



Upcoming Season

We hope that you will join us for our 2003-04 season,
which will include a concert of German polyphony through the ages,
a chamber version of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*,
Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Five Mystical Songs*,



Ildebrando Pizzetti's *Requiem*.

For details, watch your mail or visit us at www.cerddorion.org.

If you are not yet on our mailing list and would like to receive advance notice of Cerddorion events,
you may send an e-mail with your name, address, and e-mail to
cerddorion_info@earthlink.net, or write to us at:

Cerddorion NYC, Inc.
Post Office Box 946, Village Station
New York, NY 10014-0946



CERDDORION

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

KRISTINA BOERGER
Artistic Director

presents

REGENERATIONS

Ancient Tunes Revisited



Tuesday, May 13, 2003 - 8:00 p.m.
St. John's Episcopal Church
139 St. John's Place
Brooklyn, New York

Saturday, May 17, 2003 - 8:00 p.m.
Church of St. Luke in the Fields
487 Hudson Street
Manhattan, New York

CERDDORION

SOPRANOS

Prentice Clark
Panny King
Marilyn Lenat
Eva Lund
Wendy Reitmeier
Jeanette Rodriguez
Ellen Schorr

TENORS

David Deschamps
Philip Gallo
Steve Parkey
Dale Rejtmar
Eddie Rubeiz

ALTOS

Judith Cobb
Ilse de Veer
Susan Glass
Kate Kurz
Cathy Markoff
Myrna Nachman
Gretta Wren

BASSES

Raphael Biran
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Louis Flaim
Michael Fletcher
Peter Kurz
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Cerddorion

Now in its eighth season, Cerddorion (the name means “musicians” in Welsh) has become one of the most admired ensembles in the thriving New York choral music scene.

As the group’s name suggests, Cerddorion aspires to musicianship in its fullest sense, using the human voice to explore and fulfill the expressive potential of the art. Audiences have quickly come to know Cerddorion for its interpretive depth as well as its technical excellence.

Our repertoire spans the chamber choral literature, from early Renaissance works to new compositions. Past programs have focused on: Josquin; Monteverdi; early American hymns and spirituals; double-choir works by Bach and Schütz; Brahms, Schubert, and Rheinberger; Delius, Elgar, and other post-Romantics; Hindemith and his contemporaries; and 21st-century composers including Robert Dennis, Tom Shake, and Giles Swayne.

Since our founding in 1995 by Susanne Peck, we have attracted significant recognition and numerous invitations to collaborate with other prestigious artists. In August 1998 and August 1999, the group served as the resident teaching ensemble for the Dennis Keene Choral Festival in Kent, Connecticut. Cerddorion has performed Bach’s *Cantata 140* and Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas* with the acclaimed early music ensemble Concert Royal. In October 2001, Cerddorion lent its “ethereal sounds” (*Dance Insider*, 10/10/01) to a performance with Christopher Caines Dancers, produced by Dancing in the Streets and Dana Salisbury.

Robert Page, director of the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh and professor of Music at Carnegie Mellon University, has called Cerddorion “a chamber ensemble where ‘ensemble’ is the key word. The sheen, the matching of sounds is a joy to hear...whether it be Poulenc, Britten, Hindemith, Elgar or Victoria.”

2002-2003

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Program

Please reserve your applause until the end of each set.

O God, Thou Art My God Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Thou Knowest, Lord

Funeral Sentences (*excerpt*)

Purcell’s Funeral Sentence Paul Ayres (b. 1970)



It Was a Lover and His Lass Thomas Morley (ca. 1557-1602)

Marilyn Lenat, Jeannette Rodriguez, Ellen Schorr

Ilse de Veer, Cathy Markoff, Myrna Nachman

Philip Gallo, Eddie Rubeiz

Raphael Biran, Alan Reinhardt

Now is the Month of Maying Thomas Morley

Now is the Month of Maying Paul Ayres



De Confessoribus: O successores Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

Hildegard Motets Frank Ferko (b. 1950)

I. O verbum Patris

V. O ignis Spiritus Paracliti

IX. Nunc gaudeant



The Golden Peacock Robert Dennis (b. 1933)

I. O Western Wind

II. Sant Jacobs Strasse

III. L’Homme Armé

IV. Di goldene Pave

V. Katy Cruel



Komm, süßer Tod Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Harmonic realization, K. Boerger

Komm, süßer Tod Edwin London (b. 1929)

Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara Johann Sebastian Bach

Program Notes

Tonight's concert features music by four dead composers and four living ones. All the pieces by the living composers are reworkings of material that had been created before they were born – in one case as many as eight centuries earlier. The dead composers featured tonight have been chosen because they have supplied the material with which the living have worked.

