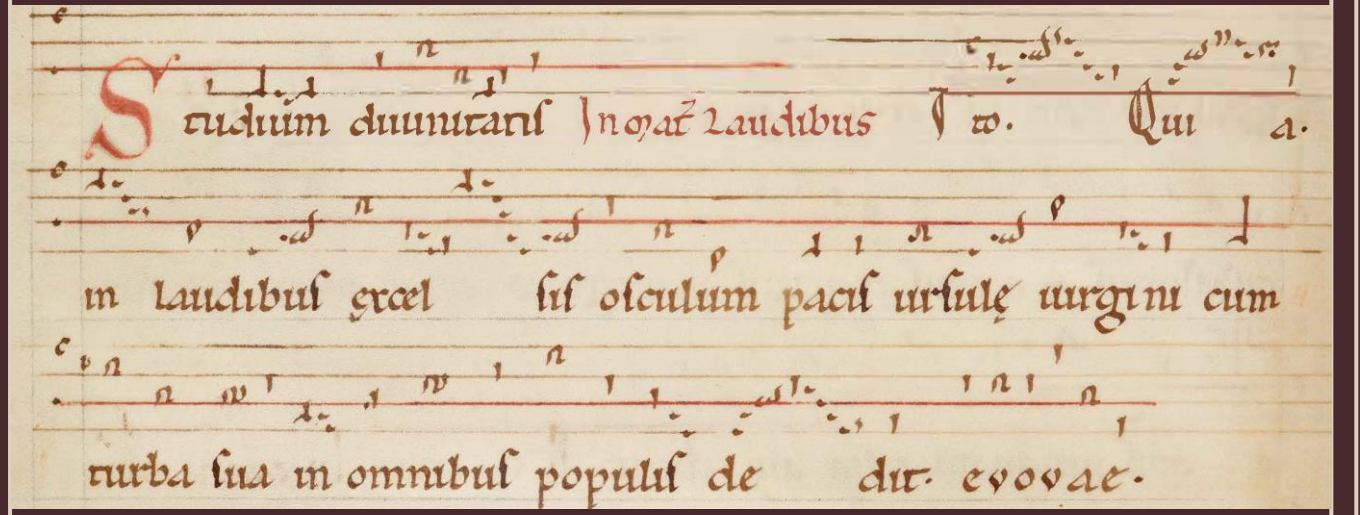

Chant Reimagined

William A. Murphy

November 12, 2025
5:30 p.m.

MUS 576: Doctoral Project Lecture and Recital

I. A Nun Takes the Veil, from *Four Songs,* Op. 13 (1940)
Samuel Barber

I have desired to go Where springs not fail,
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.
And I have asked to be Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,
And out of the swing of the sea.

—Gerard Manley Hopkins

WELCOME!

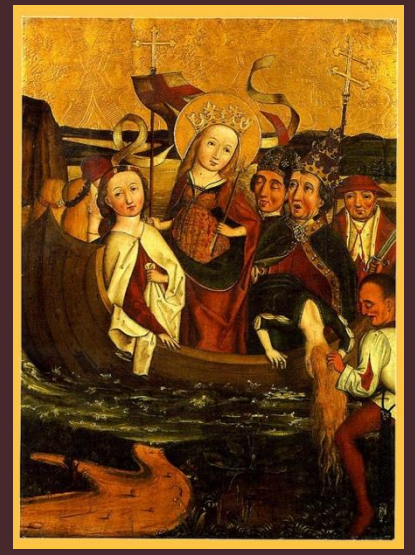
Project Inception

- Ursulines of Mount St. Joseph, Kentucky (1874-present)
- St. Angela Merici (1474-1540)
- St. Ursula (4th century)











Hildegard Von Bingen (1098-1179)

- Monastic life, beginning at age 8 in Disibodenberg, Germany
- Took vows at the age of 15
- Elected to lead the sisters at Disibodenberg in 1136.
- VISIONS
- Manuscripts and Music
- Sainthood and revitalized interest

