

# LES ENLUMINURES

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**HENRI DUMONT, *Messes Royales***

**In Latin and French, decorated stenciled book on paper**

**France, Auvergne(?), eighteenth century (after 1767)**

*i* (contemporary paper) + 27 + *i* (contemporary paper) folios on paper, two watermarks: grapes and the name of a paper maker: "A (star) Co...?", similar to Churchill 478 (Auvergne, 1762), original pagination in black ink, 1-50 (no pagination on title page, between pp. 10 and 11, and on two leaves between pp. 25 and 26), complete (collation *i*<sup>2</sup> *ii-iii*<sup>10</sup> *iv*<sup>5</sup>), ruled in hard point (justification 370 x 239 mm.), stenciled in black and red inks on 7 lines of text and 7 staves of music per page, music in square notes in black on four-line staves in red, rastrum 26 mm., capitals and rubrics in red, initials and titles decorated with floral patterns enhanced with touches of yellow and green paint on pp. 1, 9, 10 (including fleurs de lis, p. 35), some initials stenciled on paper and pasted into the volume, some leaves partly loose from the binding structure, a small tear in the lower outer margin of p. 29, minor stains and signs of use, otherwise in very good condition. In contemporary binding of vellum over pasteboards, spine flat, inscribed in black ink in a later hand "Missa Regia H. D. Dumon", stained, two pairs of ties lost, but in overall good condition. Dimensions 439 x 286 mm.

Stenciled books are a special category in the post-Gutenberg era, neither printed with movable type nor written by hand; instead, they are produced with the mechanical aid of stencils, a device for mechanically applying designs and letters to a surface. This handsome stenciled book contains the popular royal masses composed by the noted Baroque composer Henry Dumont, whose work is still performed today. The fact that these compositions were available in at least four different print editions when the present book was made underscores the phenomenon of stenciling as a virtuoso exercise that sometimes – as is the case here – offered an opportunity to customize further a work.

## PROVENANCE

1. The manuscript was made for a monastery of the Order of the Visitation in the eighteenth century, after 1767, as indicated by the inclusion of the feast of Saint Jeanne de Chantal, founder of the Order of the Visitation with François de Sales, who was canonized in 1767 (ff. 46-50). The watermark suggests that it was made in the Auvergne (Churchill 1935, no. 478; see also nos. 2088-2432 in Heawood, 1950).
2. A geographic list written in French in brown ink in a small eighteenth-century (?) hand on the back pastedown: "1. islande 2. angleterre 3. europe 4. italie 5. espagne 6. cantal."
3. A modern ownership inscription "A Hays" in dark brown ink on pp. 1 and 31.

## TEXT

pp. 1-10, *Missa Regia D. H. Dumon. Primi toni*, incipit, "Kyrie eleison... dona nobis pacem";

[Unnumbered titlepage]- p. 20, *Messe du Second ton composée par Mr. H. Dumont*; [titlepage, verso blank]; *Messe du second ton de M. H. Dumont*, incipit, "Kyrie eleison... dona nobis pacem. FINIS";

pp. 21-31, [title page], *Messe du cinquième ton composée par Monsieur H. Dumont*, [p. 22 blank]; *Messe du cinquième ton. De Mr. H. Dumont*, incipit, "Kyrie eleison...dona nobis pacem"; [p. 32, blank];

pp. 33-45, [title page], *Messe du sixième ton composée par Monsieur H. Dumont*, [p. 34 blank]; *Messe du sixième de Mr. H. Dumont*, incipit, "Kyrie eleison...dona nobis pacem";

pp. 46-50, *In Festo sanctae Joannae Franciscæ Fremiot de Chantal ordinis sanctimonialium visitationis S. Mariae fundatricis In Utrisque Vesperis. Ant.*, incipit, "Dum esset Rex in accubitu suo... Cant. Magnificat. I."

Henri Dumont, *Cinq Messes en plein-chant musical, appelées messes royales*. First printed in Paris by Robert Ballard in 1669 as *Cinq Messes en plain-chant composées et dédiées aux Révérends Pères de la Mercy, du couvent de Paris*; modern edition by Amédée Gastoué, 1909. For the most recent study on Dumont's royal masses, see the article published by Jean-Yves Hameline in 1997.

Henri Dumont (or Du Mont) (1610-1683) was a Walloon composer of Baroque music, whose career took place essentially in Paris. He was born Henry de Thier in the Southern Netherlands in 1610, and studied music in Maastricht and Liège, before moving to Paris in 1639. In Paris he translated his name Thier ("hill" in Walloon) to French, "Mont." He was organist at the important parish church of Saint-Paul of Paris, and from 1652 worked as harpsichordist at the court of the Duke of Anjou, and from 1660 for Queen Marie-Thérèse. Once in the royal service, Dumont's career was marked by considerable success. In 1663, he was named one of the masters of the Chapelle Royale in Versailles, in 1672, *Sous-maître de la musique du Roy*, and in 1673, *Maître de musique de la Reine*. He died in 1683.

In his compositions, Dumont contributed to the renewal of sacred music, introducing Italian practices, which in his native Flanders had already been widely adopted in churches. The first edition of the five plainchant masses included in our manuscript was printed during Dumont's lifetime in 1669. Its considerable success is demonstrated by the quick reprinting of the work in four further editions in 1678, 1685, 1701, and 1711. The title of the fourth edition includes the term royal masses, "Messes royales," recurring in this manuscript as "Missa Regia" (Online Resources). In addition to the printed editions, numerous manuscript copies of the work survive from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ("Henry Du Mont," Online Resources). Dumont's works influenced his contemporary composers and followers and extended far into the future. His royal masses were widely sung in French parishes until the Second Vatican Council in the mid-twentieth century and are still found in the repertoire of churches that follow traditional liturgy.

At first glance, this volume appears to be a manuscript. The script, however, although it is clearly not produced by type face, is also not written by hand, and it was in fact produced by a stencil. The stenciled letters can be recognized by the small breaks in the body of the letter (stencil-templates must avoid contiguous shapes that would cause them to fall apart). Stenciled manuscripts are curious hybrids. They are unique items, like handwritten manuscripts, but were produced with a mechanical aid, and in that sense are more like printed books. Stenciled liturgical books, many large Choir Books with musical notation, often made in monastic settings, are known from the mid-seventeenth century until the latter decades of the nineteenth century, and in some cases later. This practice probably began in France, where it flourished for centuries (Constantinou, 2021; Kindel, 2013; François, 2010; O'Meara, 1933), and then spread

through Catholic western and southern Europe, including the Low Countries, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, and possibly even Mexico. One example has been identified in England (we thank Mr. Eric Kindel for sharing his research, in correspondence, 2012).

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#### ONLINE RESOURCES

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<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b9059803g.image>

Henry Du Mont (Wikipedia)

[https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\\_Du\\_Mont](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Du_Mont)

Eric Kindel, Reading University, numerous publications related to stenciled books  
<https://www.reading.ac.uk/typography/staff/professor-eric-kindel>

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