This image is an illumination from a transcription of Hildegard's *Liber Divinorum Operum*, one of her three extant theological works. The page shown here is from a manuscript that dates from 1210 to 1230 (restored in 1936); it is the only surviving transcription that contains illuminations. Image 252 of *The Book of Divine Works*, Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/item/2021668244/), ms 1942, fol. 121v.

A Conductor's Guide to the Music of Hildegard von Bingen

KATIE GARDINER

Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179) is a behemoth figure in the history of medieval Germany for her roles as seer, scientist, religious leader, writer, preacher, exorcist, playwright, naturalist, poet, and composer. She is extraordinary for the spiritual guidance she was able to provide to powerful religious and political leaders, as well as for her prolific creative, scientific, musical, and theological output. Preparing and performing Hildegard's music provides an ensemble with the opportunity to sing substantive, vocally demanding repertoire that has a unique texture and style and belongs to a different tradition than much of the repertoire performed by ensembles today. For the contemporary conductor, one of the primary challenges associated with this repertoire is deciding which notation and edition to use. This article surveys the current types of notation and editions available for the music of Hildegard von Bingen, describes the challenges and benefits associated with each resource, and provides information on performance practice with the aim of equipping ensemble leaders and singers with the tools to bring this repertoire to life.

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Hildegard and Her Music

Hildegard was the youngest of ten children, and at the age of eight she was promised as a tithe to God. She was chosen to serve as companion to Jutta von Sponheim (1092-1136), an ascetic woman who had resolved to live as an anchoress at the monastery of Disibodenberg. As anchoresses, the women vowed to withdraw from society to devote their lives to religious pursuits from within the confines of their affiliated community. The women were enclosed at Disibodenberg on November 1, 1112, at which point Hildegard was committed to a life of spiritual devotion.[1] After Jutta died in 1136, Hildegard, then thirty-eight years old, was unanimously elected to lead the growing community of women.

Hildegard's literary, artistic, and preaching work began once she was called to lead the nuns. During her lifetime she was highly respected and influential as a prolific writer and visionary. Remarkably, during a time when it was illegal for women to sermonize publicly, she led a series of preaching tours well into the final decade of her life. Hildegard died on September 17, 1179, at the age of eighty-two. After hundreds of years' worth of attempts, she was canonized on May 10, 2012, and made Doctor of the Church on October 7, 2012, being one of only four women to receive this distinction.

Hildegard's extant musical output comprises seventy-seven musical works (all but two with original poetry) and music for the spiritual drama *Ordo Virtutum*, amounting to the largest collection attributed to any single composer in the twelfth century.[2] Preparing and performing Hildegard's music is challenging yet deeply rewarding. Monophonic plainchant is an exciting and refreshing addition to a choral program in that it provides singers with the opportunity to perform music that is a different texture and style than much of the repertoire performed in high school, university, and community settings.

Hildegard's music is deeply expressive and thrilling to sing as an ensemble, particularly in regard to modality, technically demanding monophonic singing, and a vivid text/music connection. Contemporary musicians do not often have the opportunity to perform modal music, which has its own unique musical affects that are visceral for a singer to experience, ranging from devastatingly sad, to profoundly mystical, to exhilaratingly joyful. Unison singing is also important work for an ensemble. As William Mahrt asserts in *A Performer's Guide to Medieval Music*, "in unison, the singers can perfect elements of tuning, timbre, diction, rhythm, and expression in common."[3] In contrast to many chants in the Gregorian repertory, Hildegard's melodies exhibit a wide vocal range, sometimes spanning up to two octaves plus a fourth. The connection between text and music is an important feature of Hildegard's music. The *Symphonia* songs comprise Hildegard's own newly composed religious poetry, with the exceptions of the Kyrie and Alleluia. Hildegard's music, images, and poetry are interconnected in a holistic representation of the visions she experienced.[4] The act of singing was central to the lives of the monks and nuns practicing the Benedictine Rule, and Hildegard's music and texts were intended to be experienced by the singers with the intention of elevating one's own morality and experiencing the harmony of the universe.[5]

Three common notational possibilities exist for Hildegard's *Symphonia*: (1) the original twelfth-century Rhineland neumes, (2) Solesmes-style square-notation neumes, and (3) a modern transcription using some form of noteheads on a five-line staff. Each notational possibility involves positive elements as well as challenges. The manuscript sources have the benefit of being closest to the original creation but require a specialist's knowledge in reading the symbols. Standardized square-notation neumes can contain a wealth of performing practice information and may be more accessible to read than the manuscripts, but it may also be uncomfortable for those who do not consistently spend time in this notational world. Modern staff transcriptions are appealing in the clarity of pitch content, yet nuances of the neumes and the physical shape of the phrases that are inherent in neumatic notation, particularly in the expressive shapes of ornamental and compound neumes, can be lost in a modern transcription. A richer understanding of each resource and elements of performing practice of medieval plainchant may be helpful in assisting the director in learning and teaching this repertoire.

Twelfth-Century Rhineland Neumes[6]: Dendermonde and Riesencodex

Hildegard's *Symphonia* exists in two primary sources that include text and music known as the Dendermonde and Riesencodex.[7] The Dendermonde Codex was a gift to the monks of Villers from around 1175 and may have been copied under Hildegard's supervision.[8] Riesencodex is a large volume of Hildegard's collected works, likely produced in the scriptorium of the Rupertsberg cloister and presumably completed in the decades following her death.[9] Scholars have had access to high-quality digital images of the manuscripts since the 1990s.