Chant

- Uses
- The Divine Office
- Antiphons

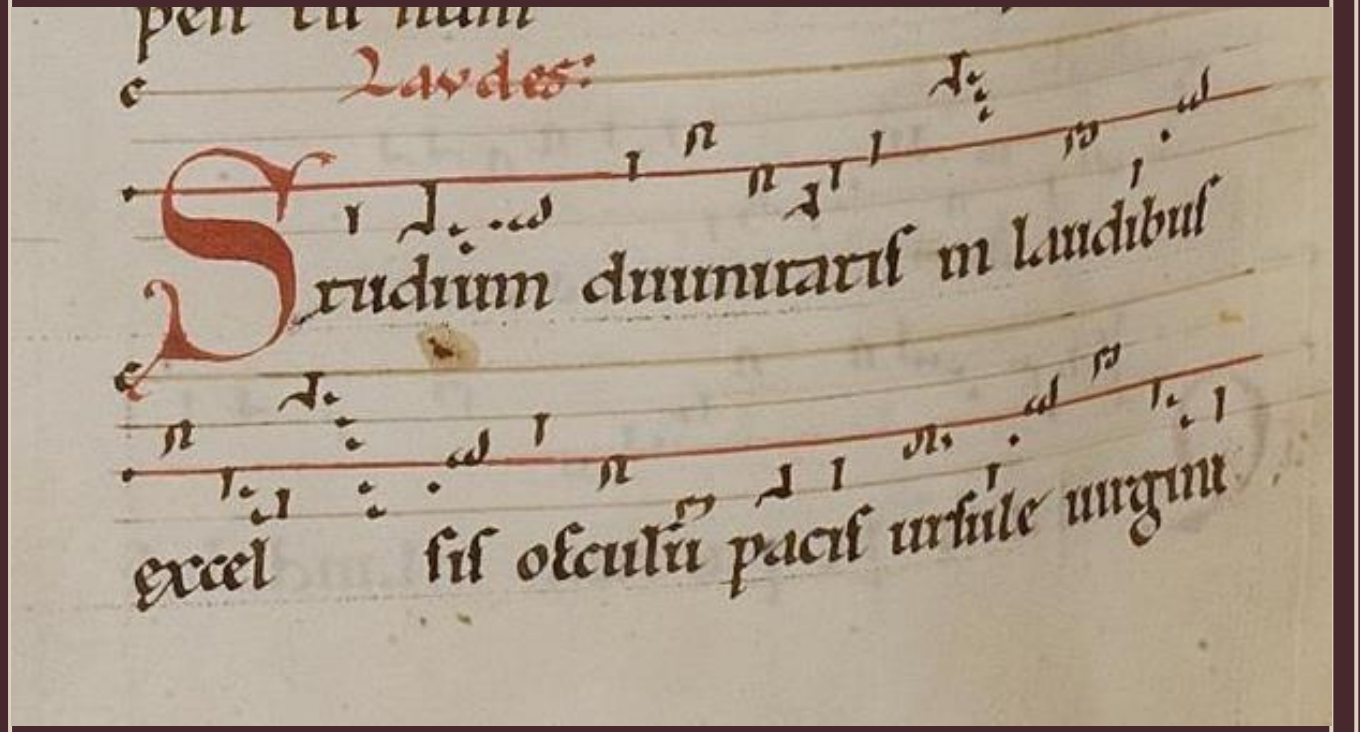
In matutinis laudibus

- Feast day of St. Ursula
- Eight antiphons
- Lauds in the monastic use
  - Versicle—Deus in adjutorium meus intende
    ("O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me")
  - Five Psalms with antiphons
  - Chapter/Lesson with Responsory
  - Hymn
  - One Canticle with antiphon
  - Canticle of Zechariah with antiphon

- Lauds for St. Ursula's Feast Day with Hildegard's music
  - Versicle—Deus in adjutorium meus intende
  - *Studium divinitatis*—Psalm 92
  - *Unde quocumque*—Psalm 99 or 117
  - *De patria*—Psalms 62 and 66
  - *Deus enim in prima*—Old testament canticle "Benedicite omnia opera"
    (Book of Daniel 3:57-88, 56)
  - A Lesson or Chapter Reading
  - *Aer enim volat*—Psalm 148
  - *Deus enim rorem*—Psalm 149
  - *Sed diabolus*—Psalm 150

  } Psalms Separated

  - A Hymn (*Cum vox sanguinis*)
  - A Responsory (*Spiritui sancto*)
  - Sequence (*O Ecclesia*)
  - *Et ideo puelle*—"Benedictus Dominus Deus"
    (Canticle of Zechariah from the Gospel of Luke, 1:68-79)



Chant Selections

I. *Studium divinitatis*
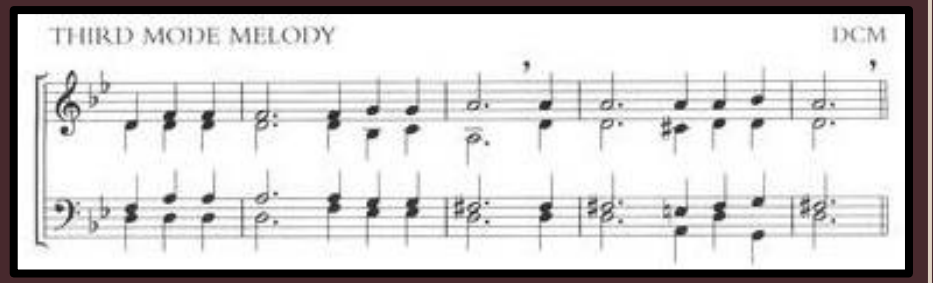
IV. *Deus enim in prima*

V. *Aer enim volat*
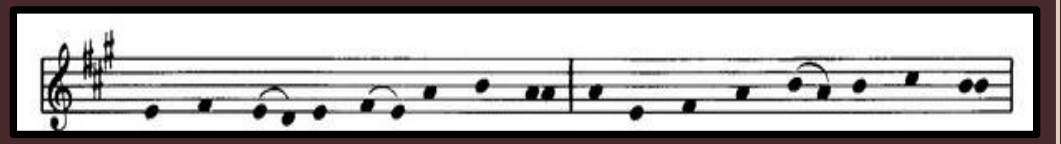
VIII. *Sed diabolus*
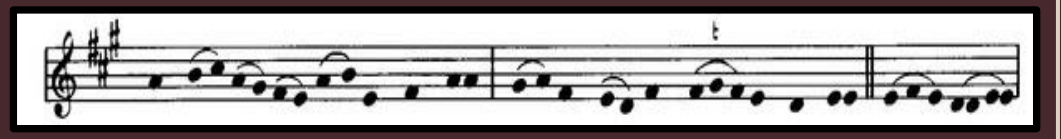
Reimaginations and Modern Musical Examples

- Vaughan Williams “Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis” for orchestra (1910 with revisions in 1913 and 1919)
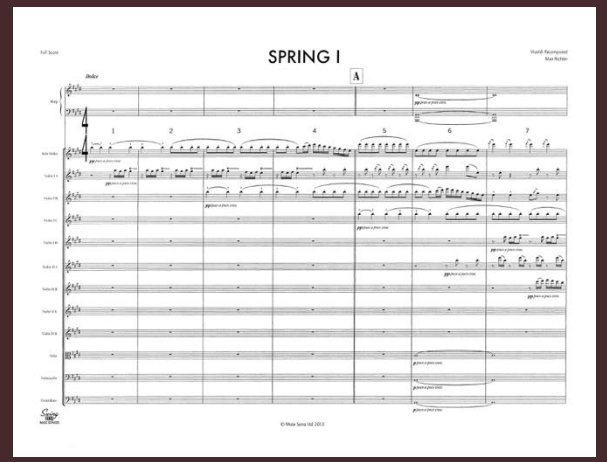


- Maurice Duruflé *Prélude, Adagio et Choral varié sur le theme du ‘Veni Creator’* (1930) for Organ





- Max Richter “Recomposed by Max Richter” – Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons* for string orchestra (2012)



- Philip Glass Piano Quintet: “Annunciation” (2017)

