

Eya: Ensemble for Medieval Music

Crossley Hawn, *soprano*

Allison Mondel, *soprano, Gothic harp, symphonia, director*

Kristen Dubenion-Smith, *mezzo-soprano*

with

Cynthia Cathcart, *clársach*

Brigid's Circle, *women's ensemble*

In partnership with:

Georgetown University

Department of Performing Arts

Campus Ministries

Global Irish Studies

Department of Theology

The Amra Project, Trinity College Dublin

presents

BRIGID

Recorded live on February 1, 2020

Dahlgren Chapel

Georgetown University

Washington, DC

PROGRAM

Plainchant for antiphons and responsories from the Matins Office for the Feast of Saint Brigid, Trinity College Dublin MS78, 15th century (unless otherwise noted). All lections from *Vita Sanctae Brigidae*, Cogitosus, 7th century.

INVITATORIUM *Totus orbis Brigide*

NOCTURN I

BLESSING I *Ave spes angelico* / Prosa, Dublin Troper, Cambridge Add. MS 710, 14th century

ANTIPHONA I *Rex celestis humilem*

LECTIO I *Now, Saint Brigid, whom God foreknew*

RESPONSORIUM I *Felix Hyberniam*

BLESSING II *Brigit bé bithmaith'* / Attr. St. Ultan, 7th century origin

ANTIPHONA II *Prolis exordium*

LECTIO II *Of the garment thrown over a sunbeam*

RESPONSORIUM II *Hanc de Britannia*

BLESSING III *Invocations* / Giolla Mac Con Midhe, 13th c.

ANTIPHONA III *Nocte matris lectulum*

LECTIO III *Of the greenwood pedestal and altar base*

RESPONSORIUM III *In albis clerici*

NOCTURN II

BLESSING IV *Brighde nam brat (Brigid of the Mantles)* / Traditional

ANTIPHONA IV *Fusa super parvulam*

LECTIO IV *Of the churning and the butter given away to the guests and the poor*

RESPONSORIUM IV *Lacte quod premitur*

BLESSING V *Prayer to St. Brigid* / Traditional

ANTIPHONA V *Ardens velum niveum*

LECTIO V *Of the water blessed and turned into ale*

RESPONSORIUM V *Proficit in moribus*

BLESSING VI *Gloria sanctorum* / Prosa, Dublin Troper, Cambridge Add. MS 710, 14th century

ANTIPHONA VI *Candor veli niveam*

LECTIO VI *Of the voiceless girl to whom she restored speech*

RESPONSORIUM VI *Virgo decorator*

NOCTURN III

BLESSING VII *Adest dies leticie* / Hymn, First Vespers, Trinity College Dublin MS78, 15th century

ANTIPHONA VII *Vertens in cervisiam*

LECTIO VII *Of the cooked bacon given to a dog and later found intact*

RESPONSORIUM VII *Larga manus Brigide*

BLESSING VIII *A Prayer to Brigid* / Allison Mondel

ANTIPHONA VIII *Quidquid vidit oculo*

LECTIO VIII *Of the gift of the best cow together with the best calf of another cow*

RESPONSORIUM VIII *Felix virgo viscera*

BLESSING IX *Gabham Molta Bhríde* / Traditional Irish Song

ANTIPHONA IX *Christo bis sex apostolis*

LECTIO IX *Of the bird blessed and later caught with the hand*

RESPONSORIUM IX *Regnum mundi respuit*

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Plainchant for antiphons and responsories from the Matins Office for the Feast of Saint Brigid, Trinity College Dublin MS78, 15th century (unless otherwise noted). All lections from *Vita Sanctae Brigidae*, Cogitosus, 7th century.

INVITATORIUM

Totus orbis Brigide

*Totus orbis Brigide
Plaudat in amorem
Puritatis floride
Curat in odorem.*

Let the whole world
Lovingly praise Brigid,
Let it hasten to the scent
Of purity in bloom.

NOCTURN I

LESSON ONE

BLESSING I

Ave spes angelico

Prosa, Dublin Troper, Cambridge Add. MS 710, 14th century
Brigid's Circle

*Ave spes angelico
more stan affata,
Ave rore celico
virgo fecundata.*

Hail, hope, standing
Addressed in angelic manner,
Hail virgin made fruitful
By a drop from heaven.

*Eya, pura pueri
Partrix puellaris,
Eya, datrix liberi,
Quem gaudento paris.*

Eya, pure madenly
Mother of a boy,
Eya, giver of a child,
Whom you bear in rejoicing.

*Gaude, stans ad dexteram
In cruce pendentis,
Gaude, te puerperam
Mortui surgentis.*

Rejoice, standing on the right-hand
Side of the one hanging on the cross,
Rejoice, O childbearer
Of the one rising from the dead.

*Salve, natum proprium
Videns ascendentem,
Salve, credens Filium
Cum Patre regnatem.*

Hail, seeing your own child
Ascending,
Hail, believing your Son
To be reigning with the Father.

*Vale, scandens celitus,
Ad thronum translata,
Vale, nos valere fac,
Deo desponsata.*

Farewell, climbing to heaven,
Carried over to the throne,
Farewell, make us to be strong,
Betrothed to God.

