

Collegium Vocale Gent Releases Recording of Luis de Victoria's OFFICIUM DEFUNCTORUM, 8/14

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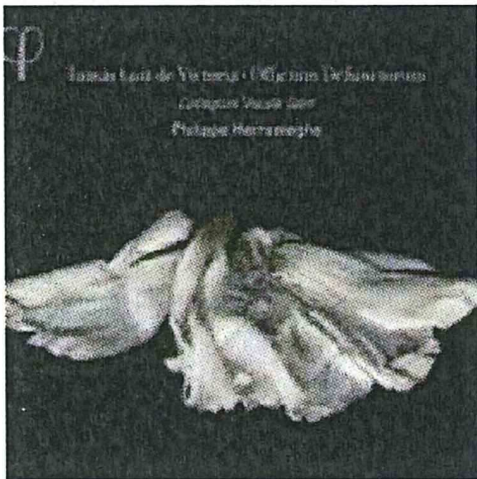
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Collegium Vocale Gent and conductor Philippe Herreweghe present a rare masterpiece from Spain in a heavenly new recording to be released on August 14, 2012, of Tomás Luis de Victoria's *Officium Defunctorum*, a work published in Madrid in 1605. In this requiem—written for the funeral of Maria of Austria, daughter of Emperor Charles V—the composer reached a mystical intensity of expression.

Founded more than 40 years ago by Herreweghe, the crystal-clear Belgium ensemble now records for the conductor's PHI label, available from Allegro Classical. Collegium Vocale Gent's distinguished discography includes more than eighty recordings,

largely of historical performances of vocal Renaissance and Baroque music.

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 – 1611), also an accomplished organist and singer, was the most famous composer of 16th-Century Spain and one of the most important composers of the Counter-Reformation. Devoted exclusively to sacred music, he is sometimes known as the "Spanish Palestrina" as he may have been this composer's student. Victoria's music expresses the passion of Spanish mysticism and religion; many hear in his music a mystical intensity and direct emotional appeal. Herreweghe considers Victoria "one of the greatest musical minds ever," placing him among composers "who know how to build entire worlds with sounds, recognizable from the first notes, profound and full of richness." In addition to *Officium Defunctorum*, Victoria's best-known work, the recording features four motets.

Founded in 1970 by a group of friends studying at the University of Ghent, Collegium Vocale Gent was among the first ensembles to use new ideas about Baroque performance practice in vocal music. Their authentic, text-oriented and rhetorical approach gave the ensemble the transparent sound with which it would acquire world-wide acclaim through performances at the major concert venues and music festivals of Europe, Israel, the United States, Russia, South America, Japan, Hong Kong and Australia.

This December, the ensemble will perform Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* in Montreal (December 12 & 13), Toronto (December 14), and New York's Lincoln Center (December 15). For more details, see www.collegiumvocale.com.