Antiphons for the Feast of St. Ursula – Reimaginations for Voice and Piano

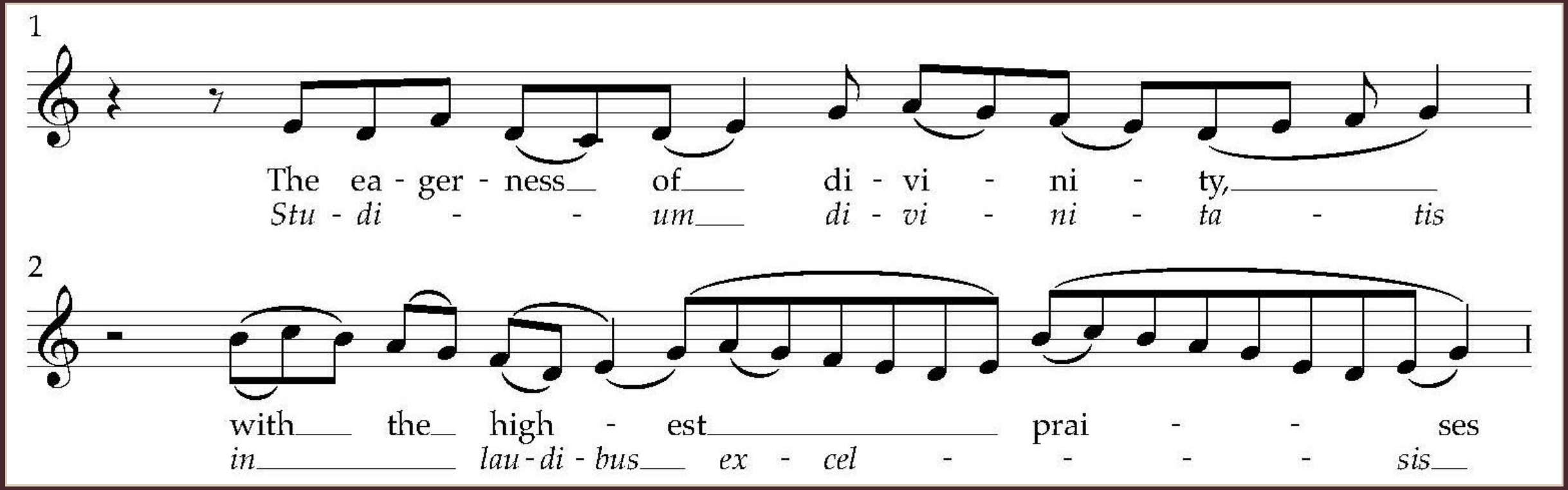
- Processes of composition
  - Preservation
  - Text and Translation
  - Phrasing and Pronunciation
  - Harmony and Texture
  - Notation Software



Preservation

Considerations:

- Maintaining the voice of Hildegard
- Observing phrasing as best as possible
- Keeping the mode of the chant in the accompaniment



Text Underlay and Translations

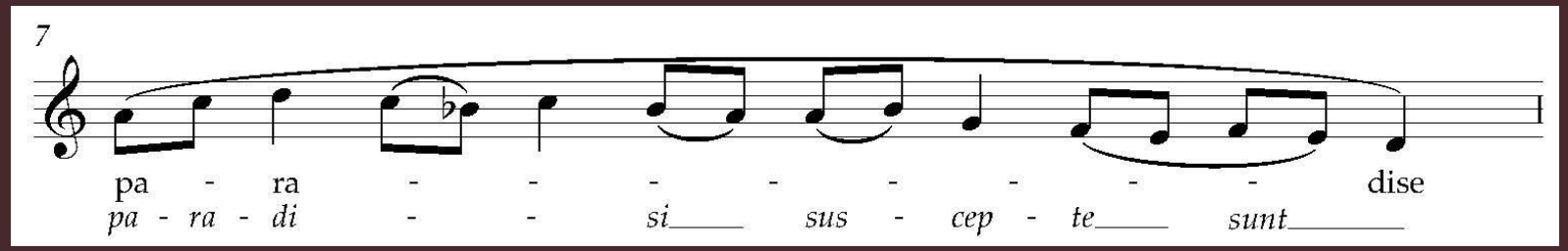
Considerations:

- The latin text inserted first
- Using existing translations as guides for the text.
- English text needs to match the phrasing of the line
- Vowel/syllable considerations for the singer

Sed diabolus

Latin text	**Pfau**	**Campbell**	**Murphy**
Sed diabolus in invidia sua istud irisit, qua nullum opus Dei intactum dimisit.	But the devil ridiculed it in his jealousy, by which he left no work of God intact.	But envious, the devil mocks, which leaves no work of God untouched.	But the devil in his envy mocked it. That no work of God was left untouched

Unde quocumque, m. 7

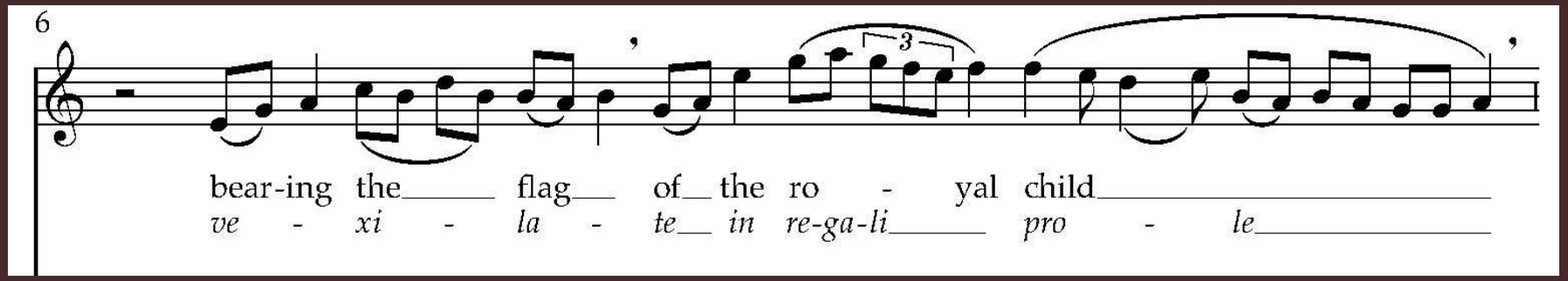


Phrasing and Pronunciation

Considerations:

- How long of a phrase?
- Matching with Latin
- Ecclesiastical Latin vs. Germanic Latin

