

ANTHOLOGY 25: Notes, Texts and Translations

When four young women gathered to sing through some medieval chant and polyphony in the spring of 1986, it was something that countless small groups of musicians do every day in a search for artistic adventure and autonomy that their normal musical pursuits can't provide. Once every now and then, the people themselves and the unity of their musical intent just click . . . there's a chemistry . . . and a long term musical relationship is born.

In partnership with each other, and with **harmonia mundi usa** and long-time producer Robina Young, we've been privileged to be able to record almost all of our concert programs. In this holiday version of *Anthology 25*, we've created a special program, with works from our recordings of sacred music -- PLUS a brand new work by the celebrated New York composer David Lang -- to celebrate 25 years together. We offer it as our anniversary gift to you, our listeners, who have helped to make it all possible.



Prosa: Gaude Virgo Salutata - *An English Ladymass* (1992)

In 1990, a cassette tape demo landed on the desk of artistic director Robina Young at the Los Angeles branch of *harmonia mundi france*. She took a chance, and we recorded *An English Ladymass*, released in 1992. Astonishingly (to us) it climbed the classical charts and sat in the top 10 for a long time. This lovely Irish chant opens that recording. It is taken from the *Dublin Troper* (c. 1400), a source we continually return to for plainchant masterpieces.

Gaude, virgo, salutata gabriele nuncio.
Gaude, mater jucundata jesu puerperio.
Gaude, conresuscitata resurgente filio.
Gaude, tua sublimata prole plena gaudio.
Gaude, sumpta et locata cum jesu in solio.

Esto nobis advocata in magno iudicio. O maria.

Rejoice, virgin greeted by Gabriel, the messenger.
Rejoice, mother delighted by Jesus' birth.
Rejoice, Thou who art resuscitated with the rising son.
Rejoice in all Thy upraised joyful descendants.
Rejoice, Thou who art taken up and placed on the throne with Jesus.

Be our advocate at the great judgment. O Mary.

Trans: Susan Hellauer

Conductus: Ave Maria salus hominum - *The Lily & the Lamb* (1995)

The Lily & the Lamb is the only program we've recorded in Europe. Boxgrove Priory, a 12th-century church near Chichester, England, was acoustically perfect, AND was used as a maneuver landmark for a local flying school. Despite the 20th-century interruptions, the final sound pleased us greatly. This 13th-century 3-voice English conductus (in which all voices declaim the text together), features lively iambic rhythms in its untexted sections.

Ave Maria salus hominum
cella regia qua lux luminum
se clausit pia numen numinum
viri nescia Christum dominum.

Tu que genuisti virgoque mansisti
decus virginum plebi conferisti
sui mater Christi luctus terminum.

Hail, Mary, humanity's salvation,
royal chamber, where the light of lights
has found its place, the God of gods,
not knowing man, Christ the lord.

You who gave birth and remained a virgin,
ornament of virgins, have given the people,
mother of Christ, an end of their affliction.

Trans: Ernest H. Sanders

Carol: Ecce quod natura - *On Yoolis Night* (1993)

While researching *An English Ladymass*, we noticed how very many poems and songs were devoted to Christmas themes in English polyphonic sources -- far more than in continental sources. *On Yoolis Night* was our first Christmas-themed recording, blending English 13th-century polyphony with 14th- and 15th-century carols. This carol is written in two voices, but we have added the typical English "fauxbourdon" harmony line, creating a rich triadic texture.

Ecce quod natura mutat sua jura:
virgo parit pura dei filium.

Behold, nature changes her law:
a pure virgin bears God's son.

Ecce, novum gaudium, ecce novum mirum:
virgo parit filium, que non novit virum;
que non novit virum, sed ut pirus pirum,
gleba fert sphirum, rosa lilium.

Behold, a new joy, behold, new wonder:
a virgin bears a son without knowing man;
without knowing man, but as the pear tree bears a pear,
the earth creates a sapphire and the rose a lily.

Nequivit divinitas plus humiliari,
nec nostra fragilitas magis exaltari;
magis exaltari quam celo locari,
deo coequari per conjugium.

Divinity could not be more humbled,
nor could our fragility be more exalted;
more exalted than to be placed in heaven,
equal with God, through this union.