The manuscripts are preserved in such excellent condition that images of the original notation constitute performable editions for those who read or are willing to learn how to interpret the notation and the text. Diastematic or "heightened" neumes (those written on a staff) indicate intervallic precision on a four-line staff that includes movable C-clef with a yellow line to mark the C line and a red line to mark the F line. An example of the clarity of image and notation in Riesencodex is provided in Figure 1. The Latin text often includes abbreviations and contractions that can be a challenge to one unfamiliar with the paleography of twelfth-century script.[10]

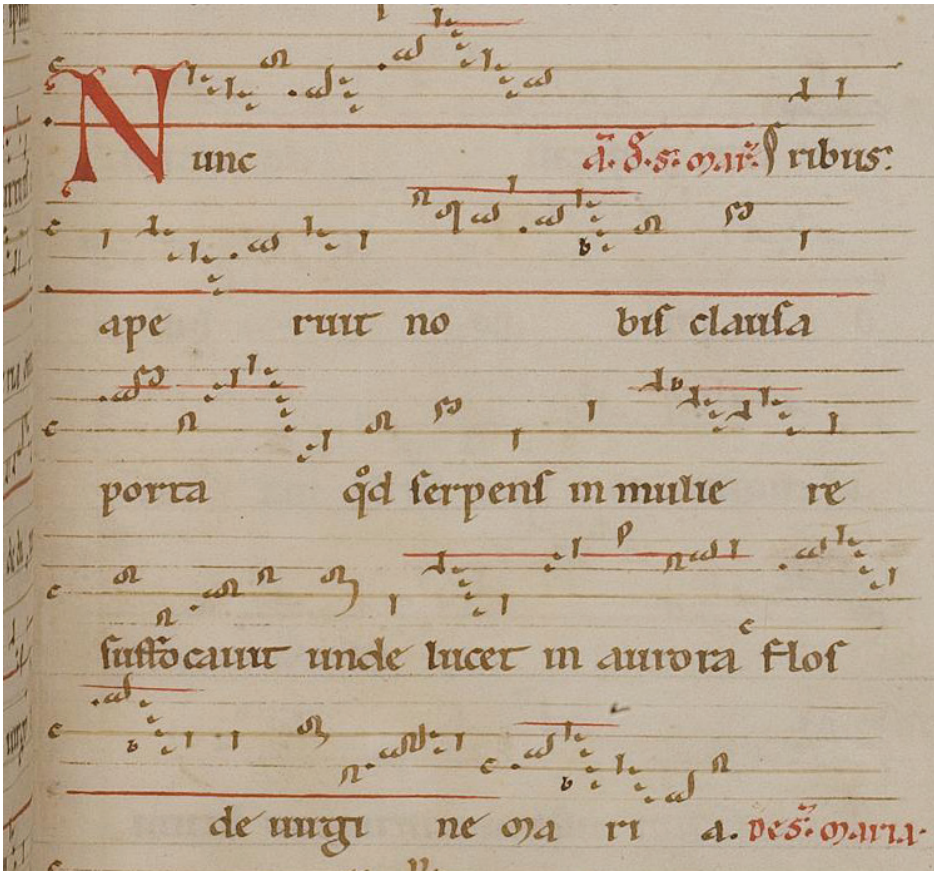


Figure 1. Hodie (Nunc) Aperuit, 476ra from Riesencodex. In Dendermonde and other sources, the first word is Hodie. Here in Riesencodex, the piece begins with the word Nunc. The text is below the staff and does not include hyphens between syllables of the same word. Note C-lines indicated with a letter and yellow line, F-lines with a red line, as well as the inclusion of a flat sign midway in the second system and at the beginning and middle of the last system. The smaller red text is an abbreviation indicating this is an antiphon to Mary. The text "-ribus" and rubric in the top right belong to the preceding piece.
Image used with permission, RheinMain University and State Library, ms. 2.

Square Chant Notation: Barth, Ritscher, and Schmidt-Görg's *Lieder*

Square-notation neumes represent a compilation of various medieval neumes standardized at the end of the nineteenth century through the work of monks at the Benedictine Abbey of Solesmes in France. In 1969, two nuns from Eibingen Abbey in Rüdesheim am Rhein, Germany—Sister Pudentiana Barth and Sister M. Immaculata Ritscher—along with musicologist Dr. Joseph Schmidt-Görg transcribed Hildegard's *Symphonia* and her liturgical play, *Ordo virtutum,* into square notation. There is a beautiful 2012 publication by musicologist and Hildegard scholar Dr. Barbara Stühlmeyer based on the 1969 *Lieder* edition, which is an excellent resource for musicians (Figure 2).[11] Stühlmeyer's *Lieder* is a logical, organized, economical, and accessible printed work that would be a practical and highly recommended resource for those familiar with or interested in learning standard square notation.

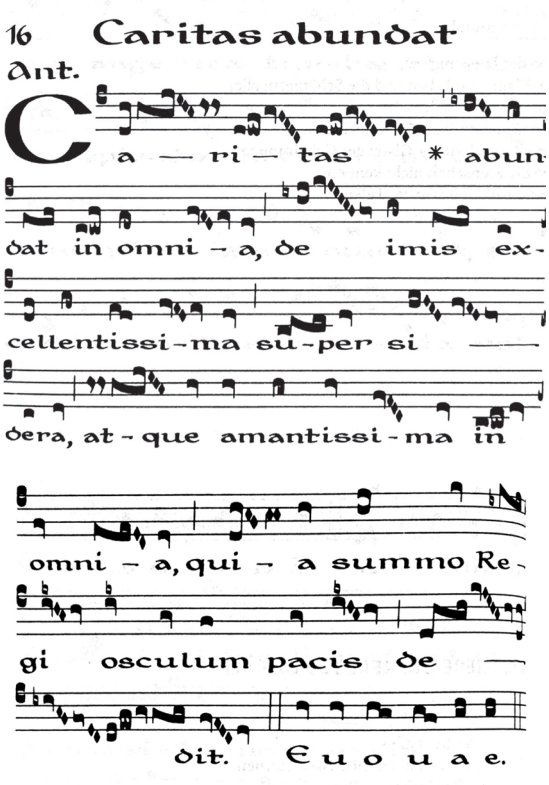


Figure 2. No. 16 *Caritas Abundat*, from Stühlmeyer's edition of Hildegard *Lieder* pp. 59–60. Used with kind permission.

