

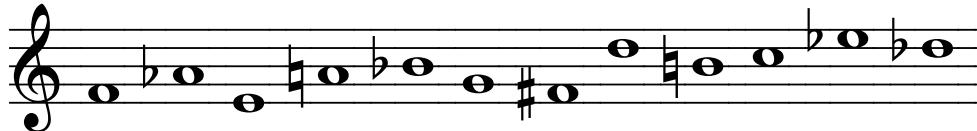
¶ magnum mysterium

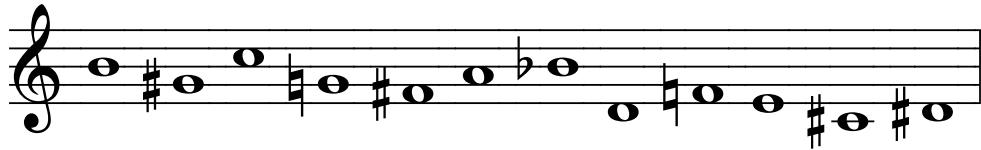
a 12

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.

*O magnum mysterium
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum
jacentem in præsepio!*

*O beata Virgo, cujus viscera
meruerunt portare Dominum Christum.*

*Ave Maria, gratia plena:
Dominus tecum.*

*O beata Virgo, cujus viscera
meruerunt portare Dominum Christum.*

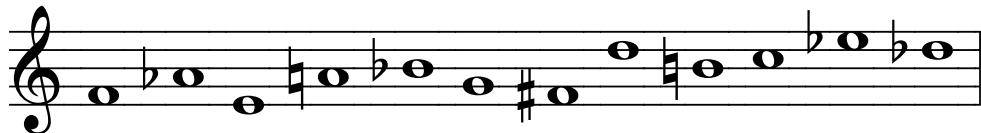
Alleluia! Alleluia!

O great mystery
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new-born Lord
lying in a manger!

O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb
was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.

Hail Mary, full of grace:
the Lord is with you.

Blessed is the Virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.