Trans: Ernest H. Sanders

Antiphon: Que es ista - A Lammas Ladymass (1998)

When we created *An English Ladymass* in 1987, our main problem was what music to leave out, since we had more than enough lovely songs for a month of Ladymasses. So we designed one more Ladymass, for the feast of Mary's Assumption, which coincides with the ancient British harvest festival of Lammas. This antiphon to Mary uses language and imagery from the Song of Songs.

Que es ista que ascendit sicut aurora consurgens
pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol,
terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.

Who is she that ascends like the rising dawn,
beautiful as the moon, bright-shining as the sun,
awesome as an army in battle array?

Trans: Susan Hellauer

the wood and the vine (David Lang, 2011)

This new work for Anonymous 4 by the *Bang on a Can* founder and composer is part of a larger work called 'love fail' that David Lang and Anonymous 4 are working on for the future.

Note from the composer:

"When the members of Anonymous 4 contacted me about the possibility of writing something for them it was clear they had my piece 'the little match girl passion' in mind. That work, with its post-medieval economy and religious undercurrent seemed to live right at the center of their aesthetic universe, since they sing a lot of ancient religious music with such directness and such purity. I told them I was done with religious music for a while, but that the medieval thing was still interesting to me, and they immediately suggested I look at the 12th century poet Marie de France. I did. And I was glad I did. I found one simple story, a tiny episode in the relationship of Tristan and Isolde. One thing that jumped out at me was that Isolde is never named in this story, she is just 'she,' an archetypal woman in love, in trouble. I started wondering what would happen if I took out his name as well, and changed all the details so that the story became neither old, nor modern. Could I make it seem like a description of any relationship between a man and a woman, in any era, gone hopelessly wrong? The man in my version of the text tells the woman that they "are like the vine that winds itself around the branch.... If someone pulls the two apart then both will die." Then he writes a song about it, and he calls it 'the wood and the vine.' So I named my piece that too."

Song: Mainte chançon ai fait - la bele marie (2002)

We were about to begin our second day of recording *la bele marie* at the Christian Brothers monastery in Napa, California, on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001. Hearing of the terror attacks, we wanted to go home to New York City right away, but flights were grounded. And so, once we knew that our family and friends were safe, we decided to carry on with the recording. This 13th-century *chanson pieuse* -- a love song to the Virgin Mary -- was the first song recorded when we resumed work.

Mainte chançon ai fait de grant ordure
Més, se Dieu plaist, jamés n'en avrai cure.
En moi a petit eu Bien et sens et mesure
Or me tieng a deceu Quant si lonc tens me dure.
Bien ai mon cuer esmeu, Car por chanter l'ai meü
De la roine pure Par qui somes esleu
En grant joie et receu Et fors de grant ardure:
C'est la douce mere Dieu, Qui de dolor nos cure,
Rendu nos a le bon lieu Ou joie toz jors dure.

Mout fu Marie et precieuse et bele
Certes, mout fu fine et nete pucele.
L'angre li fu envoiés Qui li dist la novele
Que Dex seroit alaitiés Dou lait de sa mamele.
Ne fu mie desvoiés L'angre, mes bien avoïés,
Qui li dist: "Damoïsele, Ave Marie, or m'oïez:
Dex c'est a vos avoïés, Car mere vos apele."
Marie a ses euz baissiés, Quant entent la novele,
Et puis les a rehauciés, Saint Gabriel apele:

"Amis, di moi coment enfanterois
Ne coment fruit en mes flans porteroie,
Quant nul home ne conois Ne nul n'en prenderoie.
Mout sembleroit grant ennuis Se sanz home engendroie."
"Douce Marie, entent moi: Tu porteras Dieu .IX. mois,
Ne pas ne t'en esfroie". "Amis, quant vos en iroiz,
A Dieu de par moi dirois Que je sui toute soie;
De moi face li douz rois Ses voloïrs, je l'otroie.
S'ancele sui, car c'est drois, Et si en ai grant joie."

I have composed many songs of great filth
but if it please God, I shall never again care about them.
In me there has been little good or sense or control.
Now I think I was deceived that it lasted so long.
My heart is certainly stirred, for I have begun to sing
about the pure queen by whom we are chosen
and received in great joy and kept from burning.
She is the sweet mother of God who cures our sorrow,
who brought us to the good place where joy lasts forever.