In the *Lieder* editions, the neumatic notation is preserved and clearly legible, the use of standardized neumes may be more easily decipherable than the handwritten Rhineland neumes, and the pitches are printed clearly on the staff. The archaic script in the manuscript sources is replaced by traditional Latin spelling in a simple font. The use of standardized neumes maintains neume groupings, compound neumes, and ornamental neumes. Movable C and F clefs mark where the solfège syllables "doh" and "fah" occur and are used to indicate the mode the piece is in (based on final, range, and pitch organization) and may be moved on the staff to avoid extensive ledger lines. Other advantages to working with a *Lieder* edition includes the correction of suspected scribal errors in the manuscript[12] and the addition of breath marks, suggested ficta, and custodes (a little note at the end of a line indicating the next pitch) to aid the performer.

One challenge for non-German speakers is that the commentary and translations in both *Lieder* editions are in German. The most notable challenge in working with a *Lieder* edition is that it presumes an ability to read square notation. While this may be a deterrent to those who do not have training in this type of literacy, chant notation can be extremely accessible to a musician literate in modern notation. The preface to the *Liber Usualis* is still used in educational settings as a tool to learn to read chant notation.[13]

Modernized Transcription

Free editions of selections from *Symphonia* are available online. The International Studies of Hildegard von Bingen Website is a rich resource and, in addition to a wealth of information about Hildegard's works, includes pitch content, recordings, translations, and scholarly commentary on the poetry and music (for a musical example, see Figure 3 on the next page).[14] The complete *Symphonia* transcribed in modern notation by Dr. Marianne Richert Pfau is available through Hildegard Publishing. This collection comprises eight volumes and derivative octavos of selected sets and pieces. Each volume includes a transcription guide with a ta-

ble that provides the common name of the neume, the symbol in twelfth-century Rhineland neume notation on a four-line staff, and Pfau's corresponding transcription in modern notation on a five-line staff, as well as an introduction with commentary on the context and musical aspects of the individual pieces included in the set. The manuscript folio numbers for the music and the text are included within the collection below the title of the piece. Hildegard scholar Dr. Honey Meconi notes that Pfau's collection, while wonderfully accessible to modern musicians, does contain errors and transcribal inconsistencies.[15]

While a modern musician may feel more comfortable looking at familiar notation, modern transcriptions still present challenges to the performer. Whether using a free version online or purchasing the small volumes or individual octavos, the ensemble leader will have to communicate information regarding ornamental neumes and their execution to the ensemble. For this information, the ensemble leader may refer to the manuscripts or *Lieder* to easily identify the ornamental neumes. The front matter commentary prefacing the first and second volumes of Pfau's *Symphonia* collection provide rationalization for the symbols used in transcription and discuss the importance of the nuanced musical information the original neumes can provide.

Performance

There is frustratingly little primary source material available on the performance of medieval music in comparison to the treatises, testimonies, and artifacts available from other time periods. Scholars and performers can often only make informed guesses based on the limited information available about what the musical traditions occurring in a given geographical location were during a particular time throughout the roughly one thousand years that define what we describe as the medieval musical era. While many concrete answers are simply unavailable for vocal music of the Middle Ages, the following sections present some considerations for performance regarding medieval theory, rhythm, and ornamental neumes.

Medieval Theory for Performers

Medieval plainchant is based on a system of modality, which is defined by the final (generally the first or last note and resting tone in the piece) of a melody, the range of the music, and the patterns of tones and semitones within the collection. Medieval theoretical treatises classify modes by the name of the ordinal Greek number and are referred to as *protus* (D), *deuterus* (E), *tritus* (F) and *tetrardus* (G), sometimes without the clarification of authentic (generally final to final) or plagal (generally a fourth below to a fifth above the final), as we classify Renaissance music.[16] Modal identification not only signified to the performer the classification of final and range, but also melodic formulae that recur in pieces that share the same mode.[17] The extensive range involved in much of Hildegard's music and the use of finals other than D, E, F, and G (namely, a and c) can obfuscate modal classification within the system.

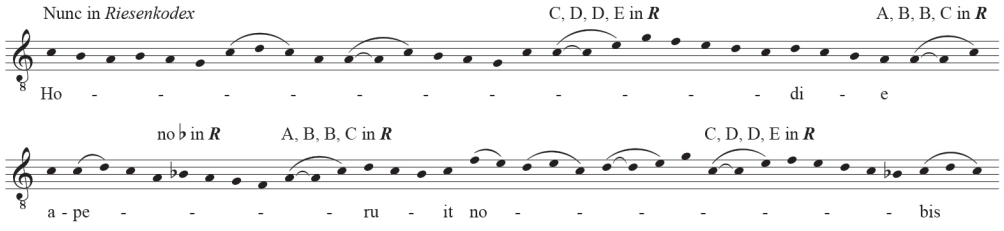


Figure 3. Hildegard of Bingen, *Hodie aperuit*, Antiphon, D. 154 v, R 467ra
from the International Society of Hildegard von Bingen Studies.
Transcription by Beverly R. Lomer

One of the challenges encountered in Hildegard's music as well as with other plainchant throughout the medieval era involves the use of either the pitch B♮ or B♭ when it is not clearly notated in a source.[18] There are some discrepancies between Dendermonde and Riesencodex where a flat sign is included in one manuscript and not with the corresponding pitch in the other source. The decision to include the B♭ where it is not notated but may possibly be included in practice can be based on the mode of the piece, comparison with other sources, and if a following B in question might be part of the same word, phrase, or musical gesture. If a flat sign occurs near a B, it may be applied at least to the closest B after it, and likely to any other B occurring on the same word, possibly the same stave, or within a similar melodic gesture.[19] The *Lieder* and Pfau editions include suggested *ficta* (an un-notated pitch that is not included in the manuscript but possibly included in performance based on the mode) above the staff.