The new compositions employ different methods of reusing old material, one of which represents the absolute starting point of harmonic composition in the Western art-music tradition. This method, *cantus firmus* technique, involves taking a pre-existing melody and using it as the basis for a new composition. The first pieces of sacred polyphony were generated by harmonizing *canti firmi* taken from the existing corpus of Gregorian chant. Being very adaptable to stylistic evolutions, this method has never gone out of vogue, although in the sixteenth century, a more complicated practice for re-using old material was developed. The new parody technique involved borrowing no mere melody but rather an entire polyphonic structure as the model. Typically based on a secular song in four voice parts, the new composition—usually a motet or a cyclic Mass in four, five, or six voice parts—would share several important architectural features with its model, borrowing and expanding on its salient points of imitation, characteristic melodic figures, and structurally important cadences. Another method of recomposition presented tonight, a contemporary practice, involves using all of the model's pitches—and no more—but in new ways that utterly transform the piece.

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)—arguably the greatest English composer between William Byrd and Benjamin Britten—began his career as a boy soprano in the Chapel Royal and throughout his life never left the musical service of the church. At the age of twenty, he replaced his teacher, John Blow, as organist of Westminster Abbey, a post he retained until his death. Shortly after earning this post, he also became composer and organist of the Anglican Chapel Royal. In his short life, he served under a parade of monarchs: Charles II, James II, and William and Mary. He also distinguished himself as a composer of music for the public theater. Among the most famous pieces he wrote at court are his odes for the birthday of Queen Mary and the service music for her funeral, which latter took place in the first days of 1695. His own funeral took place later that year, in Westminster Abbey, where, in the presence of the choirs of the Abbey and the Chapel Royal, this great middle-Baroque composer was buried near the organ he had played for sixteen years.

Our Purcell set opens with “O God, Thou Art My God,” an anthem originally scored for four-voiced chorus and organ continuo. The continuo part is a strict *basso sequent*—containing no pitches not already present in the voice parts—and with this justification we adapt the anthem to our *a cappella* program. Passages scored for reduced textures feature some unexpected chromaticism, but the *tutti* sections are largely diatonic, lending this piece its air of grace, warmth, and optimism.

Our next two Purcell selections are chosen as preludes to the Paul Ayres piece that closes the set. The text in all three comes from the Funeral Sentences of the traditional Anglican Burial Service. Purcell set these lines in three versions, and we begin with the most beloved one, the sorrowful, restrained, *a cappella* setting of the final Sentence (“Thou knowest, Lord”) that he made for Queen Mary's funeral. The music communicates very directly to the listener in its predominantly homophonic texture and judicious use of chromaticism. We continue with the first two Sentences (“Man that is born of a woman” and “In the midst of life”), excerpted from Purcell's 1678 version for four voices and continuo. This version is the one used by Paul Ayres.

Kristina Boerger

An accomplished conductor, singer, and choral arranger, Kristina Boerger is now in her third season as Cerddorion's Artistic Director. She comes from Champaign-Urbana, where she earned a D.M.A. in choral conducting and literature from the University of Illinois. She received her formative music training from pianist Annie Sherter.

Currently a professor of music history at Barnard College, Dr. Boerger has also served on the faculties of Lake Forest College and Millikin University. She has been a guest conductor, adjudicator, and ensemble clinician in several U.S. cities, in Quebec City, and in Mar del Plata, Argentina.

As Founding Director of AMASONG, an ensemble for 60 women's voices, Dr. Boerger has conducted and produced two award-winning compact discs, appeared in several national venues, and toured the Czech Republic. Her work with AMASONG is the subject of a documentary currently in production for broadcast on public television. Ensembles throughout the country sing her choral arrangements and compositions. In 2000, her work *Draum om nedsnodde bruer*, for treble chorus and double bass, won the GLAMA for Best Composition.

Komm, süßer Tod

Komm, süßer Tod, komm selige Ruh!
Komm, führe mich in Friede,
weil ich der Welt bin müde.
Ach, komm! Ich wart' auf dich.
Komm bald und führe mich.
Drück mir die Augen zu.
Komm, selige Ruh!