Mary was very precious and beautiful,
certainly a pure and spotless maiden.
The angel was sent to her to give her the news
that God would be fed on the milk from her breast.
The angel was not wrong, but very right,
who said to her: "Young lady, hail, Mary, listen to me:
God has come to you, for he calls you mother."
Mary lowered her eyes when she heard the news
and then raised them and asked St. Gabriel:

"Friend, tell me how I shall give birth
or bear fruit in my body, when I have known no man
and shall never take one. It would be very distressing
that I could be pregnant without a man."
"Sweet Mary, listen to me: You will bear God for nine
do not be afraid." "Friend, when you leave, [months
tell God for me that I am completely his;
let the sweet king do his will with me, I grant it.
I am his handmaid, for that is right, and I have great joy
from that."

Trans: Joan Ferrante

Conductus: Ave virgo virginum - la bele marie (2002)

la bele marie was our exploration of the rich and extremely varied repertoire of French 13th-century conductus. Written in 1, 2, 3 or 4 voice parts, these works range from simple dance songs with carol-like refrains, to elaborate, virtuosic polyphony with extended "cadenzas" and complex cross-rhythms. In this unadorned homophonic song, the synchronized declamation allows the poetic text to command our full attention.

Ave virgo virginum verbi carnis cella
in salutem hominum stillans lac et mella
peperisti dominum moysi fiscella
a radio sol exit et luminum
fontem parit stella.

Ave, plena gratia caput zabulonis
contrivisti spolia reparans predonis
celi rorans pluvia vellus gedeonis
o filio tu nos reconcilia
mater salomonis.

Virgo tu mosaice rubus visionis
de te fluxit silice fons redemptionis
quos redemit calice christus passionis
o gaudio induit glorifice
resurrectionis.

Hail, virgin of virgins, chamber of the incarnate word.
For mankind's salvation you gave birth to the lord,
distilling milk and honey, O Moses' basket.
From one ray the sun shines, and a star
brings forth the fount of light.

Hail, full of grace: you crushed
the devil's head, and you restored the stolen spoils,
distilling heaven's rain, you fleece of Gideon.
O, reconcile us to your son,
mother of Solomon.

Virgin, you bush of Moses' vision,
from you, the rock, flows the fount of redemption.
Christ clothes those redeemed
by the chalice of his passion with the joy
of his glorious resurrection.

Trans. Susan Hellauer

Lectio ysaye prophete: Surge et illuminare - *Darkness into Light* (2001)

In a happy moment of musical matchmaking, our agent put us in contact with another of their clients, the London-based Chilingirian String Quartet, who had one more work due in a three-work commission with British composer John Tavener. He composed **The Bridegroom** for us and “The Chilis,” which appears on *Darkness into Light* along with medieval works, like this two-voice setting of a liturgical “lection” or reading from Isaiah, also used in Handel’s **Messiah**.

Lectio ysaye prophete.
Surge illuminare jerusalem
quia venit lumen tuum.
Et gloria domini super te orta est.
Quia ecce tenebre operient terram
et caligo populos.
Super te autem orietur dominus
et gloria eius in te videbitur.
Et ambulabunt gentes in lumine tuo
et reges in splendore ortus tui.
Leva in circuitu oculos tuos et vide:
omnes isti congregati sunt venerunt tibi.

A reading from Isaiah the prophet:
Arise, shine O Jerusalem:
for they light is come,
and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.
For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,
and gross darkness the people:
but the Lord shall arise upon thee,
and his glory shall be seen upon thee.
And the Gentiles shall come to thy light,
and kings to the brightness of thy rising.
Lift up thine eyes round about, and see:
all they gather themselves together, they come to thee.
Isaiah 60:1-4, King James Bible

Lectio: Apocalypse 21:1-5 - *1000: A Mass for the End of Time* (2000)

In 1999, while the world worried about using an ATM machine on January 1, 2000, Anonymous 4 was looking backward to the millenarian movements of the 10th century, predicting the world’s end in the year 1000. Our program **1000** is built on the Mass for the Ascension, which frequently mentions the Second Coming (aka “The Rapture”). This reading is set to an ancient lection tone and harmonized in parallel organum, as described in music treatises from the 10th century.

