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Ornamentation in Selected Antiphons and Responsories from Hildegard's Vision of Music in *Scivias*

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# Table of Contents

- **Introduction** ................................................................. 4
- **Chapter One: Of the Angels and the Fallen Angel** .................. 17
- **Chapter Two: Of the Angels and Archangels** ....................... 36
- **Chapter Three: Of the Virgins in the Sweetest Garden** ........... 54
- **Chapter Four: Of the Verdant Virgins** ............................... 74
- **Conclusion** ....................................................................... 90
Introduction

Ornamentation though typically associated with later periods in music history, played a role in the music of the Middle Ages. It was present in Gregorian Chant with the uses of ornamental and liquescent neumes such as the quilisma and cephalicus, as well as the highly melismatic and repetitive structures of Alleluia and nine-fold Kyrie chants.

The Alleluia was a chant that held a position in both the Eastern and Western churches. While its identity and position in the Mass evolved across the Middle Ages, it was typically performed in a responsorial style with the first word “alleluia” sung on an extensive melisma, the jubilus.¹

Both the Alleluia and Kyrie were often used as frequent responses to sections of the Mass. The Kyrie was composed of three chants each repeated three times following the order of “Kyrie eleison,” “Christe eleison,” “Kyrie eleison.” The chant was frequently ornamental and especially so on feast days. The way in which the Kyrie was formatted varied considerably. In the Kyrie Rex genitor of Liber Usualis VI each of the nine sections of the chant were identical, while the Kyrie libitum VI showed an ascent in overall pitch. In the tenth and twelfth centuries more variation was seen with uses of “melodic invention and organization.” Centonization was used borrowing phrases across pieces and even motivic material was seen within the repeated phrases.² Melisma in the Kyrie was most prominent on the final “eleison” falling primarily on the first syllable (Fig.1).

² Ibid.
While the elaborate melismas of the Alleluia and Kyrie chants were used to signify importance of the liturgy they followed or the service they belonged to, they were never used to highlight specific words in the text and or create tone painting. Similarly, the ornamental and liquescent neumes of Gregorian chant were simply considered convenient ways to connect close melodic phrases. It was Hildegard von Bingen who utilized their visual and melodically expressive qualities as melisma and individual neumes.

From an early age Hildegard experienced visions, which filled her simultaneously with terror and awe. For some time she was unsure of whether to share them outwardly in fear of how others would react, but in her education and upbringing at Disibodenberg, she was soon able to make sense of their significance. That being said, she would not document her visions and compositions for forty years following their inception, when in 1141 she
received the prophetic call to document her visions with the help of her secretary, the monk, Volmar.³

While it is likely she drew encouragement from her contemporaries, Hildegard was greatly inspired by the Virgin Mary and the feminine allegorical figures that she frequently saw in her visions: Sapientia and Caritas (wisdom and love of God), Scientia Dei (the knowledge of God), and Ecclesia (the church). In her book on Hildegard's feminine influence, *Sister of Wisdom*, Barbara Newman cites *De Operatione Dei* (On the Activity of God):

> As the Bride of God, Sapientia is identical with her alter ego, Caritas: "Wisdom and Love are one," and again, "Love and the foreknowledge of God agree in one."⁴

Newman comments on Hildegard's vision of Sapientia in *Scivias*, decorated in elaborate garments to indicate her sheer power and proximity to God:

> Somewhat later in the Scivias, Hildegard saw a similar image of Sapientia, representing the activity of divine Wisdom in Church and cosmos. Clad in a golden tunic, with a crown and a jeweled stole to proclaim her royalty, she stands on a platform supported by seven pillars—the traditional iconography of the House of Wisdom (Prov. 9:1). Like Scientia Dei she is terribilis et blanda, "terrible and mild to every creature."⁵

Sapientia is an example of feminine influence and outward expression that influenced Hildegard's tenacity.

From Hildegard's *Liber Vitae Meritorum* Caritas, the Love of God, is a figure responsible for all growth and breathing life:

⁵ Ibid. pp. 48
Caritas in the Book of Merits is both the élan vital, and elemental force that invigorates nature, and the spiritual force that instills new life in the soul. "I am the air," she sings, "I who nourish all green and growing life, I who bring ripe fruit from the flower. For I am skilled in every breath of the Spirit of God, so I pour out the most limpid streams. From good sighing I bring weeping, from tears a sweet fragrance through holy actions."\(^6\)

Newman further draws reference from Hildegard's *De Operatione Dei*, dedicated to Caritas or Divine Love, in which she envisions the celestial power, wearing a "golden circlet," with "four magnificent wings" her "tunic glows like the sun" she holds a "shining lamb," and she stands upon a blackened serpentine monster. Hildegard hears a heavenly voice breathe into her the words: "In the strength of unfailing divinity dwells Love, beautiful in election and marvelous in the gifts of the heavenly fathers mysteries, revealing man."\(^7\)

Caritas' emblems are the stag and the mirror representing the devotion and brilliance of God.\(^8\) The mirror imagery is one of the most salient aspects of Hildegard's theology. It appears in her music, as we will discuss later on, and is a key ingredient to her visions, which came to be known as the "reflection of the living light."\(^9\)

In *Scivias*, Hildegard writes of Scientia Dei, the Knowledge of God, clad in all gold and surrounded by stars and angels with "reverent people on her right and scoffers on her left"

That image denotes the Knowledge of God, for she watches over all people and all things in heaven and on earth, being of such radiance and brightness that, for the measureless splendor that shines in her, you cannot gaze on her face or on the garments she wears. For she is awesome in terror as the Thunderer's lightning, and gentle in goodness as the sunshine. Hence, in her terror and her gentleness, she is

\(^7\) Ibid. pp. 69
\(^8\) Ibid. pp. 50
\(^9\) Hart, *Scivias*. Pp. 11
incomprehensible to mortals, because of the dread radiance of divinity in her face and the brightness that dwells in her as the robe of her beauty. She is like the sun, which none can contemplate in its blazing face or in the glorious garment of its rays. For she is with all and in all, and of beauty so great in her mystery that no one could know how sweetly she bears with people, and with what unfathomable mercy she spares them. 

Scientia Dei is yet another example of a figure that encapsulates the paradigm of terror and tenderness, a power softened by her feminine form, nevertheless remaining a strong spirit within God.

The last of Hildegard’s feminine allegorical heroines is Ecclesia (fig. 2), the feminine figure of the Church, who is present in five of the visions in Scivias. She represents the “bride of Christ, inviolate virgin,” and “mother of the faithful.” Hildegard viewed her as the “final epiphany of the feminine, and historically the last manifestation of the eternal counsel.” While Caritas and Sapientia represent God’s purpose, Eve the betrayal of that purpose, and Mary the atonement and new beginning, Ecclesia is the “triumphant course through history to a consummation at the end of time.” Furthermore, as Eve is typified as the mother of all mothers sharing in “fruitfulness and sin,” Ecclesia is the mother of all virgins, with Mary, both typifying regeneration.

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10 Hart, Scivias. pp. 47
11 Newman, Sister of Wisdom, pp. 196
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid. Pp. 196
14 Ibid. Pp. 197
Fig. 2 Scivias II.5 Eibingen ms. Ecclesia protects the virgins and monks holding them close to her flaming heart.

Because of their feminine roots in Latin the figures of Sapientia, Caritas, Scientia Dei and Ecclesia were often considered to be female even by Hildegard’s male counterparts. These individuals were powerful theological evidence of the strengths in women, because they either represented the bride of God, Christ, or were extensions of God’s identity. This greatly inspired Hildegard’s theology, justified her strength as a female visionary and composer, and ultimately the choices she made as Abbess of her own convent.

On the macro level these insights drove the ornamentation of femininity carried out in her convent through the white garb, crowns, and long hair that her nuns wore. A letter responding to a neighboring monastery confirmed these ornamental practices that showed women with their hair unbound, donning rings and crowns. In a letter of criticism from Mistress Tengswich of the neighboring Andernach:

They say that on feast days your virgins stand in the church with unbound hair when singing the psalms and that as part of their dress they wear white, silk veils, so long that they touch the floor. Moreover, it is said that they wear crowns of gold filigree, into which are inserted crosses on both sides and the back, with a figure of the Lamb on the front, and that they adorn their fingers with golden rings. All this despite the express prohibition of the great shepherd of the Church, who writes in admonition: Let women comport themselves with modest "not with plaited hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly attire."[16]

Hildegard replied eloquently but with a touch of scathing:

“The Living Fountain says: Let a woman remain within her chamber so that she may preserve her modesty, for the serpent breathed the fiery danger of horrible lust into her. Why should she do this? Because the beauty of woman radiated and blazed forth in the primordial root, and in her was formed that chamber in which every creatures lies hidden. Why is she so resplendent? For two reasons: on the one hand, because she was created by the finger of God and, on the other, because she was endowed with wondrous beauty. O, woman, what a splendid being you are! For you have set your foundation in the sun, and have conquered the world.”[17]

She continued, backing her argument by coupling Christian theology with her ideology of virginity:

“Listen: The earth keeps the grass green and vital, until winter conquers it. Then winter takes away the beauty of that flower, and the earth covers over its vital force so that it is unable to manifest itself as if it had never withered up, because winter has ravaged it. In a similar manner, a woman, once married, ought not to indulge herself in prouful adornment of hair or person, nor ought she to lift herself up to vanity, wearing a crown and other golden ornaments, except at her husband’s pleasure, and even then with moderation.

[17] Ibid.
But these strictures do not apply to a virgin, for she stands in the unsullied purity of paradise, lovely and unwithering, and she always remains in the full vitality of the budding rod. A virgin is not commanded to cover up her hair, but she willingly does so out of her soul, lest, on account of her pride, the hawk carry it off. Virgins are married with holiness in the Holy Spirit and in the bright dawn of virginity, and so it is proper that they come before the great High Priest as an oblation presented to God. Thus through the permission granted her and the revelation of the mystic inspiration of the finger of God, it is appropriate for a virgin to wear a white vestment, the lucent symbol of her betrothal to Christ, considering that her mind is made one with the interwoven whole, and keeping in mind the One to whom she is joined, as it is written: “Having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads” [Apoc 14.1] and also “These follow the Lamb whithsoever he goeth” [Apoc 14.4].

Hildegard concluded her response with: “These words do not come from a human being but from the Living Light. Let the one who hears see and believe where these words come from.”

In reading this letter there are visible connections between the powers of the feminine divine and the Virgin Mary, to the reasoning behind the practices of ornate dress.

Linking the macro with the micro ornamentations that Hildegard sought in expressing her visions, are the notions of the “tunic” and “trumpet.” Outlined by Newman, and taken from De Operatione Dei,

Now when God looked upon the man he was well pleased, for he had created him after the tunic of his image and after his likeness, to proclaim all his marvels through the trumpet of a rational voice. For man is the consummate work of God. It is he who knows God, and for his sake God created all creatures, and, in the kiss of true love, enabled him to proclaim and praise him through reason.

Newman argues that the “Tunic pertains especially to woman because it is so closely connected with the incarnation” while “Trumpet” is the human ability to praise God whether

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18 Baird and Ehrman. *The Letters*, pp. 27-29
19 Ibid.
singing or speaking. For Hildegard, these two items, outward forms of expression, are ways to celebrate God. Her visionary experiences with the living light as she called it, were not to simply be documented in a manuscript but they needed to be shared in all senses: feeling, seeing, touching, smelling and hearing.

Hearing and seeing contribute to the minute-scale ornamentation in Hildegard’s manuscripts in the illuminations and music. If you observe the illumination from Vision Six of *Scivias* (Fig.3), you will see the detailed and exacting concentric circles of the celestial hierarchy, an image that goes hand in hand with Vision Thirteen’s most ornamental responsory, “O Vos Angeli.” The amount of celestial beings present in each ranking is extensive and the detail on each individual is ornate. Similarly, in “O Vos Angeli,” most all of the words are layered with decorative neumes and ornamental musical qualities such as melisma, range and otherworldly note extremes. As with all the writing of *Scivias*, the illuminations were dictated by Hildegard, and are her own visual portrayals of her visions.

Another image in *Scivias*, distinctly ornamental in appearance, is the illumination of the universe in Vision Three (Fig. 4). In reading Vision Three you can see the egg surrounded in outer bright fires with sparkling flames beneath, a globe fixed in the middle of these multicolored flames underneath the moon and two stars amidst other “bright spheres.”

