

Echoes

Viderunt omnes – Pérotin
Shiroi Ishi – Ken Ueno
Oi Dex! Quam brevis – St Martial Ms
Ergone conticuit – Johannes Lupi?
La voce delle creature – Luca Belcastro

Interval

Tu solus qui facis mirabilia – Josquin Desprez
Wreath of stone – Jonathan Wild
Se je fayz dueil – le Rouge
Prima mundi – St Martial Ms
Cathedral in the thrashing rain – Stephen Hartke

Almost exactly eight hundred years separate Pérotin's *Viderunt omnes* and Stephen Hartke's *Cathedral in the thrashing rain* but they have a common link in the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris, or rather the present cathedral and the church which stood on the same spot at the end of the 12th century. In Hartke's setting of Takamura Kotaro's poem in praise of Notre Dame we can also hear echoes of the rhythmic modes employed in Pérotin's imposing setting of the Gradual for Christmas day. Hartke sets an English translation of the poem but quotes several lines in the original Japanese.

Ken Ueno's *Shiroi Ishi*, on the other hand, is entirely in Japanese. Ueno, who wrote both music and words, tells us that the first syllable "SHI" of the word "shiro" (white) has multiple meanings: Four – for the number of performers; Death; Poetry. This work and Jonathan Wild's *Wreath of Stone* were among the pieces written for us by graduate students at Harvard University in connection with The Hilliard Ensemble's residency there in early 2001.

Wreath of Stone has a connection to another great French cathedral, that of Tournon. It was there that the funeral mass for Henry IV was held following his assassination in 1610 and among the readings given in tribute was the text of this piece. The epitaph is a curiosity in itself. If read at the correct speed in the right acoustic, that of Tournon cathedral, the last syllables of each line of the Greek text will be heard as an echo but in French, forming a shorter poem, also about the death of Henry. As if this were not complex enough, the first letters of each line of the Greek spell out *Errikos Borbonis* – Henry of Bourbon, as Henry IV was also known.

Ergone conticuit, possibly by *Lupi*, is a musical epitaph on the death of the composer Ockeghem. The text, by Erasmus, which was written about ten years after Ockeghem's death also has architectural resonances in the lines "*Obmutuit vox aurea Okegi / per sacra tecta sonans.*" – "The golden voice of Ockeghem resounding through the sacred buildings has become dumb." The poet of le Rouge's *Se je fayz dueil* has a much more immediate personal involvement as he contemplates his own death as a way of dealing with the suffering he endures at the loss of his love.

Prima mundi and *Oi Dex! Quam brevis* are both from a manuscript connected with St Martial de Limoges - our third great French church. *Prima mundi* tells the story of Adam's fall, after the creation, and of mankind's redemption through God's incarnation, bringing us back to Christmas, Pérotin and *Viderunt*. *Oi Dex! Quam brevis* is a commentary on the shortness of life.

Josquin's *Tu solus qui facis mirabilia* and Luca Belcastro's *La voce delle creature* are two very different reflections on creation, Josquin's full of dogmatic confidence and Belcastro's a setting of a questioning, introspective passage from *The confessions of St Augustine*. This piece was one of the prize-winners in the Hannover Biennale 2001 at which The Hilliard Ensemble were the artists in residence.

Texts

Viderunt omnes fines terrae salutare Dei nostri: iubilare Deo omnis terra.

V. Notum fecit Dominus salutare suum: ante conspectum gentium revelavit iustitiam suam.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God: rejoice in God, all the earth.

The Lord has made his salvation known: he has revealed his justice in the sight of the gentiles.

SHIro i iSHIi

Tsukiyo no umi ni SHIzumu

Sono toki hamon wa

Nagare boSHI no kage

White stone

Sinks into a moon-lit ocean

That moment, the ripples are

like the shadows trailing a shooting star.

Oi Dex! quam brevis est vita mortalium!

Suo perit agmento.

Eam si compares adevi spacium,

Vix par est vel momento.

Ut fumus deficit, cadit ut folium,

Quod rapitur a vento.

Fili putredinis et cibus vermium,

Homo quod es, memento.

Oh God! How short is our mortal life

The whole host of mankind shall perish.

Compared to the span of the ages

Man lives for hardly a moment.

We shall vanish like a fallen leaf

Carried off by the wind.

The children of decay and the food of worms,

Remember man, this is what you are.

Ergone conticuit vox illa quondam nobilis,
aurea vox Okegi?
Sic musicae extinctum decus?
Dic age,
dic fidibus tristes Appollo Naenias.
Tu quoque, Calliope
pullata cum sororibus,
funde pias lachrymas;
lugete, quotquot musicae dulce rapit studium
virumque ferte laudibus.
Artis Appollineae sacer
ille foenix occidit.

