

O magnum mysterium

á 12

by

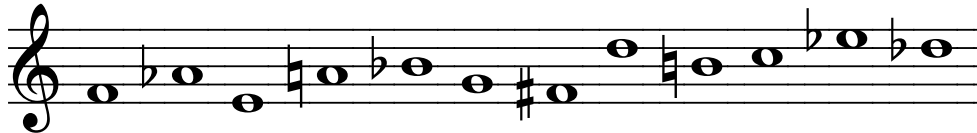
Charles H. Giffen

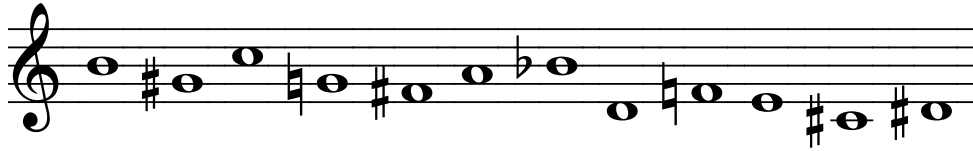
for

SSAT - SATB - ATBB

a cappella

voices





Notes on the composition

In this work, I have tried to capture the awe and reflect an aura of the calm, deep-night mystery of the Incarnation of Jesus in Bethlehem, where stable animals witnessed, with Mary and Joseph, a cosmic event that changed the course of history for ever - occurring in that “fulness of time, fixed by the unsearchable counsel of God, when the Son of God took upon him the nature of man, that he might reconcile it to its Maker.”

The music includes mainly twelve tone thematic but also whole tone harmonic material, which lend a sense of mystery and reverence as the music unfolds. The given markings for tempo are approximate and may be adjusted to suit the performance acoustics. The three 4-part groups may be separated by some distance if there is adequate space in the performance venue.

The text is the full responsory to the fourth lesson at Matins of Christmas Day and hence includes the short *Ave Maria, gratia plena: Dominus tecum* that is often omitted in musical settings.

<i>O magnum mysterium et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent Dominum natum jacentem in præsepio!</i>	O great mystery and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the new-born Lord lying in a manger!
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<i>O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Christum.</i>	O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.
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<i>Ave Maria, gratia plena: Dominus tecum.</i>	Hail Mary, full of grace: the Lord is with you.
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<i>O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Christum.</i>	Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.
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<i>Alleluia!</i>	Alleluia!
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O magnum mysterium

Fourth responsory for
Matins of Christmas Day

SSAT - SATB - ATBB

Charles H. Giffen (b. 1940)

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system includes Cantus 1, Medius 1, Altus 1, and Tenor 1. The second system includes Cantus 2, Altus 2, Tenor 2, and Bassus 2. The third system includes Altus 3, Tenor 3, and Barytonus 3. The lyrics are: *ma - gnum mys - te - rium*. The score features various musical notations including dynamics (*p*), slurs, and fermatas. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$.

2011-06-24
2015-07-31
2019-01-13
2021-12-25

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A

9

C1 *p* O my - ste - ri -

M1 *p* O my - ste - ri -

A1 *pp* my - ste - ri - um,

T1 *ppp* *pp* - - ri - um. O ma - gnum

C2 *p* O my - ste - ri -

A2 *pp* my - ste - ri - um,

T2 *ppp* *pp* O ma - gnum

B2 *ppp* *pp* O ma - gnum

A3 *pp* my - ste - ri - um,

T3 *ppp* *pp* O ma - gnum

Bt3 *p* um. O ma - gnum

B3 *p* *ppp* *pp* ri - um. O ma - gnum

B $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 52$

18

C1
um, _____

M1
um, _____

A1
pp _____ *p* _____ *mp* _____ *p* *3*
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____ et _____ ad - mi - ra - bi -

T1
pp _____ *p* _____ *p* *3*
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____ Al-le-lu - ia! _____

C2
um, _____

A2
pp _____ *p* _____ *mp* _____ *p* *3*
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____ et _____ ad - mi - ra - bi -

T2
pp _____ *p* _____
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____

B2
pp _____ *p* _____
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____

A3
pp _____ *p* _____
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____

T3
pp _____ *p* _____ *p* *3*
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____ Al-le-lu - ia! _____

