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PAPER TITLE:

“The Anonymous 8-Voice *Missa Miserere mihi* in the Alamire Manuscripts: Contextual and Stylistic Considerations”

ABSTRACT:

The *Missa Miserere mihi* is an anonymous mass composed for eight voice parts preserved in Munich 6, one in the series of the famous codices from the Alamire Workshops of Mechelen and Brussels. It takes pride of place in a manuscript intended for the Munich court chapel of Duke Wilhelm IV, Duke of Bavaria dating from the early 1520s. The opening folios of the Kyrie eleison include the coat of arms of the Bavarian dukes. Other masses in this manuscript choirbook are by Antonius Divitis, Noel Bauldeweyn, Jheronimus Vinders and Nicholas Champion. The mass is made up of differing types of textures, with the sonority sometimes expanding up to thirteen voice parts at cadence points. The contrapuntal fabric is both imitative and non-imitative, and also includes homophonic passages to accompany important phrases in the mass text. The circumstances of the composition of this mass are not yet certain. However, it is interesting to note that the Munich chapel had a taste for such large-scale works: among the choirbooks is a copy of Brumel’s famous ‘Earthquake mass’, the twelve-voice *Missa et ecce terra mortus*, which in many ways may be regarded as a predecessor of the *Miserere mihi* mass. Brumel’s mass was still used at the Munich court during the time of the chapelmastership of Orlando Lassus during the second half of the sixteenth century.