

JS 036

ca. 5 minutes, 45 seconds

In Magna Symphonia

For SSAA, a cappella

Text by

Hildegard of Bingen & Prudentius

Music by

Joshua Shank

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Joshua Shank

Note from the composer

The poetry of twelfth-century German abbess and polymath Hildegard of Bingen contains some of the most beautiful language I think I've ever encountered, so the opportunity to set it to music—something she did an exquisite job of herself—was irresistible. The narrative in the text (which I freely arranged) is a veiled creation story of sorts introduced by a few lines from fourth-century Roman poet Prudentius: everything is dark and the people are confused...until someone shows up and begins to sing. Then “the earth exudes Life” and, wherever this music goes, it brings that life with it both to nature and the people who take it in “as nourishment.”

In Magna Symphonia was commissioned by the Nebraska Children's Chorus Bel Canto (Sean Burton, Conductor) and received its premiere in June 2007.

Performance notes

- The closer the harmonies, the less vibrato should be used.
- Staggered breathing should be employed throughout with no apparent break in the musical line unless specified.

The Text:

By Prudentius (348-c. 410) and Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)

Nox, et tenebrae, et nubila
confusa mundi et turbida,
lux intrat, albescit polus,

-Prudentius, *Morning Hymn*

O night and clouded Darkness,
confused and troubled world,
Light enters in, the sky is whitening,

De te nubes fluunt, ether volat,
lapides humorem habent,
aque revulos educunt
et terra viriditatem sudat.

-Hildegard of Bingen, *O ignis Spiritus Paracliti*

Through you clouds stream, ether flies,
stones gain moisture,
water becomes streams,
And the earth exudes Life.

in magna symphonia
Et hoc in alto voce omnia elementa audierunt
Hoc audiant omnes celi
quia guttur serpentis antique
in istis margaritis
materie Verbi Dei
suffocatum est.

-Hildegard of Bingen, *O Ecclesia*

In a single great sound
Their voices were heard by all the Elements
Let all the heavens hear
Because the ancient serpent is suffocated
by these pearls,
made from the Word of God.

Unde quocumque venientes perrexerunt
Velut cum gudio celestis paradisi
suscepte sunt,
quia in morum honorifice
apparuerunt.

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

-Hildegard of Bingen, *In Matutinis Laudibus*

Alleluia! Amen.

And thus,
wherever they went they were welcomed,
for the joy of celestial paradise,
which they received,
Was the honor of their life

For truly God showered them in a dew,
from which grew many aspects of fame,
thus all people partook of this honorable fame
as nourishment.

Alleluia! Amen.

ether flies, stones gain moisture,

e - ther vo - lat, la - pi - des hu - mo - rem ha - bent, _____
 e - ther vo lat, la - pi - des hu - mo - rem ha - bent, _____
 doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh
 doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh

water becomes streams...

...and the earth exudes Life.

a - que re - vu - los e - du - cunt et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem
 a - que re - vu - los e - du - cunt et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem
 doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh
 doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh

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rit. su - dat. *mf a tempo* in ma - gna sym -
rit. su - - - dat. *mf a tempo* in ma - gna sym -
rit. doh doh doh doh doh in ma - gna sym -
rit. doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh doh

45 Gradual accelerando to next tempo

cresc. poco a poco

ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li,

cresc. poco a poco

ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li,

mp cresc. poco a poco

ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li,

mp cresc. poco a poco

ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li,

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48 *a few voices: f*

om - nes ce li,

ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li,

- li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li,

ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li,

ce - li, ce - li, ce - li, ce - li,

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51 With crisp, spitting consonants (♩ = ca. 152)

...and the earth exudes Life

f et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem *simile*

f et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem *simile*

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f et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem *simile*

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem

59

Because the ancient serpent is suffocated...

f qui - - - a gut tur ser - pen - tis an - ti - que

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem

f qui - - - a gut tur ser - pen - tis an - ti - que

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63 *f* ...by these pearls, made from the Word of God

in is - tis mar - ga - ri - tis

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem

f in is tis mar - ga - ri - tis

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ma - te - ri - e Ver - bi De - i suf - fo - ca - tum est.

