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## DASER Polyphonic Masses

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Author: Edward Breen

Poor Ludwig Daser (c1525-1589). If you've heard anything about him it was probably that he once retired as Kapellmeister to the Catholic Court at Munich to make way for Lassus, or that he had a brush with the Inquisition. Less well known is that he was both pupil and successor of Senfl and knew Cipriano de Rore. Daser contributed to 'a high point of German polyphony', as Paul Van Nevel puts it; and the two Masses recorded here – the six-part *Missa Praeter rerum seriem* and four-part *Missa Fors seulement* – date from his Munich period. The Huelgas Ensemble already plan to record more from his later years as Kapellmeister in Württemberg.

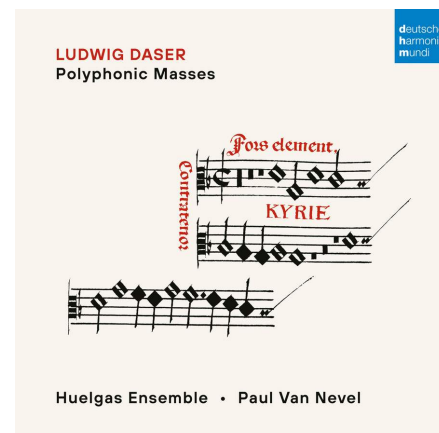
*Missa Praeter rerum seriem* is a parody Mass based on Josquin's motet, which in turn incorporates the Gregorian chant. It's a tuneful and intricate setting, comparing favourably to Rore's more famous Mass. The Huelgas Ensemble use two or more voices per part in accordance with the size of Daser's own court chapel choir and this larger ensemble creates a rich, well-balanced sound which at times I found attractively wistful. Occasionally I'd favour a more prominent top line but their blend and homogeneity pay dividends in the long run.

In the *Kyrie* Van Nevel appears to enjoy the interplay between the insistent repeated notes of the chant and Daser's tuneful imitative polyphony but it is the *Credo* that is most exciting, with a vivid depiction of Christ's descent and a truly splendid setting of 'et homo factus est'. There appears to be an odd edit at 'Crucifixus' – a fleeting moment of unsettled intonation.

*Missa Fors seulement* is an altogether different beast. Drawing on a popular chanson, it's direct, unpretentious and full of confident homophony and sonorous lower-voice textures. This is a brassy, sumptuous performance. I'm already looking forward to the next volume.

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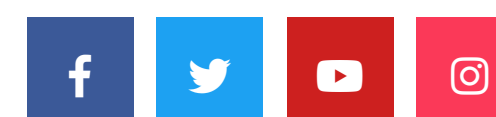
### DASER Polyphonic Masses

Missa Praeter rerum seriem à 6

Missa Fors seulement à 4

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