The repetition of detailed flame after flame and star after star and the ornamentation of each figure fixed in this living yet stable image is wonderful. Like the layering imagery of the celestial hierarchy, the universal egg is painted open, with each layer revealing intricately unique sub layers, another quality found when observing the textual, auditory and even visual

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21 Hart, *Scivias*, pp. 93
qualities of Hildegard’s music. Both illuminations presented extend beyond their frames, an idea that once again can be seen in Hildegard’s antiphons and responsories. An explicit example of this is the authentic e mode melodic structure of “O Vos Angeli” while the piece primarily adheres to the notes significant within the authentic realm of the mode, it occasionally traverses the authentic boundaries with a plagal-specific note. Lastly, as most of the pieces are primarily neumatic, any time an extensive melisma is held, this departs from the established melodic structure, similar to the illuminations extending beyond their boundaries.

The sense of hearing comes at the end of Scivias, in Vision Thirteen, where ornamentation results from the meeting of text and music in each responsory and antiphon. These music pieces were not composed to go hand in hand with a biblical lesson, they were meant to bring to life Hildegard’s visions just as they came to her, so that others could hear what the living light had shared with her. They were more significant than Visions one through twelve, because they had added music—outward expression to be sung and heard. Though they did fit into the Mass and Office and were often used to reinforce the themes within a lesson or psalm, they were not place-markers or jubilations like the Alleluias and Kyries, and they could stand alone.

The use of ornamentation in Hildegard’s music was not simply incidental or convenient. Ornamental neumes and melismas were designated with purpose to add dimension to antiphons and responsories. Visually and audibly melisma and corresponding range and pitch pathways varied considerably between words within a composition whether looking at the manuscript notation or listening to the pieces performed. With a context of the
factors that inspired Hildegard's outward expression and ornamentation, the figures of feminine divinity, it is enlightening to consider the text-music analysis of Hildegard's antiphons and responsories in *Scivias*. In this analysis, underlying meaning becomes visible bringing new significance to the central themes within Hildegard's visions and theology.
Fig. 3 Scivias Vision VI. The celestial hierarchy in concentric circles surrounding the white light of divinity.
Fig. 4 Scivias III.1 The Universal Egg
Ornamentation is present in Hildegard’s music; it is the richness in the vocabulary of her poetry and the height and extensiveness to her melodic phrasing. The dimensions of ornamentation are much more complex when they are realized in a music-text analysis. Because music and text were bestowed on Hildegard as complete visions, their ornamental significance is intentional. To further indicate what is meant by ornamentation imagine a piece where lyrics have no descriptive words and are simply an account of a biblical story, and imagine the music is primarily syllabic with no melismatic or neumatic styles, we would not label this ornamental. But the words in Hildegard’s music are wonderfully descriptive and bring the story to life in a memorable way, and the music brings the lyrics to life with their extensiveness in range and diversity of syllabic, neumatic, and melismatic phrasing. These characteristics of descriptive poetry, phrasing, and range when juxtaposed with the simpler qualities I’ve mentioned prove an expressivity and ornamentation fully present in Hildegard’s music.

In my analysis of ornamentation in Hildegard’s music, I am going to use the model devised by Marianne Richert Pfau in her dissertation “Hildegard von Bingen’s ‘Symphonia Armonie Celestium Revelationum’: An Analysis of Musical Process, Modality, and Text-Music Relations.” I will be using this because of its effective categorization of Hildegard’s music on a broad to detailed spectrum, starting with the overarching quality of the piece—antiphon or responsory in neumatic, syllabic, and/or melismatic style—and delving further
into specific text-music relationships. I will begin with an analysis of the antiphon: “O Gloriosissimi.”

From a broad vantage point of analysis, “O Gloriosissimi” is the third of fourteen antiphons and responsories in Vision Thirteen of Hildegard’s *Scivias*. Within Vision Thirteen, “O Gloriosissimi” belongs within the first two pieces about the celestial hierarchy. The celestial hierarchy is among nine themes of music which also includes: Holy Mary, the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles, the martyrs, the confessors, the virgins, “the ones to be recalled,” and lastly a short liturgical play entitled: “the exhortation of the virtues and the fight against the Devil.” This is the prototype of Hildegard’s Ordo Virtutum. Vision Thirteen comes at the end of Hildegard’s first major work. In analyzing the ornamentation of Hildegard’s music, the most explicit and exquisite ornamentation can be found in the music for the celestial hierarchy. The music is dedicated to beings of greater power and closer proximity to God, and in celebrating them these qualities need to be achieved by multilayered ornaments.

Now that we have a context for where “O Gloriosissimi” fits into *Scivias* and Vision Thirteen, we may begin musical analysis.

“O Gloriosissimi” is an antiphon. An antiphon is a piece of music of shorter length typically performed before and after a psalm or canticle in service. It is in mode 4, the plagal mode on E with frequent melodic phrasing on notes B, C, and D. According to a rough

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22 Hart. *Scivias*, pp. 525-529

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contemporary of Hildegard, John of Afflighem, in De Musica, this mode is generally conveyed as “ingratiating.” 24

Text

“O Gloriosissimi” is an ode to the nine heavenly ranked beings and proclaims their unceasing loyalty to God (Ex.1). The first stanza describes the eyes of the nine orders and their secured curiosity in God and the “mystical darkness of all creation.” 25 The second stanza further cements the power of the heavenly beings’ devotion by describing them in marked distinction from the Devil. 26 The poem gives a short and indirect summary of the Devil’s attempt to usurp both the height and depth of God’s power but this storyline is only a reference to the “untouched form” of the orders. 27 This indirect association linking the celestial beings with the devil is accentuated within a text-music analysis and will be touched upon later in the chapter.

27 Newman, Symphonia. pp. 155
Example 1. O Gloriosissimi (antiphon) from Barbara Newman’s Symphonia.

O gloriosissimi lux vivens angeli, O most glorious angels, living light:
qui infra divinitatem beneath the Divinity
divinos oculos you gaze on the eyes of God
cum mistica obscuritate within the mystical darkness
omnis creature aspicitis of all creation
in ardentibus desideriis in ardent desires,
unde numquam potestis satiari: so that you can never be satiated.

O quam gloriosa gaudia illa O how glorious are those joys
vestra habet forma, that belong to your form,
que in vobis est intacta which in you is untouched
ab omni pravo opere, by all the wicked work
quod primum ortum est that first arose
in vestro socio, in your companion,
perdito angelo, the lost angel,
qui volare voluit who wished to fly
super intus latens above the pinnacle hidden
pinnaculum Dei, in the depths of God.
unde ipse tortuosus So he crookedly
dimersus est in ruinam— plunged into ruin—
sed ipsius instrumenta casus but by his counsel,
consiliando facture he supplied the means of his fall
digit Dei instituit. to the handiwork of God’s finger.

Text-Music Organization

In Pfau’s analysis of text-music relations, she begins by “devising a taxonomy of the main
types of text settings that make up the Symphonia”28 dividing music into sections based on
“syllable-note” relationships. In her second stage of analysis, she delves more specifically
into detailed examinations based on “melodic processes, tonal orientation, and rhythmic

28 Marianne Richert Pfau. “Hildegard Von Bingen’s Symphonia Armonie Celestium
Revelationum: An Analysis of Musical Process, Modality, and Text-Music Relations.” PhD
diss., Stony Brook, 1990. Print. Pg. 214
elements as part of more comprehensive text-music relations. 29 In devising a taxonomy, Pfau separates responsories from antiphons, and furthermore divides antiphons into five categories based on the syllable-note relationships: 1. Uniformly syllabic phrasing, 2. Uniformly neumatic phrasing, 3. Neumatic settings with some syllabic phrasing, 4. Melismatic settings with some syllabic phrasing, and 5. Neumatic settings with melismas distributed throughout. Because category 5 is more prominent in Hildegard’s music, it is separated into three subcategories: 5a. Neumatic with a melismatic event at the beginning, 5b. Neumatic with a melismatic event at the end, and 5c. Neumatic with melismas throughout the entirety of the piece. 30 “O Gloriosissimi” is a largely neumatic antiphon, but has a frequency of melismas distributed throughout, making it an example of the 5c subcategory.

The melismas in the antiphons of the 5c grouping can be used to bring out the text meaning (tone painting), they can be used to prepare the listener for a much grander and final melisma at the end, or they can serve a formal role “reflecting the many poetic assonances through melodic extensions and even melodic rhymes.” 31 Pfau also argues that the three of these characteristics may be present in one piece but may not have equal prominence.

Approaching “O Gloriosissimi” (Ex. 1) from a closer vantage point, we can see that the melismas act to “shade” the music or reinforce its meaning. 32 Furthermore words that have the lowest or highest pitches within the music, words that have a longer melisma breaking the neumatic flow, and words that skip upwards or below more than a third amidst stepwise

29 Pfau, Analysis of Musical Process, Modality, and Text-music Relations. pp. 214
30 Ibid. pp. 216-221
31 Ibid. pp. 247
32 Ibid. pp. 245
melodic phrasing all serve to ornament the music and catch the listener’s attention.

“Shading” is a word taken from Pfau’s analyses where the melismas add texture to the imagery of the text. These mechanisms that shade the music are, for me, synonymous with ornamentation. These types of ornamentation can overlap, similar to the characteristics of interspersed melisma. Pfau explained that interspersed melisma could have three purposes, and they may all be acting together within a piece, or individually. This concept is mirrored in the uses of ornamentation.

**Extremes Of Range**

I will begin with the highest and lowest notes present in “O Gloriosissimi.” The listener’s first exposure to the lowest note in the piece, a G, is at the word “obscuritate” (darkness). In Ex.1, G is only touched upon in the final two syllables “-ri-” and “-tate and the word concludes on A. The word “obscuritate” has a duration of 14 notes and spans a sixth from G to e. The word begins with a 5th skip from an A to an e, fluttering below e on a d at “-scu-” before tumbling into the lowest note range. The penultimate syllable moves B-G-A. With the note range, length, and newly achieved depth, the meaning of “obscuritate” is evoked.

Ex.1. “Obscuritate” notation.

“Creature” (creation)(Ex. 2) follows a shortened but similar path beginning on A moving up just below an e before dipping into a G and returning to A. The final syllable here
concludes with a similar B-A-G-A. Because these two belong to the same phrase, “within the mystical darkness of all creation,” the text settings suggest that darkness and creation are on the same plane.

Ex. 2. “Creature” notation.

The next low point is achieved at “aspicitis” (gaze) (Ex. 3), and belongs within the same phrase as “creature.” Coincidentally, it also follows the same basic structure beginning on A moving up to e and down to B-G-A. “Aspicitis” is only 11 notes in duration and a sixth in range but it maintains the melodic subject matter. Because it follows the same structure but touches on new notes it becomes ornamental.

Ex. 3. “Aspicitis” notation.

The next word that reaches a low G is “numquam” (never) (Ex. 4). It maintains a variation of the melodic pattern we experienced earlier by beginning on the f above the final, moving into d-C-d-C and down to an A, and finally concluding with the now-familiar motif of B-G-
A. This association with the idea of darkness, creation, and sight linking to the “numquam” within the phrase of “so that you can never be satiated” creates a deeper meaning within the poem, that visualizing creation in all its mysteriousness reinforces this insatiable thirst that is the devotion of the heavenly spirits to God.

Ex. 4. “Numquam” notation showing abbreviated melodic phrase B-G-A.

Ex. 5. “Gaudia” notation showing abbreviated melodic phrase.

The final word that ascends to G is “gaudia” (joy). “Gaudia” (Ex. 5) only spans 8 notes and has a smaller range of only a fourth, but once again it follows the melodic pathway of the previous four words furthering the underlying connection. The B-G-A note pathway is filled-in in “gaudia;” the newly added pitches once again serve as ornamentation to the melody that has now become familiar. Because the listener has now adjusted to these pitch pathways, and new pitches have now been interspersed they become ornaments to the notation. They are ornamental in their special placement among significant words, and they are also ornamental through their ability to elicit a response in the listener. “Gaudia” is a significant word,
belonging to the phrase “O how glorious are those joys, that belong to your form.” “Gaudia” pertains to the angels; specifically their distinction from Lucifer, the “lost angel” (“perdito angelo”). “Gaudia” is the fifth word that reaches G, the five words are connected in their melodic pathway. They also belong to phrasing that glorifies the strength of the angels and their insatiable devotion to God. While the melodic connection is unmistakable, the lyrical one is not an underlying message but more an ongoing theme in the piece.