O magnum mysterium

Fourth responsory for
Matins of Christmas Day

SSAT - SATB - ATBB

Charles H. Giffen, 2011

d = c. 40

Cantus 1 *p*

Medius 1 *ma* - *p*

Choir 1 (SSAT)
left side *p* *gnum* - - -

Altus 1 *ma* - - - *p*

Tenor 1 *ste* - - *ri* - *um.*

Cantus 2 *p*

Altus 2 *O* - *p*

Choir 2 (SATB)
center *O* - - - - - *p*

Tenor 2 *my* - - - - - *p*

Bassus 2 *my* - - - - -

Altus 3 *p*

Tenor 3 *p* *gnum* - - - - -

Choir 3 (ATBB)
right side *gnum* - - - - -

Barytonus 3 *p*

Bassus 3 *um.*

ri - - *um.*

A

II

C 1 *O my - ste - ri - um, _____*

M 1 *O my - ste - ri - um, _____*

A 1 *pp* *O my - ste - ri - um, _____* *p*
my - ste - ri - um, _____ *O ma -*

T 1 *ppp* *pp* *O ma - gnum* *O ma -*

C 2 *p* *O my - ste - ri - um, _____*

A 2 *pp* *my - ste - ri - um, _____* *p*
O ma -

T 2 *ppp pp* *O ma - gnum* *O ma -*

B 2 *ppp pp* *O ma - gnum* *O ma -*

A 3 *pp* *my - ste - ri - um, _____* *p*
O ma -

T 3 *ppp pp* *O ma - gnum* *O ma -*

Bt 3 *ppp pp* *O ma - gnum* *O ma -*

B 3 *O ma - - - gnum* *O ma -*

B $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$

20

C 1

M 1

A 1 *gnum my - ste - ri - um, _____ et _____ ad - mi - ra - bi - le*

T 1 *gnum my - ste - ri - um, _____ Al-le-lu - ia! _____*

C 2

A 2 *gnum my - ste - ri - um, _____ et _____ ad - mi - ra - bi - le*

T 2 *gnum my - ste - ri - um, _____ Al-le-lu - ia!*

B 2

A 3 *gnum my - ste - ri - um, _____*

T 3 *gnum my - ste - ri - um, _____ Al-le-lu - ia!*

Bt 3

B 3

26

C 1 *ut* _____ *a - ni - ma-li -*
p₃ _____

M 1 *Al-le-lu - ia!* _____

A 1 *sa - cra - men - tum*
mp

T 1 *sa - cra - men - tum*

C 2 *ut* _____ *a - ni - ma-li -*
p

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

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

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

A 3 *p₃* _____
Al-le-lu - ia! _____

T 3 *Al-le-lu - ia!* _____

Bt 3 *p₃* _____
Al-le-lu - ia! _____ *sa - cra - men - tum* _____
mp

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

31

C 1 *a vi - - - de - rent*
mp

M 1 *vi - - - de - rent*

A 1 *p₃* *Al-le-lu - ia!* *3* *Al-le-lu - ia!*

T 1 *p₃* *Al-le-lu - ia!*

C 2 *a* *p₃* *Al-le-lu - ia!*

A 2 *Al-le-lu - ia!* *3* *Al-le-lu - ia!*

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

B 2 *3* *Al-le-lu - ia!*

A 3 *Al-le-lu - ia!* *3* *vi -*
p₃ *mp*

T 3 *ut* *a - ni - ma-li - a* *vi -*
mp

Bt 3 *3* *Al-le-lu - ia!*
p₃

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

[C] $\text{d} = \text{c. } 60$ Charles H. Giffen: *O magnum mysterium*

36

C 1 *Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem*
mp f mp mf

M 1 —
Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem
mp f mp mf

A 1 —
Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem
mp f mp mf

T 1 —
Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem
mp f mp mf

C 2 *Al-le-lu - ia!* *Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem*
mp f mp mf

A 2 —
Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem
mp f mp mf

T 2 *p* *Al-le-lu - ia!* *Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem*
mp f mp mf

B 2 —
Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem
mp f mp mf

A 3 36 *de - rent* *Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem*
mp f mp mf

T 3 *de - rent* *Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem*
mp f mp mf

Bt 3 —
Do - mi-num na - tum ja - cen - tem
mp f mp mf

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

Charles H. Giffen: *O magnum mysterium*

7

D $\text{d} = \text{c. } 48$

45 *p* *mp* *pp*

C 1 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

M 1 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

A 1 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

T 1 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

C 2 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

A 2 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

T 2 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

B 2 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

A 3 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp* *p*

T 3 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

Bt 3 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

B 3 — *in — præ - se - pi - o!* *pp*

a -

E

56

C 1

M 1

A 1

T 1

C 2

A 2

T 2

B 2

A 3

T 3

Bt 3

B 3

p *me* -

mp *mf* *p*

jus — *sce* - - - *ra* —

mp *mf* *p*

go, — *vi* - - - *ra* —

p *mp* *mf* *p*

Vir - *cu* - - - *sce* - - - *ra* —

mp *mf* *p*

go, — *vi* - - - *ra* —

mp *mf* *p*

Vir - *jus* — *sce* - - - *ra* —

mp *mf* *p*

go, — *jus* — *sce* - - - *ra* —

66

C 1 ***p*** ***mp*** ***mf***

M 1 ***p*** *e* - - - *ta* - ***mp*** *mi* - - - *Chri* - - -

A 1 ***p*** *me* - *por* - ***mp*** *Do* - - - ***mf*** *Chri* - - -

T 1 ***p*** *ru* - *por* - ***mp*** *mi* - - - ***mf*** *Chri* - - -

C 2 ***p*** *runt* _____ ***mp*** *re* _____ ***mf*** num _____

A 2 ***p*** *por* - ***mp*** *Do* - - - ***mf*** *Chri* - - -

T 2 ***p*** *ta* - ***mp*** *num* _____ ***mf*** *Chri* - - -

B 2 ***p*** *mi* - - - ***mf*** *Chri* - - -

A 3 ***p***

T 3 ***p***

Bt 3 ***p***

B 3 ***p***

F $\text{d} = \text{c. } 60$
 mp mf

Charles H. Giffen: *O magnum mysterium*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