J.S. Bach

Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara

Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara
und lasst die süße Musika
ganz freudereich erschallen,
daß ich möge mit Jesulein,
dem wunderschönen bräut'gam mein,
in steter Liebe wallen.
Singet, springet, jubilieret, triumphieret!
Dankt dem Herren!
Groß ist der König der Ehren!

Martin Luther

Come, sweet Death

Come, sweet death, come blessed rest!
Come, lead me in joy,
For I am world-weary.
Ah, come! I await thee.
Come soon and lead me.
Draw down my eyelids.
Come, blessed rest!

trans. K. Boerger

Strum the Strings of the Zither

Strum the strings of the zither
And let the sweet music
Full joyously resound,
For I would with dear Jesus,
My wondrous lovely bridegroom,
Abide in steadfast love.
Sing, dance, rejoice, and be triumphant!
Give thanks to the Lord!
Great is the King of Glory!

trans. K. Boerger

Our in presenting it in an altered form is to give the listener enough of Purcell's material to elucidate Ayres's process without exhausting the material or divulging the "punch line." Therefore, we have cut repeats that Purcell scored for different textures, and we decline to sing the third Sentence, having already presented it in its later, most sublime setting. In contrast to the 1695 work, this setting is highly polyphonic and riddled with chromaticism, some of it quite tortured. The polyphony is generated by points of imitation that should be recognizable as they recur in the Ayres piece, especially the memorable descent created by the successive entrances on the first word, "Man."

Paul Ayres (b. 1970) was born in West London where he studied piano under Margrit Kensbock and sang in the parish choir under John Miley. He attended Oxford University and graduated as an organ scholar from Merton College in 1991. He retains his base in West London, freelancing as a choral conductor, musical director, organist, and accompanist with various amateur and professional musicians. A widely commissioned and performed composer, Ayres often begins with an extant work as a model; the resulting treatment may range from a simple arrangement of the original to a structure in which the existence of the model is barely detectable.

In "Purcell's Funeral Sentence," composed in 1999 for eight voices, Ayres preserves the four voices of the original almost exactly. To the extra four voices, he assigns new material, often using the tools of Renaissance parody technique. As employed here, these tools result in a much more dense polyphony, a vastly expanded *ambitus* (range of pitches), and frequent cross-relations and tone clusters. Purcell's own craft, however, is never obscured; rather, the original is heard in an exponential version of itself, expanded and colored by its projection to the threshold of the twenty-first century.

Thomas Morley (ca. 1557-1602) owes his singular place in music history to his genius for adaptation and recomposition. Like his master William Byrd before him and Purcell well after him, he was forced to manage his career around political conflicts between Catholics and Anglicans. But it was not his work at Saint Paul's Church or the Chapel Royal that distinguished him. He made his unique mark—and plenty of money—in the 1580s and '90s by recomposing and putting English texts to *canzonette* and *balletti* by Italian composers. The ever-popular five-voice "Now is the Month of Maying" is his recomposition of Orazio Vecchi's "*So ben mi ch'a bon tempo*," with a cleverer text, sunnier harmonies, and a much more playfully active "fa-la-la" refrain. We open our set, however, with his thoroughly original setting of the words of his local contemporary, William Shakespeare, in "It Was a Lover and His Lass," published in 1600. Morley scored this piece for solo singer with lute accompaniment in the manner of the new genre popularized by John Dowland. We present it here in a four-voice transcription, as Dowland did with his own lute airs, so that they—like madrigals, ballets, and canzonets—could be sung 'round the table for engaging and flirtatious entertainment at social gatherings of the well-bred. Our entire set will be performed in this manner, as conductor-less performances of secular polyphony sung for pure diversion among a group of friends.

The set culminates in Paul Ayres's recomposition of Morley's "Now Is the Month of Maying," scored for double choir. Here, as in his Funeral Sentences, the tools of parody technique are discernible, though Ayres leaves very little of the original material untransformed. The top voice in each choir sings the first phrase with the same melodic contour chosen by Morley; accompanying voices move in parallel or contrary motion to the melody until the first, rather jazzy, cadential figure. In the "fa-la-las" that follow, Ayres takes Morley's first three notes as a motif, spinning them out in a series of rhapsodic permutations. We leave other correspondences and novelties for the listener to discover.