What is fascinating and unexpected is the lower range Hildegard allows these words as opposed to the middle range she gives to “perdito angelo.” The five words have ranges of 6-7 intervals as does “perdito angelo” and even though the lost angel sits far below the ranks of the nine heavenly spirits, Hildegard placed him above them in this piece. The outer ranges are a dimension of ornamentation that Hildegard allows for the angels and withholds from the Devil, who remains in the middle range. This could potentially be a link to both the depth and height of God’s power that the Devil is unable to achieve. Furthermore, within the 73 words in “O Gloriosissimi” the average range sits between d and a encircling the final e.

Hildegard gives special attention to the angels’ abilities in these low notes and not the “lost angel” or his actions. She is not granting him a melodic deviation that the listener will pick up on. This is quite similar to Hildegard’s dramatization of Ordo Virtutum, in her musical organization of voices, she gives the Devil no sung melody, only spoken dialogue. Similar to

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33 The “Lost Angel” also referred to as Lucifer or the Devil, was once an angel accepted amongst the celestial hierarchy. In pride he attempted to achieve a power greater than God’s. In Isaiah 14 it is written: “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning...For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.” Lucifer did not succeed and was cast out of Heaven permanently.
the minimal range in voice frequency the devil is limited to the middle range without variation.

Ex. 6 "Perdito Angelo" ("lost angel") is limited to the middle range of the piece d-c\textsuperscript{1}.

In overlap with the lower extremes on G, the ascent to the upper extreme, g\textsuperscript{1}, begins at "desideriis" (desires) (Ex. 7). It moves into the higher register with the listener's first exposure to a d\textsuperscript{1}. Not long after, "gloriosa" (glorious) (Ex. 8) opens the sound space one step higher at e\textsuperscript{1}, followed by "quod" (that) (Ex. 9) on f\textsuperscript{1}. The first two reaching words "desideriis" and "gloriosa" have virtually the same melodic phrase (f\textsuperscript{1}-d\textsuperscript{1}-c\textsuperscript{1}-b-c\textsuperscript{1}-a-g-a-g-f-e-d-e) except that "gloriosa" reaches the e\textsuperscript{1}. The third stepwise melodic shift at "quod" (that) reaches up to f\textsuperscript{1}, but does not follow the same melodic pathway as the first two.

Ex. 7. "Desideriis" (desires) opens up the tonal range to d\textsuperscript{1}. 

26
Ex. 8. “Gloriosa” (glorious) continues tonal expansion opening the range up to e\textsuperscript{1}.

Ex. 9. “Quod” (that) expands the tonal range to f\textsuperscript{1}.

The highest note is g\textsuperscript{1}. It occurs in the last third of the piece on “socio,” “volare,” “pinnaculum,” “tortuosus,” “instrumenta,” and “facture.” The g\textsuperscript{1} is approached slowly by melodic phrasing beginning with words reaching up to d\textsuperscript{1}, e\textsuperscript{1}, f\textsuperscript{1}, and finally g\textsuperscript{1}. The words belonging in the higher register of the antiphon sequentially reach a note above their predecessors, until the g\textsuperscript{1} is reached at “socio” (companion). (Ex. 10)

The characteristics of the highest notes in “O Gloriosissimi” are quite different from the uniform characteristics shared by the lowest notes. Among other differences, there seem to be more ornamental flourishes on the words, and the g\textsuperscript{1}, while specific to one syllable, does not remain in the same syllabic region of the word, as did the words on the lowest notes.

Interestingly enough, the words that reach g\textsuperscript{1} (“socio,” “volare,” “pinnaculum,” “tortuosus,” “instrumenta,” “facture”) are all descriptor words for the rebellion of the lost angel. While his name in the song is not given special significance, his actions are emphasized to express the extent of contrast between all celestial beings in comparison to him. “Socio”
(companion)(Ex. 10) reaches its melodic climax in the first syllable beginning on e¹ moving by a third up to g¹ and moving stepwise down to a g before settling on b. “Socio” refers to the lost angel, and the tone painting here is very clear. We can picture the angel beginning on the same higher plane as other celestial beings, skipping upwards in an attempt to reach a higher altitude than God, and falling stepwise a full octave and finishing on a b.

Ex. 10. “Socio” achieves the first tonal climax of the piece reaching g¹.

Tone painting is a factor also present in the next word of the highest range, “volare” (fly)(Ex.16). This word also makes reference to the lost angel and his attempted ascension above God. Beginning on e¹ the phrasing moves stepwise up and down falteringingly reaching the g¹ but quickly falling farther below its starting note to the d an octave and a half below. The setting of this word is spectacular as it further shades the fall of the lost angel.

We continue to see these falling melodic phrases in the remaining four words. “Pinnaculum” (pinnacle) (Ex. 17) within “pinnaculum Dei” refers to the height of God through the motives and actions of the lost angel. The g¹ occurs in the third syllable within stepwise and skipping notation. The melody heightens by syllable, which inspires the imagery of a winding and far-reaching ascent. The height is accentuated in the fourth skipping up to, and third skipping down from g¹. This creates a pointed shape, the pinnacle.
The $g^1$ is once again unsustained and the melody falls back down below the $b$ that it began on.

The next word “tortuosus” (Ex. 11) (winding, crooked, dark, and tangled among other translations) skips up to the $g^1$ in its second syllable moving in a shaky descent to its final note of $b$. “Tortuosus” begins on the $e$, the lowest a $g^1$-achieving word has begun on.

Ex. 11. “Tortuosus” skips up to the $g^1$ and moves stepwise down to finish on a $b$.

The fifth word “instrumenta” (supplied or instrumental) (Ex. 12) refers to the lost angel’s actions that influenced his own fall. “Instrumenta” like “tortuosus” also skips up to the $g^1$ before beginning a stepwise descent. Skips always require more physical effort for the singer than stepwise motion, so we once again see this struggle up towards the $g^1$, with a stepwise descent following. While the approach to and from $g^1$ is not exactly the same across these words, the $g^1$ is never connected by step, it is always reached and occasionally left by skip.

Ex. 12. “Instrumenta” skips up to $g^1$ and moves stepwise down to a $b$. 
The sixth and final word achieving g¹ is “facture” (handiwork) (Ex. 13). It is God’s response to the lost angel’s efforts for power. “Facture” is a more stable word in that it lacks large skips and involves more stepwise motion. “Facture” is God’s response to the rebellion. It follows a steady melodic route with the usual small skip before and after g¹, and returns the listener to b, the note with which the word began. In conclusion, for the high notes, the similarities are few yet significant in that the g¹ is never sustained, it is always approached and departed by skip, and the words are primarily organized in a skip-heavy first half and stepwise descent. The fact that these are not identical melodic phrases, as was seen in the lower note extremes, and that their routes are always unstable may symbolize the lack of power belonging to the falling lost angel.

Ex. 13. “Facture” the last of the six high notes skips up to g¹ in the first syllable and moves stepwise down to a b.

Melisma

Let us now look at the most explicit style of ornamentation: the melisma. While the syllabic and neumatic text-music relationships hold great significance in Hildegard’s music, they are not as audibly discernible to the listener as the melisma. In this antiphon there is an inner circle of four words that contain the most notes i.e. longest melismas. At the beginning of the piece “oculos” expands the melismatic range with its fifteen notes and twelve neumes. (Ex.14). The second of longer melismas, also within the first stanza, is “desideriis” with
fifteen notes and fourteen neumes. (Ex. 15) In the longer and final stanza, the words “volare” (Ex. 16) and “pinnaculum” (Ex. 17) reach the most extensive melismas, “volare” with twenty-five notes and fifteen neumes, “pinnaculum” with twenty notes and seventeen neumes.

Counting the notes or pitches heard in each word is an easy way for the listener to pick out especially important words, but it is also crucial to consider the neumes; they are the notation in which the music was written, and they themselves are visually ornamental.

Ex. 14. “Oculos” as seen in the modern score compared with its notation in the Dendermonde Codex. Neume order: one clivis, one elongated quilisma, two puncta, one pes, three puncta, one virga, two puncta, and one quilisma.
With their elaborate melismas and meaning, all four words can be organized under the umbrella of both tone painting and ornamentation. "Oculos" within "divinos oculos" references the eyes of God, representing in those eighteen notes his all-seeing power. The neumes are significant for the concept of ornamentation because they are the visual portrayal of the melody, itself ornamental to see.

"Desideriis" (Ex. 15) within the phrase "in ardentibus desideriis" references the nine celestial beings’ passionate and constant dedication to God. It begins with a quilisma, followed by alternating groups of puncta and virgae. More puncta can indicate a more stepwise melodic pathway and distinguish that there are fewer repeated notes. Though they are not considered ornamental neumes, the puncta present a more distinct melodic phrase, which can aid in the visual tone painting of each phrase.

The third ornament, "Volare" (Ex. 16) within the phrase "qui volare voluit," references the attempted flight of the fallen angel. Not only does the word "volare" span the widest
range of eleven notes (an octave and a third), but also its melodic phrasing truly seems to be attempting to fly. “Vo-” begins on a small range fluttering between e⁹ and a then reaching up to a g⁹ only briefly, falls into a disjunct descent at “-la-” skipping from an e⁹ to a b, then awkwardly moving from an a-b-e and finally at “-re” tumbling from a g to a d. The neumatic organization creates a large peak that is quickly ascended in the first syllable with two ornamental quilismas, and a slower fall descent across the last two syllables. The extended clivis and torculus emphasize the pitch drop that occurs in the second syllable further painting an image of the Devil’s fall.

Ex. 16. “Volare” (fly) has the longest melisma of “O Gloriosissimī” with 25 notes and 16 neumes. Neume order: one porrectus, two puncta, one quilisma, one clivis, one elongated quilisma, two puncta, one elongated clivis, one elongated torculus, one virga, three puncta, and one virga.
Ex. 17. "Pinnaculum" (pinnacle) has the second longest melisma of "O Gloriosissimi" with 20 notes and 16 neumes. Neume order: one virga, two puncta, one virga, two puncta, one clivis, one pes, one elongated torculus, one virga, two puncta, one virga, and three puncta.

The last of the larger melismas is "pinnaculum," within "pinnaculum Dei"—the physical highest height within God’s power. (Ex. 17) "Pinnaculum" spans a total of twenty notes within a range of a tenth. In contrast with "volare," "pinnaculum" works a steady ascent up g\textsuperscript{1} before it skips down to a. This word reaches the same height as other words in the writing, possibly showing that "the lost angel" was incapable of flight above that note. The lost angel never achieves a height above g\textsuperscript{1}, only a c\textsuperscript{1}, signifying his failure. It is interesting to also note the descent on the first word with stepwise or small skips "pinna-" beginning its descent with a fifth between "pin-" and "-na." The manuscript shows a change in clef in the middle of the word. Immediately after this, despite the clef change, a ledger line is added to indicate the climactic g\textsuperscript{1} before the phrase descends to its finish. The neumatic notation outlines four peaks on three virgae and one pes sitting on different pitches to embody the pinnacle. The elongated torculus marks the skip towards the g\textsuperscript{1}. Within the context of the phrase: "above the pinnacle in the depths of God," "pinnaculum" references that power that Lucifer is
attempting to take. There is an intriguing juxtaposition of opposites in the utilization of the words “pinnacle” and “depth,” both in reference to God’s power.