Rhythm

The study of rhythm in plainchant presents complex issues for the performer. There is no medieval treatise that explicitly describes a discernible rhythmic system that would correspond with the clear system that defines pitch in treatises pertaining to chant notation.[20] There are generally two schools of thought in regard to interpretations of rhythm in the notation of chant, with a variety of gradations represented in derivative theories.[21] One philosophical school of plainchant rhythm is the "Equalist" style, also called the Solesmes style, which generally involves every pitch receiving a pulse. The second school of rhythmic theory, often referred to as "Mensurists," encompasses a spectrum of theories that map various mensural or fixed time values onto the neumatic notation.[22] Within the wide range of theories, there is some practical information that may be considered in application to Hildegard's music.

Eugène Cardine, a French plainchant scholar and one of the most important figures in the study of the Gregorian chant tradition, suggests approaching plainchant with a nuanced rhythmic interpretation based on text stress, with the first note of a neume group receiving stress in melismatic passages.[23] While Hildegard's plainchant is not a part of the Gregorian chant repertory, it is part of the same tradition of musical characteristics and notational practices. Willi Apel, author of the monumental text *Gregorian Chant*, recommends the performer consider deriving musical rhythm based on textual accent and a stress on the first note of each neume group, with subtle variations in speed based on the number of pitches in a neume grouping.[24] Apel explicitly states that he would not advocate for a strictly equalist performance of chant, which could sound unnatural, mechanical, and counterintuitive to the text.[25]

If one begins by interpreting each individual pitch as generally representing an eighth-note, as suggested in the *Liber Usualis*, the performer can then lengthen or shorten notes or syllables based on either the agogic accent or the neumatic symbol.[26] Cardine, Apel, and their fellow chant scholars David Hiley and Georges Houdard all indicate rhythmic differentiation between individual neumes and neumes that are grouped together. [27] Neume groupings that are distinct from the individual virga and puncta (discussed in the next section) may be performed with slightly faster motion through the grouping. Two-note constructions could also imply a strong-weak execution.[28]

It may be practical to pursue a musical rendering of Hildegard's chants through subtle rhythmic inflection derived from the text and neumes. Inflection and nuance may also be performed by variations in weight through dynamic gradations, tone color, or durational value given to a particular vowel, consonant, or syllable in order to follow the accent and rhythm naturally inherent in the words. The performer may additionally wish to add emphasis to the first note of each neume grouping, particularly in melismatic passages.[29] These subtle variations in rhythm and stress can facilitate a dynamic and interesting performance and are generally natural and intuitive nuances that derive from an exploration of the connection between the text, the musical line, and the notation.

Basic and Ornamental Neumes[30]

Basic neume shapes that appear in the *Symphonia* are listed in the bulleted list on the next page. Figure 4 shows examples of these neumes in the Riesencodex.

- Virga and puncta, each representing a single pitch
- Pes, which indicates a pitch followed by a note above
- Clivis or flexa, which represents a pitch followed by a lower pitch
- Climacus, a series of descending pitches
- Scandicus, a series of ascending pitches
- Torculus or pes flexus, a series of three pitches that ascend and then descend
- Porrectus or flexa resupina, a three-note neume complex that descends and then ascends

Ornamental neumes usually involve some type of graphic signifier indicating the incorporation of a special or ornamented type of performing execution and generally fall into the categories of either liquescent or repercussive.[31] Liquescent neumes involve the modification of a pitch to reflect the sound of a word by indicating when to sing through a voiced consonant or give emphasis to a vowel. The repercussive neumes include the apostropha, bistropha, and tristropha, and indicate a pulse or rearticulation of the pitch with a descending and decaying slide.[32] There are additionally specific neumes that have their own independent ornamental significance, including the quilisma, oriscus, and pressus. There is conjecture as to how the specific ornamental neumes are supposed to be performed, and an exact interpretation of these neumes is unknown.

Liquescence

Liquescent neumes involve an ornamental neume that has implications as to how the word should sound. The performance of this neume generally involves a consonant or vowel receiving rhythmic duration. As the name of the neume implies, the syllable should become "liquid" and flow seamlessly from one pitch to the next.[33] This type of neume, characterized by a rounded off, lighter stroke, often occurs on a voiced consonant, such as in the letters *m*, *n*, or *l*. Liquescence is not limited to voiced consonants and may also appear on diphthong syllables, double consonants, or consonants that may be reflective of the pronunciation of the time.[34] In regard to diphthongs or liquescence occurring on a vowel, the execution of the word might involve a darkening of the vowel, a sliding transition between pitches, or a sliding transition and rearticulation of the next pitch.[35] On syllables that might appear ambiguous as to how to perform the liquescence, the symbol might imply the insertion of a shadow vowel.[36]

Oriscus and Pressus

The oriscus is a small note, similar to a punctum or apostropha, that has a wavy component. The oriscus usually does not stand alone but is part of a compound neume construction. The information surrounding this neume, its significance, and style of performance, is generally conjecture based on the shape of the neume. This neume could imply a "tension" toward the next note that could be executed through a microtonal inflection of the voice.[37] There may be melodic implications involving alternation between the note and a note less than a half-step above, similar to a mordent[38]—it may demonstrate rhythmic significance or could possibly imply liquescence at the unison.[39]

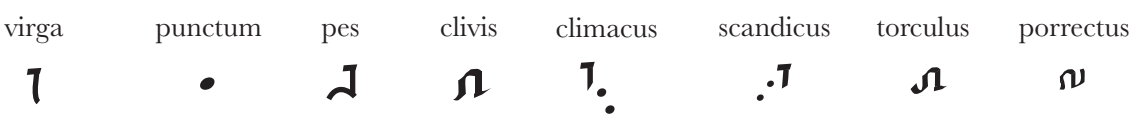


Figure 4. Images of basic neumes from Riesencodex, f. 470[r]

The oriscus is a component of a pressus construction, which appears in the notation of Hildegard's manuscripts in the form of a vertical line attached to a short undulating line. The *Liber Usualis* suggests that the pressus be performed as an intensification, requiring a strengthening of sound.[40] Intensification could be achieved with vibrato, pitch fluctuation, acceleration, dynamics, or a combination of these musical devices. If the construction includes non-ligated (unattached) notes, it is likely this neume might also have articulative significance involving the repercussion of a note.[41]