*Et factuos servulos
Nostre mortis hora
Tecum frui gloriam
In perhenni mora.*

And cause your servants
At the hour of our death
To enjoy glory with you
For everlasting time.

Trans. Helen Deeming, Samantha Blickhan

ANTIPHONA I

Rex celestis humilem

*Rex celestis humilem
Ancillam respexit
De qua prolem nobilem
Brigidam provexit.*

The King of Heaven
Regarded his humble servant,
His noble offspring,
Brigid, who was brought forth.

LECTIO I

Now, Saint Brigid, whom God foreknew

Allison Mondel, *reader*

Now, saint Brigid, whom God foreknew and predestined according to his own image, was born in Ireland of Christian and noble parents belonging to the good and most wise sept of Echtech [Eochaid]. Born of her father Dubhtach and her mother Broicsech, she grew from childhood in the pursuit of good. For, chosen by God, the girl was by character totally self-restrained and chaste and was continually progressing to better things.

And who can adequately recount her deeds and the miracles she wrought even at that age? However, we shall offer the following few selected from countless others by way of illustration.

RESPONSORIUM I

Felix Hyberniam

*Felix Hyberniam
Beat Lagenia
De clara Brigidam
Gignens prosapia.*

*De que leticiam
Sumat ecclesia.*

*Presignant Brigidam
Multa prodigia
Futuram placidam
Celesti gracia.*

Happy Leinster,
Blessed Ireland,
Bearing Brigid
From noble lineage.

On this happy occasion
The church rejoiced.

Many wonders
Foretold that Brigid
Would come, serene
With celestial grace.

LESSON TWO

BLESSING II

Brigit bé bithmaith' (Ulta's Hymn)

Attr. St. Ultan, 7th century origin

Reader: Alix Evans

Brigid ever-good woman
flame golden, sparkling,
may she bear us to the eternal kingdom,
(she), the sun fiery, radiant!

May Brigid free us
past crowds of demons!
may she win for us
battles over every disease!

May she extirpate in us
the vices of our flesh,
she, the branch with blossoms,
the mother of Jesus!

The true-virgin, dear,
With vast pre-eminence,
May we be free, at all times,
Along with my saint of Leinster-folk!
One (of the two) pillars of the Kingdom,

Along with Patrick the pre-eminent (as the other pillar);

The vestment beyond (even) splendid vestments,
The royal Queen

May they lie, after old age,
Our bodies, in sackcloth;
(but) with her grace may she bedew us,
May she free us, Brigid!
Brigid ever.

ANTIPHONA II

Prolis exordium

Prolis exordium
Multa prodigia
Precurrunt gaudium
prefigurancia.

Many prophetic
Wonders
Anticipate the joy of
The birth of the child.

LECTIO II

Of the garment thrown over a sunbeam

Reader: Alyson Miller

Here, I think I ought to slip in for your Reverences, this other miracle in which the pure mind of the virgin and God's co-operating hand clearly seem to combine.

As she was grazing her sheep in the course of her work as a shepherdess on a level and grassy plain, she was drenched by a very heavy downpour of rain and returned to the house with her clothes wet.

There was a ray of sunshine coming into the house through an opening and, as a result, her eyes were dazzled and she took the sunbeam for a slanting tree growing there. So, she put her rainsoaked clothes on it and the clothes hung on the filmy sunbeam as if it were a big solid tree.

And the occupants of the house and the neighbours, dumbfounded by this extraordinary miracle, began to extol this incomparable lady with fitting praise.

RESPONSORIUM II

Hanc de Britannia

Hanc de Britannia
Presules predicant
Eius natalia
Magi magnificent.

From Britain,
The bishops foretold.
The druids extolled
Her birth.

Hanc luminaria
Celi pronosticant.

The heavenly lights
Predicted her coming.

Nam globus igneus
Splendor ethereus
Sanctam notificant.

For a fiery orb
Of ethereal brightness
Signified her holiness.

LESSON THREE

BLESSING III

Invocations

Giolla Mac Con Midhe, 13th century

Reader: Stephanie Cabell

XIII

May Holy Brigid of Cill Dara, my virgin saint, my woman friend,
come to my heart as a fervent girdle;
may she come as a guest to visit me.

XIX

Pray for me, O Bridget after whom I was baptized, that my children should
live; do not let your poet into disrespect, O faithful sweetheart of god.

XXI

Bridget, the gentle princess, is a midwife from the land of the Irish for the birth;
Bridget is the foster-mother of the off-spring;
Everyone asks for her help.

ANTIPHONA III

Nocte matris lectulum

Nocte matris lectulum

Lux irradiabat

Nasciture meritum

Prolis presignabat.

At night, light flooded
Her mother's small bed.
It announced the worth
Of the child about to be born.

LECTIO III

Of the greenwood pedestal and altar base

Reader: Jane Brady-Close

Shortly afterwards when her parents wanted to betroth her to a man according to the custom of the world, Brigit, inspired from above and wanting to devote herself as a chaste virgin to God, went to the most holy bishop Mac-Caille of blessed memory. Seeing her heavenly desire and modesty and seeing such a love of chastity in this remarkable maiden, he placed the white veil and white garment over her venerable head.