Et ideo puelle, m. 6
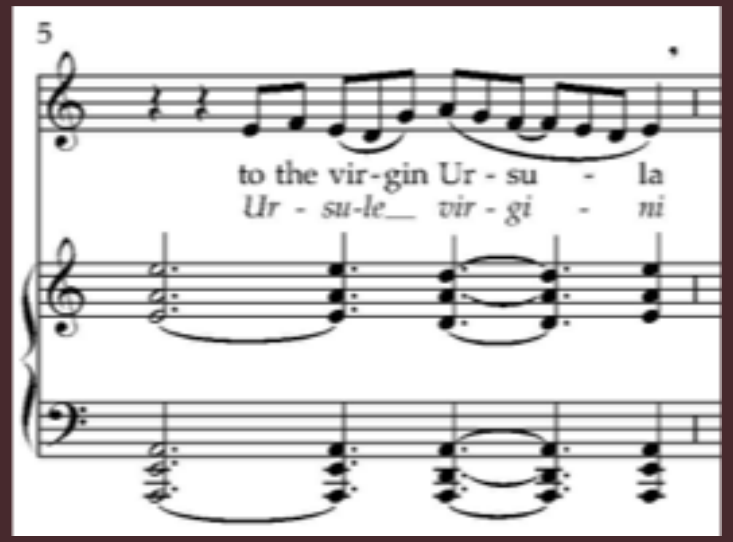


Harmony and Texture

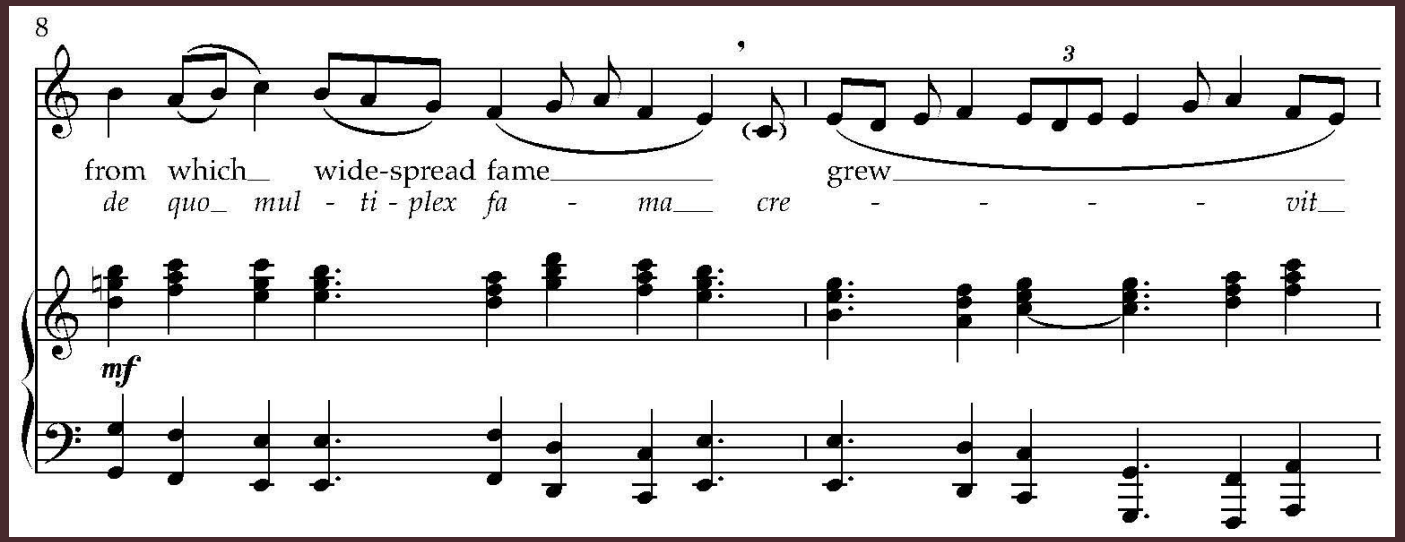
Considerations:

- Harmonic structure – open fourths and fifths
- Singer's Tessitura
- Doubling of the singer

