

Qualifying Examination for Kate Doyle: Hildegard von Bingen  
Submitted by Susan McClary  
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Until recently, few musicologists took Hildegard von Bingen into account when they presented surveys of medieval music, largely because she had been forgotten. But even after her work came to light, she has remained difficult to incorporate into surveys in part because she seems so anomalous with respect to her gender, her contributions to so many disparate areas of cultural activity, her idiosyncratic takes on theology, and her musical style.

In your essay, situate Hildegard into her historical context, discussing at least:

- her own accounts of her creativity and career;
- her relationships with contemporaries (directly or through correspondence);
- her ways of drawing on and channeling various influences or traditions.

Then analyze her “O viridissima virga” (score attached). How does she shape this piece with respect to melodic contour, pitch center, use of vocal range, settings of syllables, expressivity?

O viridissima virga, ave,  
que in ventoso flabro sciscitationis  
sanctorum prodisti.

Cum venit tempus  
quod tu floruisti in ramis tuis,  
ave, ave fuit tibi,  
auiā calor solis in te sudavit  
sicut odor balsami.

Nam in te fluruit pulcher flos  
qui odorem dedit  
ominibus aromatibus  
que arida erant.

Et illa apparuerunt omnia  
in viriditate plena.

Unde celi dederunt rorem super gramen  
et omnis terra leta facta est,  
quoniam viscera ipsius frumentum protulerunt  
et quoniam volucres celi  
nidos in ipsa havuerunt.

Deinde facta est esca hominibus  
et gaudium magnum epulantium.  
Unde, o suavis Virgo,  
in te non deficit ullum gaudium.

Hec omina Eva contempsit.

Nunc autem laus sit Altissimo.

que p[ro]vidēat

—

mat[er]iam

—

quam mag[is]

—

vir[gin]e de q[ui]a

—

cit[is] quā fecit

—

in et ampliat

—

Inci[pi]t conc[ep]ti

—

rat[ur] om[n]is

—

na deus te

nedictionē pre[ter] p[ro]tulit quā etia[m] hominib[us]

—

no[n]cuss[er]et. Unde o saluatrix que nouū lu-

—

men humano generi p[ro]tulisti collige mem-

—

bra filii tui ad celestem armoniam.

**O**mnidissima uirga aue que Des. maria.

—

in uentoso flabro sciscitationis sanctorū

—

prodisti. Cum uenit tempus quod tu flo-

—

ruisti in ramis tuis aue aue sit tibi quia

—

calor solis in te sudauit sicut odor balsami.

Nam inter floruit pulcher flos qui odorem de-

dit omnibus aromaribus que arida erant.

Et illa apparuerunt omnia in uiriditate

plena. Unde celi dederunt rorem super

gramen & omnis terra facta est quod uiscera

ipsius frumentum protulerunt et quod uo-

lucres celi nidof in ipsa habuerunt. De-

inde facta est esca hominibus et gaudium mag-

num epulantium unde osuauis uirgo in-

te non deficit ullum gaudium. Hec

omnia eua contempsit. Nunc autem laus

fit ei nulli. Non uis de sancta MARIA.