Kneeling humbly before God and the bishops as well as before the altar and offering her virginal crown to almighty God, she touched with her hand the wooden base on which the altar rested.

And to commemorate her unsullied virtue, this wood flourishes fresh and green to the present day as if it had not been cut down and stripped of its bark but was attached to its roots. And to this day it rids all the faithful of afflictions and diseases.

RESPONSORIUM III

In albis clerici

In albis clerici

Vestibus celici

Natam santificant.

The heavenly ministers
Clothed in white clothing
Sanctified her birth.

Aquis baptismatis

Liquore chrismatis

Hanc Deo dedicant.

By the waters of baptism
And the anointing oil
They dedicated her to God.

*Post vestem candidam
Collatam Brigidam
Sanctam specificant.*

Then they proclaimed
Brigid holy, wrapped in
A shining white garment.

NOCTURN II

LESSON FOUR

BLESSING IV

Brighde nam brat (Brigit of the Mantles)

Traditional Scottish Gaelic

Reader: Julia McCabe

*Brighde nam brat,
Brighde na brìg,
Brighde nan cleachd,
Brighde na frìth.*

Brigit of the mantles,
Brigit of the peat-heap,
Brigit of the twining hair,
Brigit of the deer.

*Brighde nan gealachos,
Brighde na bìth,
Brighde nan gealabhos,
Brighde na nì.*

Brigit of the moonlight,
Brigit of calmness,
Brigit of the bright palms,
Brigit of the kine.

*Brighde bean chomainn,
Brighde na brig,
Brighde bean chobhair,
Brighde bean mhìn.*

Brigit, woman-comrade,
Brigit of the peat-heap,
Brigit, woman-helper,
Brigit, woman mild.

*Brighde ciabh Moire,
Brighde Moime Chrìosd, —
Gach latha agus gach oidhche
Nì mi Sloinntearachd na Brìghd,*

Brigit, own tress of Mary,
Brigit, Nurse of Christ, —
Each day and each night
That I say the Descent of Brigit,

*Cha mharbhar mi,
Cha ghuinear mi,
Cha charachar mi,
Cha ghonar mi,
Cha spaltar mi,
Cha spùillear mi,
Cha saltrar mi,
Cha rùisgear mi,
Cha reubar mi,
Cha mhó dh'fhàgas
Crìosd an dearmad mi.*

I shall not be slain,
I shall not be wounded,
I shall not be put in cell,
I shall not be gashed,
I shall not be torn in sunder,
I shall not be despoiled,
I shall not be down-trodden,
I shall not be made naked,
I shall not be rent,
Nor will Christ
Leave me forgotten.

*Cha loisg grian mi,
Cha loisg teine mi,
Cha loisg ial mi,
Cha loisg gile mi.
Cha bhàth uisge mi,
Cha bhàth sàla mi,
Cha bhàth lighe mi,
Cha bhàth burn mi.*

Nor sun shall burn me,
Nor fire shall burn me,
Nor beam shall burn me,
Nor moon shall burn me.
Nor river shall drown me,
Nor brine shall drown me,
Nor flood shall drown me,
Nor water shall drown me.

*Cha laigh bruaill-brì orm,
Cha laigh suan-dubh orm,
Cha laigh druail-drì orm,
Cha laigh luaths-luis orm.*

Nor shall nightmares lie on me,
Nor shall dark-sleep lie on me,
Nor shall spell-sleep lie on me,
Nor shall restlessness lie on me.

*Tha mi for chomraig
Mo Naomh Moire;
'S i mo chaomh chomainn
Brighde.*

I am under the keeping
Of my Saint Mary;
My companion beloved
Is Brigit.

ANTIPHONA IV

Fusa super parvulam

*Fusa super parvulam
Gracia celestis
Monstrat Christi famulam
Signis manifestis.*

Celestial grace was
Showered upon the young one,
Showing her to be Christ's servant
By outward signs.

LECTIO IV

Of the churning and the butter given away to the guests and the poor

Reader: Dominique Rychlik

So, when she was old enough, she was sent by her mother to do the work of churning so that she could make up the butter from the cow's milk which had been dashed; she too was meant to carry out this work, in the same way as other women were accustomed to do, and to deliver for use the complete yield of the cows and the customary weight and measure of butter at the appointed time with the others.

However, this maiden with her most beautiful and generous disposition, preferring to obey God rather than men, distributed the milk and butter liberally to the poor and the guests.

So when as usual the appointed time for all to hand in what the cows had yielded, her turn came. And when her workmates presented the finished result of their work, the aforementioned blessed maiden was also requested to hand in her work in like manner.

In dread of her mother since she had nothing to show because she had given the lot away to the poor without a thought for the tomorrow, strengthened and inflamed with an ardor of faith so intense and unquenchable, she turned to the Lord and prayed. Without delay the Lord heard the maiden's voice and prayers. And being a helper in the hour of need, he came to her assistance with the generous bestowal of a divine gift, and lavishly restored the butter for the maiden who had confidence in him.

Astonishingly, the very moment after her prayer, the most holy maiden proved that she had fulfilled her task by showing that nothing was missing from the fruit of her work, but that it was even more abundant than her workmates'.