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem

ma - te - ri - e Ver - bi De - i suf - fo - ca - tum est.

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71 *and the earth exudes Life...*

suf - fo - ca - tum est. et ter - ra

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra

et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra

suf - fo - ca - tum est. et ter - ra

74 *simile*
 vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra
simile
 vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra
simile
 vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra
simile
 vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra vi - ri - di - ta - tem et ter - ra

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78
 vi - ri - di - ta - tem su - - - - dat.
 vi - ri - di - ta - tem su - dat.
 vi - ri - di - ta - tem su - - - - dat.
 vi - ri - di - ta - tem su - dat.

82 With a mysterious quality (♩ = ca. 70)

And so wherever they went they were welcomed

mp
 ooh
mp
 Un - de quo - cum - que ve - ni - en - tes per rex - e -
mp
 Un - de quo - cum que ve - ni - en - tes per - rex - e -
mp
 ooh

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89

mf

For the joy...

— Ve - lut cum gu - di - o

runt Ve - lut cum gu - di - o

runt Ve - lut cum gu - di - o

— Ve lut cum gu - di - o

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92

mf

...of celestial paradise, which they received

ce - les - tis pa - ra - di - si su - scep - te sunt, _____

ce - les - tis pa - ra - di - si su - scep - te sunt, _____

ce - les tis pa - ra - di - si su - scep - te sunt, _____

ce - les - tis pa - ra - di - si su - scep - te sunt, _____

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97

mf

...was the honor of their life made manifest

mf

qui - a in mo - rum ho - no - ri - fi - ce ap - pa - ru - e - runt. _____

qui - a in mo - rum ho - no - ri - fi - ce ap - pa - ru - e - runt. _____

qui - a in mo - rum ho - no - ri - fi - ce ap - pa - ru - e - runt. _____

qui - a in mo - rum ho - no - ri - fi - ce ap - pa - ru - e - runt. _____

102 Majestic (♩ = ca. 60)

f For truly God showered them in a dew, from which grew many aspects of fame *sub. mf*

De - us e - nim ro-rem in il - las mi - sit de quo mul - ti - plex fa - ma

f *sub. mf*

De - us e - nim ro-rem in il - las mi - sit de quo mul - ti - plex fa - ma

f *sub. mf*

De - us e - nim ro-rem in il - las mi - sit doh doh doh doh doh

f *sub. mf*

doh doh

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105 *mp* And so all people...

cre - - - vit i - ta quod om - nes po - pu - li

mp

cre - - - vit doh

mp

doh doh

mp

doh doh

mp

doh doh

mp

doh doh

108 ...partook of this honorable fame as nourishment.

mf *rit.* *p*

ex-hac ho-no-ra-bi-li fa - ma ve - lut ci - bum gu - sta - bant.

mf *rit.* *p*

ex-hac ho-no-ra-bi-li fa - ma ve - lut ci - bum gu - sta - bant.

mf *rit.* *p*

ex-hac ho-no-ra-bi-li fa - ma ve - lut ci - bum gu - sta - bant.

mf *rit.* *p*

ex-hac ho-no-ra-bi-li fa - ma ve - lut ci - bum gu - sta - bant.

114

mf *sub. mf*

S1 Al - - - le - lu - -

S2 *mf* Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

A1 *mf* Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

A2 *mf* Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

A3 *mf* Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

117 *sub. mf*

- - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia!

121

mp *close slowly to 'n'* *lunga*

S1 A - - - men. (n)

S2 *mp* *close slowly to 'n'* *lunga*

A - - - men. (n)

A1 *mp* *close slowly to 'n'* *lunga*

A - - - men. (n)

A2 *mp* *close slowly to 'n'* *lunga*

A - - - men. (n)