Studium divinitatis, m. 5

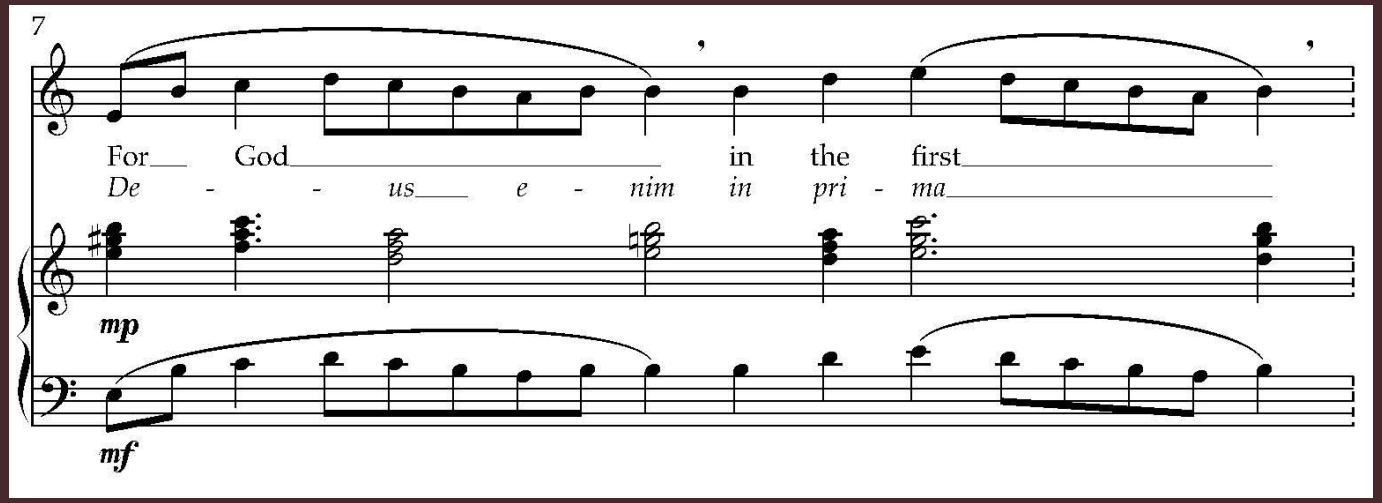


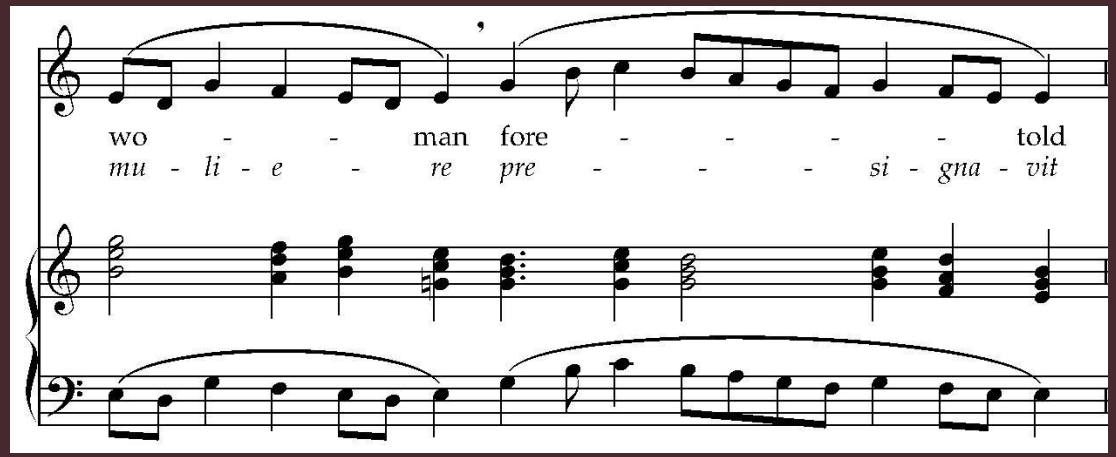
Deus enim rorem, mm. 8-9



Harmony and Texture

Deus enim in prima, mm. 7
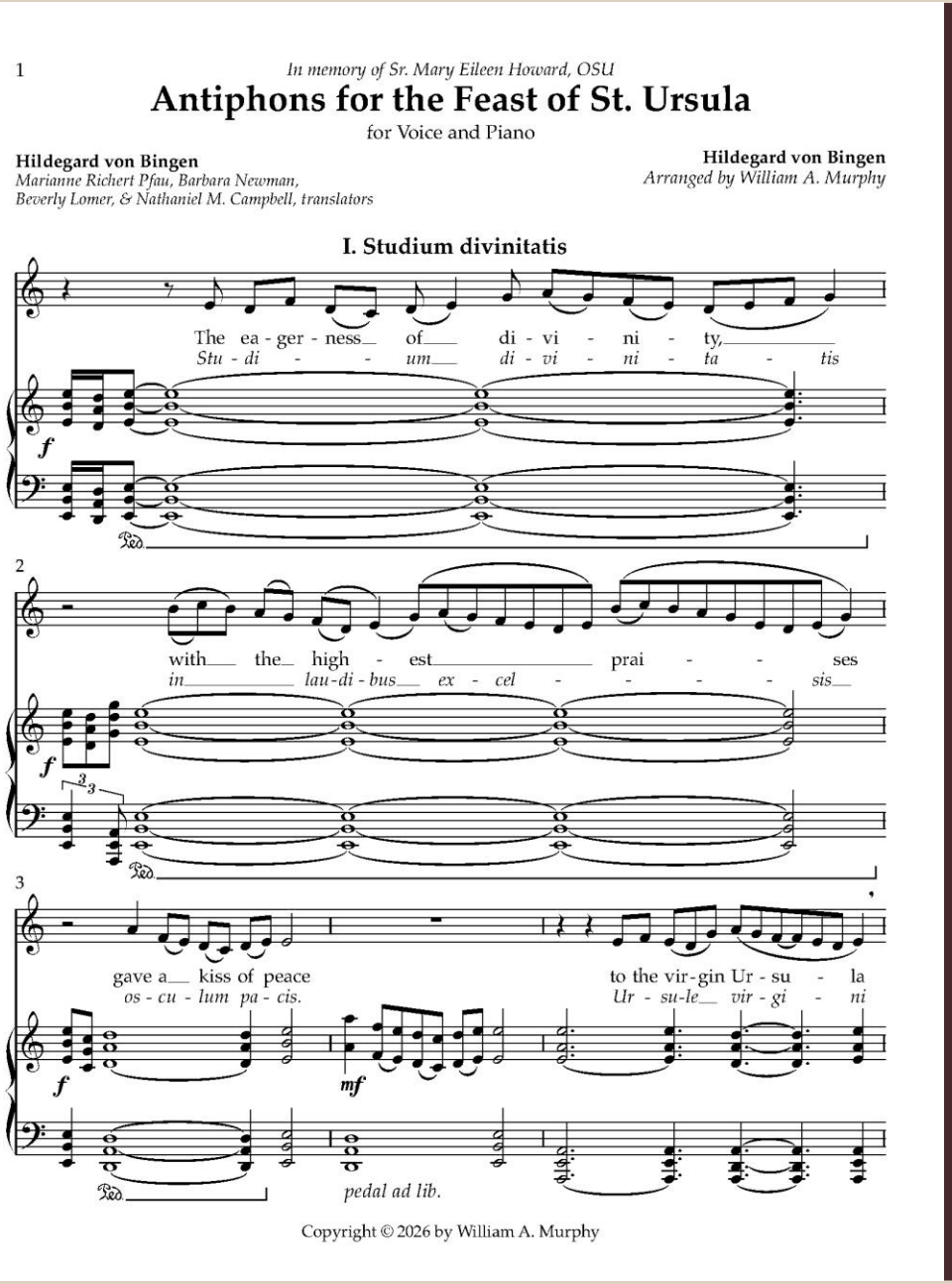




Notation Software

Considerations

- Choices of software
- Ease of use
- Aesthetic



1

In memory of Sr. Mary Eileen Howard, OSU

Antiphons for the Feast of St. Ursula

for Voice and Piano

Hildegard von Bingen
Marianne Richert Pfau, Barbara Newman, Beverly Lomer, & Nathaniel M. Campbell, translators

Hildegard von Bingen
Arranged by William A. Murphy

I. Studium divinitatis

The ea - ger - ness of di - vi - ni - ty,
Stu - di - - um di - vi - ni - ta - tis

2

with the high - est prai - - - ses
in lau-di - bus ex - cel - - - - - sis

3

gave a kiss of peace to the vir-gin Ur - su - la
os - cu - lum pa - cis. Ur - su-le vir - gi - ni

pedal ad lib.

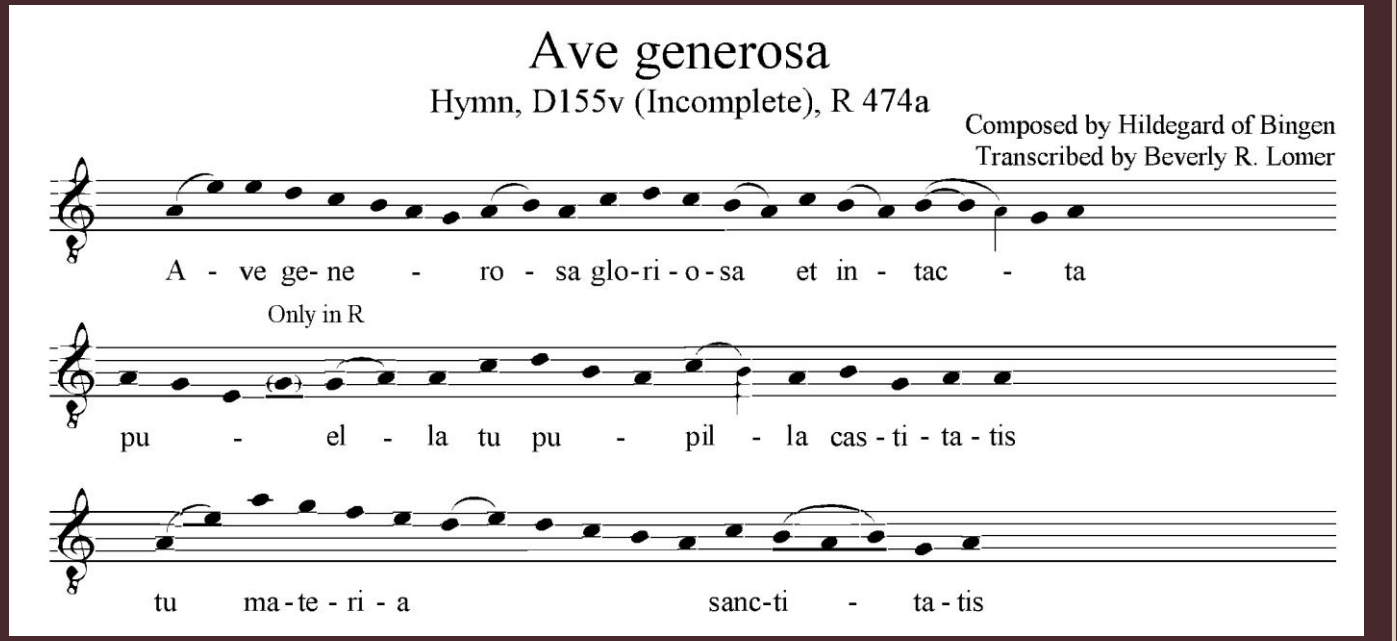
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Performances of Other Reimaginations