RESPONSORIUM IV

Lacte, quod premitur

*Lacte, quod premitur
De vacca candida
Per sanctam femina
Cibatur Brigida.*

The milk that was drawn
From the white cow
By a holy woman
Fed the young Brigid.

Rejicit omnia magi cibaria.

For she rejected all of the druid's food.

*Lucis ad tenebras
Cum sint contraria,
Non erat aliqua
Conveniencia.*

As light and dark
Are opposites,
Somehow there was no other [food]
That would agree with her.

LESSON FIVE

BLESSING V

Prayer to St. Brigid

Traditional Irish

Reader: McLean Turner

Brigid

You were a woman of peace.

You brought harmony where there was conflict.

You brought light to the darkness.

You brought hope to the downcast.

May the mantle of your peace cover those who are troubled and anxious,

and may peace be firmly rooted in our hearts and in our world.

Inspire us to act justly and to reverence all God has made.

Brigid you were a voice for the wounded and the weary.

Strengthen what is weak within us.

Calm us into a quietness that heals and listens.

May we grow each day into greater wholeness in mind, body and spirit.

Amen.

ANTIPHONA V

Ardens velum niveum

Ardens velum niveum

Multis apperabat

Quod caput virgineum

In cunis tegebat.

A burning, snowy-white curtain of flames

Appeared to many,

Which shielded the head of the girl

In the crib.

LECTIO V

Of the water blessed and turned into ale

Reader: Samantha Suplee

Another wonderful occurrence was this: lepers asked the venerable Brigit for ale. Since she had none, seeing some water prepared for the baths and blessing it with the power of faith, she changed it into excellent ale and drew it in abundance for the thirsty men.

For he who changed the water into wine at Cana in Gallilee also changed water into ale through the faith of this most blessed woman.

But, speaking of this miracle, it seems appropriate to recall another wonderful one.

RESPONSORIUM V

Proficit in moribus

Proficit in moribus

Infra patris septa

In cunctis operibus

Graciam adeptam.

She excelled in character

Within her father's house,

Receiving grace

through all of her actions.

Crescit eius manibus

Res quevis receptam.

For anything grew

That was received by her hands.

Sicut lecytus liquoribus

Hydria farine panibus

Abundat in Sarepta.

Just as the container of oil

And the bread flour in a jar

Provided abundantly in Zarephath.*

*Luke 4:26

LESSON SIX

BLESSING VI

Gloria sanctorum

Prosa, "Dublin Troper," Cambridge Add. MS 710, 14th century
Brigid's Circle

*Gloria sactorum,
Decus angelorum,
Ave Maria.*

Glory of the saints,
Shining light of the angels,
Hail Mary.

*Visita tuorum
Mentes famulorum,
Dulcis Maria.*

Visit the
Minds of your servants,
Sweet Mary.

*O fons bonitatis,
Nostrae pauper tatis
Sis memor, Maria.*

O source of goodness,
Remember your poor
Family, Mary.

*Sordes foeditatis,
Aestus voluptatis
Dilue, Maria.*

From base foulness
And the heat of passion:
Cleanse us, Mary.

*Nobis Evae natis,
Sinum pietatis
Aperi, Maria.*

To us, born of Eve,
Open your bosom of piety,
Mary.

*Ne nos pro peccatis
Simus cum damnatis,
Succure, Maria.*

Lest we be condemned
For our sins,
Help us, Mary.

ANTIPHONA VI

Candor veli niveam

*Candor veli niveam
Carnis castitatem
Presignavit igneam
Ardor caritatem.*

The brightness of the veil,
Foretold the purity of her flesh.
Its heat presaged
The ardor of her charity.

LECTIO VI

Of the voiceless girl to whom she restored speech

Reader: Emily Jaster

Famous therefore for such great miracles, full of humility of heart, purity of mind, restraint of character and spiritual grace, she merited to acquire such great authority in divine worship and a prestige renowned above all the virgins of her time.

One day, a woman, one of her adherents from outside, came to visit her with her twelve-year-old daughter who was voiceless from birth. After she had curtsied with due reverence as all used to do and had gone forward with neck bowed to receive the kiss of peace, our Brigit, who was affable and cheerful to all, addressed her in wholesome words seasoning her discourse with the divine salt. And following the example of our divine Saviour who ordered the little ones to come to him, she took the girl's hand in her own and, unaware that she was voiceless, asked her what her wish was, whether she wanted to have her head veiled and remain a virgin or be given away in marriage.

When her mother warned her that the girl would give her no answer, Brigit in reply said to the mother that she would not let go of the girl's hand until she first gave her an answer. And when she asked the girl a second time about the same thing, the girl answered her and said: 'I do not want to do anything except what you want'.

And so, afterwards, when her lips had been opened, she was able to speak normally without hindrance to her tongue and freed of impediment.

RESPONSORIUM VI

Proficit in moribus

*Virgo decoratur
Honor amplius ei cumulatur,
Synodus instabat,
Nova Brigida stella micabat.*

*Sacra cohors plaudit
Quia signum celitus audit.*

*Presbyter hanc aliam
Denunciat esse Mariam.*

The graceful virgin
Is heaped with with great honors,
The synod cries out,
Brigid appears as a new star.

The holy assembly acclaims her,
Because it heard a sign from heaven.

