

GUILLAUME DE MACHAUT

ARS ANTIQUA DE PARIS



LA MESSE NOSTRE-DAME
L'AMOUR COURTOIS

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LA MESSE NOSTRE-DAME - L'AMOUR COURTOIS
ARS ANTIQUA DE PARIS
DIRECTED BY MICHEL SANVOISIN

Joseph Sage, *countertenor* Hugues Primard, *tenor* Pierre Eyssartier, *tenor*
Marc Guillard, *baritone* Michel Sanvoisin, *recorders* Philippe Matharel, *tenor*
Raymond Cousté, *lute* Colette Lequien, *vièle* Marie Jeanne Serero, *organ*

La Messe Nostre-Dame

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|--|-------|
| 1. Kyrie I, Christe, Kyrie II, Kyrie III | 06:52 |
| 2. Gloria | 05:12 |
| 3. Credo | 06:44 |
| 4. Sanctus | 04:35 |
| 5. Agnus Dei | 03:29 |
| 6. Gratias | 01:44 |

L'Amour Courtois

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| 7. De Toutes Flours (<i>organ, vièle</i>) | 03:31 |
| 8. Quant Theseus (<i>two tenors, vièle, organ, lute</i>) | 04:44 |
| 9. Plus Dure Que Un Dyamant (<i>lute</i>) | 01:59 |
| 10. Ma Fin Est Mon Commencement (<i>countertenor, recorder, lute</i>) | 06:14 |
| 11. Hoquet David (<i>vièle, organ, lute</i>) | 02:16 |
| 12. Douce Dame Jolie (<i>countertenor</i>) | 03:54 |
| 13. Ce Qui Soutient Moy (<i>recorder, lute</i>) | 01:29 |
| 14. Rose, Liz (<i>tenor, baritone, organ, vièle, cornet, lute</i>) | 04:16 |
| 15. Dame, Ne Regardes Pas (<i>recorder, vièle</i>) | 01:51 |
| 16. Ma Chiere Dame (<i>countertenor, recorder, vièle, lute</i>) | 01:46 |
| 17. Dame, Se Vous M'estes Lonteinne (<i>baritone, organ, vièle, cornet</i>) | 02:55 |
| 18. Trop Plus Est Belle (<i>vocal and instrumental ensemble</i>) | 02:59 |

TOTAL PLAYING TIME 68:14

Recorded at Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, Venice 1990

Recording Engineers: Silvia and Giovanni Melloncelli

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LA MESSE NOSTRE-DAME - L'AMOUR COURTOIS

Born in Champagne about 1300, Guillaume de Machaut travelled around Europe as secretary to John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia. On the King's death at the Battle of Cressy in 1346, Machaut went into the service of the Duchess of Normandy, and on her death in 1349 into that of Charles, King of Navarre, before ending up in the court of Charles V. Machaut became canon of Rheims Cathedral, and died in 1377. A poet and composer, he experimented with all manner of musical forms including *lais*, *ballades*, *chantées*, *rondeaux*, *virelais*, *motets*, *masses* and *hockets*.

Guillaume de Machaut's 'Messe' is considered to be one of the most exceptional works of Medieval music. At the beginning of the fourteenth century it was normal for various pieces from different sources to be brought together to make up a complete mass (e.g. the 'Tournai Mass'). 'La Messe Nostre-Dame' was the earliest polyphonic mass setting by a single composer. It was also the first complete mass, in the sense that the entire Ordinary was put to music - an accomplishment that remained unrepeatable until the appearance of masses by Arnold de Lantins and Guillaume Dufay around 1430.

'Nostre-Dame', which is probably a votive mass, is divided into six sections. The Kyrie is composed in *motet* style, but the four voices use the same text. The Gloria and Credo do not contain liturgical *cantus firmus* and are written in the style of a polyphonic *conductus* whose parts move in the same rhythm. As in the Kyrie, Sanctus, Agnus Dei and *Ite Missa est*, the third voice, or *tenor*, is a fragmented liturgical *cantus firmus* deriving from Gregorian chant.

The notation technique makes use of the *hocket* device, which was already used in the thirteenth century. A *hocket* consists of phrases broken up by rests in such a way that when one part is silent another fills the gap.

The isorhythmic structures, on the other hand, are sequences that are

identical in rhythm but different in melody. Unity is produced by the return of the rhythmic cells. Harmonic cadences *à double sensible* are characteristic of *Ars Nova*. In contrast with polyphony, long chords stress the words *Jhesu Christe and Ex Maria virgine*.

The 'Mass' appears in five undated manuscripts, which vary as to alterations, ligatures, rests and the placement of words under the notes. The title 'Nostre-Dame' appears on only one of the manuscripts. Even if the mass was not commissioned for the anointment of Charles V, it is thought to have been composed around 1364.

The *hocket*, a fundamental structure in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, is built around a tenor in such a way that when one voice is silent, another sings. If we take the 'Alleluja-Nativitas' by Perotinus Magnus, for example, the tenor is isorhythmic and the two higher voices in *hocket*.

'Trop plus est belle', motet.