Quid facis, invida mors?
Obmutuit vox aurea Okegi
per sacra tecta sonans.
Demulsit aures caelitem terrigenumque simul
penitusque movit pectora.
Quid facis, invida mors?
Sat erat tibi promiscue
tollere res hominum;
Divina res est musica;
numina cur violas?

*So has that voice, once noble, fallen silent,
the golden voice of Ockeghem?
Is the glory of music thus extinguished? Speak out then, Apollo,
sing to the faithful your sad dirges.
and you, Calliope,
dressed in mourning black with your sisters, pour forth pious tears;
mourn, as many of you as are seized by the sweet study of music,
and bring your praises to this man.
The high priest of the art of Apollo,
that phoenix is dead.*

*What have you done, hateful death?
The golden voice of Ockeghem
resounding through the sacred buildings has become dumb.
It honeyed the ears of dwellers of heaven and earth at the same time,
and moved our hearts in their inmost part. What have you done, hateful death?
It was enough for you indiscriminately
to carry away mortal things;
music is a divine thing;
why do you outrage the gods?*

[Guarda dentro di te]

E che cosa è tutto ciò?

Ho interrogato la terra e mi rispose: "Non sono io". E mi fecero la stessa dichiarazione tutte le cose che sono in essa.

Ho interrogato il mare e i suoi abissi, i viventi che vi si muovono, e risposero: "Non siamo il tuo Dio; cerca più in alto".

Ho interrogato il sussurro del vento; e tutta l'atmosfera con i suoi abitatori rispose: "Anassimene s'inganna; non sono la divinità".

E ho interrogato il cielo, il sole, la luna le stelle: "Nemmeno noi", mi dicono, "nemmeno noi siamo il Dio che cerchi".

Dissi allora a tutto ciò che siede davanti alle porte dei miei sensi: "Se non lo siete voi, ditemi qualche cosa del mio Dio, parlatemi di lui".

Ed a gran voce tutto rispose: "È il nostro creatore".

Guardare le creature era come interrogarle; la loro bellezza era la loro risposta.

Mi ripiegai allora su me stesso: "Tu, che cosa sei?", chiesi.
E mi risposi: "Un uomo".

[Look into yourself]

And what is this God?

I asked the earth, and it answered, "I am not he"; and everything in the earth made the same confession.

I asked the sea and the deeps and the creeping things, and they replied, "We are not your God; seek above us."

I asked the fleeting winds, and the whole air with its inhabitants answered, "Anaximenes was deceived, I am not God."

I asked the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars; and they answered, "Neither are we the God whom you seek."

And I replied to all these things which stand around the door of my flesh: "You have told me about my God, that you are not he. Tell me something about him."

And with a loud voice they all cried out, "He made us."

My question had come from my observation of them, and their reply came from their beauty of order.

*And I turned my thoughts into myself and said, "Who are you?"
And I answered, "A man."*

Tu solu qui facis mirabilia,
tu solus creator, qui creasti nos,
tu solus redemptor, qui redemisti nos
sanguine tuo pretiosissimo.

Ad te solum confugimus,
In te solum confidimus,
nec alium adoramus,
Iesu Christe.

Ad te preces effundimus,
exaudi quod supplicamus,
et concede quod petimus,
rex benigne.

D'ung aultre amer,
Nobis esset fallacia:
D'ung aultre amer,
magna esset stultitia et peccatum.

Audi nostra suspiria, reple nos tua gratia,
o rex regum,
ut ad tua servitia sistamus cum laetitia
in aeternum.

*You alone, who perform wonders,
you alone the creator who created us,
you alone the redeemer who redeemed us
with your most precious blood.*

*To you alone do we turn,
in you alone do we trust,
neither do we adore any other,
Jesus Christ.*

*To you we offer our prayers,
hear our supplications
and grant our requests,
benign King.
To love another
would be deceitful.
To love another
would be a great folly and a sin.*

*Hear our sighs, pour on us your grace,
King of Kings,
that we may serve you with joy
forever.*

Erepei ti chutas skuthros hod'ai las;
Resis hoten; agon teke nai gemei,
Reson, hon homoklan eche sos, oun herosx
Irin, aia posos keinoisi, balian
Keion d' ounoma tis ho e enrei
Oia ho hepathern deinomora, Pares.
Soros hou; ai ai! tis ho getesei
Basileus! Hin age bu sous alla me
Ouk estin holas zoes toge phos
Ra men hou oduna hos sune s' ogos
Be nous pouth' achous echei sous arrepos
Ostis ano phere lipe d' essoona me
Nekus ei ode, dei es ton ames biban Mais vivant
Ina; ouchi se ge libes' hai Louis
Olikous agathon de drasi agathus
Sunechei pos hos kala pais do nan.