Then a priest declared
That she was another Mary.

NOCTURN III LESSON SEVEN

BLESSING VII

Adest dies leticie

Hymn, First Vespers Office for Saint Brigid, Trinity College Dublin MS 78, 15th century
Brigid's Circle

*Adest dies leticie
Quo sancta virgo Brigida
De tenebris miserie
Transit ad regna lucida.*

*A statu puericie
Deo servire studuit
Dono pollens mundicie
Sponso superno placuit.*

*In signum pudicitie
Altaris quod exaruit
Manus tactu virginie
Lignum repente viruit.*

*Hec est laurus Hibernie
Cuius viror non marcuit
Plena misericordiae
Nulli petenti defuit.*

*Gloria tibi Domine
Qui natus es de virgine
Cum Patre et sancto spiritu
In sempiterna secula.
Amen.*

Today is the happy day
When the holy virgin Brigid
Crosses from the misery of darkness
Into the kingdom of light.

From her childhood
She was devoted to the service of God
Endowed with the gift of purity
She was pleasing to her heavenly bridegroom..

As a sign of her modesty,
The altar made of dry wood,
Touched by her pure hands,
Was suddenly brought back to life.

She is the triumph of Ireland,
Whose greenness will never fade,
Full of mercy
No one shall ever be failed by her.

Glory be to you, O Lord,
Who was born of a virgin,
With the Father and the Holy Spirit,
Forever and ever.
Amen.

ANTIPHONA VII

Vertens in cervisiam

*Vertens in cervisiam
Fontanum liquorem
Nutricis inopiam
Pellit et languorem.*

As she transformed ale
From the water in the well,
She expelled from her nurse
Sickness and suffering.

LECTIO VII

Of the cooked bacon given to a dog and later found intact

Reader: Crossley Hawn

But I feel I must not pass over unrecorded the famous miracle which was wrought by this most renowned handmaid of God who was unceasingly dedicated to God's service.

Once, as she was cooking bacon in a cauldron for some guests who had arrived, she was moved to compassion and gave it to a fawning begging dog.

And when the bacon was taken from the cauldron and later divided among the guests it was found perfectly intact as if none of it had been taken away.

And those who witnessed this were full of admiration and with fitting praise spread the renown of the maiden who in the quality of her faith and the merit of her good virtues was beyond compare.

RESPONSORIUM VII

Larga manus Brigide

*Larga manus Brigide
Cani carnis avido
Frusta quinque jecit.*

The generous hand of Brigid
Gave the hungry dog
Five pieces of bacon.

*Grande per miraculum
Nullum cibi ferculum
In cena defecit.*

By a great miracle,
No single dish of food
Was lacking at the dinner.

*Horum gestat omnium
Hospes testimonium
Quem virgo refecit.*

To all these things
The host bore witness,
Whom the virgin fed.

LESSON EIGHT

BLESSING VIII

A Prayer to Brigid

Allison Mondel

Reader: Allison Mondel

Dear Lady of holy miracles great and small,
Dear Mistress of mysterious, magical fire,
Rekindle the flame within our hearts.

May we be open to receive your gifts of Gentleness. Kindness. Inspiration.
May we delight in them.
May we, too, offer these gifts unto the world.

Ignite our spirit's calling.
Sustain our faith in Divine Trust.

We praise you in wonder.
We bless you a thousandfold.

Noble teacher and sweetest friend,
Show us the way to tend our flame.
Amen.

ANTIPHONA VIII

Quidquid vidit oculo

Quidquid vidit oculo
Vel manu tangebatur
Celesti miraculo
Cremetum sumebatur.

Whatever she gazed upon
Or her hand touched,
By a heavenly miracle
It was increased.

LECTIO VIII

Of the gift of the best cow together with the best calf of another cow

Reader: Kris Devine

The following instance from among her beneficial deeds is one we must also admire.

As poor people and pilgrims were flocking to her from all sides attracted by the enormous renown of her miracles and of her lavish generosity, an unpleasant leper among them came up and demanded to be given the best cow of the herd together with the best calf of all the calves.

Nor did she put him off when she heard his request. But thereupon she freely gave the sick man who requested them the cow she had come to know as the best of the lot and the sleek and prime calf of another cow. And in her kindness of heart she sent her own chariot with him for the long journey over the very broad plain and gave orders that the calf be placed in the chariot behind him, lest the sick man should be wearied by the long journey and endure hardship in driving the cow.

And so, the cow licking it with her tongue and loving it as if it were her own, without compulsion from anyone, followed behind to the place of destination.

You see, dearest brethren, how even the brute beasts, contrary to their custom, used to do her bidding.

RESPONSORIUM VIII

Felix virgo viscera

*Felix virgo viscera
Gerens pietatis
Ensem patris dextera
Donat caritatis.*

The happy virgin
Filled with pity,
Gave her father's sword
With her right hand of charity.

*Rex stupet ad opera
Tante largitatis.*

The king was amazed by this great work
Of generosity.

*Illa voce libera
Dixit: Rex credatis
Hinc vos, vestra cetera
Dare Christo gratis.*

In a clear voice
She said: King, believe me
That going forward, give your goods
Freely to Christ.

