

PALESTRINA: Missa Papae Marcelli / Missa Aeterna Christi Munera	8.550573
RENAISSANCE MASTERPIECES	8.550843
SALVA FESTE DIES Gregorian Chant - Female Voices	8.550712
VICTORIA: Ave Maria / Missa O magnum mysterium / Missa O quam gloriosum	
A. LOBO: Versa est in luctum	8.550575



Early Music • Alte Musik

DDD

8.553087

DUFAY

**Missa L'homme armé
Supremum est mortalibus bonum**

Oxford Camerata
Jeremy Summerly



Guillaume Dufay (c. 1400 - 1474)

Missa L'homme armé

Supremum est mortalibus bonum

If Dufay's *Missa L'homme armé* (from the 1460s) had survived anonymously, one could easily believe it to be the work of a breathtakingly ambitious young composer. On the face of it, the Mass appears to be the work of a man determined to impress, keen to show that he is never lost for ideas, that he will not borrow any convention without turning his handling of it into a commentary of some kind - in short, a man who will always go one step beyond convention. The almost over-confident message seems to be: whatever others have done, I can do it better.

Yet Dufay was not a young man when he wrote the *Missa L'homme armé*. In fact he was almost certainly in his sixties, by which time illness had already forced him to turn his mind to his imminent death and the salvation of his soul. Unlike younger composers such as Regis, Caron, and Busnois, who were struggling in low-paid and onerous choirmasterships, Dufay was a wealthy ecclesiastical dignitary at one of the most prestigious establishments in Northern France: Cambrai Cathedral. He had been a musical celebrity ever since he had written his first motets in the 1420s and produced that astonishing series of state motets in the 1430s (including *Supremum est mortalibus bonum*). These early works had evidently become something of a legend, as they were still being copied and performed thirty years after their composition.

Yet the ageing Dufay was clearly not content with his legendary status alone, nor was he particularly wedded to the older styles in which he had once proved his international leadership. In the *Missa L'homme armé* he seems intent to prove (perhaps somewhat like the serialist Stravinsky of the 1950s) that his reputation had never depended on any particular stylistic idiom, but rather on his ability to carry every idiom to a plane of unprecedented artistic perfection. That intention - for a man who had little left to prove in this world (and might

at that stage have been more concerned with his record in the next) - is no less remarkable than his undiminished artistic ability.

The *Missa L'homme armé* seems to have become a popular and successful work. It survives in four manuscripts (a large number for any 15th-century Mass), three of which were copied in Italy and one, remarkably, in Scotland, at a time when no other Continental works seem to have been appreciated in the British Isles. More importantly, in 1477 (three years after Dufay's death), the chief music theorist of the time held up the *Missa L'homme armé* as an outstanding example of the aesthetic principle of *varietas* ('to be thoroughly imitated').

That aesthetic principle may be hard for us to appreciate today, since the *Missa L'homme armé* moves entirely within the musical horizon of the 15th century, whereas the modern ear is conditioned mostly by what lay beyond that horizon. Given the astonishing range of musical styles to which we are exposed every day, Dufay's setting may strike us initially as homogeneous rather than varied, and perhaps as virtually indistinguishable from any other 15th-century Mass. It would take considerable effort to imagine the sensitive and discerning ear that would have been shaped by a lifetime spent singing, composing, and listening within the same horizon. Given the relative homogeneity of the musical idiom, variety would have been detectable in the smallest detail - the very level on which Dufay sought to impress his contemporary audience most.

Beyond that, we are heirs to a musical tradition that values unity (whether cyclic or motivic) more than variety. If modern analysis is meant to foster musical understanding (and thereby perhaps to enlighten musical experience), its very methods of reduction and distillation seem to predispose us to an understanding that is very different from that valued in the 15th century. In the *Missa L'homme armé* Dufay seems to have been concerned to create a fundamentally irreducible variety of kaleidoscopic detail in which moments are to be relished rather than eliminated in search of some deeper structure. To

be sure, there is an underlying structure to the Mass in its recurring *cantus firmus* (the well-known *L'homme armé* song which opens this disc). Yet artistically that structure neither guarantees nor explains the quality of the work. Faced with a composition that places all musical significance in the individuality of each moment, our analytical tools are powerless, yet our ears await a feast of musical delight.