When we look at the syntactical organization of “O Gloriosissimi” we see two separate stanzas, one devoted to the glorification of those angels who support God and the other to the strength they have that distinguishes them from the wickedness of the “lost angel.” The narration of the poem addresses the nine celestial beings directly. Even when the subject shifts towards the actions of Lucifer, the narrator still focuses on the angels and their strength, the theme of the antiphon. The forms of ornamentation—pitch height, pitch depth, melisma, melodic range, and melodic phrase repetition—are all ways to enunciate or stress significant words within the music. The most audibly explicit in ornamentation are the melismas; they are immediately heard and recognized by the ear by upsetting the balance or established flow of the song. In analysis with the help of Pfau’s designed concept of interpreting text-music relationships we can conjecture that the outer melismas weren’t Hildegard’s only tool for the voice as an instrument of faith. Text-music analysis confirms that the music has multilayered ornamentation. The many layers of ornamentation Hildegard used were for the words and music to mutually breathe life into one another, accentuating their theological meanings.
“O Vos Angeli” concludes the song pair of antiphon and responsory that address the celestial hierarchy in *Scivias*. As an extension of “O Gloriosissimi” it continues the praising of the celestial beings while taking on a new structure. Similarly, the structure of ornamentation changes as it shifts to fit the framework of a responsory rather than an antiphon. Responsories were in general expected to be much more ornamental than antiphons. In a short article on two of Hildegard’s responsories, Marianne Richert Pfau writes,

Musically, Hildegard’s responsories represent her most lofty inventions, poetically elaborating on fundamental biblical topics, exploring an exalted, ornate musical style that relied on the vocal range and agility of well-trained singers, and inspiring intense devotion. Her purpose in adding her own chants to the traditional office hours, we may assume, was to share her private experience of the divine which inspired all her poetry and song, as well as to heighten her companions’ experience of spiritual reality through the singing in unison of what has recently been termed a “music of ecstasy.”

These pieces with impressive melodic expressivity are known as “prolix chants” and were reserved for morning and evening services of the Divine Office. Furthermore Pfau describes these musical pieces and the extraordinary melismas within them unique qualities of Hildegard’s style amongst the “restrained esthetic of Gregorian Chant.”

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35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
Where the antiphon “O Gloriosissimi” framed (before and after) a psalm within the service, the responsory “O Vos Angeli” would have concluded a lesson. As a responsory it also follows a more repetitive structure beginning with a soloist in the first section of the chant followed by the entrance of a chorus. In the manuscript “v” marks the return of the verse for the soloist “Videtis enim,” followed by the choir repeating the ornate responsorial section known as the respond: “Sit laus vobis.” The last section usually covers the return to the respond and doxology. Hildegard’s responsories were created with an emphasis in the free composition but did not depart completely from “centonization,” a style of composition drawing pre-existing musical units from other compositions. Hildegard’s mixing of these styles provides an overarching multidimensional shape to her music with the inner layers connecting the listener to older melodies and their corresponding lyrics, and on the outer layers introducing the listener to a new melody or poem that would strike the listener in its unfamiliarity. Hildegard’s responsories are just as important to the study of ornamentation as antiphons, they make up for half the fourteen songs in Vision Thirteen, and their form permits them a greater range of expressivity.
Example. 2 O Vos Angeli (responsory) from Barbara Newman’s Symphonia.

O vos angeli
qui custoditis populos,
quorum forma fulget
in facie vestra,

et o vos archangeli
qui suscipitis
animas iustorum,
et vos virtutes,
potestates,

principatus, dominatates,
et troni,
qui estis computati
in quantum secretum numerum,
et o vos cherubin

seraphin,
sigillum secretorum Dei:

Sit laus vobis,
qui loculum antique cordis
in fonte assplicitis.

Videtis enim
interiorem vim Patris,
que de corde illius spirat
quasi facies.

Sit laus vobis,
qui loculum antiqui cordis
in fonte assplicitis.

O angels
that guard the peoples,
whose form gleams
in your faces

and O archangels
that receive
the souls of the just
and you virtues,
powers,
prinedoms, dominations
and Thrones,
who are reckoned
in the mystical number of five;
and O you cherubim
and seraphim,
seal upon the secret things of God:

Praise to you,
who behold in the fountain
the little place of the ancient heart.

For you see
the inmost strength of the Father,
which breathes from his heart
like a face.

Praise to you,
who behold in the fountain
the little place of the ancient heart.
In "O Gloriosissimi" a pronounced distinction is drawn between the fallen angel and the angels to highlight their strength of devotion to God. This dedicated language is continued in "O Vos Angeli," where each order of the nine celestial beings is outlined in the first stanza. The groupings of celestial beings seem to be unique to Hildegard, as Newman comments, "although for the sake of numerology the angels were commonly divided into three groups of three, Hildegard counted them instead as two, five and two." 37 The next line "Praise to you, who behold in the fountain the little place of the ancient heart" serves as both the second and fourth stanzas, the respond. The third stanza, "For you see the inmost strength of the Father, which breathes from his heart like a face" is placed in between. The last three stanzas refer to the strengths all nine celestial beings possess in their uniform allegiance to God.

The poem begins with the orders closest to earth: angels and archangels. The words "angeli" and "archangeli" signify their connection through homeoteleuton, a grammatical figure of sound linking words by their identical endings. This is an unusual instance of assonance in Hildegard's poetry. Pfau used it to mark underlying connections between words and in contrast the noticeable expressivity that occurs when the text departs from this pattern.38 "O angels that guard the peoples, whose form gleams in your faces and O archangels that receive the souls of the just." The lowest order of celestial beings, the angels, protect humanity and reflect the forms of the people. This idea of reflection coincides with the idea of a mirroring or physical replication of God's being. In the antiphon "O Pulchre Facies" and Sister of Wisdom. In "O Pulchre Facies," the word "mirror" is presented as one

38 Pfau, diss. Pp. 240
of several translations “where he made you mirrors of all heaven’s graces”\textsuperscript{39} and in \textit{Sister of Wisdom} as “an image of rich theological content.”

Pseudo-Dionysus had used mirrors as a metaphor for the celestial hierarchies, and Hildegard drew on this familiar usage in the \textit{Activity of God}, where she heard Christ address the Father as \textit{paternum speculum}, the mirror in whose brightness all the angels shine. As we have seen, she also characterized the medium of her visions as a kind of mirror, the “reflection of the living Light,” wherein she could observe all things present and future as they exist in God. Her visionary experience thus lends concrete reality to a conventional metaphor for the world of ideas. Among medieval platonists, from Augustine to Hildegard’s contemporaries, it was commonplace to regard the empirical world as a mere shadow or reflection of the true life possessed by creatures in the mind of God. Poets and mythographers illustrated the idea with the image of a fountain, at once well of life (fons vitae) and mirror of providence.\textsuperscript{40}

This idea of \textit{paternum speculum}, God’s light reflecting off the angels as connected to the people whose “form gleams” in the faces of the angels, creates a full circle of Hildegard’s living light theology. Newman connects this with the equally reflective “fountain” or “well of life” which is also a central theme in “O Vos Angeli.”

Newman quotes Hildegard’s \textit{De operatione Dei} where in Hildegard’s vision she witnesses “Caritas and her two companions, Humilitas and Pax, presiding over the ‘living fountain’ that both quickens and reflects all creatures.”\textsuperscript{41}

Thus the spirit of God is a living fountain that he distributes among all his works, which also draw life from him and possess their vitality through him, like reflections in water. And no being can plainly see whence it lives, but each merely senses that which moves it…

Indeed the purity of the living God is a leaping fountain, resplendent with his glory. In that splendor, God with great love embraces all things, whose reflections appeared in the leaping fountain before he bade them come forth in their own forms. And all creatures shown resplendent in me, Love, and my splendor made their features visible as a reflection reveals a form. And in Humility, my helper, creation came forth

\textsuperscript{39} Newman, \textit{Symphonia}. Pp. 219
\textsuperscript{40} Newman, \textit{Sister of Wisdom}. Pp. 26
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid. Pp. 52
through the bidding of God. In that same humility, God bowed down to me to restore the dry leaves that had fallen, in that bliss by which he can do all that he wishes. For he had formed them on earth, and thence he delivered them after their fall.\textsuperscript{42}

This imagery continues the picture of the “mirror of providence” and the “well of life.” Hildegard embellishes this image of God being both a mirror and a font that reflects those of his creation. The fact that the angels are capable of reflecting the human form is an indication of their rank in heaven and likeness to God.

The next five orders, “you virtues, powers, principedoms, dominations and thrones,” represent the five senses and five wounds of Christ.\textsuperscript{43} They are “reckoned in the mystical number of five.” As was mentioned earlier, this grouping of the orders appears to have been for the purpose of nestling the significant number five into the music. Placed in the middle, they still create symmetry, while also highlighting the wounds Christ suffered, and also marking the five senses that were very important sensations for Hildegard biblically and spiritually. Furthermore, they were likely crucial in Hildegard’s synesthesia, a condition which blurred the boundaries between the senses. This middle grouping do not share in homeoteleuton, but they are subtly book-ended by “iustorum” (just) and “numerum” (number).

The last phrase in the first stanza “And Cherubim, O seraphim, seal upon the secret things of God” introduces the last two orders, the closest to God in their placement and representing the “knowledge and love of God.”\textsuperscript{44} Seraphim and Cherubim are so high in

\textsuperscript{42} Newman, \textit{Sister of Wisdom}. Pp. 53
\textsuperscript{43} Newman, \textit{Symphonia}. Pp. 284
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
proximity to God that they physically bind or “seal” to his secrets and love. Additionally with their “-in” endings the highest orders also form homeoteleuton.

The respond “Praise to you, who behold in the fountain the little place of the ancient heart” introduces the fountain theme. The respond appears as the second and fourth stanzas, whose three lines create the most explicit homeoteleuton with “vobis,” “cordis,” and “asspicitus” in the most closely connected organization of words in the piece. As was touched upon earlier, the fountain is a physical representation of God’s purity and spirit that is the source behind the reflective properties of God’s power. Behind the source of water flow is the “place of the ancient heart” (“qui loculum antique cordis”) which as Hildegard stated, “no being can plainly see whence it lives, but each merely senses that which moves it…” It is significant that this imagery belongs to the respond, stressing that the celestial orders are an exception to this rule for they are capable of the greatest power: beholding the origin of God’s heart.

This idea is further reiterated in the third line: “For you see the inmost strength of the Father, which breathes from his heart like a face.” Additionally translated by Newman as, “For your eyes are fixed on the father’s pulse as on a face that breathes from his soul.” They are capable of seeing the “pulse” and “breath” of God’s heart, the gift of sight that is an explicit strength that unites the celestial beings in an elaborate and divine grouping.

**Overarching Musical Quality**

“O Vos Angeli” is a responsory in standard format though it lacks divided verses between soloist and choir. It is organized in an introduction, respond, verse, and respond order. It is labeled with a red “R” in the manuscript to signal responsory and a “v” to indicate
verse, and signals the respond by spelling out the beginning of the phrase “sit.” (“praise”) for the return to “Sit laus vobis.”

Though it cadences at some points on an a, the responsory is in e mode because of its beginning and endings on e. I believe it is in authentic e mode, because it primarily sits above the final, but there are several occasions when it descends below, most noticeably on the second word, “vos” (you.)

“O Vos Angeli” has the widest range of two octaves and a fifth, and the longest melisma of the fourteen antiphons and responsories in Vision Thirteen. The last word of “O Vos angeli,” repeated twice in the song, is “asspicitis” (behold) on eighty-seven notes and seventy-seven neumes. The closest melisma in Vision Thirteen, nearly forty notes behind, is in “Vos Flores Rosarum” with fifty-one notes on “capite” (“beginning.”)

**Ornament: Note extremes, Range, and Melisma**

The frequency of ornamental styles between note extremes, range, and melisma are much more continual within Hildegard's responsories. Because of the normalcy of these styles a word that simply has either a large range, long melisma or high note individually will blend in, whereas a word that has any combination of the three styles will likely carry more weight in significance. With that in mind, it is necessary to look at the words of “O Vos Angeli” in succession to explore the development of melisma lengths and range.

Situated between words with under-ten-note melismas, “angeli” (“angels”)(Ex. 1) is the first word with multi-dimensional ornamentation. It is the first named celestial order and the closest to humanity, which is well represented in its octave range around the final. It has the second largest melisma with thirty-three notes and twenty-nine neumes, and opens up the
sound space to e\textsuperscript{1}. The neumatic composition of “angeli” mainly consists of single neumes, but the use of elongated pes and porrectus, as well as the ornamental quilisma are visibly pronounced in the manuscript. Sitting on heightened ledger where “vos” (you) brought the range to its lowest note, a G, “angeli” appears to descend in note height but is really simply shifted downwards to prepare for the coming “custoditis.”

Ex. 1 “Angeli” is the first ornamental word in “O vos angeli” with thirty-three notes, twenty-nine neumes, and an octave range. Neume order: one porrectus, one virga, two puncta, one virga, one elongated pes, three puncta, one virga, one porrectus, two puncta, one virga, three puncta, one virga, one elongated porrectus, two puncta, one virga, three puncta, one virga, two puncta, one quilisma, one virga, two puncta, and one virga.