In the last 20 years, overdue scholarship on Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) has supported her growing reputation as one of the most creative and accomplished individuals in history. To her belongs the largest extant corpus of Medieval chant attributable to one composer. In her long life, Hildegard was also an artist, a poet, a healer, a Mother Abbess, and a diplomat.

At the age of seven, Hildegard—the last of ten children—was tithed to the local monastery, where she was to spend a solitary, devotional life with daily visits only from a tutor and from a Father Confessor. With the guidance of her teacher Jutta, she became literate in Latin, learned to play the psaltery, and mastered music notation. To her Confessor, she regularly reported receiving divine visions on cosmology, morality, and the healing arts. Impressed by these accounts, her Confessor carried them to the outside world. Thus, Hildegard earned her reputation as a prophet and a saint. With this power, she made a successful bid for an abbey of her own, entered debates on Church policy, and once even convinced the Pope to reverse an intended course of action.

Hildegard's music is easily distinguishable from standard Gregorian chant, which follows certain conventions of mode and *ambitus* that do not limit her compositions. Her vivid language is uniquely heavy with matricentric and naturocentric imagery, as in her original concept of "*viriditas*"—suggesting something like "powerful greenness"—which invokes the creative, healing, and mystical power of the Feminine aspect of the Divine as manifest in the natural world. "*De Confessoribus: O successores*" is one in a set of chants each dedicated to a particular level of the Church hierarchy. Here Hildegard extols the virtues of the office of Confessor when practiced as God intends. Certainly, she had been blessed with a model practitioner of the vocation, one for whom she had much to thank.

The "Hildegard Motets" that follow were born of the enduring power of Hildegard's poetry to inspire. We present three from a set of nine motets by Frank Ferko (b. 1950), created between 1991 and 1993 as part of his *Hildegard Trilogy*, still in progress. These new settings of Hildegard's words were commissioned by the Chicago chamber ensemble, His Majestie's Clerkes. The composer states that the unique structure of each motet is dictated by the text and by considerations of text-painting, numerology (a very Medieval concern), and vocal color. Though we observe that several moments in these pieces suggest *cantus firmus* treatment, Ferko has revealed privately that in only one place—a seemingly unlikely one, at that—did he use actual material from a Hildegard chant as the basis of a new passage.

Ferko was born in Barberton, Ohio, where he began piano study with Grace Baughman as a youth. In his teen years he began working as a church organist and choral director. Having gone on to attend Valparaiso, Syracuse, and Northwestern Universities, Dr. Ferko holds degrees in piano and organ performance, music theory, and composition. His composition teachers include Richard Wienhorst and Alan Stout. Ferko has lectured on and widely performed Messiaen's organ music and published articles on avant-garde organ music in various music journals. Active as a composer, organist, and church music director in Chicago for the last 25 years, Ferko is also composer-in-residence for The Dale Warland Singers. His works have been widely performed in the United States and abroad, and he is the winner of numerous awards, fellowships, and grants. He premiered the first part of his *Hildegard Trilogy*, the "Hildegard Organ Cycle," at the Holland Festival Oude Muziek in Utrecht and has given subsequent performances in several major U.S. cities.

The five movements "*Di Goldene Pave*" ("The Golden Peacock") by Robert Dennis (b. 1933) are unified by *cantus firmus* practice. Each one is based on an anonymous, pre-existing source melody in a vernacular language. The centerpiece of the cycle, "L'Homme armé," is based on what is arguably the most famous

The Golden Peacock

O Western Wind

Oh western wind when will thou blow,
The small rain down came rain.
I wish that you were in my arms,
and I in bed again!

Sant Jacobs Strasse

Wer das Elend bawen will der mach
sich auf, und zich dahin wol auff
Sant Jacobs Strasse.

Zwei par Schuh die muss er han,
Ein Schuessel und ein Flaschen.

L'Homme armé

L'Homme, L'Homme, L'Homme armé
L'Homme arme doit-on doubter.
On a fait partout crier
que chacun se viengue armé
D'un haubregon de fer!

Di goldene Pave

Es iz gefloygen di goldene pave,
fun a fremden land.
Hot si verloyren di goldene feder,
mit a grossen shand.

Gefloygen, gefloygen, di goldene pave,
iber alle felder.
Hot si verloyren di goldene feder
in a fremden lender.

Vi es iz bitter, mein tayre mama,
a vasser on a fish,
Azoy is bitter, mein tayre mama,
Bei a fremden tish.