Triplum: Trop plus est belle

Motetuts: Biaute paree de valour

Tenor: Je ne sui mie certains d'avoir amie

Here the *triplum* and *motetus* are in octosyllabic verse followed by the word 'amen', while the tenor ends with the word 'amis'. Guillaume de Machaut sometimes copied the thirteenth-century trend to base motets on *rondeaux* and *virelais*.

The *virelai*, with its refrain before and after each verse, is a song designed to accompany dances. In a large number of monodic *virelais* there are very few melismas and vocalises.

'Douce dame jolie' is a virtually syllabic, monodic *virelai*.

'Plus dure que un dyamant', for two voices, includes two or three-note melismas, but no vocalises. The tenor line is sober and often contains a single note per bar.



The *rondeaux* by Gervais du Bus, Jeannot Lescurel and Adam de la Halle came before those of Guillaume de Machaut, who adapted them to his own genius. 'Rose, liz' is for four voices, two of them singing parts, with long vocalises. The words of the refrain are as follows:

- a: Rosem liz, printemps, verdure
- b: Fleur, baume et tres douce odour
- c: Belle passes en doucour

'Ce qui soutient moy' is a *rondeau* of eight decasyllabic lines very elaborate themes and rhythms.

'Ma fin est mon commencement' for three voices, is a canon *cancrizans*, which means it proceeds by retrograde motion. This type of canon uses *crab-wise* counterpoint: the higher voice moves backwards, while the tenor goes forward. The two halves of the countertenor rigorously symmetrical in respect to the central double bar, are identical to its retrograde motion.

Guillaume de Machaut wrote forty-two ballades *chantées*. Written for two, three or four voices, without cantus *firmus* and free form all constraint, they are Machaut's most refined form. He seems to have been the inventor of the double and *triple ballade*, where he adopts the same technique as for his motets: he has two or three voices singing the two or three stanzas of the ballade at the same time, while each stanza ends with the same refrain line.

'Dame ne regardes pas', for two voices, is taken from the 'Louange des Dames'. The very ornate melody is based on the *dotted crotchet-quaver-crotchet* rhythm. The tenor is often reduced to one dotted minim per bar.

'De toutes fleurs' is for four voices in two manuscripts. The version for organ is from the beginning of the fifteenth century.

'Quant Theseus', Hercules et Jazon / Ne quier veoir la biaute d'Absalon'. This double *ballade* is one of Machaut's best-known works. Each ballade contains

three eight-line stanzas. The refrain is the same in the two poems.

'Ma chiere dame' is without vocalises, and it has the musical but not poetic structure of a ballade.

'Dame se vous m'estes lonteinne' is a monadic ballade with three stanzas of seven octosyllabic lines including the refrain.

A craftsman of 'ancient and modern invention', Guillaume de Machaut wrote in his 'Prologue':

And Music is a science
That wills us to love, sing and dance
That care not for melancholy...
...She forges all manner of carols
For villagers, towns and schools.

ARS ANTIQUA DE PARIS

Joseph Sage (countertenor) has a vocal range of more than three octaves, giving him access to an exceedingly large repertoire, from the earliest polyphonic works to contemporary music.

Hugues Primard (tenor) gained a diploma in solfeggio and in saxophone, after graduating in musicology from the University of Tours. He uses his 'falsetto' in many works from the Renaissance, a period which interests him greatly.

Piere Eyssartier (tenor) studied piano, analysis and history of music before continuing his career as a voice instructor, choral director and opera singer. His repertoire ranges from sacred medieval monodical drama to contemporary music.

Marc Guillard (baritone) after studying musical writing, piano and trumpet, at the Conservatory in Nantes, he graduated in musicology from the Sorbonne. At the same time he studied singing, winning 1st prize at the 'Institut de Développement de l'Expression Vocale' in Paris in 1988.

Michel Sanvoisin (recorders), has published works for this instrument, as well as many early scores including Gabrieli's Canzoni and Gastoldi's Balletti. He recorded Vivaldi's Concerto for flautino and orchestra, and Telemann's Suite in A minor. M. Sanvoisin is responsible for the restauration of most of the works included in the Ars Antiqua de Paris' repertory.

Philippe Matharel (cornet) discovered a love for the cornet at the age of 25 and devoted himself studying this instrument. In 1974 he gave his first concerts and made his first recordings with the Ars Antiqua de Paris ensemble. In 1976 he was of the founders of 'Les saqueboutiers de Toulouse' and he started the Early Music course at Toulouse Conservatory.

Raymond Cousté (lute), studied in France at the Conservatory of Paris under Alexandre Lagoya, as well as in Spain under José Tomas and Andrés Segovia in Santiago de

Compostela. Playing only 20th century music on the guitar, he uses Renaissance and baroque lutes for the interpretation of early music, as a soloist and as a member of Ars Antiqua de Paris.

Colette Lequiene (vièle) was awarded 1st prize for viola, harmony and Chamber Music at the National Conservatory in Paris. She regularly gives concerts and goes on tour in France and all over the world, playing both the 'vièle' and the viola. She also teaches viola at the National Conservatory in Paris.

Marie Jeanne Serero (organ) studied at the National Conservatory in Paris where she won 1st prize for harmony, specialized solfeggio and counterpoint.

The ensemble Ars Antiqua de Paris, formed in 1965, performs in the most important festivals, and regularly tours in Europe, America and the Far East.





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