Quilisma -

The quilisma is a symbol frequently found in Hildegard's *Symphonia* and is often an important musical feature in Hildegard's expansive melodies. This neume has a distinctive shape that looks like two small jagged-looking waves with a gracefully curved line ascending the distance of a second, third, or fourth. The jagged part of the neume is the quilisma, which can appear as part of compound neume constructions and is often preceded by a punctum. In the manuscript sources, the symbol has a distinctive quality in that the quilisma itself usually occurs on a line or in a space and is connected to a smooth upward ascending stroke. In contemporary transcriptions of Hildegard's music, some editors represent the quilisma with a symbol that looks like a mordent sign (jagged dark line) turned diagonally to show the ascending gesture, although some modern transcriptions do not use a corresponding symbol.[42]

There are several different theories that are applied to the performance of this neume, and among them there seems to be agreement in that it involves some sort of trembling or trill and an ascending rise. The *Liber Usualis* describes the quilisma as a "tremolo" note that appears like a "melodic blossom" that involves a trill and an ascending line.[43] The note preceding the quilisma is likely to be lengthened, with the quilisma performed as a light, quicker note, possibly like a trillo or gruppetto.[44]

Depending upon the tempo and character of the selection, one option for performance would be to lengthen the first note, as if it were a dotted rhythm, and then move quickly through the quilisma in a light ascending gesture up to the third or fourth as indicated by the notation, either in the style of a light portamento, or gently articulating the diatonic pitches to fill in the interval. Another option is to lengthen the first note, perform a quick, light mordent (alternation between two adjacent pitches, which could involve a microtonal pitch), and either sing a light portamento or ascend by filling in the interval with the intervening diatonic pitches. The three primary components to the ornament involve the lengthening of the first note, something special that likely has some musical aspect related to the jagged, wavy shape of the neume, followed by a light ascent.

Vocal Technique

There are some concepts we may consider that can facilitate a healthful, beautiful vocal production that will serve this repertoire. The monophonic songs in *Symphonia* require the ability to sing legato phrases that are often very long, as well as the ability to sing a melisma (sustaining a vowel through multiple notes). The potential for a spectrum of vocal colors in this music can be exceptionally beautiful and demanding, with high and low sounds on vowels that range from dark to bright at both ends of a singer's range. The text, and the ability to communicate the expression and affect inherent in the poetry, is of fundamental importance to singing this repertoire.

There is some information in medieval musical treatises that might inspire the singer's imagination toward a healthy, expressive, organic vocal production. One comment in *Instituta Patrum de modo psallendi* (ca. 1200), an anonymous treatise associated with the abbey of St. Gall on the singing of psalms and chants, indicates that flexibility and the ability to perform the nuances of the neumes were lauded as valuable skills.[45] A twelfth-century comment from Bernard of Clairvaux indicates the voice should be "sweet, but not light."[46] Another treatise that is often referenced in conjunction with singing medieval music is the phrase from the seventh-century scholar and clergyman Isidore of Seville, who used the words "loud, sweet, and clear" to describe the "perfect" voice.[47]

Hildegard's spiritual writings indicate that she valued a voice that had a "sweet, clear, and ringing tone."[48] In addition to agility, expression, and subtlety; clarity of

pitch, accuracy, and a refined vocal quality seemed to all be priorities of medieval vocal production.[49] For the modern ensemble director, prioritizing text expression, vocal flexibility, clear and focused pitches, a spectrum of vowel colors, and a full sound riding on breath would serve both the singers and the music.

Performing Hildegard

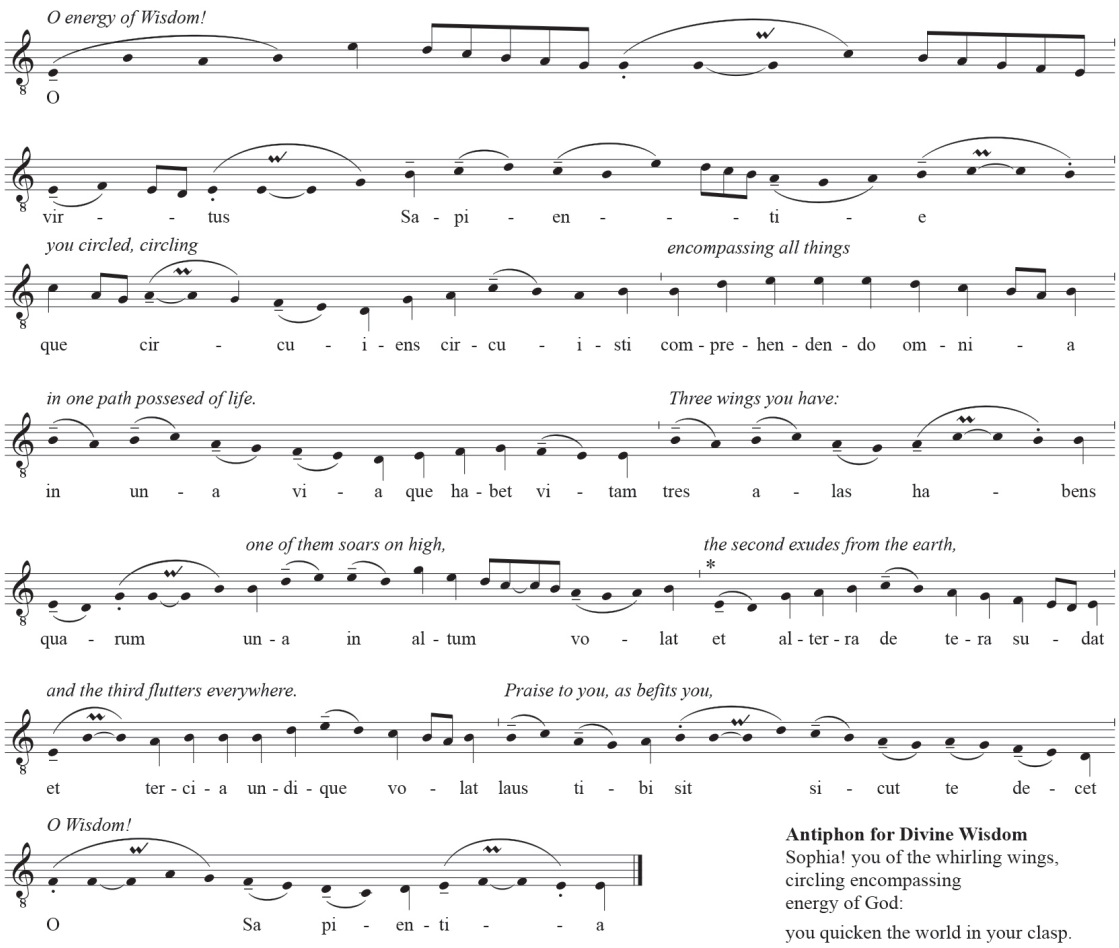
While the manuscript and *Lieder* editions can be excellent performing or reference resources, for many ensembles, a modern transcription will likely be the most practical means of sharing the musical material with the singers. The ensemble director can cross-reference a modern transcription against a manuscript source or *Lieder* and write some of the neume information into the score. See Figure 5 on the next page for an example. The liturgical function (antiphon) and the corresponding folios in the manuscripts (R = Riesencodex) are next to the title in Figure 5. Stemmed notes represent virga; unstemmed, puncta; small notes represent liquesence. Slur groupings (representing compound neume constructions) and beamed notes (representing cascading puncta) are considered a single rhythmic gesture and are grouped together for clarity and do not imply a proportional relationship to another note value. The mordent symbol represents quilismata, and the trill symbol, pressis.[50] In the medieval era, there was no standardized pitch as we know it today, and it is completely reasonable, and sometimes necessary, to transpose the piece to suit your ensemble. To develop phrase shape and pacing, it is helpful to intone the chant by singing the text on one pitch. Teaching by rote or leading from within the ensemble without the assistance of a piano doubling the vocal line will facilitate musicality and expressivity and develop in singers an awareness of unified sound and tuning.