Katy Cruel

When I came to town
they called me the roving jewel.
Now they've changed their tune,
they call me Katy Cruel.

O that I were where I would be,
then would I be where I am not!
Here I am where I must be,
where I would go I cannot.

Saint Jacobs Street

He who wishes to cultivate misery,
Let him set off,
and travel to Saint Jacob's Road.

Two pairs of shoes he must have,
A bowl, and a bottle.

The Armed Man

The man, the man, the armed man!
The armed man is to be feared!
Everywhere it has been proclaimed
That everyone should arm himself
with an iron coat of mail.

The Golden Peacock

The golden peacock came flying
from a faraway land.
She lost her golden feather
With great shame.

The golden peacock flew and flew
over the fields.
She lost her golden feather
in a faraway land.

Bitter as it is, dear mother,
For a lake to have no fish,
So it is bitter, dear mother,
To eat from a stranger's table.

I know who I love,
and I know who does love me!
I know where I'm going and
I know who's going with me!

Thru the woods I'll go,
Thru the bogs and mire
Down the road I'll go,
To my heart's desire!

Nunc gaudeant

Nunc gaudeant materna viscera Ecclesie,
quia in superna simphonia
filii eius
in sinum suum collocati sunt.
Unde, o turpissime serpens,
confusus es,
quoniam quos tua estimatio
in visceribus suis habuit
nunc fulgent in sanguine Filii Dei,
et ideo laus tibi sit,
rex altissime.
Alleluia.

Hildegard von Bingen

Rejoice now

Rejoice now, Mother Womb of the Church,
for in the heaven's harmony
her offspring
are gathered together at her breast.
Wherefore, O foul serpent,
you are confounded.
For those whom you thought
you held in your grasp
now shine in the blood of God's Son.
Now therefore, praise be to you,
O King Most High!
Alleluia.

translated by Leo Nestor with the Rev. Paul F. DeLadurantaye

cantus firmus in Western art-music history. Numerous Renaissance composers chose this most popular folk tune of fifteenth-century France as the basis for their cyclic Masses. The title *Missa L'Homme armé* is found in the works lists of Dufay, Binchois, Busnoys, Vaqueras, and others, and the great Josquin Desprez composed two L'Homme armé Masses. About his cycle, Robert Dennis says: "In 1986, The Western Wind asked me to compose a one-minute version of their namesake song, the 16th-century English 'O Western Wind,' to be used as theme music for their radio program. From this grew the idea to write a group of settings of 'older' folk songs. 'St. Jacobs Strasse' is a 12th-century German pilgrims' hymn. 'L'Homme Armé' is a well-known 15th-century French song that gained extended life as a *cantus firmus* used in Masses by Dufay, Josquin, and others. 'Di Goldene Pave' is an 18th(?)-century Yiddish song about the homesickness felt by a young bride. 'Katy Cruel' was a very popular marching tune in 18th-century New England."

Dennis's recent commissions and performances include pieces composed for the Denver Project, the New York City Opera, the Western Wind Ensemble, the Jubal Trio, the American Brass Quintet, Calliope, the New York Women's Chorus, and the Lincoln Center Institute. His music for orchestra has been performed by the Cleveland, Chicago, and Louisville Symphony Orchestras. Mr. Dennis has also composed extensively for theater and film, including scores for productions at (among others) the Arena Stage, the Guthrie Theater, and Circle in the Square. Three of his eight scores composed for the Pilobolus Dance Theater were performed on the PBS series "Dance in America." Mr. Dennis was composer-in-residence for the Western Wind Vocal Ensemble in 1990-91 and 1996-97. He has written eight pieces for the group, including "*Die Goldene Pave*".

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), the great Baroque master, was very successful in his adaptation of existing material, whether he borrowed from others or from himself. For example, large portions of his "B-Minor Mass" are retexted versions of movements from his own liturgical cantatas. Another church organist and composer, Bach produced his most mature sacred works during his tenure at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, Germany. The musical staple of Lutheran worship was the chorale tune, a simple folk tune collected by Martin Luther—or newly composed by him—and given a devotional text. Luther's purpose for the chorale was to replace Gregorian chant and Latin polyphony, traditionally sung only by the clerics, with congregational singing in the vernacular. By Bach's time, the typical Lutheran would have known by heart the melodies and messages to a standard repertoire of chorales. Bach's use of the chorale tune as *cantus firmus* lends structure, drama, and theological commentary to his weekly Leipzig cantatas and to the great Christmas and Passion oratorios. Scholars suggest that in these works, the four-part chorale harmonizations—brilliant distillations of Bach's harmonic practice—were intended for "audience participation" in the lesson or story of the larger work.