Lectio libri apocalypsis beati Joannis Apostolis

Et vidi celum novum et terram novam:
primum enim celum et prima terra abiit,
et mare iam non est.
Et civitatem sanctam hierusalem novam
vidi descendentem de celo a deo,
paratam sicut sponsam ornatam viro suo.
Et audivi vocem magnam de throno dicentem:
Ecce tabernaculum dei cum hominibus,
et habitabit cum eis: et ipsi populus eius erunt,
et ipse deus cum eis erit eorum deus:
et absterget deus omnem lacrimam ab oculis
eorum:
et mors ultra non erit, neque luctus, neque clamor,
neque dolor erit ultra,
quia prima abierunt.
Et dixit qui sedebat in throno:
Ecce nova facio omnia. Et dicit:
Scribe, quia hec verba fidelissima sunt et vera.
(Vulgate)

A reading from the Apocalypse of Saint John the Apostle

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth:
for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away;
and there was no more sea.
And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem,
coming down from God out of heaven,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying,
Behold the tabernacle of God is with men,
and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people,
and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;

and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,
neither shall there be any more pain:
for the former things are passed away.
And he that sat upon the throne said,
Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me:
Write: for these words are true and faithful.
(King James Bible)

Ballad-carol: Lullay my child - This ender nithgt - *The Cherry Tree* (2009)

Our fifth Christmas-themed program, *The Cherry Tree* juxtaposes medieval and early Renaissance English carols with American tunes descended from British ancestors. This makes for a great variety of sounds and textures, all with a family resemblance. This ballad is a reconstruction from a refrain fragment. The story of the infant Jesus’s prophetic and miraculous conversation with his mother recurs often in old British poetry and song.

Lullay my child and wepe no more
Selepe and be now styll
Kynge of blis thi fader he es
And thus it es his wyll.

This ender nithgt I sauy ha sithgt
Ha may ha credill kepe
Hand ever schuy sang
Hande sayde in mang
Lullay my child ande slepe.

I may nocht slepe I may bot wepe
I ham so wobegony.
Slepe I wolde
But me hes colde
Hande clothse hauf I nony.

The chylde was swet
Hand sor he wepe
Hande ever me thoht he sayde
Moder dere
Way doy I here
In crache wy ham I layde

Adam gilt
That man has spilde
That syn rues me fole sore
Man for the
Here sal I be
xxx [Thyrty] yere ande mor.

Dolles to dreye
And I sale dye,
Ande hyng I sale on the rode
Wondys to wete
My bals to bethe
Ande gif my fleches to blode.

A spere so charpe
Sale thirll my hert
For the dede that man has done
Fadere ofe blys, Wartu thu has
Forsakin me thi sone.

Lullay my child and weep no more,
sleep and be still now.
Your father is the king of heavenly bliss
and thus it is all as he wishes it to be.

The other night, I saw a sight,
a maiden watched by a cradle,
and ever she sang
and all the while said:
lullay my child and sleep.

I cannot sleep, I can only weep:
I am so woebegone.
I would sleep,
but I am cold,
and I have no clothing.

The child was sweet,
but he wept sorely,
and ever I thought he said:
Mother dear,
what am I doing here?
Why am I lying in a manger?

Adam's transgression
that condemned humankind to perdition,
that sin grieves me sorely.
Mankind, for you
will I stay here
for thirty years and more.

I will endure suffering,
and I will die,
and I will be hung on the cross.
To wash away sin
and to redeem mankind
I will give my body to be bloodied.

A spear so sharp
will pierce my heart
because of the sins of man.
Father of heavenly bliss, why have you
forsaken me, your son?

Trans: Marsha Genensky

The Lamb (John Tavener, 1982) - Wolcum Yule (2003)

In his *Songs of Innocence* (1789), transcendental poet William Blake intended to illuminate, in both paintings and words, innocence as a state of being. John Tavener, whose works since the early 1980s have been imbued with both the mysticism and musical language of the Orthodox church, has composed a setting which ideally reflects the unadorned simplicity of Blake's text.

Conductus: Nicholai presulis - Legends of St. Nicholas (1999)

Legends of St. Nicholas was the first concert program presented by Anonymous 4, in December 1986 in New York City. While it underwent many changes through the years, the basic repertoire of chant and polyphony in honor of the miracle-working saint remained the same. The rhythm of this quirky 13th-century French conductus for St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 6) requires some guesswork to reconstruct.

Nicholai presulis festum celebremus
concrepando modulis letitie sonemus.
Versibus almisonis diem decoremus
vocibus altisonis intenti festinemus.

In tanto natalitio patrum docet traditio
ut consonet in gaudio fidelium devotio,
est ergo superstitio vacare a tripudio.

Nunc igitur iustorum suavitas cantorum
per tymphanum et chorum et omne musicorum
genus instrumentorum psallat deo deorum.