With thirty-one notes, twenty-six neumes and a ninth in range, “custoditis” (guard) (Ex.2) comes to life as the musical representation of “guarding” by which the angels protect the people. It continues widening the range up to an e\textsuperscript{1}, building towards the g\textsuperscript{1} that occurs in the less melismatic “populos.” The ninth range of “custoditis” encapsulates the seventh of “populos” (not pictured here) but is seated lower from d-e\textsuperscript{1} establishing a supportive foundation for “populos” which reaches higher from a-g\textsuperscript{1}.
"Custoditis" uses primarily single neumes but is studded with two quilisma and an elongated pes both ornamental in their distinction from the ordinary single neumes.

Ex. 2 "Custoditis" has thirty-one notes, twenty-six neumes, and a ninth range. Neume order: one virga, two puncta, one virga, one porrectus, one virga, five puncta, one quilisma, three puncta, one elongated pes, one virga, four puncta, one quilisma pre-puncte, three puncta, and one virga.

The next of the celestial orders, "Archangeli" (archangels) (Ex.3) is welcomed with another mixing of ornamental styles with seventeen notes, fifteen neumes and a sixth range. Though it doesn’t audibly reach new heights, it sits between a nine-note melisma and four-note melisma marking its distinction. Unlike "angeli," "archangeli" sits on a higher range of g-e¹ beginning an ascent towards the highest note of the piece, d², occurring on "suscipitis" (receive) (Ex.4) with eighteen notes, thirteen neumes and an octave range. The archangels are the divine beings who "receive the souls of the just" so height is an explicit way to embody the imagery of rising souls. The word-ending on e¹ an octave above the final also shows a new haven for these departing souls, still linked to their earthly home on e. "Archangeli" has
only single neumes and doesn’t tonally overlap with “suscipitus” which has two ornamental 
quilismas nestled into the single virga, puncta and clivis neumes.

Ex. 3 “archangeli” the second celestial order, has seventeen notes, thirteen neumes, and a 
sixth range. Neume order: one virga, two puncta, one clivis, one porrectus, one virga, two 
puncta, two virga, two puncta, and one virga.

Ex. 4 “suscipitis” introduces the first d² of the responsory. It covers eighteen notes, thirteen 
notes, and an octave in range. Neume order: one quilisma prepuncte, two clivis, one 
quilisma, four puncta, one clivis, one virga, two puncta, and one virga.
The next of conspicuously ornamental words, is “virtutes” (virtues) (Ex. 5) the first of the “mystical five” orders. Prefaced by a two-note melisma, the twenty-note, eighteen-neume and sixth-range word announces the middle orders with fervor. Along with “potestates” (powers) (Ex. 6), which has thirty notes, twenty-six neumes and an octave range, the two words’ melismas grow in length and range in anticipation for “principatus” (prinedoms) (Ex. 7) and “dominationes” (dominations) (Ex. 8). “Principatus” with thirty notes, and twenty-three neumes widens the soundscape with the highest range thus far of an octave and a fourth (g-\textsuperscript{1}). Its darkly drawn extended pes and clivis create steep valleys and peaks in the melodic phrase in contrast to the more rounded hills of the other orders. While “dominationes” diminishes its melisma to twenty-seven notes and twenty-four neumes and narrows its range to an eighth, the note extreme g\textsuperscript{2} is traversed a second time. “Dominationes” has the most ornamental neumes of any celestial rank in the piece with four quilismas. The last of the middle five orders on “troni” (thrones) hides amidst small melismas and ranges implying their passive existence among the celestial ranks.
Ex. 5 "Virtutes" introduces the middle grouping of five orders with a twenty-note eighteen-neume melisma and sixth range. Neume order: one virga, two puncta, one virga, three puncta, two virga, four puncta, one quilisma, three puncta, and one clivis.

Ex. 6 "Potestates" the second of the middle celestial orders, has thirty notes, twenty-six neumes and an octave range. Neume order: one virga, two puncta, one clivis, one quilisma prepuncte, one virga, two puncta, two virga, two puncta, one virga, four puncta, one virga, one quilisma prepuncte, four puncta, one virga, and one torculus.
Ex. 7 "principatus" reaches a C′ and covers a melisma of thirty notes, twenty-three neumes and a tenth range. Neume order: one clivis, one quilisma prepuncte, one virga, two puncta, one virga, one elongated pes, seven puncta, one clivis, one pes, one elongated clivis, one virga, three puncta, one virga, and one clivis.
Ex. 8 “dominations” reaches the second d² in the responsory, covering a twenty-seven note and twenty-four neume melisma and an octave range. Neume order: one quilisma prepuncte, one quilisma, one virga, four puncta, one quilisma, one virga, four puncta, one virga, four puncta, one virga, two puncta, one quilisma, two puncta, one pes, and one virga.

The last two of the nine celestial beings are “cherubin” (cherubim) (Ex. 9) and “seraphin” (seraphim) (Ex. 10). These beings are the prime subject matter in “O Vos Angeli” so giving ornamental center stage to their identities is the full purpose of the responsory.

“Cherubim” with twenty-two notes, seventeen neumes and a sixth range (b-g¹) is introduced amidst smaller melismas and range where similar to the first two groupings it builds a foundation to provide a jumping off point for “seraphin” widening the ornamental dimensions with thirty notes, twenty-three neumes and an octave range culminating in c².

These two orders serve as the knowledge and love of God but they are not given more attention by way of ornamentation than the other orders because this responsory unites the strengths of all nine orders.
Ex. 9 "cherubim" is the first of the highest celestial orders, spans twenty-two notes, seventeen neumes and a sixth in range. Neume order: one elongated pes, two puncta, one quilisma, one virga, two puncta, two virga, three puncta, one quilisma prepuncte, three punta, and one torculus.

Ex. 10 "seraphim" is the highest celestial order next to the "white light of divinity." It spans thirty notes, twenty-three neumes, and an octave range culminating at c\(^1\). Neume order: one virga, two puncta, one quilisma, one virga, two puncta, one virga, one elongated pes, one quilisma prepuncte, seven puncta, one clivis, one torculus, one pes, two puncta, and one virga.

Drastically distinguished from any other responsory lyric as well as any other lyric in Vision Thirteen, “asspicitis” (behold) (Ex. 11) envelops almost all extremes in the piece with eighty-seven notes, seventy-seven neumes, and a range over two full octaves (c-d\(^3\)). Furthermore it is repeated twice, additionally stressing its importance as a central strength of
all nine orders. The melodic phrasing roams numerous hills and valleys, and each height is studded with a virga. While larger neumes are considered more ornamental, this word was given forty-five purposefully placed puncta. The deliberateness of the melisma and range here—almost masking the word’s sense to the ears—expose the mysterious factor that unites the celestial hierarchy. They can see beyond the source of God’s outflowing wisdom and purity, to look upon his heart.
Ex. 11 “asspicitis” is the most ornamental word in “O vos angeli” and Vision Thirteen. It covers eighty-seven notes, seventy-seven neumes and a range of over two octaves. Neume order: one elongated pes, five puncta, one clivis, one quilisma prepuncte, one virga, six puncta, one virga, two puncta, one quilisma, one virga, three puncta, one virga, two clivis, one virga, two puncta, one virga, four puncta, one virga, one puncta, one quilisma, four puncta, one virga, four puncta, two virga, three puncta, one tristrophe, one virga, three puncta, one virga, two puncta, one quilisma, three puncta, one virga, one torculus, one virga, three puncta, one quilisma prepuncte, and three puncta.
Dedicated to the virgins, “O Pulchre Facies” and “O Nobilissima Viriditas” are the last of the seven pairs of antiphons and responsories in *Scivias*, Vision Thirteen. Particularly significant to my study of ornamentation is the antiphon “O Pulchre Facies” because it overtly mentions the word “ornament” twice, first in “Omnia celestia ornamenta” (“all the beauties of heaven”) and later in “in omnibus ornamentis” (“with all the beauties”)—one almost an echo of the other, with linked meanings. Translated from Latin “ornamenta” means “decoration, ornament, honor” or “distinction,” yet Barbara Newman’s two translations do not use those words.\(^{45}\) This explicit reference accentuates the concept of ornamentation as a multidimensional element in the words, music and even lives of Hildegard’s nuns.

**Text**

“O Pulchre Facies” (antiphon) from Barbara Newman’s Symphonia.

O pulchre facies,  
Deum aspicientes  
et in aurora edificantes,  
o beate virgines,  
quam nobiles estis,  
in quibus rex se consideravit  
cum in vobis  
omnia celestia ornamenta  
presignavit,  
ubi etiam suavissimus hortus estis,  
in omnibus ornamentis  
redolentes.

O beautiful faces,  
beholding God  
and building in the dawn!  
O blessed virgins,  
how noble are you,  
in whom the King contemplated himself  
when he sealed in you  
beforehand  
all the beauties of heaven.  
So you are the sweetest garden,  
fragrant  
with all beauties.

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\(^{45}\) Newman, Symphonia, pp.218-19
Hildegard's poem is in essence about Christian virginity. Pfau explains that the opening phrase “O beautiful faces, beholding God and building in the dawn!” evokes the virgins “constructing the City of God through their chaste imitation of Christ and Mary.” They build this city by laying the “stones of good works.” Among other virtues their practice in chastity establishes an essential foundation for the symbolic city.

The second and final phrase can be split into two important sections, the virgins' creation in God's likeness (the King), and their comparison to the sweetest garden (the lost paradise): “O blessed virgins, how noble are you, in whom the King contemplated himself when he sealed in you beforehand all the beauties of heaven so you are the sweetest garden, fragrant with all beauties.” Women created in God’s contemplation of himself was a debated idea in the twelfth century; Hildegard implied that they were created in his likeness while men were primarily thought to be the sole sex with this gift. According to Newman, Hildegard “used the feminine expressly to symbolize the eternal counsel, woman’s role as vessel to the Incarnation was the very seal of her creation in the image of God.” Hildegard believed that “man is like the soul and woman like the body” and furthermore that “man signifies the divinity and woman the humanity of the Son of God.” The idea that a woman (Mary) brought the savior of humanity into life links to God, the creator of humanity. This is the underlying meaning of “O Pulchre Facies.” Lastly the congregation of the virgins considered as the “sweetest garden” recalls Eve in the Garden of Eden, where paradise was

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46 Pfau, "Music and Text." pp. 304
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid. pp. 219
49 Newman, Sister of Wisdom. Pp. 93
50 Ibid.
lost, but redeemed by Mary the virgin mother. As is most apparent, this is an antiphon dedicated to the virgins and directly applying to those voices that performed it: the women of Hildegard’s convent.

Virginity was important in the church not only because of Mary but also as a practice of virtue and faith. But the virgin had a deeper meaning within Hildegard’s theology. In her idealization of virginity and as a mechanism for justifying her own power as a visionary, Hildegard made the argument that power was perfected in weakness. In Sister of Wisdom, Newman used Mary to explain this seemingly paradoxical idea. Mary, as a woman, was of frail stature in comparison to a man, but in nourishing and giving birth to Jesus Christ, she brought salvation into the world, and therefore brought forth strength from her frailty. Newman used Hildegard’s sequence “O Virga ac Diadema” as a strong example of her perception of virginity. The poem was written for Mary but oddly never mentions her explicitly.\(^5\) The poem instead exemplifies the Virgin Mary’s state of existence or her essence. Newman argues:

The ideal [Hildegard] personifies is Virginity, but it is not the monastic virginity purchased by fallen humanity at the price of renunciation, discipline, and suffering. Hence she is no model for direct imitation. Hers is rather the virginity of Paradise. It is an aesthetic rather than ascetic state; there is no hint of strain about her. Unlike most hymnodists, Hildegard did not even stress the paradox that Mary is both virgin and mother; in fact, she seems scarcely to have perceived that it was a paradox. For her, virginity and maternity were not mutually exclusive terms but aspects of unique feminine birthright that Eve unfortunately spoiled. Mary is supreme because she at last enters into the inheritance, bearing a child without the tragic fall into sexuality. She both embodies the lost Paradise in her own person and provides access to it through her son.\(^5\)

\(^5\) Newman. Sister of Wisdom. pp. 128-31
\(^5\) Ibid. pp. 188
The imagery of the virgin as the “sweetest garden” in “O Pulchre Facies” is a revival of the lost paradise that Eve destroyed. The virtual city that the virgins build is of course not a literal reproduction of a city population but the reproduction of “stones of good works.” This maternal fostering of faith combined with virginal chastity allows for them to be figures of strength despite their alleged frailty. This was an important distinction that allowed for Hildegard to add ornament and expressivity to all facets of her monastic life, and even building confidence in her ability as a visionary.