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Oxford Camerata

The Oxford Camerata was formed by Jeremy Summerly in order to meet the growing demand for choral groups specializing in music from the Renaissance era. It has since expanded its repertoire to include music from the medieval period to the present day using instrumentalists where necessary. The Camerata has made several recordings for Naxos, and future plans include discs of music by Gibbons and Weelkes.

Carys-Anne Lane	Lisa Beckley
Alison Coldstream	Rebecca Outram
Deborah Mackay	Robin Blaze
Andrew Carwood	James Gilchrist
Julian Smallbones	Robert Evans
Jonathan Arnold	Michael McCarthy

Jeremy Summerly

Jeremy Summerly was a choral scholar at New College, Oxford, from where he graduated in 1982. For the next seven years he worked as a Studio Manager with BBC Radio and it was during this time that he founded the Oxford Camerata. In 1989 he left the BBC in order to join the Royal Academy of Music as a lecturer in the department of Academic Studies and in 1990 he was appointed conductor of Schola Cantorum of Oxford. He has recently signed a long-term contract with Naxos to record a variety of music with the Oxford Camerata and Schola Cantorum of Oxford.

1 L'homme armé doit on doubter. On a fait partout crier que chacun se viegne armer d'un haubregon de fer.

The armed man should be feared. Everywhere it has been decreed that everyone should arm himself with an iron coat of mail.

2 Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

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

3 Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te; benedicimus te; adoramus te; glorificamus te; gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, rex caelestis, Deus pater omnipotens, Domine fili unigenite, Jesu Christe; Domine Deus, agnus Dei, filius patris. Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis; qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram; qui sedes ad dexteram patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe, cum sancto spiritu in gloria Dei patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those of goodwill. We praise you; we bless you; we worship you; we glorify you; we give thanks to you for your great glory. Lord God, heavenly king, God the father almighty, Lord the only son, Jesus Christ; Lord God, lamb of God, son of the father. You who bear the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you who bear the sins of the world, accept our prayer; you who sit at the right hand of the father, have mercy on us. For you only are holy, you only are Lord, you only are the most high, Jesus Christ, with the holy spirit in the glory of God the father. Amen.

4 Veni Sancte Spiritus et emitte caelitus lucis tuae radium; veni pater pauperum, veni dator munerum, veni lumen cordium. Consolator optime dulcis hospes animae dulce refrigerium; in laboris requies, in aestu temperies, in fletu solatium. O lux beatissima reple cordis intima tuorum fidelium; sine tuo numine nihil est in homine, nihil est innoxium. Lava quod est sordidum, riga quod est aridum, sana quod est saucium; flecte quod est rigidum, fove quod est frigidum, rege quod est devium. De tuis fidelibus in te confidentibus sacrum septenarium; da virtutis meritum, da salutis exitum, da perenne gaudium.

Come, Holy Spirit, and send the ray of your light out from heaven; come, father of the poor, come giver of favours, come light of our hearts. Utter consolation, sweet host, sweet respite for the soul; in labour rest, in the heat mildness, in grief solace. O most blessed light, fill the innermost regions of the hearts of your faithful; without your power man is as nothing, nothing is good. Cleanse that which is unclean, water that which is parched, heal that which is wounded; bend that which is rigid, warm that which is cold, correct that which is perverse. You are a seven-fold sacrifice for the faithful who trust in you; grant virtue its reward, grant salvation its conclusion, grant never-ending joy.