The tune "*Komm süßer Tod*" fails to conform to the traditional AAB form of the Lutheran chorale, which may be explained by the scholarly conjecture that Bach wrote it himself. The realization heard here was made strictly according to the figured bass as found in Bach's collected works with only two exceptions: the suspensions in the alto voice at the ends of the first two phrases are added for the effect they will have when we re-sing this chorale according to the suggestions of Edwin London.

London (b.1926) was born in Philadelphia and attended college at the Oberlin Conservatory, majoring in french horn performance. He went on to pursue composition studies at the Manhattan School of Music and with Darius Milhaud and Luigi Dallapiccola, as well as studying conducting with Izler Solomon. In 1960 he earned his Ph.D. in composition from the University of Iowa. He has taught theory and composition on the music faculties of several prestigious colleges and universities, including Smith College, the University of Illinois, the University of California at San Diego, and Cleveland State University, where he served as

department chair. He is also founding director of the Cleveland Chamber Symphony. From 1974 to 1981 he chaired the National Council for the American Society of University Composers. At Illinois, he directed the ensemble Ineluctable Modality, a chorus dedicated to experimental music. His compositions encompass a wide palette of styles and include dramatic works for musicians, dancers, and mixed-media effects, solo and ensemble settings of the Biblical books of *Psalms* and *Proverbs*, a variety of instrumental chamber works, several large ensemble pieces, and a body of works for tape.

London's intent for recomposing Bach chorales was to extend Bach's own tradition of borrowing and recasting old material. London has published a set of possible devices that he says may be used to transform any Bach chorale without adding or subtracting any of the pitches Bach wrote. The performers choose the chorale, and they choose which of the suggested devices they will employ—and how—in any given performance. We choose not to explain our choices for tonight's interpretation; we prefer that you listen and wonder.

“Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara” is a later verse of Luther's well-known “Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern.” In this form, it appears in Bach's cantata BWV 36, *Schwingt freudig, euch empor*. It is a shining profession of joy and thanksgiving, whose metaphor for these is the resounding in our instruments and voices of sweet music. With this we close our program—and our season—and we thank you for being with us.

—Kristina Boeger

O ignis Spiritus Paracliti

O ignis Spiritus Paracliti,
vita vite omnis creature,
sanctus es vivificando formas.

Sanctus es unguendo
periculose fractos,
sanctus es tergendo
fetida vulnera.

O spiraculum sanctitatis,
o ignis caritatis,
a dulcis gustus in pectoribus
et infusio cordium
in bono odore virtutum.

O fons purissime,
in quo consideratur
quod Deus alienos colligit
et perditos requirit.

O lorica vite
et spes compaginis membrorum omnium
et o cingulum honestatis:
salva beatos.

Custodi eos qui carcerati sunt
ab inimico,
et solve ligatos
quos divina vis salvare vult.

O iter fortissimum,
quod penetravit omnia
in altissimis et in terrenis
et in omnibus abyssis,
tu omnes componis et colligis.

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

Tu etiam semper educis doctos
per inspirationem Sapientie
letificatos.

Unde laus tibi sit,
qui es sonus laudis
et gaudium vite,
spes et honor fortissimus,
dans premia lucis.

O fire of the Spirit Paraclete

O fire of the Spirit Paraclete!
Living life of all your creatures!
You are holy, enlivening all creation's patterns.

You are holy, anointing
those dangerously broken.
You are holy, cleansing
those festering wounds.

O breath of holiness,
O fire of love,
O sweet taste in our breasts
and inpouring to our hearts
with the pleasant scent of virtues.

O fountain most pure,
in which we see reflected
God's gathering of the strangers
and his pursuit of the lost.

O breastplate of life
and hope of the company of all its members,
O belt of honor,
save our blessed ones.

Guard those who are imprisoned
by the enemy,
and break the bonds of those
whom the divine power wishes to save.

O most powerful journey
which pervades all things
in the high places, in earth's places,
and in all places below:
You gather and bind all the peoples.