G $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$

86

C 1

M 1

A 1

T 1

C 2

A 2

T 2

B 2

A 3

T 3

Bt 3

B 3

- mi - nus te - cum. _____

O be - a - ta Vir - go,

O be - a - ta _____

O be - a - ta Vir - go,

O be - a - ta _____

Vir - go,

Vir - go,

O be - a - ta _____

Vir - go,

me-ru - e - runt _____ por-ta - re Do-mi - num

cu - jus vi - sce - ra

Vir - go, cu-jus vi - sce - ra

cu - jus vi - sce - ra

me-ru - e - runt _____ por-ta - re Do-mi - num

cu - jus vi - sce - ra

me - ru - e - runt por - - - ta - re

cu-jus vi - sce - ra

me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re Do - mi -

me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re

me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re Do - mi -

cu-jus vi - sce - ra

102

C 1 *Chri - stum.* _____

M 1 *Chri - stum.* _____ ***mf***

A 1 *Chri - stum.* _____ ***mf***

T 1 *Chri - stum.* _____ ***mf***

C 2 *Chri - stum.* _____ *Chri - stum.* _____

A 2 *Do-mi - num* _____ ***mf***

T 2 — *Do-mi-num Chri - stum.* _____ *Chri - stum.* _____

B 2 *Do-mi - num* _____ ***mf***

102

A 3 *num Chri - stum.* _____ *Do-mi - num* _____ ***mf***

T 3 — *Do-mi-num Chri - stum.* _____ *Chri - stum.* _____ ***mf***

Bt 3 *num Chri - stum.* _____ *Do-mi - num* _____ ***mf***

B 3 *Do-mi - num* _____

14

H $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 40$ Charles H. Giffen: *O magnum mysterium****mf***

14 **H** $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 40$

Charles H. Giffen: *O magnum mysterium*

mf

C 1

M 1

A 1

T 1

C 2

A 2

T 2

B 2

A 3

T 3

Bt 3

B 3

lu - - -

mp

Al - - -

mp

le - - -

mp

ya! _____

p

Al - - -

p

le - - -

p

III

le - - -

p

ya! _____

mp

lu - - -

p

lu - - -

I $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$ *mp*

C 1 *Al - ia!* *mp*

M 1 *lu -* *mp*

A 1 *Al-le-lu-ia,* *al - le - lu-i - a,* *al - le - lu-i - a!* *mf*

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

C 2 *le -* *mp*

A 2 *Al-le-lu-ia,* *al - le - lu-i - a,* *al - le - lu-i - a!* *mf*

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

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

A 3 *Al-le-lu-ia,* *al - le - lu-i - a,* *al - le - lu-i - a!* *mf*

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

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

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

J

C 1 *Al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu-i - a, al - le - lu-i - a!*

M 1 *Al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu-i - a, al - le - lu-i - a!*

A 1

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

C 2 *Al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu-i - a, al - le - lu-i - a!*

A 2

T 2 *p* *le - - - Al - le - lu -*

B 2

132 *p* *Al - le - lu -*

A 3

T 3 *p* *lu - A - le - lu -*

Bt 3

B 3 *p* *Al - le - lu - Al - le - lu -*

141 **K mp** rit. $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 30$

C 1 Al - le - lu - i - a, — al - le - lu - i - a! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mp $\times p$ $\times pp$

M 1 Al - le - lu - i - a, — al - le - lu - i - a! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf *mp* $\times p$ $\times pp$

A 1 - i - a! — Al - le - lu - i - a, — al - le - lu - i - a! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf *mp* $\times p$ $\times pp$

T 1 - i - a! — Al - - - le - lu - ia! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mp rit. $\times p$ $\times pp$

C 2 Al - le - lu - i - a, — al - le - lu - i - a! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf *mp* $\times p$ $\times pp$

A 2 - i - a! — Al - le - lu - i - a, — al - le - lu - i - a! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf *mp* $\times p$ $\times pp$

T 2 - i - a! — Al - - - le - lu - ia! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf $\times mp$ $\times p$ $\times pp$

B 2 - i - a! — Al - - - le - lu - ia! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf $\times mp$ $\times p$ $\times pp$

141 A 3 - i - a! — Al - le - lu - i - a, — al - le - lu - i - a! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf $\times mp$ $\times p$ $\times pp$

T 3 - i - a! — Al - - - le - lu - ia! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf $\times mp$ $\times p$ $\times pp$

Bt 3 - i - a! — Al - - - le - lu - ia! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf $\times mp$ $\times p$ $\times pp$

B 3 - i - a! — Al - - - le - lu - ia! $\times p$ $\times pp$
mf $\times mp$ $\times p$ $\times pp$