

Nesciens mater

Edited by Jason Smart

Walter Lambe (c.1450–c.1504)

Treble

Mean

Countertenor

Tenor

Bass

The first system of the musical score consists of five staves. From top to bottom, they are labeled: Treble, Mean, Countertenor, Tenor, and Bass. The Treble staff has a C-clef and contains a whole note chord. The Mean, Countertenor, and Tenor staves have C-clefs and contain vocal lines with lyrics: "Ne - sci - ens ma -". The Bass staff has a B-clef and contains a whole note chord. The system concludes with a double bar line.

4

The second system of the musical score consists of five staves. The Treble staff has a C-clef and contains a whole note chord. The Mean, Countertenor, and Tenor staves have C-clefs and contain vocal lines with lyrics: "Ne - sci - ens ma -". The Bass staff has a B-clef and contains a whole note chord. The system concludes with a double bar line.

8

Musical score for measures 8-11. The system consists of five staves: a vocal line and four piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line begins with a whole rest in measure 8, followed by a melodic line starting in measure 9. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and a more active treble line with various rhythmic patterns.

12

Musical score for measures 12-15. The system consists of five staves. The vocal line has lyrics: "vir - - - go vi - - -". The piano accompaniment includes a bass line with lyrics: "vir - - - go vi - - -" and three treble staves, each with the suffix "- ter" aligned with the vocal line. The piano accompaniment continues with a consistent bass line and a treble line with rests.

16

Musical score for measures 16-19. The system consists of five staves. The vocal line has a melodic line with a flat (b) above the first measure. The piano accompaniment features a bass line with a flat (b) above the first measure and a treble line with rests.

20

rum
pe - pe -

pe - - - pe -
pe - pe -

rum

24

pe - pe -

rit si -

rit

pe - pe -

28

rit si - ne do -

ne do - lo -

rit si - - - - - ne

si - ne

rit si - - - - - ne

32

lo - - - re Sal - - - va - to - -

re Sal - va - to - - -

do - - - lo - re Sal - va - - - to - -

do - - - lo - - - re Sal - va - to - -

Sal - - - va - to - -

36

rem sae - cu - - -

rem sae - cu - lo - - -

rem sae - cu - lo - -

rem sae - cu - lo - - -

rem sae - - - cu - lo - - -

40

lo - - -

43

Musical score for measures 43-46. The system consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "rum, i". The second staff continues the vocal line with lyrics: "rum, i psum re". The third, fourth, and fifth staves are instrumental accompaniment. The lyrics "rum," are aligned with the vocal lines.

47

Musical score for measures 47-50. The system consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "psum re". The second staff continues the vocal line. The third, fourth, and fifth staves are instrumental accompaniment. The lyrics "psum re" are aligned with the vocal lines.

50

Musical score for measures 51-54. The system consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line. The second staff continues the vocal line. The third, fourth, and fifth staves are instrumental accompaniment. There are no lyrics visible in this section.

53

Musical score for measures 53-55. The score consists of five staves. The top two staves are vocal parts with lyrics: "- gem" on the first staff and "- gem" on the second. The third staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "an - ge - lo - - - - -". The fourth staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "an - ge - lo - - - - -". The fifth staff is a bass line with lyrics: "an - ge - lo - - - - -". The music is in a key with one flat and a 3/4 time signature. Measure 53 starts with a whole note rest in the vocal parts. Measure 54 begins the vocal melody. Measure 55 continues the melody.

56

Musical score for measures 56-58. The score consists of five staves. The top two staves are vocal parts with rests. The third staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "- - - - -". The fourth staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "- - - - -". The fifth staff is a bass line with lyrics: "- - - - -". The music continues from the previous system.

59

Musical score for measures 59-61. The score consists of five staves. The top two staves are vocal parts with rests. The third staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "- - - - -". The fourth staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "- - - - -". The fifth staff is a bass line with lyrics: "- - - - -". The music continues from the previous system.

62

so - la vir - - - -
 - - - - rum; so - - - la vir -

65

so - la vir - - - - go la - cta - - - -
 - go la - cta - - - -
 - go la - cta - - - -
 so - la vir - - - - go la - - - -
 so - la vir - - - - go la - cta -

69

- - - - bat - - - -
 - - - - bat u - be - - - - ra de - - - -
 - bat u - be - - - - ra de - - - -
 - cta - - - - bat
 - - - - bat u - - - -

72

u - be - - - - - ra - - - - -
 cae - - - - -
 cae - lo ple - - - - -
 u - be - - - - - ra
 - - be - - - - - ra - - - - - de

76

de - - - - - cae - - - - - lo ple - - - - -
 - lo ple - - - - -
 de - - - - - cae - - - - -
 cae - - - - - lo ple - - - - -

80

- - - - - na.
 - - - - - na.
 - - - - - na.
 - lo ple - - - - - na.
 - - - - - na.

Translation

Innocent of man, the virgin mother gave birth without pain to the saviour of the ages. The virgin alone suckled the very King of Angels with breasts filled from heaven.

Editorial Conventions

The nomenclature of the voice parts follows the Tudor convention.

The prefatory staves show the original part name, clef, staff signature and first note of each part.

Mensuration symbols are shown on the staves.

The beginning of each new staff in the source is signalled in the score by a pilcrow above the staff.

The variable staff signatures of the source are preserved in the score. B natural staff signatures with a superscript dot are editorial additions for clarity; the source simply omits the signature.

All source accidentals are retained in the score, whether or not redundant in modern usage, but are placed against the notes they affect. The original positions of pre-placed accidentals are recorded in the notes below.

Editorial accidentals are placed above the notes concerned and remain operative throughout the bar unless cancelled.

Ligatures are indicated by the sign \lrcorner , coloration by the sign \sqcap \sqsupset .

Underlay that is written in red ink in the source (and which may have been used to indicate passages sung by soloists) is represented in the score by italics. Underlay between square brackets is entirely editorial.

Source

Windsor, Eton College MS 178 (the 'Eton Choirbook', c.1500–c.1504), opening r.3 (f.87^v).

In contents tables: *Nesciens mater virgovirum 5 parcium lambe r.3.22*
[indicating that the piece is to be found on opening r.3 and has an overall compass of 22 notes]

Header on f.88: *Lambe .22. notes.*

Cantus Firmus

Nesciens mater, the Magnificat antiphon for Vespers of the Virgin during Christmastide until the Purification, is deployed in the Tenor part.

Salisbury Cathedral MS 152, f.29.

Ne - sci - ens ma - ter vir - go vi - rum pe - pe - rit
si - ne do - lo - re Sal - va - to - rem sae - cu - lo - - - -
- rum, i - psum re - gem an - ge - lo - rum; so - la vir - go
la - cta - bat u - be - ra de cae - lo ple - na.

Notes on the Readings of the Sources

In the notes below, each reference to a bar or group of bars is separated by an oblique stroke. Within these references multiple readings in the same voice are separated by commas and readings in different voices by semicolons. The order within each entry is: 1) bar number; 2) voice; 3) reading of the source. For extended references subsequent bar numbers are in brackets. Pitches are in capital letters, preceded by a number where necessary, e.g. ²F = second note F in the bar.

Pre-positioned Accidentals

14 Tr \flat for B is above C / 42 Ct \flat for B is before F in 41 / 53 Ct \flat for B is before A / 68 Ct \flat for B is before rest in 65 / 78 M \flat for B is below ²F in 77 /

Underlay

25 M *-rit* below E²D /

Other Readings

29 T no dot for G / 44 Tr G is minim / 71 T no dot for G / 81 B D is m /