Experimenting with drones and organum can be a valuable exercise for the ensemble to experience singing within a mode. One effective technique is to have one section of the ensemble maintain the resting tone (or added octaves/fifths) on a hum or a vowel while the rest of the ensemble sings the chant. In extant letters, Hildegard references the practice of organum (not in connection to the music she and her nuns were making, however), which involves an added voice to the plainchant that sings the text parallel to the original voice by remaining on the final or singing at a parallel fourth, fifth, or octave, with both voices moving at the same speed.[51] Instruments can also be used to provide a foundation and variety. There are some general references to instruments and harmonic simultaneities recorded in Hildegard's extant letters and treatises.[52] Medieval instruments that existed during Hildegard's life include the vielle, harp, portative organ, drums, wind instruments, and drone instruments such as the symphonia or bagpipes. Hildegard's own words are tantalizing in their reference to instruments:

> And so the holy prophets, inspired by the spirits which they had received were called for this purpose: not only to compose songs and canticles (by which the hearts of the listeners would be inflamed) but also to construct various kinds of musical instruments to enhance these songs of praise with melodic strains. Thereby, both through the form and quality of the instruments, as well as through the meaning of the words which accompany them, those who hear might be taught, as we said above, about inward things, since they have been admonished and aroused by outward things[.] They accompanied their singing with instruments played with the flexing of the fingers, recalling in this way Adam, who was formed by God's finger, which is the holy spirit.[53]

This passage is part of an elaborate metaphor about the importance of music in the lives of Hildegard and her nuns. In her spiritual text *Scivias*, Hildegard describes another vision involving female figures, one outfitted as a warrior, with people playing instruments all around them.[54] In an image from *Liber Divinorum Operum* (see the opening page of this article, page 18) depicting the "City of God in Salvation History," various instruments can be seen in the heavenly cloud, as well as the trumpet representing the prophets sharing the word of God with the city. The allusion to instruments in her writing does not imply the explicit use of instruments in practice; it does, however, indicate that Hildegard had an understanding of musical instruments that went beyond biblical schol-

arship, and that she envisioned them as part of the divine music of the universe as she experienced in her vivid visions. In bringing this music to life today, it can be a useful pedagogical tool as well as a rewarding musical experience to incorporate instruments or multiple vocal parts into performance.



*D, C in *Riesenkodex*, possible scribal error, corrected in Stühlmeyer

Small note = *liquescence*
= *quilisma*
= *pressus*

Antiphon for Divine Wisdom
Sophia! you of the whirling wings,
circling encompassing
energy of God:

you quicken the world in your clasp.

One wing soars in heaven
one wing sweeps the earth
and the third flies all around us.

Praise to Sophia!
Let all the earth praise her!

– *Poetic translation*
by Barbara Newman

Figure 5. Hildegard of Bingen, *O virtus Sapientie*, Antiphon, R 466rb,
Translation from *Hildegard of Bingen Symphonia:*
A Critical Edition of the Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum,
with introduction, translations, and commentary by Barbara Newman, translator and editor.

Transcription by Katie Gardiner, with reference to Barbara Stühlmeyer Lieder

The connection between text and melody is vital to Hildegard's music. To express the complex and sensuous poetry, it might be helpful to think of one's own language and consider what about it we find beautiful, persuasive, sensual, agitated, heartbreaking. Details of language that convey emotions or tone and feeling can be communicated through syllabic duration and stress, the length or shortness of articulation, pitch inflection, dynamic level, vocal rhythm, and vocal quality.[55] Character of expression is imparted through the degree of harshness or gentleness in the vocal quality; the degree to which our sounds are intimate or exclamatory; how words or syllables are clipped and distinct or run together smoothly; the high and low inflection that can impart the function of a phrase. If the singer understands the text they are trying to communicate, they can imagine the details of the language that might help them convey the meaning.

