's contact with composers of the Burgundian court is well established, and there is reason to suspect his works in the Chigi codex may too have been sung during the order's functions.

Renaissance composers enjoyed some freedom in setting polyphonically the various texts that comprise 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 by the Council of Trent (16th century), the Gradual (*Si ambulem*) and the Tract (*Sicut cervus*) were alternatives, deriving from Sarum use (Salisbury Cathedral), to the usual Gradual (*Requiem aeternum*) and Tract (*Absolve, Domine*).

Ockeghem's Requiem mass is based on the appropriate plainsong melodies that churchgoers of the period would have instantly recognized. These centuries-old melodies, embellished and given rhythmic shape by the composer, are heard for the most part in the highest voice; but it is Ockeghem's multi-stranded and labyrinthine music that imbues them with deeper significance: the "endless melody" (Bukofzer) of Ockeghem's flowing, long-limbed melodic lines that in their asymmetric design seem sprung free of earthly concerns for temporality.

Traditional liturgical usage also determines the shape of each movement, here dictated by the structural alternation of soloist(s) and full choir of the chants themselves. The Gradual, for instance, follows the scheme: *Si ambulem* (solo); *in medio umbrae mortis* (choir); *Virga tua* (solo verse = duet); *consolata sunt* (choir). Ockeghem adopts a variety of scoring (duets, trios) and compositional devices (canon; parallel first-inversion chords, or *fauxbourdon*). There are also complex rhythmic patterns present in the original notation that lie in wait for the unwary singer (*Quam olim*).

Ockeghem's handling of text illustration--the enhancement of verbal sense 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 higher, brighter sounds heard at the outset give way to somber lower registers, leaving the listener with a profound sense of brooding contemplation of the hereafter.

- DN

\* \* \*

Texts and translations are provided overleaf.

## TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

### MORT, TU AS NAVRÉ DE TON DART

Mort, tu as navré de ton dart  
Le pere de joyeuseté  
En desployant ton estandart  
Sur Binchois, patron de bonté.  
Son corps est plaint et lamenté  
Qui gist soubz lame  
Helas, plaise vous en pitié  
Priez pour l'ame.

En sa jonesse fut soudart  
De honorable mondanité  
Puis a esleu la milleur part  
Servant Dieu en humilité.  
Tant luy soit en chrestienté  
Son non est fame  
Qu'i detient de grant volenté  
Priez pour l'ame.

TENOR: Miserere, miserere pie...  
Quem in cruce redemisti precioso sanguine  
Pie Jhesu Domine dona ei requiem.

### INTEMERATA DEI MATER

Intemerata Dei mater, generosa puella,  
quam stipant agmina divum,  
respice nos tantum,  
si quid iubilando meremur.  
Tu scis, virgo decens,  
quantum discrimen agatur exulibus  
passimque quibus iactemur arenis

Nec sine te manet ulla quies,  
spes nulla laboris;  
nulla salus patrie,  
domus aut potiunda parentis,  
cui, regina, praees:  
dispensans omnia laeto  
suscipis ore pios  
dulci quos nectare potas, et facis  
assiduos epulis accumbere sacris.

Aspiciat facito miseros pietatis  
ocello Filius: ipsa potes.  
Fessos hinc arripe sursum diva,  
virgo manu, tutos et in arce locato.

*Death, you have wounded with your dart  
the father of all happiness;  
you have spread your standard  
over Binchois, model of goodness.  
Mourned and lamented,  
he lies under the tomb.  
Alas, may you in pity  
pray for his soul.*

*In his youth he was a soldier  
of honorable worldliness.  
Then he chose the better course,  
serving God in humility.  
Justly is his name famed  
throughout Christendom  
All men of goodwill,  
pray for his soul.*

*Have mercy...  
give rest to him whom Thou hast redeemed upon  
the Cross with Thy precious blood, Holy Jesus.*

*Undefiled mother of God, noble maiden,  
around whom the heavenly host throng with  
their songs, pray look down on us,  
if in our joyous praise we earn any merit.  
You know, beauteous maiden, how dreadful is  
the risk run by exiles on the various shores  
on to which we are cast.*

*No peace remains without you,  
no hope of work;  
no safety for our country,  
nor parental home for our possessions,  
of which you, O queen, are at the head:  
watching over all things,  
you lift up the righteous with a glad smile,  
feed them with your sweet nectar, and seat  
them in constant attendance at the sacred feast.*

*We beseech you to make your Son look upon  
us compassionately: this is within your power.  
Snatch us up away from here with your godly  
hand, maiden, weary as we are, and set us  
down in a place of safekeeping.*



#### **PETITTE CAMUSETTE**

Petitte Camusette, j'ay  
Proposé me mettre en essay  
D'acquérir quelque peu vo grace:  
Force m'est que par la je passe.  
Ceste foys j'en feray l'essay.

