

The Requiem of Tomás Luis de Victoria (1603)

Victoria's Requiem is among the best-loved and most-performed musical works of the Renaissance, and is often held to be 'a Requiem for an age', representing the summation of golden-age Spanish polyphony. Yet it has been the focus of surprisingly little research. Owen Rees's multifaceted study brings together the historical and ritual contexts for the work's genesis, the first detailed musical analysis of the Requiem itself, and the long story of its circulation and reception. Victoria composed this music in 1603 for the exequies of María of Austria, and oversaw its publication two years later. A rich variety of contemporary documentation allows these events – and the nature of music in Habsburg exequies – to be reconstructed vividly. Rees then locates Victoria's music within the context of a vast international repertory of Requiems, much of it previously unstudied, and identifies the techniques which render this work so powerfully distinctive and coherent.

Owen Rees is Professor of Music at the University of Oxford, and Fellow in Music at The Queen's College, Oxford. He specialises in Spanish and Portuguese sacred music of the 'golden age' and has published on the principal composers of the period – Morales, Guerrero, and Victoria – and on numerous other repertories, genres, and sources from the Iberian Peninsula.

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Author's Note

Victoria's first name was 'Thome': he gave it thus when signing correspondence, and it appears in this form (or with the spelling 'Tome') in other documents concerning the composer in Castilian. In modern accounts, of course, his first name is given as 'Tomás', as it is (for ease of recognition) in the title of this book. Most of the letters bearing his signature which have so far been discovered are reproduced in Alfonso de Vicente, *Tomás Luis de Victoria: Cartas (1582–1606)* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 2008).

Note on the Abbreviations

Notated pitches are designated using the Helmholtz system, whereby c' denotes middle C, c the note an octave below middle C, and c'' the note an octave above middle C. Pitch classes are given in upper-case Roman letters. Clefs are designated using a subscript numeral to indicate the staff-line on which the clef is located, such that g_2 , for example, denotes a G clef on the second staff-line from the bottom.

For printed musical sources of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the sigla employed are those of the *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*, where such a siglum exists for a given book.