

Verbum caro factum est – chant

Gaude, virgo nobilis/Verbum caro factum est/Et veritate – Huelgas manuscript

“Verbum caro” is one of the more well-known Christmas texts, and this chant is traditionally sung on Christmas morning. The text is then used in a motet and paired with yet another text that celebrates Mary’s role in the life of Christ. Motets are works composed with multiple texts going on at the same time over a non-texted tune. We perform the piece with the “Verbum” text, then add the “Gaude” text on top. **Cantor: Katja**

Viderunt omnes – Magister Perotin (c. 1198)

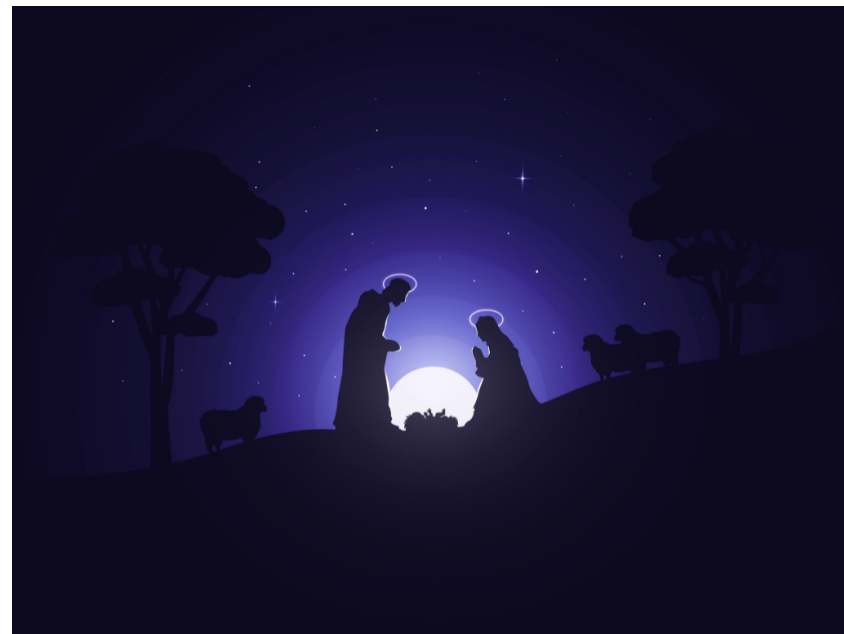
Contained within the three sources that we have for Notre Dame polyphony are two works of four-voice organum: “Viderunt omnes” and “Sederunt principes.” These are among the first examples of four-voice writing that we have found, and we can narrow the date and author based on corroborating sources. “Viderunt” repeats small segments of music at different pitch levels, all within the same rhythmic pattern, and each of the three upper voices trade segments constantly. This creates an undulating, woven rope of sound that is underpinned by the “Viderunt omnes” chant notes held for impressive lengths of time. Some say this work is the pinnacle of Notre Dame polyphony; it certainly is magnificent.

**Soloists: Laura, Juli, Heather, Anna, Alissa, Andrea**

Verbum patris humanatur – Later Cambridge (c. 1200)

We end the concert with an exuberant conductus taken from a source in England referred to as “the Later Cambridge songs.” Unlike most of the sources listed above, which were made to last, this source was an informal songbook and heavily damaged by the time it was found. Nevertheless, this three-part conductus has been reconstructed, and scholars think it might be the earliest extant 3-voice work.

**Soloists: Katja, Maria, Alissa, Tansy, Andrea**



SCIVIAS MEDIEVAL ENSEMBLE PRESENTS

# HODIE!

## A HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

*Directed by Dr. Heather Holmquest*

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**DECEMBER 17TH, 2021  
7:30PM  
ASBURY FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH**

## Personnel

Laura Anderson	Alissa Magee
Anna Atwater	Maria Mastro Simone
Barb Conley	Debra McCollough
Tansy Deutsch	Andrea McGaugh
Juli Elliott	Katja Pennypacker
Heather Holmquest	

## Program and Notes

Hodie aperuit – Hildegard von Bingen (late 12<sup>th</sup> century)

This short antiphon comes from the Dendermonde Codex, one of two sources of Hildegard's compositions. The piece evokes three images that are metaphors of Christ's birth: a gate, an opening flower, and dawn light. **Soloist: Juli**

Verbum bonum et suave – Huelgas manuscript (c. 1300)

This two-voice organum is based on a chant that was sung on Epiphany. This is an example of discant organum—a new voice is added to pre-existing chant and both voices are sung rhythmically at a moderate pace. This version is taken from the Huelgas manuscript, which was compiled in a Cistercian convent in northern Spain. **Soloists: Juli, Alissa, Tansy, Debbie**

Senescente mundano filio – Paris BN Fonds Latin 3549 (c. 1300)

The Saint Martial school of composition, often called "Aquitanian polyphony" by some scholars, is considered the transition between monophonic chant and the rhythmic polyphony of the Notre Dame school. This duet is a conductus, which is two-voice polyphony that is newly composed (i.e. not based on a pre-existing chant). Instead of using specified

rhythms, singers of this music line up the syllables and let the notes tumble out as they may. **Soloists: Laura, Heather**

Ortu regis evanescit – W2 Wolfenbüttel (mid 13<sup>th</sup> century)

Taken from one of the Notre Dame school manuscripts, this three-voice discant organum has modal shifts and tricky passages to navigate. Rarely, if ever, has this piece been recorded in the modern day, so it's possible that this is a modern premiere of this stunning work and its luxuriant poetic depiction of winter giving way to spring and dark giving way to light when Christ is born.

**Soloists: Anna, Laura, Barbara, Andrea, Heather, Juli**

O quam preciosa – Hildegard von Bingen

Another of Hildegard's chants to honor Christ's birth is performed here by the Scivias altos. This is a responsory chant, which means that there is a refrain after each of the two verses.

**Soloists: Andrea, Debbie, Barbara**

Alleluya, Dies sanctificatus – W2 Wolfenbüttel

This piece, also from the Notre Dame school, features both types of organum: florid organum, which features an upper voice singing melodically over sustained notes of pre-existing chant; and discant organum, which features both the chant and upper voice moving together rhythmically. Only parts of the chant were decorated with a second voice, so you will hear portions of the chant sung by itself interspersed with polyphony.

**Soloists: Anna, Katja, Tansy**

Cristo e nato – Laudario di Cortona (mid 13<sup>th</sup> century)

Our only non-Latin piece this evening comes from a songbook featuring laude, or praise songs in the vernacular Italian. These songs are still sung in Italy to this day. Fittingly, we selected a joyous tune that celebrates Christ's birth.

**Soloists: Katja, Debbie, Heather, Barbara**