[echo]: Helas,
qui ne gemit
un heros
si vaillant?
Henry
mort à Paris
gist icy
sous la lame.
Je faus,
cy ne sont qu'os,
sus à repos
son ame,
Mais vivant
en Louis
à tous
la paix donnant.

Se je fais deuil, je n'en puis mais,
Ne nul me m'en doibt donner blasme,
Car je ne crois pas qu'il fut ame
Plus desplaisant que moy, jamais.

Qui plus est, je me doibt souffire
De faire deuil tant seullement,
Car par droit je me deusse occire
Pour mettre fin a mon tourment.

If I, at the end of my tether, abandon all hope for myself,
none should blame me for it.
For I am sure there was never
a more disagreeable soul than me.

What's more, I must suffer
this grief in utter solitude.
For by right I should make an end of myself
in order to put a stop to my anguish.

Prima mundi seducta sobole
Turbati sunt paradisicole
Fraude nota.

Adam Eva mali convivio
Imposuit longo exilio
Uxor seva

Uxor seva decepit hominem
Fraude sed fraus per sanctam Virginem
Est adempta

Est adempta plebs diabolica
Ergo plaudat voce magnifica
Plebs redempta.

The Earth's first offspring were led astray,
the hosts of Heaven were dismayed at this deception.

Adam and Eve lived together in wickedness
a long exile was imposed on them,
O! cruel wife.

The cruel wife deceived the man,
but the deceit was redeemed through the Holy Virgin.

The people of the devil are redeemed,
thus the voices of the saved are raised in rejoicing.

O mata fukitsunoru ame kaze.
O another deluge of wind and rain.
Collar turned up, getting drenched in this splashing rain,
and looking up at you -- it's me,
it's that Japanese.
This morning
about daybreak the storm suddenly went violent, terrible.
and now is blowing through Paris from one end to the other.
I have yet to know the directions of this land.
(O mata fukitsunoru ame kaze.)
I don't even know which way this storm is facing.
Only because even today I wanted to stand here
and look up at you, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris,
I came, getting drenched,
only because I wanted to touch you,
only because I wanted to kiss your skin, the stone, unknown to anyone.

O another deluge of wind and rain.
Though it's already time for morning coffee,
a little while ago I looked from the Pont-Neuf.
the boats on the Seine were still tied up to the banks, like puppies.
The leaves of the gentle plane trees shining in their autumn colors on the banks
are like flocks of buntings chased by hawks.
The chestnut trees behind you,
each time their heads ... get mussed up,
starling-colored leaves dance up into the sky.
All the square is like a pattern,
filled with flowing silver water, and isles of golden-brown burnt-brown leaves.
Then there's the noise of the downpour resounding in my pores.
It's the noise of something roaring, grinding.
With golden plane tree leaves falling all over my coat,
I'm standing in it.
Storms are like this in my country, Japan, too.
Only, we don't see you soaring.

O Nootorudamu, Nootorudamu
O Notre-Dame, Notre-Dame,
rock-like, mountain-like, eagle-like, crouching-lion-like cathedral,
reef sunk in vast air.
square pillar of Paris,
sealed by blinding splatters of rain, ...
O soaring in front, Notre-Dame de Paris,
it's me, ...
it's that Japanese.
My heart trembles now that I see you.
Looking at your form like a tragedy,
a young man from a far distant country is moved.

...
O another deluge of wind and rain. ...
Only the gargoyles ...

raise their paws, crane their necks,
bare their teeth, blow out burning fountains of breath. ...
O nanto iu ame kaze no shuuchuu.
O what a concentration of wind and rain.
How is the rooster at the top of the tall slender steeple doing? ...

O mata fukitsunoru ame kaze.
O another deluge of wind and rain.
Sono naka de hasseikikan omomi ni gasshiri to tatsu katedoraru.
A cathedral standing in it
solid with the weight of eight centuries,
a mass of millions of stones piled and carved by believers of old.
A great scaffold for truth, sincerity, and eternity.
You stand wordless ...
You know the strength of nature s force ...

o cathedral in the thrashing rain ...
... wind and rain that took a breath and has driven itself harder,
all the instruments of the heavens gone berserk,
the dance swirls around
o cathedral, ...
you who watch motionless the houses of Paris suffering the storm.
please do not think me rude,
who, hands on your cornerstone,
has his hot cheek pressed on your skin,
it's me, the drunken one.
It's that Japanese.

Text taken from Chieko and other poems of Takamura Kotaro, translated by Hiroaki Sato (The University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu; 1980), and used by kind permission of the translator.