“O Pulchre Facies” praises the pure beauty of the virgins, who maintain the gift that God has “sealed” within them, protecting them in the “sweetest garden,” a bond among all virgins and Mary. The fragrant haven that is the “sweetest garden” connects to the theme of verdure that is not foreign to Hildegard’s music. In addition to being a recurring theme for Hildegard, this symbolism links to medieval medical belief that women and men were split among the four elements. Men were classified as air and fire, the active elements, while women were classified as water and earth, the passive elements. Though Hildegard was not strict in following these beliefs, her lush and verdant vocabulary surrounding the virgins in this antiphon show the intersection between water and earth: greenery. Within the responsory that is paired with “O Pulchre Facies,” “O Nobilissima viriditas,” this descriptive language continues with the naming of “viriditas” (“greening power”).

Newman continually stresses Hildegard’s tendency to highlight the “aesthetic rather than the ascetic qualities of a nun’s life.” She also states: “a consecrated virgin never

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52 Pfau, Music and Text. Pg. 304
54 Newman, Sister of Wisdom. Pg. 128
withers; in her soul she embodies all that is fresh, vernal, and fragrant; her life on earth prefigures the bliss of heaven as she contemplates and reflects the divine beauty.” This imagery seemingly compares the virgin to the “viriditas” (greenery) of an unpicked flower; it continues to blossom and grow roots connecting it to its foundation while putting forth beauty.

The idea of chastity furthermore links to the mindset held amongst the monks of Disibodenberg and other monasteries in the Middle Ages: that practicing celibacy enhanced the spiritual possibilities of the mind, like that of meditation. Virginity was not viewed by Hildegard as a chore in religious life, but a wondrous gift that connected women to God, and additionally to one another in sisterhood. This is further linked to Hildegard’s encouragement of outward expression in her convent as witnessed by her correspondence and argument with mistress Tengswich of Andernach on appropriate attire in the convent.

“O Pulchre Facies” is in my mind one of the many well-worded arguments that Hildegard used as a foundation for ornamentation and expressivity in the music, lyrics and everyday practices at her convent. Her thoughts about virginity were an outlet for ornamentation that went beyond the normal allowances for a female in the medieval period. Hildegard took those characteristics of the feminine form that widespread were considered weaknesses, and celebrated them as strengths.

**Overarching Musical Quality**

“O Pulchre Facies” is written with the same final of e as “O Gloriosissimi” but it employs the authentic side of the mode: mode 3. In mode 3 the typical Phrygian sound is
captured by the half step f leading tone into final e, but in this piece the leading tone falls on the d a whole step below e rather emphasizing the authentic nature of the mode.

Using Pfau's categorization of musical style in antiphons, she categorizes "O Pulchre Facies" as 5c, the same group as "O Gloriosissimi," because of its interspersed albeit smaller melismas. "O Pulchre Facies" is a piece that Pfau discussed as an example for 5c stating that: "the melodic extensions fall on important words, and make these stand out from the neumatic context. Here the meaning of words seems to be the clue to the presence of the melismas." However, because of its longest melisma within the last word "redolentes" it could arguably be considered 5b—neumatic building to a long melisma at the end, but still with noticeable melismas on specific words.

**Extremes**

As an antiphon set in the authentic mode 3, the lower extent of notes below the final e is limited to d. The d often serves as a leading tone that shifts back into e, marking punctuation in the text and music. We see this touched on in "edificantes" ("building") (Ex.1), "virgines" ("virgins") (Ex.2) and estis ("you are") (Ex. 3).

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56 Pfau, Diss. Pp. 242
Ex. 1 “Edificantes” is the first word to reach the lower boundary of d, and uses this as a leading tone into the final to indicate a pause or cadence.

Ex. 2 “virgines” marks the second reach to the lower boundary of d, and also indicates a punctuation in the text and pause in the music.

Ex. 3 “estis” resolves from d to e where the phrase finishes at “quam nobiles estis.”

The other words that utilize a d deceptively prepare the listener for a return to the final but land on the f before eventually resolving to e. These words are: “presignavit” (“beforehand”) (Ex. 4), and “redolentes” (“fragrant”) (Ex. 5). The final five notes of these two words follow identically g-f-g-d-f-e hinting at a musical rhyming of sorts. The word “ornamenta” (“ornament”) also has a d as its final note and connects to “presignavit” referencing the ornaments that were bestowed on the virgins “before” they were born.

“Deum” also makes use of d twice in its eleven notes moving into e after the second d but later finishing on g.
Ex. 4. "Presignavit" moves from a d-f-e, instead of direct leading tone d-e.

Ex. 5. The final word “redolentes” hints at conclusion in the third syllable but continues another 23 notes before returning to a doubly-emphasized f and concluding on e.

The lower boundary of d that is reached at “redolentes” is among other significant forms of ornamentation belonging to the word that I discuss in the section on melisma. Because the lower boundary in this piece is so close to the final it may seem that its significance is less audible, but considered as a leading tone it is a useful tool for capturing the listener’s attention.

The upper boundaries of “O Pulchre Facies” are reached at g\textsuperscript{1} only twice in the antiphon. First at “consideravit” ("considered") (Ex. 6), and at “omnibus” ("all") (Ex. 7). The final four notes of these word settings are the same, though varied in length moving from g\textsuperscript{1}-e\textsuperscript{1}-d\textsuperscript{1}-e\textsuperscript{1}. 
Ex. 6 “consideravit” marks the first time the height of the melody reaches its upper boundary of g₄.

Ex. 7 “omnibus” is the second and final time that the melody achieves a g₄.

“Consideravit” (“considered”) reaches the g₄ in its second syllable moving up from a d₁-g₁-e₁ before moving down to a d₁ and concluding on e₁. God’s consideration of himself marks a powerful gift that he has bestowed on the virgins highlighted in the g₁. “Omnibus” (all) reaches the g₁ on its second syllable within the pattern e₁-g₁-e₁. It refers to all heaven’s graces that were sealed in the virgins by God. The height of this word, analogous to God’s consideration, forms a link to the beauties that he bestows on the virgins, and these similar melodic pathways form that likeness that the virgins bear to God’s image. This is a confirmation of the power the virgin nuns wield in their chastity. An interesting aspect of this power is further accentuated by the skip to and from the g₁. Similar to “O Gloriosissimi” the g₁ is never approached by step in this antiphon, but additionally intriguing there is never a single or stepwise note landing on f₁. While f₁ was used in “O Gloriosissimi” to widen the melodic range and prepare the listener for the g₁ it is completely skipped here, reinforcing the authentic range of the mode.
Range and Melisma

As in “O Gloriosissimi,” melodic range can be just as revealing of the words on
which Hildegard bestowed the most significance—though not as explicitly ornamental as
melisma. Total composition ranges in Office antiphons typically remained within the narrow
fifth or sixth interval. Disregarding range boundaries was a tendency in Hildegard’s style.
In “O Pulchre Facies,” range and melisma are coupled to create an expressivity that expands
in multiple directions.

Overall range in the piece covers an octave plus a fifth interval, and the most range in
one word covers a ninth. On average, a majority of the words fall on fourths or fifths with the
occasional occurrence of sixths. There is also a building of sevenths towards the ending and
climax of the piece. The words with ranges above fourths or fifths are: “O,” “aspicientes,”
“edificantes,” “ornamenta,” “presignavit,” “estis,” “omnibus,” and lastly “redolentes.” These
either overlap or distinguish from the words with most extensive melisma: “O,” “Deum,”
“aspicientes,” “edificantes,” “rex,” “presignavit,” “omnibus,” “ornamentis,” and
“redolentes.”

The beginning of “O Pulchre Facies” on the single syllable “o” moves from an e to a
c1 forming a sixth and marking a decorative introduction to the beautiful faces of the virgins
that fix their eyes on God. It spans ten notes and eight neumes in duration. As seen in the
Dendermonde codex the “o” itself is visibly ornamental beginning with the illuminated letter

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and leading into the arching melodic phrase composed of one punctum, one quilisma, one virga, one pes, three puncta, and one virga. Right away the first word uses an ornamental neume, the quilisma.

Ex. 8. "O" introduces the first phrase of the piece "O Pulchre Facies" and prepares the melodic sound space for expansion in multiple directions.

The following sixth occurs on "aspicientes" ("beholding") (Ex. 9), covering the same sixth range of e to c^1 but beginning and ending on g to link its previous and following phrases together: the virgins who behold God also build in the dawn! The word spans ten notes and eight neumes: one pes, one quilisma, one virga, one clivis, one cephalicus, two puncta, and one virga. The cephalicus is a kind of liquescent neume, prescribing it a legato or diphthong delivery.
Ex. 9. "Aspicientes" links together the first phrase of the poem and belongs in the combined larger range and melisma category.

The following word with a larger melisma "Deum" (God) encompasses eleven notes and seven neumes. Though it only reaches a fifth interval the word itself serves as a foundation for the themes of the piece. It is the first of two references to God, both referring to perception. The first is the virgins’ perception of him, and the other his perception of himself, which he contributed to the virgins. "Deum" has a lower range from a d- to a g, it hinges on the final in the first syllable before settling on a g in the second syllable. It lies on the melodic back-bone of the piece.

"Edificantes" has the largest range and most extensive melisma in the first half of the "O Pulchre Facies" covering an octave vertically, thirteen notes and 12 neumes horizontally. This is an important word because it is the indication in the poetry of the virgins’ power. "Edificantes" references the building of the city of god, and distinguishes itself with its extended height and its placement amongst fourths. Both the preceding "aurora" (dawn) and
following “o” mark a distinct contrast with their smaller ranges enforcing the significance of “edificantes.” The word towers over its surrounding words beginning with the leading $d^1$ and finishing by the lower $d$ leading into the familiar $e$ final. Apart from the clivis, “edificantes” is composed of all single-note neumes, accentuating the image of the aforementioned “stones of good works.”

![Image of musical notation]

Musical example 9. “edificantes” covers a range of an octave, and spans 13 notes and 12 neumes. Neume order: one virga, two puncta, one clivis, one virga, two puncta, two virgae, two puncta, and a virga.

The next word with extensive melisma is “rex” (king) (not illustrated here). It covers a fifth in range and a ten-note melisma. It marks the second mention of God but now represents his self-contemplation. In contrast to the first mention of God, this mention belongs higher in the melody, lying between $g$-$d^1$. The melisma on “king” marks a word with great significance, but it also prepares the melody for the note extreme $g^1$ on “consideravit,” rounding out the phrase “in whom the King contemplated himself.”

Continuing in sequential order, the next word achieving ornamentation on range or melisma is “ornamenta” (Ex. 10) which marks the beginning of the sevenths, the precursors
to the climax of the piece. This is the first mention of the word ornament. Ironically in the manuscript it is somewhat stark in comparison to the other neumatic phrases within the same intervallic range. The neumatic structure is simply four neumes alternating oriscus with clivis. Oriscus is another neume belonging to the category of ornamental neumes.

Ex. 10. "Ornamenta" follows a simple structure of alternating neumes that can be seen in manuscript and contemporary notation.

The next in the category of sevenths is "presignavit" ("beforehand") (Ex. 11) spanning ten notes and five neumes. In the manuscript notation the neume structure follows one quilisma, one oriscus, one virga, an elongated torculus, and a combined quilisma and torculus. There seems to be a kind of tone painting in this image, showing in the first two syllables the beauties that are bestowed on the maidens by God in the heavens prefiguring their grounded and earthly appearance in the second two syllables. Furthermore the neumatic notation is largely that of ornamental neumes, overt visual ornamentation.
Ex. 11. "Presignavit" is the second in building four sevenths widening the sound space towards the climax. It also offsets an authentic cadence with a plagal going from d-f-e.

The next seventh is on "estis" ("you are") (Ex. 12) spanning eight notes and eight neumes respectively. The word "estis" is itself important in that it unites the subjects of the poem, placing them together in the sweetest garden. The neumatic notation is as follows: one virga, three puncta, one virga, two puncta, and one virga. The neumatic style of puncta dominates the word, the delicate shapes trickling downwards and settling with the pronounced downwards point of the virga. The range is very visible in the manuscript, further highlighting the stable connection of the higher power—God to the virgins.
Ex. 12. "Estis" is the third word to cover a seventh in range. It addresses the virgins directly, placing them in the sweetest garden.

