

## REQUIEM PARA CERVANTES

Mateo Romero  
Missa pro Defunctis

La Grande Chapelle  
Schola Antiqua  
Àngel Recasens



## REQUIEM FOR CERVANTES

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Missa pro Defunctis

La Grande Chapelle

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MATEO ROMERO (ca. 1575-1647): *Domine, ne in furore tuo,  
Domine, quando veneris, Missa pro Defunctis*

Pedro Ruimonte: *Qui Lazarum resuscitasti, Ne recorderis peccata  
mea, Libera me, Domine, De profundis clamavi ad te*

Sebastián López de Velasco: *Tota pulchra es amica mea*

Plainsong: *Convertere Domine, Manus tuae fecerunt me, Requiem  
aeternam, Absolve, Domine, Lux aeterna*

**World Premiere Recording**

The commemoration of the fourth centenary of the publication of *Don Quixote* in 2005 was the best occasion to pay homage, not only to the great genius of Spanish literature, Miguel de Cervantes, but to other leading artistic and cultural figures of the Golden Age. Mateo Romero (ca. 1575-1647), music master of the Chapel Royal from 1598 to 1633 (during the reigns of Philip III and Philip IV) was the most important composer at the Spanish court around 1616, the year of Cervantes's death.

The rediscovery of his eight-part *Missa pro Defunctis* is doubly interesting. Firstly, because it constitutes the first recording of one of the most popular works at the beginning of the seventeenth century. And secondly, it reclaims one of the greatest composers of the Spanish Baroque.

The so-called "Maestro Capitán" excelled at polyphonic writing for two choirs (*stile moderno*), which was very fashionable at the main musical centres in Europe and especially at St Mark's Basilica in Venice. The Requiem for two choirs is one of Romero's best works. It is very solid and the vocal writing is impeccable.

With the collaboration of the musicologist and performer Juan Carlos Asensio, the program reconstructs a Mass for the Dead from the period, with the characteristic alternation of polyphonic works and plainchant, the latter taken from the El Escorial chant books from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Matins responsories from the Office for the Dead complete the program, which were sung during absolutions at the time, and the magnificent psalm *De profundis*, which the priests recited or intoned while the procession to the *depositio* or tomb of the deceased took place. Some of these responsories were composed by another of Cervantes's contemporaries, the Zaragozaan Pedro Ruimonte (1565-1627), who was none other than chapel master to the Governor of the Low Countries, the Archduke Albert. His mournful works (in the *Missae sex*) were published in Antwerp in 1614.

This recording of the "Requiem for Cervantes" is, thus, of prime importance in that it rediscovers some of the most outstanding works composed in Spain at the beginning of the seventeenth century and sets them in their original liturgical context.