Petitte Camusette, a la mort m'avés mis.  
Robin et Marion s'en vont au boys jouer.  
Ilz s'en vont bras a bras; ilz sont endormis.  
Petitte Camusette, a la mort m'avés mis.

#### **L'AULTRE D'ANTAN**

L'aultre d'antan, l'autrier passa  
Et en passant me trespercha  
D'ung regard forgié a Melan  
Qui me mist en l'arriere ban,  
Tant malvais brassin me brassa.

Par tel fachon me fricassa  
Que de ses gaiges me cassa;  
Mais, par Dieu, elle fist son dan.  
L'autre d'antan . . .

Puis après nostre amour cessa,  
Car, oncques puis qu'elle dansa  
L'autre d'antan, l'autre d'antan,  
Je n'eus ne bon jour ne bon an,  
Tant de mal enuy amassa.  
L'aultre d'antan . . .

#### **JE N'AY DUEIL**

Je n'ay dueil que je ne suis morte;  
Ne doyje pas vouloir morir?  
Dueil a mon cuer voulu saisir,  
Qui de tous biens me desconforte.

Ma doulour est plus que trop forte  
Car sans avoir aucun plaisir  
Je n'ay dueil...

Je n'ay rien qui plus me conforte.  
De oeil ne voy plus que desplaisir.  
Mort est le plus que mon desir.  
Car quelque chouse qu'on m'apporte.  
Je n'ay dueil...

#### **SALVE REGINA**

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae:  
Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.  
Ad te clamanus, 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.

*Little Snubnose, I have  
Proposed at least to try  
To obtain, however little, your grace;  
Needs be that I pass that way -  
This time I'll make the try.*

*Little Snubnose, you've put me to death.  
Robin and Marion are going to the woods to play.  
They're going off, arm in arm; they've gone to sleep.  
Little Snubnose, you've put me to death.*

*The other year, the other day, she passed by  
And, in passing, pierced me through  
With a glance forged in Milan  
That knocked me into the rear ranks  
So rude a blow she dealt me.*

*She destroyed me so thoroughly  
That she dismissed me from her troops;  
But, by God, she did her damage.  
The other year . . .*

*And then our love ended,  
For, ever since she did her dance,  
The other year, the other year,  
I've had neither good day nor good year,  
So much bad luck has piled up.  
The other year . . .*

*I am sorry only that I am not dead.  
Should I not wish to die?  
Sorrow has gripped my heart  
and bereft me of all good things.*

*My pain is more than acute,  
for, having no pleasure at all,  
I am sorry only that I am not dead...*

*Nothing can comfort me now.  
My eye sees nothing but vexation.  
Death is the greatest of my desires,  
for, whatever befalls me,  
I am sorry only that I am not dead...*

*Hail, Queen, mother of pity!  
Our life, sweetness and hope, hail!  
To thee we cry, exiles, son of Eve.  
To thee we sigh, lamenting and weeping  
in this vale of tears.  
Well then, our advocate, turn  
thy pitiful eyes upon us.  
And show us, after this exile,  
Jesus, the blessed fruit of thy womb.  
O merciful, O pious,  
O ever sweet Virgin Mary.*

## REQUIEM (MISSA PRO DEFUNCTIS)

### INTROITUS

Requiem \* aeternam 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 \* aeternam dona eis Domine:  
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

### KYRIE

Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.

### 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 singulos dies:  
ubi est Deus tuus?

### OFFERTORIUM

Domine Iesu Christe, \* Rex gloriae,  
libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum  
de manu inferni, et de profundo lacu;  
libera eas de ore leonis,  
ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant  
in obscura tenebrarum.

Sed signifer sanctus Michael  
repraesentat eas in lucem sanctam;

Quam olim Abrahae promisisti,  
et 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,  
et semini eius.

### INTROIT

*Rest eternal give them, O Lord,  
and perpetual light shine on 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 on them.*

### KYRIE

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

### 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 all 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.