The last seventh is on the word "omnibus" ("all") (Ex. 13) bridging ten notes and seven neumes. "Omnibus" encapsulates all the styles of ornamentation that have been discussed in this chapter, it reaches the high note extreme of g¹, has a markedly higher range, and noticeable melisma. All of these styles expand the expressivity in multiple directions. In the Dendermonde codex the word itself is split by the ornamentation in the notation separating "omni-" from "-bus" by five neumes. The neumatic notation follows one pes, one quilisma, two virgae, two puncta, and one pes. On the line that "omnibus" inhabits, the ledger line has been lowered to prepare for the g¹, and a fifth line has been drawn to hold the highest virga. The virga sits at the same height on the staff as a letter stem that overlaps from the line above.
Ex. 13. "Omnibus" marks all three of the ornamental extremes of the piece with the high g\textsuperscript{1} reached in the second syllable, the seventh interval, ten-note and seven neume span. Notice, also the amount of space between "omni-" and "-bus" in the manuscript, where the middle neumes seem to form a pinnacle like shape reaching up to the g\textsuperscript{1}.

The penultimate word of "O Pulchre Facies" that has ornamental significance is "ornamentis" ("beauties") (Ex. 14) the second mention of the word. Though it only covers a fifth, its melisma is more pronounced with eleven notes and six neumes in duration. In terms of style of expressivity it is the opposite of "ornamenta," in that "ornamentis" covers a more extensive melisma with a small range, whereas "ornamenta" spans a smaller melisma but a larger range. Aside from their more extensive range or melismatic qualities these words are actual textual mentions of ornament, though Newman translated them as "beauties." The first mention references the beautiful qualities of heaven that were instilled in the virgins "beforehand." The second mention extends that statement remarking on the beauties of the community of virgins: the sweetest garden. In essence, the word itself is descriptive, adding flavor to the poetry, and its recurring presence with differing notation is another indication of ornamentation. The neumatic notation follows one oriscus, one virga, an elongated pes, one
clivis, an elongated torculus, and a combined neume of a quilisma and torculus. Like the first “ornamenta” the neumes themselves are fairly spread across the bar but with less of a recognizable pattern. The word once again uses ornamental neumes combined with single neumes and furthermore elongates several of the single neumes to mark the melodic contrast over three of the staves. The word sits on the upper register of the final, frequently skipping down a fifth below to a.

Ex. 14. “Ornamentis” is the second mention of the word stem “ornament” this time with more elaborate neumatic notation and note length.

The final word with remarkably the most extensive ornamentation is “redolentes” (“fragrant”)(Ex. 15), spanning over three times the lengths of any other word in “O Pulchre Facies.” It has thirty-five notes, twenty-seven neumes, and a ninth in range. Because these qualities are outliers to the averages of all ornamental styles in the antiphon, there can be no doubt that this word was meant to be remembered. Belonging to “in omnibus ornamentis redolentes” (“fragrant with all beauties”) fragrance is used as a reference to the beauties that belong in the sweetest garden. This crossover of smell and sight is an example of Hildegard’s
synesthesia that bestowed itself to her visions and works. This aroma of the virgins’ beauty collectively in their garden almost in essence acts as an expressivity that is allowed of these women. The neumatic notation which involves separating “redolen-” from “-tes” by twenty-one neumes and moving the ledger line, follows this neumatic order: one pes, one clivis, one virga, one quilisma, three puncta, one quilisma combined with a clivis, one pes cephalicus pes flexus, one virga, four puncta, one virga, one quilisma, two puncta, one quilisma, one virga, three puncta, one virga, one pes combined with cephalicus and pressus, and two puncta. The range of neume shapes inhabits three categories: the single neumes, the ornamental neumes, and the liquescent neumes.

“Redolentes” is by far the most extensive word in any capacity of “O Pulchre Facies.” The only other word with higher melisma and range (though still quite far beneath) is “edificantes.” These two words both serve as the glue combining the subjects of the virgins’ power (building in the dawn) and her reflection of God’s self-contemplation (the instilled beauties and fragrance within the sweetest garden). They also share in similar word endings (homoioteleuton): the only two words in the piece with an “-es” ending.

The connections that are made through highlighting the relationships between lyrics and music are clearly not incidental. In their most shallow function, they celebrate the theme of virginity using ornamental neumes and tone painting, and on a deeper level shade the music underlining the virgins’ and God’s actions. As a vision and an important theme in Hildegard’s theology it is understandable that this piece is ornamental. It links back to the feminine divine imagery that dominated the subject matter of her visions but was also simply
a celebrated aspect of monastic life. It was important for Hildegard to stress the beauty of virginity because it personally applied to herself and her fellow nuns.

Ex. 15. “Redolentes” is the final word of “O Pulchre Facies.” It is too extensive to fit on one system of both the original and contemporary notations. It is clear that the Dendermonde codex spells the word “redolentis.”
Ch. 4
Of the Verdant Virgins

The story of the Virgins introduced in “O Pulchre Facies” continues with “O Nobilissima Viriditas.” It is the very last piece of music in Vision Thirteen before the text of the morality play.

Text

Example 4. “O Nobilissima Viriditas” from Barbara Newman’s Symphonia.

O nobilissima viriditas,  O most noble greenness,  
que radicas in sole   you are rooted in the sun,  
et que in candida serenitate and you shine in bright serenity  
5 luces in rota   in a sphere  
quam nulla terrena excellentia  no earthly eminence  
comprehendit:  attains.

Tu circumdata es  You are enfolded  
amplexibus divinorum  in the embraces of divine  
ministeriorum.  ministries.

10 Tu rubes ut aurora  You blush like the dawn  
et ardes ut solis flamma.  and burn like a flame of the sun.

In the Scivias, “O Nobilissima Viriditas” continues immediately after the conclusion of “O Pulchre Facies” and elaborates on the image of the “sweetest garden.” It continues the image of not the individual virgin, but virginity in all its splendor and greenery. Newman states this second narrative on virginity as revealing

Feminine beauty to be at one with all that is most promising in nature: it is verdant as the earth yet golden like sunlight and red as the dawn, sparkling in the white light of divinity. The iridescent play of colors recreates the burning bush, a figure of Mary. Or
from another perspective, Virginity appears as the tree of life, but it grows in the celestial spheres instead of an earthly garden, and has angels to tend it instead of Adam.\(^\text{58}\)

This interpretation of the imagery in the poem serves to further the point of the power of virginity through Mary’s strength. It also manages to distinguish this fragrant paradise from Eve’s by taking the virgins away from earth and placing them in a sphere where they are not in the company of Adam but rather in the embraces of the “divine ministries” or angels.

“Greenness” is the chastity that maintains a youthful and enlightened perspective: “O most noble greenness you are rooted in the sun and you shine in bright serenity in a sphere no earthly eminence attains.” With roots planted in direct sunlight this shows the peaceful position the virgin has in the eyes of God. She is protected and able to flourish under his security. The “celestial sphere” alludes to the nine orders of angels, the celestial hierarchy, as it is portrayed in the illumination of Vision Six in Scivias, all surrounding the white light of divinity (Fig. 3). The next line “You are enfolded in the embraces of divine ministries,” further marks the protection of the virgin amongst the Angels. The last line, “Tu rubes ut aurora et ardes ut solis flamma” (“You blush like the dawn and burn like a flame of the sun”) links to past images within the writings for the virgins. Firstly, it links to the phrase in “O Pulchre Facies”: “in aurora edificantes” (building in the dawn) but this time reflects on the physical quality or dawn-like color of the virgins. The next connection links the last phrase of the poem to the first, stating that the virgins are rooted in the sun, but are also like rays of the sun. Both of these connections mark the virgins’ “likeness” to God. They both build in the

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\(^{58}\) Newman, Symphonia, pp. 304-5
City of God and they also reflect the dawn consequently reflecting humanity in that city.

Furthermore, managing to be both in the dawn and blush like the dawn, or in the sun and burn like a flame of the sun, marks the paradox between mother and virgin that Hildegard captures. They are able to harness the strengths of both, culminating in the fire or burning bush they create that is Mary, the epitome of the virgin.

Additionally, as it would have been sung, the respond (II. 7-9), “Tu cirumdata es amplexibus divinorum ministeriorum” (You are enfolded in the embraces of divine ministries,) would have been repeated after the final verse (II. 10-11). Reinforcing the imagery of the virgins’ embraced protection by the angels, this phrase also has significance in that it contains “divinorum” (“divine”)—the longest melisma in the responsory.

**Overarching Musical Quality**

“O Nobilissima Viriditas” is the last of the antiphon and responsory pairs with coring musical notation in Vision Thirteen. A typical Frankish responsory would have followed the order: “respond (solo–chorus), verse (solo), latter half of respond (chorus); or, with doxology: respond (solo–chorus), verse (solo), latter half of respond (chorus), doxology (solo), latter half of respond (chorus).” The manuscript notation for “O Nobilissima Viriditas” is much simpler lacking an “R” respond direction, so it is likely that Hildegard followed a simpler call-chorus format alternating from introduction respond, verse, respond.

“O Nobilissima Viriditas” covers an overall tonal range of an octave and a third (f–d’

and is written in C mode, a mode that lies outside the eight church modes and used sparingly

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by Hildegard such as in Victory's song in Ordo Virtutum, the responsory O Clarissima Mater, as well as the sequence Columba Aspexit.

There is much to uncover in the music-text relationships that highlight the ways that ornamentation brings texture to the overall meaning of the song.

**Extremes, Range, and Melisma**

In returning to our discussion of responsory, we must observe pitch extremes, range and melisma and their relation to one another because any one style of ornamentation will likely blend in by itself. In looking at the thresholds for layered ornamentation, the words with melismas above twenty notes, ranges above a seventh, and note heights between $g^1$-$d^1$ are marked as significant. The measures on range and melisma are based on the introductory words coming in on sevenths and upwards of twenty notes that would immediately become normal to the ear. The upper note extreme range is marked as any note above an $f^1$ because of its frequency in melodic phrasing. There doesn't appear to be a pattern of building towards pitch extremes as seen in "O Gloriosissimi" with the ascending pitches. Melisma length does not build or decrease and varies between lower lengths of 1-15 note durations alternating with a smaller cluster of words have 20-65 note durations. This irregular pattern continues in note extremes. Heights are not reached sequentially building off one another but at different areas dispersed throughout the music. All of these incidences of ornamentation appear much more to serve individual word meaning or punctuate the poetry rather than form a broader structure.
“O Nobilissima Viriditas” begins with an “O” (Ex.1) setting the landscape for an already wide sound space of a seventh range (g-f₁) and a 21-note and 14-neume melisma, centered by the e₁ with which it starts and ends. Its neumatic composition with three quilismas all elongated or varied (quilisma pes flexus) begins the piece with ornamentation. It prepares the listener for both range and melisma that will continue throughout the piece. “O” is an inherently ornamental word in that it serves to decorate and praise the subject matter in the piece, and with only one letter and no consonants it simply flows, accentuating the qualities of the voice. Furthermore it directs the focus of the piece to the noblest greenness of the virgins “O Nobilissima Viriditas.” Because it addresses the virgins directly, and it is meant to celebrate them, it sits on the same melodic plane as the second ornamental word in the piece, “nobilissima” (noble) (Ex.2). “Nobilissima” moves within the same seventh range (g-f₁) boundary as “O” stretching slightly farther in melisma length with 23 notes and 15 neumes. The melisma specifically occurs on “-si-” the fourth syllable of the word. The last word in this opening phrase, “viriditas” (greenness)(Ex.3) shifts the seventh range down a note step, f-e₁. With only a thirteen-note melisma, and a lowered range, I would not consider this explicitly ornamental. However, it does hold some significance in that the word itself has been used by Hildegard across her work and was a fundamental concept for her. For Hildegard, not only did “viriditas” provide a rich image to her poetry, it also implied an understanding of both creation and God’s power. It appears in the sequence “O ignis Spiritus Paracliti,” in the phrase “terra viriditatem sudat,” (the earth exudes

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freshness), and in Hildegard’s *De Operatione Dei,* it is used in descriptions of Caritas the figure of Love and nature whose feminine power inspired Hildegard. With the word’s frequency in Hildegard’s music it would have gained significance in her convent, and to the outside listener its ambiguous meaning would have stood out among the words sung during each service.