LESSON NINE

BLESSING IX

Gabhaim molta Bríghde

Tradition Irish

Brigid's Circle

*Gabhaim molta Bríghde
Ionmhain í le hÉirinn
Ionmhain le gach tír í
Molaimís go léir í*

I am praising Bridget
Who is daughter of Ireland
She is a daughter of all countries
We all praise her

Lóchrann geal na Laighneach
Soilsiú feadh na tíre
Ceann ar óghaibh Éireann
Ceann na mban ar míne

The bright light of Leinster
Bringing light to the country
The leader of the youth of Ireland
Our leader of gentlewomen

Tig an geimhreadh dian dubh
Gearradh lena ghéire
Ach ar lá 'le Bríghde
Gar dúinn Earrach Éireann

Here comes the dark, hard winter
Cutting with its sharpness
But on St. Bridget's Day
Ireland's spring is close by

Gabhaim molta Bríghde
Ionmhain í le hÉirinn
Ionmhain le gach tír í
Molaimis go léir í

I am praising Bridget
Who is daughter of Ireland
She is a daughter of all countries
We all praise her

Trans. Cathie Ryan

ANTIPHONA IX

Christi bis sex apostolis

*Christi bis sex apostolis
Vaccas devota dedicat
Impletis cunctis vesculis
Butirum se multiplicat.*

To Christ's apostles
Did she devoutly dedicate the cows,
And when all the vessels were filled
The butter was multiplied.

LECTIO IX

Of the bird blessed and later caught with the hand

Reader: Susan Galbraith

And another day, when Brigit saw ducks swimming in the water according to their natural instinct, and occasionally flying through the air, she bade them come to her.

In winged flight and with remarkable zeal for obedience, they began to fly to her in flocks without any fear, familiar with her calls as though domesticated. She touched them with her hand and took them in her arms and, after doing this for some time, she let them go back flying into the air on their own wings.

And, through creatures visible, she praised the invisible creator of all things to whom all animate things are subject and for whom all things live, as one says in the recitation of the office.

And from all this, it can be clearly understood that the whole of nature, beasts, cattle, and birds, was subjected to her power.

RESPONSORIUM IX

Regnum mundi respuit

*Regnum mundi respuit
Virgo Deo grata:
Mira res, quam voluit
Et est impetrata.*

The kingdom of the world was rejected
By the virgin dear to God:
An extraordinary thing, that which she desired
And which was granted.

*Oculus nam crepuit
Ne sit maritata.*

For her eye cracked open,
So that she could not marry.

*Hunc Deus resituit
Postquam est velata
Facies plus placuit
Cristo reformata.*

But God restored it
After she took the veil.
Her face was even more pleasing
To Christ after it was restored.

*Gloria patri et filio,
Et Spiritui Sancto.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit.

SOURCES

[Dublin Troper](#), Cambridge Add. MS 710, 14th century

[Trinity College Dublin MS 78](#), "Clondalkin Breviary," late 15th century

[Vita Sanctae Brigidae](#), Cogitosus, 7th century, trans. Connolly, Picard, extracted from Noel Kissane, [Saint Brigid of Kildare: Life, Legend, and Cult](#), Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2017.

Brighde nam brat (Brigid of the Mantles) from *Carmina gadelica: hymns and incantations with illustrative notes on words, rites, and customs, dying and obsolete*, Carmichael, Alexander, 1832-1912. 2nd ed. edited by Mrs. Elizabeth Carmichael Watson, 1928. (Adapted by Allison Mondel.)

INFO

Musical transcriptions: Allison Mondel

Harp improvisations: Cynthia Cathcart

Latin translations: Allison Mondel, with invaluable assistance from Hugh McElroy (except otherwise noted)

ABOUT EYA

Eya is an award-winning vocal ensemble based in Washington, DC specializing in the interpretation of medieval music for women's voices. Lauded as "remarkable" and "gorgeous" (*The Washington Post*), Eya is an early music ensemble of hauntingly beautiful vocal quality married with deep spirit. Eya crafts programs that interweave diverse repertoires, forging new points of connection between contemporary audiences and medieval repertoire which underline our common humanity with early poets and composers. Eya has performed at a variety of notable venues including the National Gallery of Art, The Music Center at Strathmore, Washington National Cathedral, and Dumbarton Oaks, as well as numerous colleges, universities, and concert series across the east coast and midwest. They have been featured on Voice of America radio, Millennium of Music and Harmonia on NPR, and are the recipient of the 2013 Ovation Award for *Best Specialty Group: Early Music*, as well as 2018 nominee for *Best New Recording* following their latest album release, *The Three Marys*.

Eya (pronounced "EH-yah") is a Latin exclamation of joy. Learn more at www.eyaensemble.com.

ARTISTS

Crossley Hawn soprano

Praised for "her lovely limpid colors in good harmony with her musical intelligence" (*Perform Arts Perugia*), her "lovely, vibrant soprano, precise in her tuning," and "great acting and agile vocals" (*DC Metro Theater Arts*), Crossley Hawn enjoys an engaging career in various styles of music in the DC area.