"HILDEGARD" from *Voices* (2019) —

Kathryn Louderback

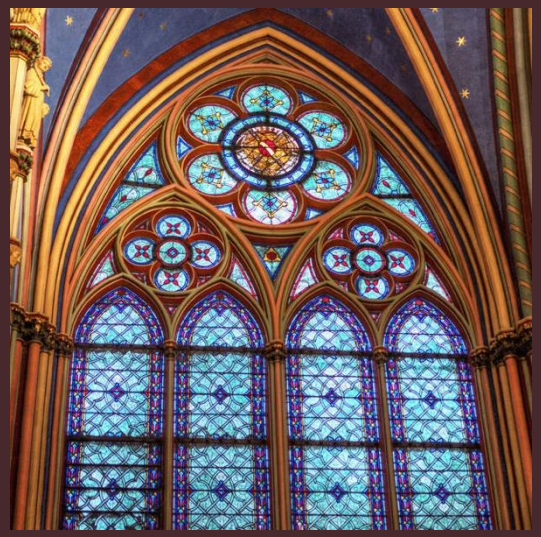
- Key Features:
  - Quotation of Hildegard hymn *Ave Generosa*
  - Free rhythms with minimal harmonies
  - Use of chorale-like interludes between chant melody



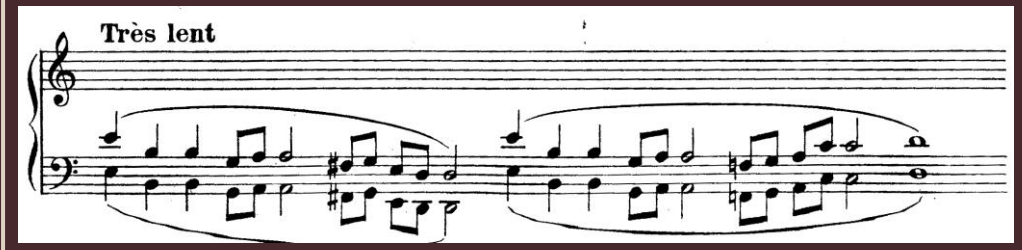
Performances of Other Reimaginations

QUATRE OGIVES (1886) — Erik Satie (1866-1925)

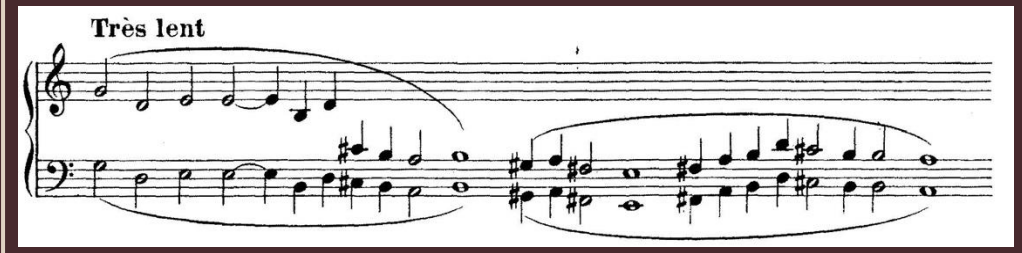
- Key Features
  - Chant-like melodies
  - Harmonies evoke the organ as an accompanying instrument
  - Unmetered/no measures
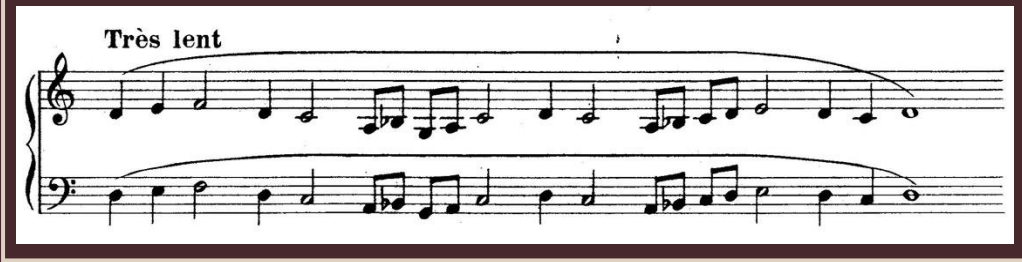


