

Ensemble Musica Humana is an imaginative early music ensemble that has presented concerts in Boston, Montpelier, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Houston, Montreal and New York City. Since 2012 the group has recorded four full albums (Turlough O'Carolan: A Life in Song, Twelve Cotillions by Giovanni Gallini, Country Dances by Thomas Skillern 1781, and Al Alba de España), has been featured in the BEMF Fringe Festival, SoHip concert series, the Jane Austen Society of North America annual conference, has headlined the annual Carolan Festival, and their recordings were featured on the BBC series *Poldark*. Funded by local cultural councils, Ensemble Musica Humana produced two fully staged productions of Hildegard von Bingen's Ordo Virtutum in Boston and Northampton, MA, and annually hosts the "Pioneer Valley Early Music Day," an all-day festival of free pop-up concerts of early music in public spaces. Recently they produced the St. John Passion in collaboration with St. John's Episcopal Church in Williamstown MA, and were in residence at the Weston Priory producing a new program of Hildegard's music ("Sybil of the Rhine") to premier in 2017.

Ensemble Musica Humana is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas, a non-profit arts service organization. We are grateful to our generous supporters whose donations help us to bring imaginative and well-researched historical performances to a wide variety of audiences. If you wish to make a contribution, it can be made online directly on our website, or by clicking the Fractured Atlas logo on this page:

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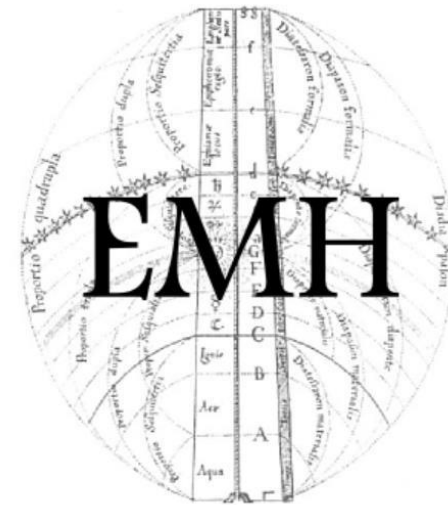
Part of the 18th Annual

**WOMEN
COMPOSERS**
FESTIVAL OF HARTFORD

Friday, April 6, 2018 – Sunday, April 8, 2018

Ensemble Musica Humana presents

Sybil of the Rhine



Claire Ferner, soprano

Lidia Chang, flute

Kevin Devine, hurdy-gurdy

In 1098 Hildebert of Bermersheim, a lesser noble in service to the count of Sponheim, and his wife, Mechtild welcomed their tenth child into the world, a girl who they named Hildegard. Eight years later, they did what any twelfth-century parents-of-ten would have done, and gave Hildegard to their local Benedictine monastery. While this may seem cruel to us, we should remember that monastic life was perhaps the best kind of life for a woman living in the Middle Ages. At the monastery of Disibod Hildegard studied under the *magistra* Jutta von Sponheim, who taught her to read and write in Latin, sing from the Psalter, and even compose her own music. When Jutta died in 1136 Hildegard was elected by her sisters to take her place as *magistra*.

In 1141 Hildegard began to have religious visions, which she dictated to her Benedictine brother, Volmar. Completed in 1151, this work containing twenty-six of her divine revelations (with her own beautiful illustrations) is known as the *Scivias*, from the Latin phrase “Sci vias Domini” (Know the Ways of the Lord). All of the vocal music we will be performing is from Hildegard’s *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum*, compiled shortly after the *Scivias*, sometime between 1151-58.

Told in Hildegard von Bingen’s own words, this program simultaneously explores the soundscape in which the celebrated *magistra* lived, and the theology that she embraced. Dramatic readings from her “*Scivias*” with improvised instrumental accompaniment are interspersed with her own compositions and anonymous medieval melodies as a means of interpreting her visions musically.

-Lidia Chang

Sybil of the Rhine

Declaration – “And behold! As I was gazing with great fear and trembling attention...” (Hildegard von Bingen, *Scivias*, c. 1151)

Cum vox sanguinis

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

The Redeemer – “And I, a person not glowing with the strength of strong lions, but a tender and fragile rib...” (*Scivias*, Book 2, Vision 1)

O quam mirabilis est

Hildegard von Bingen

The Fall of Man – “Then I saw a multitude of bright, living lamps... brilliant and splendid...” (*Scivias*, Book I, Vision II)

A Virgen mui groriosa (Cantigas de Santa Maria)

Anon. (c.1220-1280)

The Choir of Angels – “Then I saw in the secret places in the heights of Heaven two armies...” (*Scivias*, Book I, Vision VI)

O nobilissima viriditas

Hildegard von Bingen

The Church, Bride of Christ and Mother of the Faithful – “After this I saw the image of a woman...” (*Scivias*, Book II, Vision III)

O orzchis Ecclesia

Hildegard von Bingen

The Three orders in the Church – “After this I saw that a splendor white as snow and translucent as crystal...” (*Scivias*, Book II, Vision V)

Stella Splendens

Anon. 14th century

O Ecclesia oculi tui

Hildegard von Bingen

The Devil – “Then I saw a burning light...” (*Scivias*, Book II, Vision VII)

Nu Alrest Lebe Ich mir werde Walther von der Vogelweide (c.1170-1230)

Christ’s Sacrifice and the Church – “And after these things I saw the son of God hanging on the cross...” (*Scivias*, Book II, Vision VI)

O dulcissime amator

Hildegard von Bingen

Symphony of the Blessed – “Then I saw the lucent sky, in which I heard different kinds of music...” (*Scivias*, Book III, Vision XIII)

Ave Maria, O auctrix vite

Hildegard von Bingen