

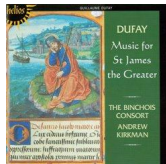
## Dufay - Music for St. James the Greater (1998)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 01 February 2017 16:23 -

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Mass for Saint James the Greater 1 *Introit* 4:28 2 *Kyrie* 5:26 3 *Gloria* 4:48 4  
*Alleluia* 5:20 5 *Credo* 8:40 6 *Offertory* 3:41 7 *Sanctus* 4:16 8 *Agnus Dei*  
2:42 9 *Communio* 1:55 10 *Motet Rite Majorem Jacobum Canamus / Arcibus*  
*Summis Miseri Reclusi* 4:22 11 *Motet Balsamus et Munda Cera* 4:34 12 *Gloria*  
5:52 13 *Credo* 6:52 14 *Motet Apostolo Glorioso* 3:47

Alto Vocals I – David Gould (5), Mark Chambers (3) Alto Vocals II – Fergus McLusky, Robin Tyson Tenor Vocals I – Chris Watson, James Gilchrist Tenor Vocals II – Andrew Carwood, Edwin Simpson The Binchois Consort Andrew Kirkman - Chorus Master Recorded in Rickmansworth Masonic School Chapel on 16-18 July 1997.

The centerpiece of this Binchois Consort disc for Hyperion is Guillaume Dufay's enormous *Missa Sancta Jacobi* (or Mass of St. James the Greater) heard here in the nine-movement version from Bologna manuscript Q15 in a performance lasting 41 minutes. Dufay's music for St. James comes from early in his career, and chronologically this disc runs from the *Gloria/Credo* pair (1426) to the motet *Balsamus et munda cera* (1431), written in honor of St. Andrew, with the mass setting falling in between (1427). *Balsamus et munda cera* was performed on April 7, 1431, and Joan of Arc was burned at the stake on May 30, so that gives you an idea of the immensely distant historical context under discussion. These years often found Dufay in Northern Italy, and the mass may have been written for Bishop Pietro Emiliani of Vicenza, who served as patron to a number of other important composers of the day.

The other pieces serve to illuminate and illustrate the larger work they are coupled with; one may require repeated hearings of this disc before one truly gets a handle on Dufay's flowing, constantly busy contrapuntal texture. These pieces are monuments of the early Renaissance, and Binchois Consort brings out the almost symphonic texture of Dufay's music. For listeners well attuned to the *ars nova* in need of a grip on what distinguishes it from slightly more progressive trends, Andrew Kirkman and Binchois Consort's *Dufay: Music for St. James the Greater* is just about the "perfect" answer to such a question. --- Uncle Dave Lewis, AllMusic

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Review

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