

 **HISTORIA SANCTI OLAVI** • Alexander M. Schweitzer, dir;
Consortium Vocale Oslo; Grace & Voices • LAWO 1106 (2 CDs: 104:56)



Historia Sancti Olavi
AUDIO CD; HYBRID SACD - DSD
Lawo Classics

Late Medieval Liturgical Offices (to use the term Andrew Hughes adopted for his inventory published in 1994 and 1996), formerly known as rhymed Offices, have been recorded frequently since the Office of St. Juvenal appeared on Erato in 1977, but this two-disc set may be the most nearly complete such recording ever. King Olav of Norway was killed in battle on July 29, 1030. His remains were brought to Trondheim a year later, where he was revered for his miraculous intercession. His efforts to bring Christianity to his country and to win independence from both Sweden and Denmark insured the devotion of his people, and Trondheim became the national capital as well as the primary seat of the Norwegian bishops. Olav was canonized in 1164 and became the patron saint of Norway. Even today Catholics assemble at the (now Lutheran) cathedral to celebrate his feast day on 29 July.

The Office as recorded here consists of First Vespers, Matins, and Lauds; the antiphons are sung with truncated psalms, and the responsories are preceded by truncated lessons, the most common way of sustaining interest (psalms and lessons are musically repetitive). The sole unique antiphon of Second Vespers concludes the set. The singing is divided alternately between Schweitzer's men's group and the women of Graces & Voices. The chant is sung in the accepted understanding of liturgical singing, without affected pronunciation or added accompaniment. A less complete version of this Office was recorded earlier by Schola Sanctae Sunnivaе (not received for review). Texts and translations may be downloaded from the label's web site. This is highly recommended as an outstanding presentation of a late Medieval liturgical Office. **J. F. Weber**

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