Ogive 1



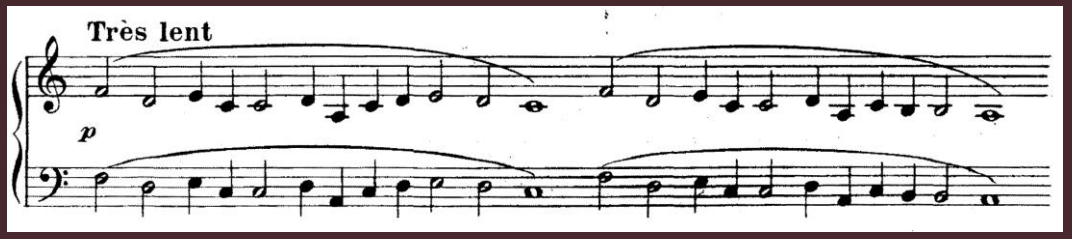
Ogive 2



Ogive 3



Ogive 4
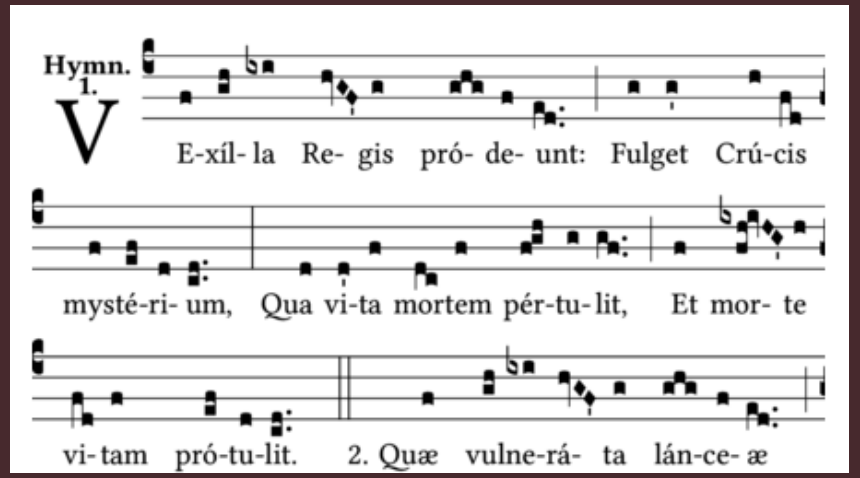


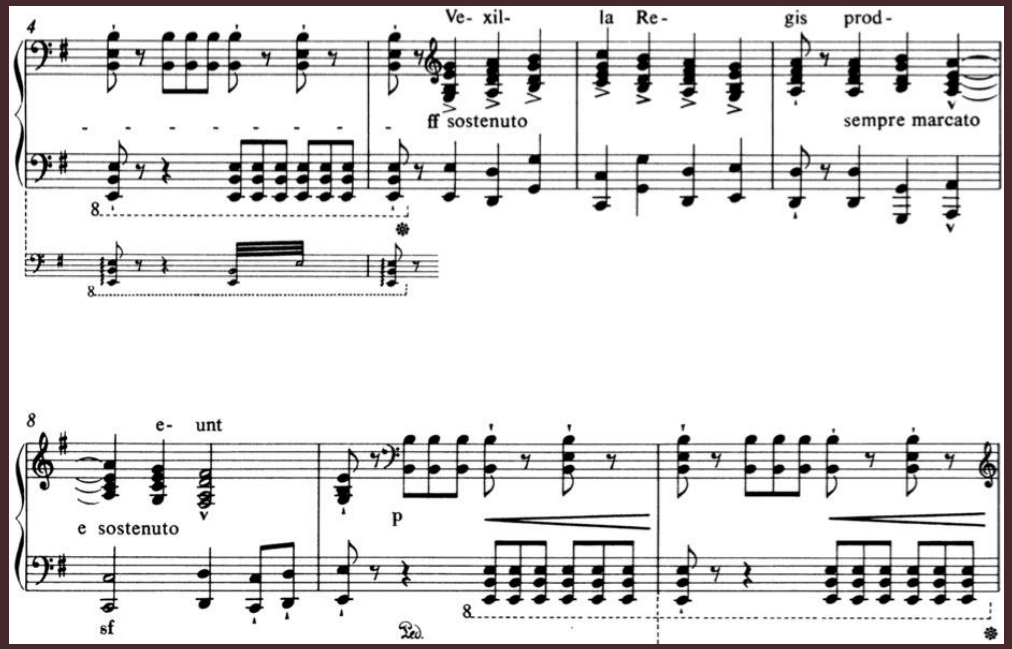
Performances of Other Reimaginations

VEXILLA REGIS PRODEUNT (1864) —

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

- Key Features:
  - Quotes original (569 a.d.) Venantius Fortunatus (c. 530- c. 600) hymn
  - Metered (in 4/4)
  - Rhythm of chant is equal quarter notes
  - Chant phrases are separated by other motives



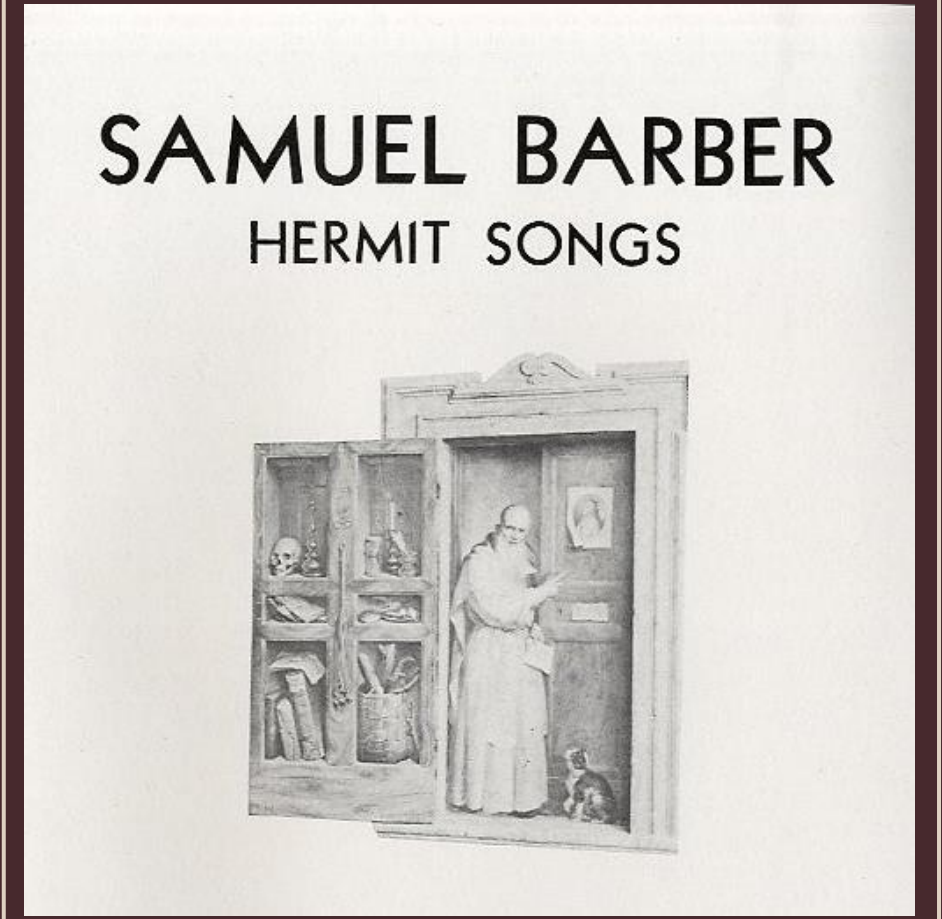


Brief Pause

Inspiration for Reimaginations

Hermit Songs, Op. 29 (1953) — Samuel Barber

- Attributes similar to the Antiphons for St. Ursula
  - Melodies, non-metered rhythms
  - Texts from Medieval Manuscript margins – Saint attributions



II. Church Bell at Night

Sweet Little Bell, struck on a windy night,
I would liefer keep tryst with thee
Than be With a light and foolish woman.