Ex. 1 “O” begins the piece immediately opening up the soundspace with a seventh range (g–f♯) and 21-note and 14-neume melisma. Neume order: one virga, two puncta, one quilisma prepuncta, one quilisma + pes flexus, three puncta, one pes, two puncta, one quilisma prepuncta, and one torculus.

61 Jones, *Theological Interpretation of ‘Viriditas.’* Pp. 1
Ex. 2 “nobilissima” (noblest) is the second word in the responsory with a range of a seventh (g-f₁) and 23-note melisma. The neumatic order is one virga, one torculus, one clivis, one quilisma, one clivis, one quilisma pes flexus, one virga, four puncta, a combined quilisma clivis, and one virga. A ledger line is added to reach the f₁.

Ex. 3 “Viriditas” (greenness) completes the first phrase with a shorter 13-note and 10-neume melisma and seventh range (f-e₁) shifted down a whole step. The neumatic order is three virga, two puncta, one elongated clivis, one quilisma, one virga, and an elongated torculus.

The next word with a crossover of ornamental styles is “radicas” (roots) (ex. 4). It only spans an 11-note and 9-neume melisma, but it opens the sound-space with its height on a¹ and range of an octave. These are both newly traversed extremes for the listener. The full octave range starts at the a¹ and descends downwards touching on the a, a pleasant and
consonant conclusion landing on half the frequency of the starting note, even though it ultimately lands on d¹. Though they are elevated on the second staff, the neumes appear to take root touching on an ornamental quilisma, a kind of visual word painting.

Ex. 4 "Radicas" widens the sound-space reaching up to an a¹ with an octave range (a-a¹). Neumatic order: two virga, two puncta, one virga, two puncta, one clivis, and one quilisma.

Following “radicas,” “sole” is the exception to the rule on ornamentation. Because it sits amidst four single-note and single-syllable words it is bound to stand out. “Sole” (sun)(ex.5) covers a range of a seventh (g-f¹) and 13-note and 6-neume melisma. Apart from its placement in syllabic and neumatic notation, it has an elaborate and connective melismatic notation with an elongated pes, one porrectus, combined quilisma pes flexus, three puncta and one virga. The neumes are notated very close to one another, appearing as longer lines that twist in between the red ledger lines.
Ex. 5 “Sole” covers the range of a seventh (g-f\(^4\)) and a 13-note and 6-neume melisma. Neume order: one elongated pes, one porrectus, one quilisma pes flexus, three puncta, and one virga.

Returning to the words that sit between the upper spectrums of range, melisma and note extremes we come across “candida” (“bright, clear or transparent”)(ex.6). “Candida” opens the ornamentation dimensions in all directions; it spans 37 notes and 26 neumes, stretches vertically a tenth in range (b-d\(^2\)), and hops above the once established a\(^1\) extreme to a d\(^2\). It is the second most ornamental word of the piece (behind “divinorum”). Its melodic phrasing is too long to fit on one staff in both the Dendermonde codex and Pfau’s modern edition. Within the context of the poetry, “candida” belongs within the phrase “in candida serenitate” (in bright serenity), referring to the virgins’ radiance rooted in the calm and nurturing light of the sun. The word’s representation in neumes creates five hilled peaks to accentuate the sense of the phrase. In a way the route of “candida” through the full tonal soundscape in “O Nobilissima Viriditas” shows a ray-like reach that the “bright serenity” has, touching every note and subsequently every virgin. “Candida” has three ornamental quilisma: two quilisma pes flexus, and one quilisma prepuncte with an elongated stem.
Ex. 6 “Candida” (bright) is the first word achieving the $d^2$ upper note climax in the responsory. It spans 37 notes, 26 neumes, and tenth range (b-d$^3$). Neume order: one pes flexus pes, one virga, five puncta, one virga, one quilisma pes flexus, one clivis, one virga, three puncta, one pes, two puncta, one quilisma prepuncte, one quilisma pes flexus, three puncta, one virga, two puncta, and one virga.

Completing the image of bright serenity comes the other multi-ornamental word “serenitate” (serenity) (ex. 7). Though it sits in the upper spectrum of ornamental dimensions, its melisma and neume numbers are only slightly over half those of “candida,” with 23 notes and 14 neumes. It covers an octave range (g-g$^1$). “Serenitate” also has three ornamental quilisma prepuncte, two of which are combined with clivis.
Ex. 7 “Serenitate” has a 23-note melisma, and an octave range (g-g¹). Neume order: one virga, one torculus, one clivis, one elongated quilisma-clivis, one elongated torculus, one quilisma, four puncta and one quilisma-clivis.

Following behind with an octave range (c-c¹), 7-note and 5-neume melisma is “luces” (shine)(ex. 8). It is one of two words that reach c², the second highest note of the piece. It also belongs to the “et que in candida serenitate” (and you shine in bright serenity) referring to the virgin’s “shining” in this pleasant atmosphere.
Ex. 8 “luces” follows the multi-ornamental “candida” and “serenitate” reaching a high note extreme (c³) and octave range. Neume order: one elongated pes, one pes, and three puncta.

The third most ornamental word in “O Nobilissima Viriditas” is “excellentia” (eminence)(ex. 9). It has a range of an octave and a fourth (g-c⁵), and a 36-note and 26-neume melisma. It also extends to the second highest note, a c⁵. Within the phrase, “quam nulla terrena excellentia comprehendit” (“which no earthly eminence attains”) it refers to the protected “rota” or “sphere” that the virgins are protected by, far from the low altitudes of the earth. “Excellentia” marks this contrast of the virgins’ serenity from that of any other earthly being, decorating this gift they have that sets them apart from others. Similar to “candida,” “excellentia” follows a number of peaks and valleys in its melodic line. Furthermore the lines are more connected with what appear to be combined neumes usually involving quilisma with porrectus, clivis, or torculus. Lastly, “excellentia” is further distinguished by the verb that follows it, “comprehendit.” Belonging on the lowest dimensions of melisma with 7 notes and 6 neumes, and with a limited range of a fourth (g-c¹), “comprehendit” perfectly
represents the earthly characteristics that sit far below the virgins. It is important to remember that words and melodic phrases such as “comprehendit” serve to reinforce the context of the largest ornaments.

Ex. 9 “Excellentia” (eminence) spans 36 notes and 26 neumes, reaches up to \( c^2 \), and covers a range of an octave and a fourth (g-\( c^2 \)). Neume order: two virga, one pes flexus pes, one virga, four puncta, one quilisma pes flexus, one virga, five puncta, one quilisma pes flexus, three puncta, one combined oriscus-pes, four puncta, and one virga.

The last two of the multi-ornamental words are “amplexibus” (embraces) (ex. 10), and “divinorum” (divine) (ex. 11). They are repeated twice as parts of the respond. “Amplexibus” covers an octave and fourth range (b-d\(^3\)), and a 21-note and 17-neume melisma.

“Amplexibus” is the second word to reach d\(^3\) linking it to the higher celestial orders. These “embraces” are coming from the high altitude of the celestial orders of angels. For the first three out of four syllables of the word the melody sits above an f\(^1\). The neumes are smaller in “amplexibus” and less varying in shape and size.
Ex. 9 "Amplexibus" (embraces) reaches the second d\textsuperscript{2} in the piece, covering a 21-note melisma and tenth range (b-d\textsuperscript{4}). Neume order: one pes, one clivis, one virga, three puncta, one quilisma, one virga, four puncta, one virga, two puncta, one virga, two puncta, and one virga.

Finally the second-to-last word, "divinorum" (divine) (ex.10), is quite substantially the most multi-ornamental word in "O Nobilissima Viriditas." It doubles in melisma length with 65 notes and 51 neumes, exceeds the established range extreme from an octave and a fourth to an octave and a sixth (f-d\textsuperscript{5}). It is the last of the words to reach d\textsuperscript{2}. "Divinorum" is a direct reference to the angels—the caretakers and nurthers to the virgins in their spherical haven.

In looking at the uses and overlaps of ornamentation in this music, it seems that the most musically "shaded" words are actions or adjectives that are favored over the subject matter. I think there are two reasons for this. First for Hildegard, actions and the pursuit of learning and understanding were important for hearing and performing this music. For example, her "living light," was very much a changing event rather than a static representation of faith. Second, I think the subject matter was enough for Hildegard in its
own meaning and significance to stand without excessive ornamentation, and she used
expansive styles of ornamentation to highlight the actions and adjectives supporting the
subject matter.

Ex. 10 “Divinorum” (divine) is substantially the most melismatic word in “O Nobilissima
Viriditas” with 65 notes and an octave and a sixth range (f-d2). Neume order: one punctum,
two puncta, one clivis, one quilisma, one virga, one torculus, one quilisma pes flexus, one
virga, three puncta, one pes, five puncta, one virga, an elongated torculus, two quilisma, three
puncta, one virga, two puncta, one combined quilisma clivis, one pes, two puncta, one
oriscus, two puncta, one virga, one pes, three puncta, one quilisma, one pes, one clivis, one
virga, and two puncta.
Once again, the connections between music and text add dimension to the qualities of visual ornamentation in the music manuscript and audible ornamentation for the ears. We can see more in the desired underlying themes than we would if we were to simply listen to the music. We are able to understand these significant themes when we establish the context in Hildegard’s visions and her own theologies. Like the vibrancy and ornamentation within her illuminations, Hildegard’s music marks distinction from the Kyrie and Alleluia of the Mass because it is not statically a celebratory interlude to the Mass; rather, it tells a story and paints a detailed picture of Hildegard’s visions.
Conclusion

In my interests in exploring the ornamentation within Hildegard's music, I began looking at the micro level with a text-music analysis. The structures I used to approach Hildegard's music were the organizations of syllabic, neumatic and melismatic phrasing as designed by Marianne Richert Pfau in her dissertation, and the writings of Barbara Newman and Margot Fassler for thematic interpretation. I wanted to analyze the music from Hildegard's visions, so I chose her early work, the music within Vision Thirteen of *Scivias*. I found that the underlying themes I uncovered in observing the words with the most ornamental styles (range, note extreme, or melisma) were predominant themes of femininity in Hildegard's visions, figures of feminine divine (Caritas, Sapientia, Scientia Dei, and Ecclesia) and the Virgin Mary (and her distinction from Eve). Furthermore, this connection was present on the macro level, in the ways in which Hildegard carried herself as an abbess and female visionary and the ways she encouraged her nuns to carry themselves as discussed in her correspondence with Mistress Tengswich of Andernach. Outward expression of her own visions and the certainty to lead her own convent and advise her community all came from these powerful feminine forms.

Returning to the unique qualities of Hildegard's music, I found a distinction between the typical ornamentation in Gregorian Chant and Hildegard's antiphons and responsories: tone painting. Whether visual in the neumatic notation of the Dendermonde codex, or audible in the actual performance of her music there are phrases in all four of the pieces I analyzed where ornamentation styles of range, pitch extremes, and melisma overlapped to expose the characters or actions of significance. In addition to tone painting, Hildegard also used simpler
styles to highlight celebratory statements and words, several examples being the introductory “o” in “O Pulchre Facies” and “O Nobilissima Viriditas,” and “gloriosa” in “O Gloriosissimi” to name a few.

Lastly in addition to feminine divine inspiration it may be argued that some ornamentation was present for the purpose of displaying gifts of “tunic” and “trumpet.” The feminine form is attributed to the tunic for its incarnation symbolism, as well as the idea of Man the “soul” and Woman the “body.” The tunic is an emblem of encouragement for outward expression through ornamental dress. The trumpet is a gift God gave to humanity, an instrument to proclaim his grace therefore outward expression of ornament and virtuosity in the voice is an opportunity not to boast selfishly, but to accent a thing of beauty that God conceived.

Ornamentation is an elaborate mechanism that adds dimension to the sound-scape of Hildegard’s responsories and antiphons. As a whole it implies the holy source from which it came as a vision, yet it also speaks to the strengths of the feminine form through voice in high pitch, range and extensive melisma. It is a mechanism that creates beautiful imagery through tone painting, but serves the deeper purpose of reinforcing Hildegard’s and her nuns’ power in weakness as maternal and virginal figures like Mary who put forth the “stones of good works” in this case, beautiful music, while remaining chaste.
Bibliography