Bt3
pp _____ *p* _____
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____

B3
pp _____ *p* _____
O ma - gnum my-ste-ri - um, _____

25

C 1 *mp* ut a - ni - ma - li -

M 1 *p*₃ Al - le - lu - ia! _____

A 1 *le* sa - cra - men - tum _____

T 1 *mp* sa - cra - men - tum _____

C 2 *mp* ut a - ni - ma - li -

A 2 *le* Al - le - lu - ia! _____

T 2 *p*₃ Al - le - lu - ia! _____

B 2 *mp* et ad - mi - ra - bi - le Al - le - lu - ia! _____

A 3 *p*₃ Al - le - lu - ia! _____

T 3 Al - le - lu - ia! _____

Bt 3 *p*₃ Al - le - lu - ia! _____

B 3 *mp* et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum _____

31

C1 *a* vi - de - - - rent _____
mp

M1 vi - de - - - rent _____

A1 *p*₃ Al-le-lu - ia! _____
*p*₃ Al-le-lu - ia! _____

T1 *p*₃ Al-le-lu - ia! _____

C2 *a* Al-le-lu - ia! _____ Al-le-lu - ia! _____

A2 Al-le-lu - ia! _____

T2 *mp* ut _____ a - ni - ma - li - a _____ Al-le-lu - ia! _____
*p*₃

B2 Al-le-lu - ia! _____

A3 *p*₃ Al-le-lu - ia! _____ *mp* vi - de - - - rent _____

T3 *mp* ut _____ a - ni - ma - li - a _____ vi - de - - - rent _____
*p*₃

Bt3 Al-le-lu - ia! _____

B3 Al-le-lu - ia! _____

C $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 64$

37

p *f* *mp*

C 1 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

M 1 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

A 1 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

T 1 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

C 2 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

A 2 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

T 2 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

B 2 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

A 3 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

T 3 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

Bt 3 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

B 3 Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem

D ♩ = c. 52

46 *p* *mp* *pp*

C1
in — præ - se - pi - o!

M1
in — præ - se - pi - o!

A1
in — præ - se - pi - o!

T1
in — præ - se - pi - o!

C2
in — præ - se - pi - o!

A2
in — præ - se - pi - o!

T2
in — præ - se - pi - o!

B2
in — præ - se - pi - o!

46 *p* *mp* *pp* *p*

A3
in — præ - se - pi - o! O —

T3
in — præ - se - pi - o! be -

Bt3
in — præ - se - pi - o! a -

B3
in — præ - se - pi - o!

55
C 1
M 1
A 1
T 1

8

C 2 *p*
ra —

A 2 *mp* *mf* *p*
jus — sce — — — ra —

T 2 *mp* *mf* *p*
go, — vi — — — ra —

B 2 *p* *mp* *mf* *p*
Vir — cu — — — sce — — — ra —

55
A 3 *mp* *mf* *p*
ta — go, — vi — — — ra —

T 3 *mp* *mf* *p*
Vir — cu — — — sce — — — ra —

Bt 3 *mp* *mf* *p*
Vir — jus — — — sce — — — ra —

B 3 *p* *mp* *mf* *p*
a — go, — jus — — — sce — — — ra —

E

p *mp* *mf*

p *mp* *mf*

p *mp* *mf*

mp *p* *mp* *mf*

p *mp* *mf*

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

65

75 F $\text{♩} = c. 64$

mp mf *p* mp

C 1
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

M 1
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

A 1
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

T 1
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

C 2
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

A 2
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

T 2
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

B 2
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

A 3
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

T 3
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

Bt 3
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

B 3
- - - stum. A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na:
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

G $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$

84 *pp* *p*

C1
Do - mi - nus te - cum.

M1 *pp* *p* *mp*
Do - mi - nus te - cum. O be - a -

A1 *pp* *p* *mp*
Do - mi - nus te - cum. O be -

T1 *pp* *p* *mp*
Do - mi - nus te - cum. O be - a -

C2 *pp* *p*

A2 *pp* *p* *mp*
Do - mi - nus te - cum. O be -

T2 *pp* *p*

B2 *pp* *p* *p*
Do - mi - nus te - cum. O be - a - ta

84 *pp* *p*

A3 *pp* *p*

T3 *pp* *p*

Bt3 *pp* *p*

B3 *pp* *p* *p*
Do - mi - nus te - cum. O be - a - ta

93 *mp* me - ru - e - runt

M1 *mf* ta Vir - - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra

A1 *mf* a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra

T1 *mf* ta Vir - - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra

C2 *mp* me - ru - e - runt

A2 *mf* a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra

T2 *mp* me - ru - e - runt por -

B2 *mf* Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra

A3 *mp* me - ru - e - runt por -

T3 *mp* me - ru - e - runt por -

Bt3 *mp* me - ru - e - runt por -

B3 *mf* Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra

$\text{♩} = c. 56$

100 *mf*

C1
por-ta - re Do-mi - num Chri - stum.

