
Ave Regina Caelorum

Patrick Keefe

PREFACE

This setting of *Ave Regina Caelorum* uses an isorhythmic scheme with a 14-note *talea*. This medieval tradition of motet writing forms the basis for the structure of the work. Much of the material is governed by two features of the chapel of Merton College, Oxford.

Pitch

The pitches used in this piece are obtained using my system of changing colour frequencies into pitch-class sets (see the preface to *Lux Aeterna*). The colours chosen are those that are used most prominently in Peter Eugene Ball's *Statue of Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom* which sits in the ante-chapel. To produce the reddish-brown 'shade' I combined Red-Shade set (A, Bb, B, Db, Eb, F) and Green-Shade set (F, G, Ab, A, B, Db), producing the eight-note Ab, A, Bb, B, Db, Eb, F, G 'palette' of pitches. This pitch scheme was used in the first of the three sections of the work; each of these parts has its own 'tuning' as it is based on a different colour scheme. In the second section I mapped the deep blue hue. To make a rich dark blue you can mix two parts blue to one part orange (its complementary colour), and as such I added one of the possible two extra pitch classes of orange to blue (in short, I added a Bb, taking 'one part' of orange and adding it to the Eb, F, Gb, G, A, B Blue-Shade set). For the final section, I mapped the gold and silver colours that embellish the facial features and clothing of the Madonna and Child. Whilst two independent visual colours, they give equivalent pitch-class sets. This is because combining three colours (required to produce the metallic tones of gold and silver) combines three different colour-sets. Where combining two hexachords had given eight possible pitch classes, combining the three different hexachords required for silver and gold (red, blue, and yellow for silver, yellow, red and green for gold) results in a set of twelve pitches. I could therefore draw on any of the notes of the chromatic scale I desired when writing this section. However, given the subject matter of the text, I decided to pursue a more diatonic soundworld.

The pitch content is not totally without order. The voice singing the *talea* uses the Tonus simplex setting from the Liber usualis, and 'filters' it through whichever 'shade' governs the pitch content of the section. Essentially, this voice approximates the chant pitches as much as possible within the current 'tuning'. In the final section, where all twelve pitches of the chromatic scale can be used, it uses the exact chant melody, with a final of Eb at the end of page eleven. There is one iteration of this *color*, beginning on page one and ending one page eleven. The *talea* material on page 12 reprises the intonation, with its final note altered to supply the third of an Ab triad and give a sense of conclusion to the final chord.

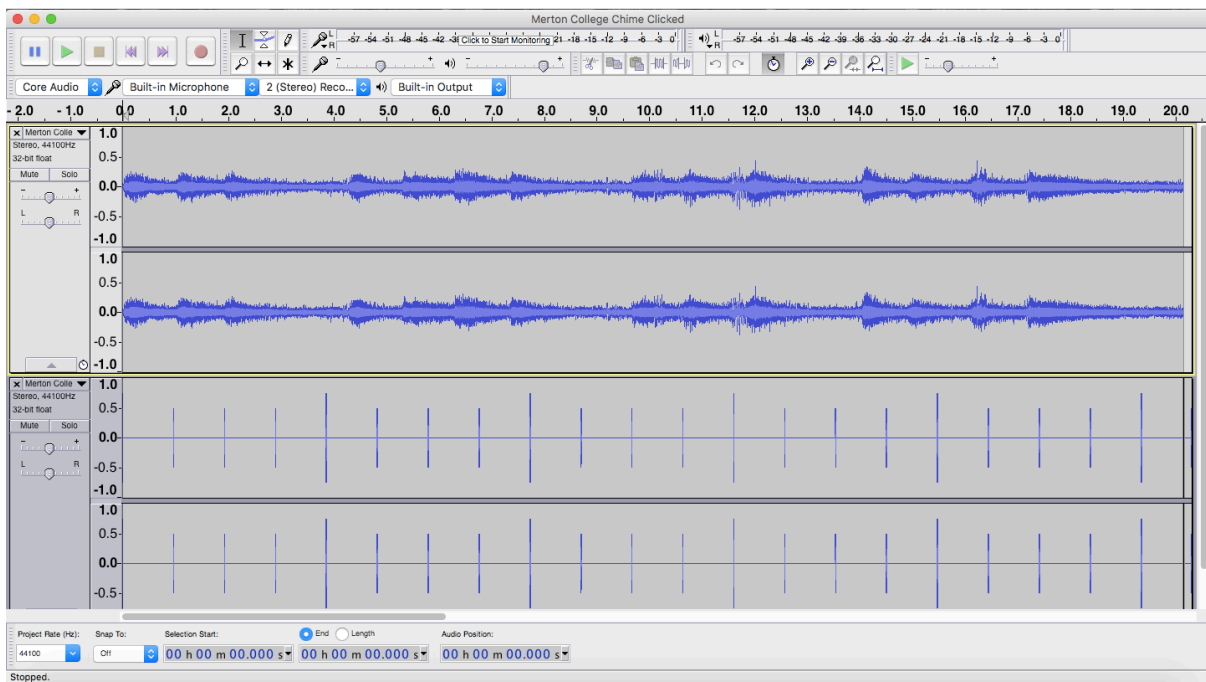
Because this piece uses my colour-shade technique, there are no assigned key signatures, much like in *Lux Aeterna* and *Variiegated Initials*. This is an academic principle, and there is an alternative performing edition scored in Ab major.