Conclusion

Even with the best transcriptions, engaging with this notation through the mediator of the modern editor can feel as if we are experiencing the music "through a glass, darkly."[56] There is information in the neumes that can aid the singer in developing an interpretation that simply does not translate in any modern transcription. The twelfth-century neumes are not a primitive precursor to our contemporary notation; rather, they are a system designed to provide the singer with the information they needed to remember—a word which, to the medieval musician, involved "imaginative reconstruction."[57] The neumes are the singer's closest connection to the sound world of Hildegard and her nuns, and are the gateway into a living creative musical process.

While it may at first seem daunting to approach this repertoire, time spent with this music will reap great rewards. Foremost, these chants constitute high-quality, substantive literature. This music is of great emotional, spiritual, and intellectual depth. There is a visceral joy in singing soaring consecutive leaps and endless melismas, and profound returns for those who spend time interpreting the layers of connection between the deeply expressive texts and architected melodies. It is rewarding for any singer to have an opportunity to explore range, vowel color, legato singing, technical challenges involving leaps and melismata, special ornamental techniques, and to experience the innate expressivity of singing modal music.

As with much early music, there are elements of performance practice that are integral to the musical execution that may be new to those who do not specialize in medieval music. Even for specialists in repertoire from the medieval era, the process of inspiring this music still involves a degree of creative and informed guesswork. To follow Hildegard's own words and example, "Do not, in your weariness, keep silent, but let your voice ring forth like a trumpet…"[58] Go forth with this repertoire as Hildegard lived her life: humbly, boldly, and eternally seeking illumination. CJ

Author's Note: This article was derived from the author's dissertation, "A Conductor's Guide to the Music of Hildegard von Bingen" (Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, 2021).

NOTES

[1] Fiona Maddocks, *Hildegard of Bingen: The Woman of Her Age* (Doubleday, 2001), 22. Maddocks notes other sources indicate Hildegard taking the veil possibly earlier in 1106.

[2] Margot Fassler, "Composer and Dramatist: 'Melodious Singing and the Freshness of Remorse," in *Voice of the Living Light*, ed. Newman (University of California Press, 1998), 150.

[3] William P. Mahrt, "Sacred Music: Chant," in *A Performer's Guide to Medieval Music* (Indiana University Press, 2000), 2.

[4] Marianne Pfau, "Music and Text in Hildegard's Antiphons," in *Hildegard, Symphonia: A Critical Edition of the Symphonia Armonie Celestium Revelationum* [Symphony of the Harmony of Celestial Revelations], ed. and trans. Barbara Newman (Cornell University Press, 1988), 75.

[5] Marianne Pfau, "Hildegard Von Bingen's Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum: An Analysis of Musical Process, Modality, and Text-Music Relations" (PhD diss. State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1990), 38–41. Pfau references philosophical theories on music by Cassiodorus and St. Augustine.

[6] David Hiley, *Western Plainchant: A Handbook* (Clarendon Press, 1993), 345–46. In medieval treatises, the term "neume" referred to the melody, not the written notation; however, as Hiley notes: "The term neume, meaning a notational sign, has become so embedded in the musical literature that it would be pointless to try to restrict its meaning to the other medieval sense of the word" (346). In *Western Plainchant*, Hiley avoids using the term neume when referring to notation. This paper will use the term neume as it is used in contemporary literature—in reference to the notational signs and symbols that represent the melody.

[7] Hildegard, *Symphonia: A Critical Edition*, ed. and trans. Newman, "List of Manuscripts," 64: Dendermonde, Belgium, St.-Pieters&-Paulusabdij Cod. 9 (Rupertsberg, c. 1175); Wiesbaden, Landesbibliothek Hs. 2, "Reisencodex" (Rupertsberg, 1180–1190); Stuttgart, Landesbibliothek Cod. Theol. Phil. 253 (Rupertsberg, St. Disibod and Zwiefalten, Ms. S, 1154–1170); Vienna, Nationalbibliothek Cod. 881 (Rupertsberg, 1164–1170), V^1; Vienna, Nationalbibliothek Cod. 963 (St. Maria in Rommersdorf, 13th century), V^2; Vienna, Nationalbibliothek Cod. 1016 (13th century), V^3.

[8] Peter van Poucke, introduction to *Hildegard, Symphonia Harmoniae Caelestium Revelationum: Dendermonde, St.-Pieters & Paulusabdij, Ms. Cod. 9*, ed. Peter van Poucke (Peer, Belgium: Alamire, 1991), 6. Van Poucke notes that it is unlikely that the manuscript was copied by Hildegard herself, but it was likely copied "under her supervision."

[9] Hildegard, Lorenz Welker, and Michael Klaper, *Lieder: Faksimile Riesencodex* (hs. 2) *Der Hessischen Landesbibliothek Wiesbaden*, ff. 466–81v (Wiesbaden: L. Reichert Verlag, 1998), 23.

[10] Peter van Poucke, introduction to Hildegard, *Symphonia*, 11. The text used in these manuscripts is referred to as "Carolingian miniscule."

[11] Hildegard von Bingen, *Lieder: Symphoniae*, translated by Barbara Stühlmeyer, Beuroner Kunstverlag, 2012.

[12] Honey Meconi, "The Unknown Hildegard: Editing, Performance, and Reception (An Ordo Virtutum in Five Acts)" in *Music in Print and Beyond: Hildegard Von Bingen to The Beatles*, ed. Craig A. Monson and Roberta M. Montemorra, 258–306 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), 281.

[13] *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Liber usualis," accessed 20 Jan. 2001.

[14] Nathaniel Campbell, Beverly Lomer, and Xenia Sandstrom-McGuire, "Music: The Symphonia and Ordo Virtutum of Hildegard von Bingen," International Society of Hildegard von Bingen Studies (1983, 2008, 2014), http://www.hildegard-society.org/p/music.html. The Hildegard Society website is an amazing resource that includes translations, pitch content, discrepancies between manuscript sources, recordings, analysis, and hyperlinks directly to the manuscript pages.