You cause the clouds to flow forth, the air to move about
and even the stones to possess moisture,
earth's waters to make streams
And earth to exude its greenery.

And more, you always guide the learned ones:
through the inspiration of wisdom
you make them glad.

Therefore, praise be to you,
you who are the sound of praise
and the joy of life,
hope and highest honor,
bestowing the gifts of the light.

Texts & Translations

De Confessoribus: O successores

O successores fortissimi leonis
inter templum et altare
dominantes in ministracione eius
sicut angeli sonant in laudibus
et sicut assunt populis in adiutorio,
vos estis inter illos qui hec faciunt
semper curam habentes in officio Agni.

Hildegard von Bingen

O successors of the most powerful lion

O successors of the most powerful lion,
between temple and altar
you govern in His ministry;
just as the angels sing praises
and assist the peoples with their support,
you are among those who do thus,
always healing in the name of the Lamb.

trans. Marianne Richtert Pfau

Hildegard Motets

O verbum Patris

O verbum Patris,
tu lumen prime aurore
in circulo rota es,
omnia in divina vi operans.
O tu prescientia Dei,
omnia opera tua previdisti,
sicut voluisti,
ita quod in medio potencie tue latuit.

quod omnia prescivisti,
et operatus es
quasi in similitudine rote
cuncta circueuntis,
que initium non accepit
nec in fine prostrata est.

Hildegard von Bingen

O Word of the Father

O Word of the Father,
You, light of first dawn
in a spinning wheel,
exercising you divine power in all things.
You, foreknowledge of God,
foreseeing all of your works
as you willed them to be
in such a way that it lay hidden in the center of
your potency
for you knew all things from the beginning
and you created
in similitude to a wheel
which encompassed all,
having no beginning
nor brought down by any end.

translated by Leo Nestor with the Rev. Paul F. DeLadurantaye

O God, Thou Art My God

O God, thou art my God:
Early will I seek thee.
My soul thirsteth for thee,
my flesh also longeth after thee
in a barren and dry land where no water is.
Thus have I look'd for thee in holiness,
that I might behold thy pow'r and glory.
For thy loving kindness is better than life itself:
my lips shall praise thee.
As long as I live will I magnify thee on this manner
and lift up my hands in thy Name.
Because thou hast been my helper,
therefore under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.
Hallelujah.

Psalm 63, vv. 1-5, 8

Thou Knowest, Lord

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts,
shut not thy merciful ears unto our prayers;
but spare us, Lord most holy,
O God most mighty,
O holy and most merciful Saviour,
thou most worthy Judge eternal.
Suffer us not, at our last hour,
for any pains of death, to fall away from thee.

from the Anglican Burial Service

Purcell's Funeral Sentence

Thou Knowest, Lord

Man that is born of a woman
hath but a short time to live,
and is full of misery.
He cometh up, and is cut down like a flow'r;
He fleeth as it were a shadow,
and ne'er continueth in one stay.
In the midst of life we are in death:
of whom may we seek for succour,
but of thee, O Lord?
who for our sins are justly displeased.
Yet, O Lord most mighty,
O holy and most merciful Saviour,
deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.
Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts.
Shut not thy merciful ears unto our prayers;
but spare us, Lord most holy,
O God most mighty,
O holy and most merciful Saviour,
thou most worthy Judge eternal.
Suffer us not, at our last hour,
for any pains of death, to fall away from thee.

from the Anglican Burial Service

It Was a Lover and His Lass

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hay, and a ho, and a hay nonino,
That o'er the green cornfield did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time;
When birds do sing, hey ding-a-ding, ding:
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hay, and a ho, and a hay nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the spring time...

This carol they began that hour,
With a hay, and a ho, and a hay nonino,
How that life was but a flower,
In the spring time...

And therefore take the present time
With a hay, and a ho, and a hay nonino,
For love is crowned with the prime,
In the spring time...

"As You Like It"
William Shakespeare

Now is the Month of Maying

Now is the month of maying,
When merry lads are playing,
Fa la la...

Each with his bonny lass
Upon the greeny grass.
Fa la la...

The spring, clad all in gladness,
Doth laugh at winter's sadness,
Fa la la...

And to the bagpipe's sound
The nymphs tread out their ground.
Fa la la...

Fie then! why sit we musing,
Youth's sweet delight refusing?
Fa la la...

Say, dainty nymphs, and speak,
Shall we play barley break?
Fa la la...