quod deus ante omnem creaturam in

O pulcherrima et dulcissima qua

deus inter delectabatur cum amplexu

loris sui inter posuit ita quod filius ei

te lactatus est. Venter enim tuus

dum habuit cum omni celestis sy-

nia de te sonuit quia uirgo filium de-

casti ubi castitas tua in deo clarum

Viscera tua gaudium habuerunt sic

super quod ros cecidit cum ei uiriditate in-

ter et inter factum est omnia omni gaudium

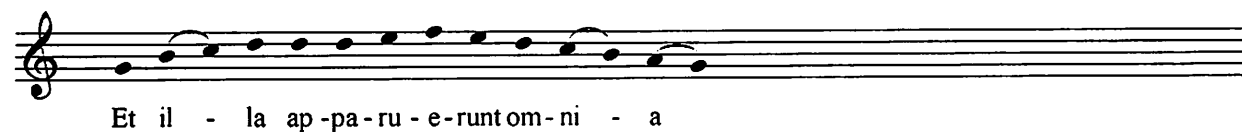
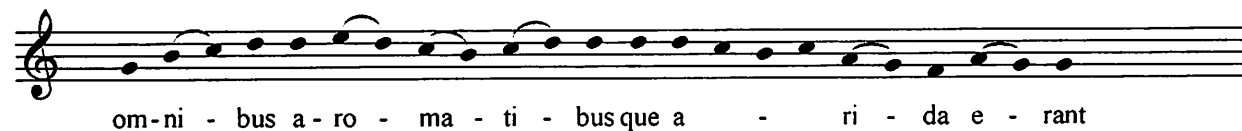
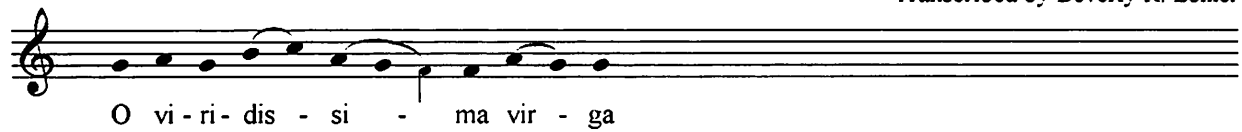
omnis ecclesia in gaudio rutilat ac in-

# O viridissima virga

Song, R 474-474a

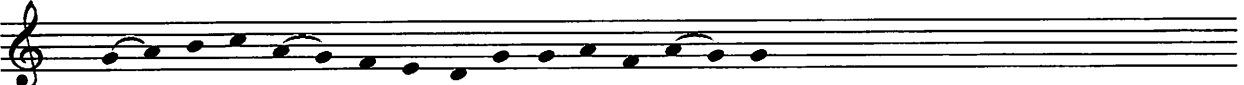
Composed by Hildegard of Bingen

Transcribed by Beverly R. Lomer






in vi - ri - di - ta - te ple - na



Un - de ce - li de - de - runt ro - rem su - per gra - men



et om - nis ter - ra le - ta fac - ta est quo - ni - am vis - ce - ra ip - si - us fru - men - tum



pro - tu - le - runt et quo - ni - am vo - lu - cres ce - li ni - dos in



ip - sa ha - bu - e - runt



De - in - de fac - ta est es - ca ho - mi - ni - bus



et gau - di - um mag - num e - pu - lan - ti - um




un - de o sua - vis vir - go in te non de - fi - cit



ul - lum gau - di - um



Hec om - ni - a E - va con - temp - sit



Nunc au - tem laus sit Al - tis - si - mo

## 2. Kate Doyle: Nineteenth-Century Listening Practices (Brittan)

Consider the attached musical example and recording from Berlioz's *Le Retour à la vie* (the sequel to the *Symphonie fantastique*). Is this music? What kind of listening is suggested by such a piece? What kind of instrumental innovations render it possible? Imagine that you are using it as the springboard for a graduate-level lecture on nineteenth-century listening practices and auditory cultures. Outline a teaching plan in which you do the following, in any order:

- situate the piece historically
- discuss the influences (philosophical, scientific, organological, technological) that produced it
- outline the ways in which it highlights shifts in listening practices, priorities, and philosophies
- survey recent literature that might allow students to situate or explore questions raised by the piece, taking care to underscore key concepts
- use the piece to introduce the idea—and contemplate the *value*—of 'sound studies' as an extension/revision of our shared musicological project

### **3. Kate Doyle: Rameau, *Pygmalion* (Coward)**

Discuss Rameau's *Pygmalion* in terms of eighteenth-century musical aesthetics and the composer's own views on music and the arts. Trace its aesthetic, along with its musical content, back to the first operatic staging of Pygmalion and his statue in La Motte/La Barre's *Le Triomphe des arts* of 1700, and show how both represent a break from earlier, seventeenth-century ideals. Can you interpret Rameau's and La Barre's settings, and perhaps other eighteenth-century iterations of the theme, as manifestos of a new kind of music and art? Finally, discuss the moment of the statue's awakening as the musical and dramatic climax of this work, and say why this moment might have had special meaning for Rameau.

#### **4. Kate Doyle: Downtown Experimental Music (Walser)**

Building on the issues raised by Christian Wolff's article about the various strategies he pursued as a composer and performer of experimental music and the results he achieved (or didn't), along with George Lewis's book and one other source (from your bibliography) of your choosing, discuss and compare the strategies and tactics that have guided and impelled people who have made what is called experimental music. To what extent IS there such a thing as experimental music, and to what extent does the label corral very different projects (and if so, for what reasons is it used)?