

L'homme, l'homme, l'homme ar - mé, l'homme ar - mé,
 l'homme ar - mé doit on dou - ter, doit on dou - ter?
 On a fait par - tout cri - er, que chac - un se
 viegne ar - mer d'un hau - bre - gon de fer.
 L'homme, l'homme, l'homme ar - mé, l'homme ar -
 mé, l'homme ar - mé doit on dou - ter,

"*L'homme armé*" must have been a most popular song, a veritable song hit of the 15th century, since the composers of the Renaissance made use of its tune in their works as a *cantus firmus* in the Netherlands, in France and in Italy, alike. The most distinguished names of those times can be found among these composers, among others Dufay, Ockeghem, Obrecht, Des Prés and Palestrina. It was not only the popularity of the tune which attracted the composers, but rather its striking simplicity and well-balanced melodic line.

The exact origin of Ockeghem's (approx. 1420-1495) "*L'homme armé*" Mass is not known; musicological research does not exclude the possibility of its having preceded Dufay's Mass composed on the same tune.

The characteristic peculiarities proper to the style of the great Flemish master also prevail in this grandiose work: the soaring continuity of melodies and harmonies passing over cadences, the colourfulness of his choral writing; for instance, in the alternative use of two, three and four voices in the Sanctus and Agnus; as well as the growing animation at the end of the movements.

The present edition has been based on the critical edition of *Publikationen älterer Musik* (Leipzig, 1927). The compass of the original parts exceeds by far the abilities of present-day choral voices; in order to enable modern mixed choirs to sing the Mass, the four voices have been allotted to six, by which arrangement we have succeeded in retaining the original version of the Mass, note for note.

Notation has also been adapted to modern requirements: note values have been shortened by halves as compared with the original, (i.e. ♩ = ♪), accordingly $\text{O} = \frac{3}{2}$, $\text{C} = \frac{4}{4}$. Barlines have been introduced to facilitate reading and performance. Supplementary accidentals have been kept down to the minimum. Broad melismatic solutions have been given preference in underlaying the words as against repetition of syllables; the requirements of modern prosody have been given due consideration, together with those of intonation and content of the text.

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