M1

A1

T1

C2
mf
por-ta - re Do-mi - num Chri - stum.

A2
mf
Do - mi - num

T2
mf
- - - ta - re Do-mi-num Chri - stum.

B2
mf
Do - mi - num

A3
100 *mf*
ta - re Do - mi - num Chri - stum. *mf*
Do - mi - num

T3
mf
- - - ta - re Do-mi-num Chri - stum.

Bt3
mf
ta - re Do - mi - num Chri - stum. *mf*
Do - mi - num

B3
mf
Do - mi - num

H ♩ = c. 48

107

C 1

M 1 *mf*
Chri - stum.

A 1 *mf* *mp*
Chri - stum. Al - - - -

T 1 *mf* *mp*
Chri - stum. le -

C 2 *mf* *mp*
Chri - stum. ya! - - -

A 2

T 2 *mf* *p*
Chri - stum. le - - - -

B 2 *p*
Al - - - -

107

A 3

T 3 *mf* *p*
Chri - stum. ya! - - - -

Bt 3 *mp*
lu - - - -

B 3 *p*
lu - - - -

117 *mf* **I** $\text{♩} = c. 52$ *mp*

C1 *lu - - - Al -*

M1 *ya! - - - lu -*

A1 *Al-le-lu-ia, al - le - lu-i - a,*

T1

C2 *le - - -*

A2 *Al - - - Al-le-lu-ia, al - le - lu-i - a,*

T2

B2

A3 *le - - - Al-le-lu-ia, al - le - lu-i - a,*

T3

Bt3

B3

127

C 1 *mp* *Al-le-lu-ia, al-*

M 1 *mp* *Al-le-lu-ia, al-*

A 1 *mp* *al - le - lu - i - a!*

T 1 *mf* *Al - le - lu - ia!* *p* *Al -*

C 2 *mp* *Al-le-lu-ia, al-*

A 2 *mp* *al - le - lu - i - a!*

T 2 *mf* *Al - le - lu - ia!* *p*

B 2 *mf* *Al - le - lu - ia!* *p*

127 *mp*

A 3 *mp* *al - le - lu - i - a!*

T 3 *mf* *Al - le - lu - ia!* *p*

Bt 3 *mf* *Al - le - lu - ia!* *p*

B 3 *mf* *Al - le - lu - ia!* *p*

135

p *mp* $\text{♩} = c. 52$ $\text{♩} = c. 48$

C1
- le - lu-i - a, al - le - lu-i - a!

M1
- le - lu-i - a, al - le - lu-i - a!

A1
mp *mf*
Al - le - lu - - - i - a!

T1
mp *mf*
ia! Al - le - lu - - - i - a!

C2
p *mp*
- le - lu-i - a, al - le - lu-i - a!

A2
mp *mf*
Al - le - lu - - - i - a!

T2
p *mp* *mf*
le - - - Al - le - lu - - - i - a!

B2
mp *mf*
Al - le - lu - - - i - a!

A3
mp *mf*
Al - le - lu - - - i - a!

T3
p *mp* *mf*
lu - A - le - lu - - - i - a!

Bt3
mp *mf*
Al - le - lu - - - i - a!

B3
mp *mf*
Al - le - lu - - - i - a!

144 **K** *mp* *rallentando* *p* *pp*

C1
Al - le - lu - i - a, al - le - lu - i - a!

M1
Al - le - lu - i - a, al - le - lu - i - a!

A1
Al - le - lu - i - a, al - le - lu - i - a!

T1
Al - - - le - lu - ia!

C2
mp *rallentando* *p* *pp*

A2
Al - le - lu - i - a, al - le - lu - i - a!

T2
Al - - - le - lu - ia!

B2
Al - - - le - lu - ia!

144 *mp* *rallentando* *p* *pp*

A3
Al - le - lu - i - a, al - le - lu - i - a!

T3
Al - - - le - lu - ia!

Bt3
Al - - - le - lu - ia!

B3
Al - - - le - lu - ia!