Commended as "outstanding" and "consistently beautiful" by *Washington Classical Review*, she has served as a guest soloist with ensembles including Cathedra, Cathedral Choral Society, The Reston Chorale, Maryland Choral Society, Maryland Summer Chorus, and The City Choir of Washington. She looks forward to returning as a soloist with City Choir in May and November of 2020. Crossley was the winner of the 2018 Choralis Young Artist Competition, subsequently performing solos with Choralis from Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* and Jongen's *Messe en l'honneur du Saint-Sacrement*. She has performed Bach solos with Chatham Baroque, and looks forward to singing solos with them again this season.

As an ensemble singer, Crossley had the honor of performing David Lang's Pulitzer Prize-winning *the little match girl passion* with Evolution Contemporary Music Series, with the composer in attendance. She is an active member of Eya: Ensemble for Medieval Music, an award-winning female trio specializing in early music. Crossley has also appeared with the Folger Consort, Cathedra, Bridge, Washington Bach Consort, Chantry, The Thirteen, The District Eight, the U.S. Air Force Singing Sergeants, and Clarion Choir. This season, she looks forward to working with True Concord and Kinnara for the first time.

A *summa cum laude* graduate of the Catholic University of America with an M.M. in Vocal Performance and studies in Theology, Crossley enjoys both sacred and operatic repertoire. Appearing with Summer Opera Theatre Company, Bel Cantanti

Opera, and Loudoun Lyric Opera, and The Catholic University of America, she has performed the roles of Dido in *Dido and Aeneas*, the Shepherd Boy in *Tosca*, Giannetta in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Drusilla in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Susanna in *Le Nozze di*

Figaro, Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Suor Dolcina in *Suor Angelica*, Amahl in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and Serpina in *La Serva Padrona*, for which she was an award recipient of DC Metro Theater Arts: Best of 2016.

Other career highlights include performing at the Kennedy Center, singing in chamber choirs for two Popes, performing arias by request for Sir Anthony Hopkins in Italy, serving as cantor at Justice Antonin Scalia's Mass of Christian Burial, and taking part in the *Defiant Requiem* in Budapest and at Lincoln Center. She has performed worldwide in Italy, Canada, Switzerland, France, England, Germany, Austria and Hungary. Crossley has been a soloist on EWTN and WETA on numerous occasions, and has been involved in a number of classical music recordings, including all of Gothic Catalog's "New American Choral Music" series. She is a cantor and chorister at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and Washington National Cathedral. She currently serves as Project Manager for Experiential Orchestra's recording of Dame Ethel Smyth's *The Prison* with EXO and Clarion Choir, and as an Artistic Director of Bridge, a professional vocal chamber ensemble specializing in new works for voices and early music. Learn more at www.crossleyhawn.com.

Allison Mondel *director, soprano, Gothic harp, symphonia*

Allison Mondel is a highly versatile performing artist, teacher, and vocal coach. She has been lauded by *The Washington Post* for her "ethereal soprano" and "spare, otherworldly radiance... a performance from across the centuries, full of distant and irresistible beauties."

She received her M.M. in Early Music Vocal Performance from the Longy School of Music where she studied with Laurie Monahan (Tapestry, Ensemble P.A.N., Sequentia) and was introduced to a revolutionary approach of music-making. She discovered a new love and inspiration: medieval music. Allison has directed Eya since its inception in 2010, crafting programs representative of her artistic vision: to marry art (old and new) with spirituality. She is a notation and performance specialist of the chants of Hildegard von Bingen. She had the honor of singing Hildegard's music at President Obama's second Inaugural Prayer Service at Washington National Cathedral. She has offered workshops, classes, and lectures on Hildegard's unique body of work and other diverse early music repertoires throughout the east coast, midwest, and Ireland.

In addition to her medieval performance and scholarship, she has also performed at the Boston Early Music Festival, Washington National Cathedral, Dumbarton Oaks, Irish World Academy at the University of Limerick, American University, Georgetown University, Harvard University, Manassas Ballet Theater, and others.

Some of her most meaningful work has been in the teaching studio. She has taught singing for over 15 years, including Washington National Cathedral, Georgetown University, and her own private studio. A Transformational Voice Coach, Allison founded Sacred Voice Studios, a holistic teaching and coaching practice which reaches around the world, helping singers transform their relationship with their voice. Learn more at www.thesacredvoice.studio.

Kristen Dubenion-Smith *mezzo-soprano*

Recognized for her "velvety legato and embracing warmth of sound" (*Washington Classical Review*) and voice of "sweet clarity" (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*), mezzo-soprano Kristen Dubenion-Smith enjoys an active performing career in oratorio and sacred vocal chamber music, specializing in the music of the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque eras.

As a concert soloist, Kristen has earned recognition for her performances of the works of the high Baroque, notably Bach and Handel. Highlights for her 2019-2020 season include Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with The Washington Bach Consort, *Mass in B Minor* with City Choir of Washington and The Clarion Choir, *St. Matthew Passion* at Washington National Cathedral and *St. John Passion* with the Dryden Ensemble, as well multiple performances of Handel's *Messiah* with Handel Choir of Baltimore and Arts Chorale of Winchester. Ms. Dubenion-Smith will also be touring and recording with the Grammy-nominated Clarion Choir.