Talea

The repeated rhythmic device through which the chant pitches are presented is taken from the rhythm of the tolling of Merton's bells:



To be sure of this rhythm I analysed a recording of the hourly chimes, noting the position of the audio 'spikes'. This analysis not only showed the rhythms required, but also provided an approximation of the BPM of the bells, which was itself used as the BPM of the piece (60-63 BPM):



The *talea* is sung by the second tenors in the first section and the baritones in the second. In the third section the *talea* appears in both of these voices in rhythmic unison. A point of interest in this section is that whilst the second tenors carry on using the the chant for their pitch content, the baritones sing the notes of the Merton Chimes as a new *color*. In this climax of the piece, all three elements of its composition are drawn together simultaneously: the pitches of the chant, the glinting silver and gold colours of the statue and the rhythm and pitches of the Merton bells.

Ave, Regina caelorum,
Ave Domina Angelorum,
Salve radix, salve porta,
Ex qua mundo lux est orta.
Gaude, Virgo gloriosa,
Super omnes speciosa,
Vale, o valde decora,
Et pro nobis Christum exora.

for Merton College, Oxford

Ave Regina Caelorum

Patrick Keefe

(solo)

Baritone

A - ve Re - gi - na cae - lo - rum

$\text{♩} = 60-63$

Espressivo

1

Soprano/
Alto 1

pp

A - - - - ve, A - ve,

Soprano/
Alto 2

pp

A - - - - ve, A - - - - ve,

Tenor 1

pp

A - ve, A - ve,

Tenor 2

pp

A - ve, A - - - - ve

Baritone

pp

A - - - - ve,

Bass

pp

A - - - - ve,

6

mf
A - ve Do

p *mf*
Re - gi - na cae - lo - rum, Do

p
Re - gi - na Do - mi - na An - ge -

mp
A - ve, Re - gi - na cae - lo - rum,

p *mf*
Re - gi - na, A - ve, A - ve

Sal - ve, sal - ve ra - dix, sal -

- mi - na An - ge - lo - rum, Sal - ve ra - dix,

- - mi - na, Sal - ve ra - dix,

lo - rum Sal - ve - ra - dix,

A - - ve, Sal - ve, sal - ve

Do - mi - na, sal - ve ra - dix, sal -

15

ve por - ta,

sal - ve por - ta, *mf dim.* Ex qua mun -

sal - ve por - ta, *f* Ex qua mun - do lux est

por - ta, *mf dim.* Ex

por - ta, *mf dim.* Ex

ve por - ta, *mf dim.* Ex

18

*mf***rit.**
mp

lux _____ est or - ta.

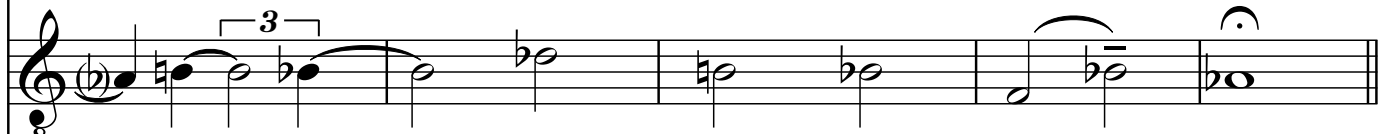
mp

- do lux _____ est or - ta.

mp

or - ta, ex qua mun - do lux est or - ta.

3



qua mun - do lux est or - ta.



qua mun - do lux est or - ta.



qua mun - do lux _____ est or - ta.

23

A tempo
Con spirito

mf Gau - de Vir - go, Vir - go

mf Gau - de Vir - go, Vir - go

mf Gau - de Vir - go,

mf Gau - de, gau - de Vir - go

27

Musical staff with treble clef and a whole rest.

Musical staff with treble clef and a whole rest.

glo - ri - o - - - sa, su - per *mf dim.*

gau - de Vir - go glo - ri - o - sa, su - per *mf dim.*

gau - - - de, om - nes *mf dim.*

glo - ri - o - - - sa,

31

Con amore

, mp

Va - -

, mp

Va - -

mp

om - nes spe - ci - o - sa. Va -

, mp

om - nes spe - ci - o - sa. Va - le,

, mp

spe - ci - o - sa. Va - le,

mf dim.

spe - ci - o - sa.

36

- le, O val - de de - co - ra,
 - le, O val - de de - co - ra, Et pro no - bis, Et
 - le, O val - de de - co - ra, Et pro no -
 O val - de de - co - ra,
 O val - de de - co - ra,
 Va - - - le, O val - de de - co - ra,

ff

mf

Chri - - - stum, Et - - - pro no -

mf

pro - no - bis Chri - stum, Chri -

mf

bis Chri - stum, Chri - stum,

f

mf

Et pro - no - bis Chri - stum

f

mf

Et pro - no - bis Chri - stum

f

mf

Et pro no - bis, pro no - bis Chri - stum, pro no-bis

45

bis Chri - stum ex - o - - - ra.

stum, ex - - - o - - - ra.

Chri - stum ex - o - - - ra.

ex - - - o - - - ra.

ex - - - o - - - ra.

Chri - stum ex - - - o - - - ra.

Affettuoso

rit. 12

49

pp

A - - - ve, A - ve.

pp

A - - - ve, A - - - ve.

pp

A - ve, A - - - ve.

pp

A - ve, A - - - - ve.

pp

A - - - - ve.

pp

A - - - - ve.