—12th Century

III. St. Ita's Vision

"I will take nothing from my Lord," said she,
"unless he gives me His Son from Heaven
In the form of a Baby that I may nurse Him."
So that Christ came down to her in the form of a Baby and then she said:

"Infant Jesus, at my breast,
Nothing in this world is true
Save, O tiny nursling, You.
Infant Jesus at my breast,

By my heart ev'ry night,
You I nurse are not A churl but were begot
On Mary the Jewess by Heaven's Light.

Infant Jesus, at my breast,
what King is there but
You who could Give everlasting Good?
wherefor I give my food.

Sing to Him, maidens, sing your best!
There is none that has such right
To your song as Heaven's King
Who ev'ry night Is Infant Jesus at my breast, at my breast."

—Attributed to St. Ita, 8th century

IV. The Heavenly Banquet

I would like to have the men of Heaven in my own house;
with vats of good cheer laid out for them.

I would like to have the three Marys, their fame is so great.
I would like people from ev'ry corner of Heaven.

I would like them to be cheerful in their drinking
I would like to have Jesus sitting here among them.
I would like a great lake of beer for the King of Kings.

I would like to be watching Heaven's family
Drinking it through all eternity.

—Attributed to St. Brigid, 10th century

V. The Crucifixion

At the cry of the first bird
They began to crucify Thee, O Swan!

Never shall lament cease because of that.
It was like the parting of day from night.

Ah, sore was the suff'ring borne
By the body of Mary's Son.

But sorer still to Him was the grief
Which for His sake
Came upon His Mother

—From *The Speckled Book*, 12th century

VIII. The Monk and His Cat

Pangur, white Pangur,
How happy we are
Alone together,
Scholar and cat.

Each has his own work to do daily;
For you it is hunting, for me study.
Your shining eye watches the wall;
my feeble eye is fixed on a book.

You rejoice when your claws
entrap a mouse;
I rejoice when my mind Fathoms a
problem.

Pleased with his own art,
Neither hinders the other;
Thus we live ever
Without tedium and envy.

Pangur, white Pangur,
How happy we are
Alone together, Scholar and cat.
Pangur, white Pangur,
How happy we are.

—8th or 9th century

IX. The Praises of God

How foolish the man
Who does not raise His voice and praise
With joyful words, As he alone can,
Heaven's High King

To Whom the light birds
With no soul but air,
All day, ev'rywhere
all day, ev'rywhere
Laudation sing, Laudation sing.

—11th century

X. The Desire for Hermitage

Ah! To be all alone in a little cell with nobody near me;
beloved that pilgrimage before the pilgrimage to Death.

Singing the passing hours to cloudy Heaven;
feeding upon dry bread and water from the cold spring.

That will be an end to evil when I am alone in a lovely little corner
among tombs far from the houses of the great.

Ah! to be all alone in a little cell, to be alone, all alone,
alone I came into the world, alone I shall go from it.

— *8th-9th* century



Antiphons for the Feast of St. Ursula

- Notes about the individual movements

  - *Studium divinitatis*
  - *Unde quocumque*
  - *De patria*
  - *Deus enim in prima*
  - Interlude – based on the hymn *Cum vox sanguinis*
  - *Aer enim volat*
  - *Et ideo puelle*
  - *Deus enim rorem*
  - *Sed diabolus*

I. Studium divinitatis

Studium divinitatis
in laudibus excelsis osculum pacis
Ursule virgini
cum turba sua
in omnibus populis dedit.

The eagerness of divinity,
with the highest praises,
gave a kiss of peace to the virgin Ursula
with her throng
in the sight of all peoples

II. Unde quocumque

Unde quocumque venientes
perrexerunt,
velut cum gaudio celestis paradisi
suscepte sunt, quia in religione morum
honorifice apparuerunt.

And so, wherever they journeyed,
they were welcomed
as if with the joy of celestial paradise,
because they appeared with honor
in the devoutness of their lives.

III. De patria

De patria etiam earum
et de aliis regionibus
viri religiosi
et sapientes
ipsis adiuncti sunt,
qui eas in virginea custodia servabant,
et qui eis in
omnibus ministrabant.

And from their home land
and from other regions
were men religious and wise
joined to them,
who served them
in virginal guardianship
and who ministered to them
in all things.

Interlude
Improvisation on the hymn *Cum vox sanguinis*

1. When the voice of the blood of Ursula
and her innocent throng
resounded before the throne of God,
there came an ancient prophecy
through the root of Mamre, in a true revelation
of the Trinity, and said:

2. This blood is touching us,
now let us all rejoice.

8, O Church,
you are worthy of praise in this throng.

9. The great throng which the unconsumed bush
that Moses had seen signifies,
and which God had planted in the original root
in the person whom he had formed from clay,
to live without mingling of man
cried out with the clearest voice,
in the purest gold, topaz,
and sapphire clothed round in gold.

10. Now let all the heavens rejoice,
and let all the peoples be adorned with them.
Amen.

V. Aer enim volat

Aer enim volat
et cum omnibus creaturis
officia sua exercet,
et firmamentum eum sustinet,
ac aer in viribus istius pascitur.

For the air flies
and with all creatures
fulfills its obligations,
and the firmament sustains it
and the air is nourished by its powers.

VI. Et ideo puelle

Et ideo puelle iste
per summum virum sustentabantur,
vexillate in regali prole
virginee nature.

And likewise these girls
were sustained by the highest man,
bearing the flag of the royal child
of virginal nature.

VII. Deus enim rorem

Deus enim rorem in illas misit,
de quo multiplex fama crevit,
ita quod omnes populi
ex hac honorabili fama
velut cibum gustabant.

For God sent a dew upon them
from which widespread fame grew
so that all peoples
partook of this honorable fame
tasting it as it were food.

VIII. Sed diabolus

Sed diabolus in invidia sua
istud irrisit,
qua nullum opus Dei
intactum dimisit.
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

But the devil that in his envy
mocked it.
That no work of God
was left untouched.
…and forever and ever. Amen.

Conclusion

Special Thanks:

Fr. Zachary Guiliano and Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church

Singers:
Ellyn Werner
Lila Dettelback
Julia Scannell

Committee Members:
Dr. EJ
Dr. Julie Gunn
Dr. Reynold Tharp
Dr. Scott MacLeod