Let us celebrate the feast of bishop Nicholas,
singing happy melodies together.
With sweet songs we'll ornament this day,
letting our voices soar high and quick.

On such a natal feast, our ancestors' tradition teaches
that the devotion of the faithful should harmonize in joy,
so let fear give way to dancing.

Now, therefore let the sweet songs of the just –
with drums and chorus and every kind
of musical instruments – sing to the God of gods.

Trans: S. Hellauer and M. Smith

Song: Novus Annus Adiiit - Christmas Music from Medieval Hungary (1996)

While researching the music of Hildegard of Bingen in the “H” section of the library, a volume of Hungarian medieval music fell off the shelf and onto Susan’s foot. Hildegard was temporarily re-shelved, and *A Star in the East* (later re-released as *Christmas Music from Medieval Hungary*) became our second Christmas recording. This two-voice New Year’s song, to which we add a drone voice, is as haunting and ethereal as most of the music in that collection.

Novus annus adiiit
in quo Christus prodiit
de aula virginali.
Mira hec nativitas
humanitas et deitas
se ubi coniugarunt.

Novus annus hodie
monet nos letitie
laudes inchoare,
felix est principium
finem cuius gaudium
solet terminare.

The new year approaches
in which Christ appears
from the virgin throne.
In this miraculous birth
both human and divine
are joined together.

The new year today
teaches us to begin
our glad rejoicing;
happy is the beginning
of which praise
is the object and end.

Trans: Susan Hellauer

Trope: Gratulantes celebremus festum - Miracles of Sant'Iago (1996)

In the earliest version of Miracles of Santiago, our second concert program, we accompanied ourselves on instruments, including the conch shell. Our source, the 12th-century Codex Calixtinus, disappeared from the Spanish shrine to St. James at Compostela in July 2011. It contains music for the liturgies of St. James the Greater like this merry polyphonic Benedicamus domino trope which, in good medieval fashion, we have adapted for the feast of St. Nicholas.

Gratulantes celebremus festum
diem luce divina honestum.
Hec est dies Nicolae insignis
illustrata signis eius dignis.
Quem precamur ducat ut ad caelos
decantantes eius christo melos.
Suscipiens gratiam de celis
benedicat ergo plebs fidelis
domino.
— magister goslenus episcopus suessionis

Rejoicing let us celebrate the feast
this noble day of divine light.
This is St. Nicholas' glorious day
made famous by his worthy miracles.
We pray him to lead the way to heaven,
singing his song to Christ.
Accepting heaven's grace,
thus let faithful people bless
the lord.

Trans: Susan Hellauer

Hymn: An teicheahd go hÉigipt (Flight into Egypt) - Wolcum Yule (2003)

Wolcum Yule, which blends medieval, traditional and modern works from the British Isles, was our first collaborative recording, featuring master harper Andrew Lawrence-King. Haunting and rhythmically free, this wonderfully dramatic traditional Irish hymn recalls the storytelling of the ancient bards, though here the story is that of Joseph and Mary's flight into Egypt with the Christ child. [Text and tune: Traditional Irish]

Trath chuala Herod bhí laige's gruaim air
go rugadh an Rí a bhéarfadh bua air,
in onóir, in uaisleacht, i gcumhacht's i méadacht,
do líon lán-channar fuatha's éad' é.
'S nach trua sin!

Ba ghearr go dtáinig an t-aingeal 'na dhéidh sin
agus labhair go modhail leis an fhaoileann déid-ghil:
"O! caithfidh sibh teicheadh le céile go hÉigipt
nó is gairid go gcluinnidh sibh feall is éigeart."
'S nach trua sin!

D'imigh an Triúr ar shiúl na hoíche-
an Naomh, an Mhaighdean agus Rí na Ríthe;
gan charaid, gan stór, gan ór, gan éadail
ach Rí na bhFlaitheasgeal, an Leanbhán Gléigeal.
'S nach trua sin!

As soon as Herod heard that the King was born
who would outdo him in honor, nobility, and power,
he became weak and despondent;
a cancerous hatred and jealousy filled his heart.
Isn't that pitiful!

The angel came soon afterwards
and spoke mildly to the sweet-mouthed maiden:
"Oh! you must flee together to Egypt,
or 'tis soon that you'll hear of treachery and injustice."
Isn't that pitiful!

The Three walked through the night:
the Saint, the Virgin, and the King of Kings;
no friend, no provisions, no money...nothing,
only the King of Heavens, the Radiant Child.
Isn't that pitiful!