[15] Honey Meconi, "The Unknown Hildegard," 286–87. Meconi specifically cites errors in Pfau's edition of *O Virga ac Diadema* but also notes that any of Pfau's editions contain a similar number of errors.

[16] Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), 135, and Mahrt, "Essential Theory for Performers," 486. Students in Renaissance music courses are typically taught the Greek modal names dorian, phrygian, lydian, and mixolydian, with finals on D, E, F, and G, respectively. Their hypo- (plagal) counterparts share the same final but encompass a range a fourth below to a fifth above the final. The mode numbers, which have been in use since the 10th century, are classified as follows: Mode 1, dorian (general range of D-D, D final); Mode 2, hypodorian (A-A, D final); Mode 3, phrygian (E-E, E final); Mode 4, hypophrygian (B-B, E final); Mode 5, lydian (F-F, F final); Mode 6, hypolydian (C-C, F final); Mode 7, mixolydian (G-G, G final); Mode 8, hypomixolydian (D-D, G final).

[17] Willi Apel, Gregorian Chant,136. For melodic analysis of Hildegard's *Symphonia* by mode, see Pfau's dissertation, *Hildegard von Bingen's Symphonia: Armonie Celestium Revelationum*, 128–212.

[18] For further reading on ficta, see Margaret Bent, "Musica Recta and Musica Ficta," *Musica Disciplina* 26 (1972): 73–100. http://www.jstor.org.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/stable/20532145; Nicholas Routley, "A Practical Guide to 'Musica Ficta'." *Early Music* 13, no. 1 (1985): 59-71, www.jstor.org.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/stable/3127407. While these articles present discussion of 15th-century repertoire, the authors provide unique insight into decisions regarding ficta the modern editor of early music must confront.

[19] Marianne Pfau, "Hildegard von Bingen's *Symphonia*," 177–78. Pfau describes the instances in her transcriptions where she has added an editorial flat sign.

[20] Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 126.

[21] Ibid., 127.

[22] Lance W. Brunner, "The Performance of Plainchant: Some Preliminary Observations of the New Era," *Early Music* 10, no. 3 (1982): 318–19, http://www.jstor.org.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/stable/3126197. Brunner makes a distinction between the "Equalist" style of the 1904 Vatican Council and the later "Solesmes" style that additionally allowed for longer and shorter note values, with the musical pulse being grouped into two or three pitches independent of the syllabic stress of the text, with the "Equalist" style being more text-driven.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 130–31. Apel's summary is based on the work of Solesmes Monk and Gregorian chant scholar Dom Joseph Pothier.

[25] Ibid., 130.

[26] *Liber Usualis*, xx.

[27] David Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 373. The other scholars referenced in this sentence include a similar indication of rhythmic differentiation between individual neumes and neume groups.

[28] Timothy McGee, "Medieval Performance Practice" in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Music*, ed. Mark Everist and Thomas Forrest Kelly (Cambridge University Press: 2018), 585.

[29] *Liber Usualis*, xiv.

[30] Timothy J. McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song: Ornamentation and Vocal Style According to the Treatises* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 43. The term "ornamental" is to be understood as "something added to the musical phrase in order to grace it," not something "additional."

[31] Timothy J. McGee, "'Ornamental' Neumes and Early Notation," *Performance Practice Review* 9, no. 1, article 5 (1996): 41. DOI: 10.5642/perfpr.199609.01.05

[32] Ibid., 53. An example of bistropha from Riesencodex: 𝅘𝅥𝅮𝅘𝅥𝅮

[33] *Liber Usualis*, summarizing Guido d'Arezzo, xij.

[34] David Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 357.

[35] Timothy McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song*, 48.

[36] Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 104.

[37] *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Oriscus," (2001).

[38] Timothy McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song*, 55-56 and McGee, "'Ornamental' Neumes and Early Notation," 56.

[39] David Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 359–60.

[40] Liber Usualis, xij. A similar description is found in William P. Mahrt, "Sacred Music: Chant," in *A Performer's Guide to Singing Early Music*, 17.

[41] Timothy McGee, "'Ornamental' Neumes and Early Notation," 56.

[42] The quilisma is represented by some editors, such as Pfau, as a repeated pitch and the higher note occurring together under a slur without a graphic symbol to indicate a special performance element.

[43] *Liber Usualis*, (1962), xij.

[44] Willi Apel, Gregorian Chant, 115; William P. Mahrt, "Chant," in *A Performer's Guide to Medieval Music* ed. Ross Duffin (Indiana University Press 2000), 17; David Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 358. *Trillo* here referring to the seventeenth-century definition of a rearticulated note that increases in rapidity; *gruppetto* implying a four-note turn including the pitch above and below the primary note.

[45] Timothy McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song*, 18.

[46] Ibid., 22.

[47] Ibid., 20.

[48] Newman, introduction to *Symphonia*, 30.

[49] Mahrt, "Sacred Music: Chant," 16-17; McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song*, 20.

[50] Special thanks to Dr. David MacNeil for the inspiration he provided in score markings.

[51] Barbara Newman, introduction to Hildegard, *Symphonia*, 31-32.

[52] Ibid., 31.

[53] Hildegard, *The Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, trans. Joseph L. Baird, and Radd K. Ehrman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) vol. I, Letter 23, 78.

[54] John D. White, "The Musical World of Hildegard of Bingen," 13. White describes a vision in *Scivias* entitled "The Vision of the Virtues."

[55] Mark D. Pell, Laura Monetta, Silke Paulmann, and Sonja A. Kotz, "Recognizing Emotions in a Foreign Language," *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 33 (2009): 107–108, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10919-008-0065-7.

[56] 1 Corinthians 13:12.

[57] Frederick C. Bartlett, *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology* (Cambridge University Press,1964), 213 in Treitler, "The 'Unwritten' and 'Written Transmission.'"

[58] Hildegard, *The Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, vol. I, Letter 32r, 100.