MASS for the DEAD
LETTERPRESS PRINT by DANIEL MITSUI

ARTWORK BY DANIEL MITSUI
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The depicts the application of the graces of the Mass to the poor souls in purgatory. A priest reads the Diptychs of the Dead; the beginning of this ancient prayer from the Canon of the Mass I wrote on a banderole. In the lower part of the central image, a dove representing the Holy Ghost carries the prayer to a company of suffering souls. Angels follow, pouring a cooling laver over them. I based this on illustrations in a late medieval manuscript of Guillaume de Deguileville's *Pilgrimage of the Soul*, a visionary account of a journey through hell, purgatory and heaven.

The scene of the Mass reflects common late medieval liturgical practices. The server holds an elevation torch, a blessed candle that was held by deacons, subdeacons and other ministers during the consecration and elevation of the Sacred Host, and that burned until the priest's communion. The faithful departed often would bequeath the six candles that burned around their coffins for this purpose.

The decorative border was inspired by the borders in the Sherborne Missal, a 14th-century English manuscript, and the borders in the printed Books of Hours produced by the partnership of Philippe Pigouchet and Simon Vostre in 15th-century Paris. It includes miniature pictures of church buildings, clergymen and hermits, and of a Gothic monstrance holding the Man of Sorrows. A small emblem at the top depicts the Hand of God holding five tiny figures representing the souls of the righteous. A quatrefoil in the bas-de-page contains an image of a pelican in her piety. These are surrounded by vines, flowers and cribly.

Medium: Letterpress print, based on ink drawings
Press: Heidelberg cylinder (Rohner Letterpress, Chicago, IL)
Ink: Albion matte black (Graphic Chemical & Ink, Villa Park, IL)
Paper: Cotton wove (Reich Savoy)
Edges: Cut
Edition: Open, approximately 200
Dimensions: 7" × 10"
Year: 2015

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