Trans: Una McGillicuddy

Antiphon: Studium divinitatis (Hildegard of Bingen) - 11,000 Virgins (1997)

Hildegard wrote an entire day's worth of liturgical texts and music for the early Christian martyr Ursula, patron saint of her Rhineland convent who, legend had it, died at Cologne with a host of 11,000 virgin handmaidens. Our first Hildegard recording drew from this repertory, with its intensely passionate poetry and vivid storytelling. This short antiphon is the first in a series of *Lauds* antiphons that, together, recount the legend of these virgin saints.

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

Zeal for the divine
gave the kiss of peace with highest praise
to the virgin Ursula and her multitude
before all peoples.

Translation: Susan Hellauer

Antiphon: O quam mirabilis est (Hildegard of Bingen) - The Origin of Fire (2005)

Larger than life in her own time (1098-1179), the German abbess and mystic Hildegard composed music for the liturgy at her convent, singing her songs to a scribe who notated them. *The Origin of Fire* is a collection of Hildegard's music for Pentecost, the feast of the fiery spirit. **O quam mirabilis** is typical of her antiphons, which are generally much longer, wider in range and vocally more demanding than the traditional liturgical chants they would have replaced.

O quam mirabilis est
prescientia divini pectoris
que prescrivit omnem creaturam.
Nam cum deus inspexit
faciem hominis quem formavit
omnia opera sua
in eadem forma hominis
integra aspexit.
O quam mirabilis est inspiratio
que hominem sic suscitavit.

Hildegard of Bingen

O how marvelous is
the foreknowing in the divinity's heart,
that foreknew every created thing.
For when God looked
upon the face of the human he had formed
he saw the fullness
of all his works
in that same human form.
O how marvelous is the breath
that brought humankind to life!

Trans: Susan Hellauer

Motet: Clastrum/Virgo viget/FLOS FILIUS - *Secret Voices* (2011)

Hildegard's nuns were surely not the only medieval women who sang demanding music. The 13th-century *Codex Las Huelgas*, containing the latest in European and local polyphony and song, was collected for the royal and noble nuns of the Cistercian convent at Burgos, north of Madrid. This trope of the *Benedicamus domino* was originally a French motet with texts of courtly love, provided here with sacred texts for use at the convent.

Triplum

Clastrum pudicicie, virginis triclimum,
spes totius leticie, gracie tenens privilegium,
regem glorie,
virgo filium fac nobis propiciam,
ut reus det veniam remedium.

Cloister of modesty, seat of virginity,
hope of all happiness, holding the privilege of grace
of the king of glory:
virgin, make your son merciful to us,
that he may forgive our sins.

Motetus

Virgo viget melius dum peperit,
set nature plenius ius deperit
nasci dei filius dum voluit,
coluit, qui nobis condoluit
cui cum iubilo sine termino:
benedicamus domino.

The virgin gave birth without pain,
defying the law of nature
while giving birth to a son
who freely suffered for us,
to whom we say with endless rejoicing:
Let us bless the Lord.

Tenor

FLOS FILIUS

Tenor

FLOS FILIUS

Respond: [Deo dicamus gracias.]

Respond: [Let us say: "Thanks be to God!"]

Trans: Susan Hellauer

Carol-ballad: The Cherry Tree Carol – *The Cherry Tree* (2009)

The centerpiece of our fifth Christmas-themed program, our Appalachian version of **The Cherry Tree Carol** descends from a miracle-ballad first sung (or possibly spoken) as part of the Coventry Plays in 15th-century England. According to the story, Joseph doubts the divine origin of Mary's pregnancy; but to his astonishment, and to his shame, the baby Jesus speaks from within Mary's womb, and causes a cherry tree to bend its branches and offer his mother its fruit.

Folk hymn: Wondrous Love – *American Angels* (2003)

The title *American Angels* came to Susan in a moment of revelation; our first foray into American shape note tunes and gospel songs came about as a result. Since making its first appearance in the 19th-century tunebook *The Southern Harmony*, this folk hymn has become one of the most treasured of American songs.

Fuging tune: Bethlehem – *The Cherry Tree* (2009)

With text by the English hymnodist Isaac Watts, Bethlehem was composed by William Billings just two years after the United States became a nation. The final piece on our most recent holiday-themed recording, *The Cherry Tree*, this cheerful, imitative fuging tune brings our concert program to its close.