5 Credo in unum Deum, patrem omnipotentem, factorem caeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium; et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula. Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero; genitum non factum, consubstantialem patri, per quem omnia facta sunt; qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis. Et incarnatus est de spiritu sancto ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato; passus et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die secundum scripturas; et ascendit in caelum, sedet ad dexteram patris; et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos, cuius regni non erit finis. Et in spiritum sanctum Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex patre filioque procedit; qui cum patre et filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur, qui locutus est per prophetas. Et

unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum, et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

I believe in one God, the father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, in all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, only son of God, and born of the Father eternally. God of God, light of light, true God of true God; begotten not made, of one substance with the father by whom all things were made; he who for mankind and for our salvation descended from heaven. And was incarnate by the holy spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified even for us under Pontius Pilate; he died and was buried. and he rose again on the third day according to the scriptures; and ascended into heaven, seated at the right hand of the father; and again he will come with glory to judge the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the holy spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the father and the son; who with the father and the son is likewise worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

[6] Jubilate Deo universa terra; jubilate Deo universa terra, psalmum dicite nprmini eius. Venite et audite et narrabo vobis omnes qui timetis Deum quanta fecit Dominus animae meae, alleluia.

Praise God, all the earth; praise God all the earth, and utter a song of his name. Come and listen, and I shall tell all you who fear God how much the Lord has done for my soul, hallelujah.

[7] Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth; pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Osanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Osanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

[8] Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi; miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi; miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi; dona nobis pacem.

O lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world; have mercy on us. O lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world; have mercy on us. O lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world; grant us peace.

[9] Illumina faciem tuam super servum tuum, et salvum me fac in tua misericordia, Domine, non confundar quoniam invocavi te.

Make your face shine on your servant, and make me secure in your mercy, O Lord, so that I may not be confounded since I have called on you.

[10] Supremum est mortalibus bonum pax optimum summi Dei donum. Pace vero legum praestantia viget atque recti constantia. Pace dies solutus et laetus, nocte somnus trahitur quietus. Pax docuit virginem ornare auro comam crinesque nodare. Pace rivi psallentes et aves, patent laeti collesque suaves; pace dives pervadit viator, tutus arva incoluit arator. O sancta pax, diu expectata mortalibus tam dulcis tam grata, sis aeterna firma sine fraude, Fidem tecum semper esse gaude, et qui nobis, O pax, te dedere. Possideant regnum sine fine sit noster hic pontifex aeternus - isti sunt due olive - Eugenius et Rex Sigismundus. Amen.

Peace is the supreme good of mankind, the greatest gift of God most high. In a time of true peace the excellence of law and the constancy of justice flourish. In peacetime day passes in joy, and night in calm sleep. Peace allows a maiden to adorn her locks with gold and to plait her hair. In peacetime the streams and birds sing in praise, and fertile hills lie open; in peacetime the prosperous traveller moves safely, and the ploughman dwells securely on the land. O holy peace, so long-awaited and so sweet and pleasant to mankind. May you remain steadfast and eternally without deceit. Rejoice that faith is always with you, and may those who granted you to us, O peace, reign for ever. Let them be pontiff and monarch for ever they are two olive branches - Pope Eugenius and King Sigismund. Amen.

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DUFAY: Missa L'homme armé

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Guillaume
DUFAY

(c. 1400 - 1474)

Missa L'homme armé
Supremum est mortalibus bonum

Oxford Camerata
Jeremy Summerly

DDD

Playing
Time:
60'01''

- | | | | |
|---|---------|---|---------|
| 1 L'homme armé
(Anonymous) | (0:43) | 6 Jubilate Deo
(Mode 1) | (3:15) |
| 2 Kyrie
(Missa L'homme armé)
(Dufay) | (4:56) | 7 Sanctus
(Missa L'homme armé)
(Dufay) | (10:09) |
| 3 Gloria
(Missa L'homme armé)
(Dufay) | (8:56) | 8 Agnus Dei
(Missa L'homme armé)
(Dufay) | (8:23) |
| 4 Veni Sancte Spiritus
(Mode 1) | (2:22) | 9 Illumina faciem tuam
(Mode 1) | (1:03) |
| 5 Credo
(Missa L'homme armé)
(Dufay) | (12:47) | 10 Supremum est
mortalibus bonum
(Dufay) | (7:27) |

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