Starting in the fall of 2016, Ms. Dubenion-Smith joined the Choir of Men and Boys/Girls at the Washington National Cathedral as the first woman to be offered a position in this choir. She had previously served as cantor since 2010.

In 2010, Ms. Dubenion-Smith co-founded the award-winning, Washington D.C.-based Eya: Ensemble for Medieval Music.

Originally from Michigan, Ms. Dubenion-Smith attended Alma College before moving to Maryland to complete her studies at The Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore. Learn more at www.kristendubenionsmith.com.

Cynthia Cathcart *clàrsach*

Cynthia Cathcart is an expert on the Clàrsach, the wire-strung harp of Scotland and Ireland. Performing and teaching internationally, she continues to lead a new wave of interest in this rare instrument. Cynthia's mission is to bring more people to experience the sweetly resonant music of the wire-strung harp.

Based near Washington, DC, Cynthia represents Ardival Harps of Strathpeffer, Scotland, and is their North American Artist in Residence. She is a recording artist and the author of several books for the Clàrsach. She holds several awards, including two-time U.S. National Scottish Harp Master Champion, three-time winner of the Clan Lamont Trophy (in Virginia, Texas, and Ohio), and holder of the Jan Pennington-Grey Award for service to the wire-strung harp. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music in Piano Performance from Hood College, where she studied under the internationally recognized pianist Noel Lester.

Her family's Scottish and Irish heritage ensured experiences in the music and art of those cultures from childhood, drawing her eventually to come across the unique sound of the wire-strung harp. After acquiring one of these rare instruments, Cynthia soon found that there was very little support for new learners and so she began to teach herself. Cynthia's passion for research led her to discover the history and music of the instrument, which she has since shared broadly with the harp world through articles and papers. She has published in such journals as *The Kilt & Harp* of the Scottish Harp Society of America, the bulletins of the Wire Branch of *Comunn na Clàrsach* in Scotland and *The Historical Harp Society of America*, and most actively via her quarterly column "Ringling Strings" in *The Folk Harp Journal*, now running for more than ten years.

In addition to performing and publishing on the wire-strung harp, Cynthia's passion includes teaching others to learn to play the instrument. To this end, she has authored the standard instructional book for the instrument, *Pathway: a Primer for the Wire Strung Harp*, as well as three collections of music arranged for beginner to advanced levels. Her two recordings, *Alchemy of a Rose* and *Joy to the World* offer inspiration and guidance to students learning to play.

Teaching is a fundamental part of Cynthia's service to music; she has been an active member of the Montgomery County Music Teachers Association for over 20 years, serving as president for four of those years. Cynthia has a lively private studio, offering instruction in both piano and wire-strung harp. Her students range in age from young children to senior adults, from beginners to advanced players, and from across the globe. She has presented workshops and lectures at such events as the Edinburgh International Harp Festival, The Somerset Folk Harp Festival, and The Boston Early Gaelic Harp Conference (sponsored by the Historical Harp Society of Ireland), and harp conferences funded by the International Society of Folk Harpers and Craftsmen.

BRIGID'S CIRCLE

Women's Ensemble

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Candy Bartoldus | Jennifer Griffiths Orudjev | Elizabeth Peters | Samantha Suplee* |
| Jane Brady-Close* | Chelsea Hudson | MaryJane Ruhl | Maud Taber-Thomas |
| Stephanie Cabell* | Emily Jaster* | Dominique Rychlik* | Emily Tsai |
| Kris Devine* | Amy Lloyd | Anna Saez de Tejada Cuenca | McLean Turner* |
| Elisabeth Desmond | Julia McCabe* | Cristina Soto | Molly Young |
| Alix Evans* | Alyson Miller* | Dale Stahl | |
| Susan Galbreath* | Teresa Modroño | Charlotte Storch | |
| Karen Garlick | Madeleine Perlman | | |

*Speaker

PROGRAM NOTES

The romance began with a set of songs. I was a freshman in college, working with a new voice teacher who knew of my unquenchable desire to sing early music and love of all things medieval. Her unusual suggestion: Samuel Barber's *Hermit Songs* (1953), an esteemed American composer who superbly set eight strange and wonderful songs to ancient Irish texts written by monks. There are some familiar miracle stories, some journal-like musings, and some gossipy marginalia. The *Hermit Songs* were my first, albeit sideways, lure into ancient Irish literature, storytelling, and lore. My Irish romance had begun.

As my interests in the field of medieval music deepened, I began to ask the question: where is the medieval music from Ireland? I developed a nagging desire to learn about this repertoire and vowed to perform it someday. At that point, there was a

serendipitous publication in 2000 in the journal *Early Music*, featuring an entire issue on the medieval music of Ireland(!). This incredible effort, spearheaded by my esteemed colleague and friend, Dr. Ann Buckley, to champion and illuminate the incredibly rare and valuable sources of Irish medieval music has morphed into a relatively new international endeavor, The Amra Project. Based at Trinity College Dublin, this international effort of scholars and musicians is enhancing the visibility and impact of this treasured body of music. I feel a debt of gratitude to Ann as she has enthusiastically extended her arm to Eya to become a member of The Amra Project, in support of our own efforts to explore and present this wonderful music to audiences in the United States.

This program, *Brigid*, is our first exploration of the medieval music of Ireland. It has been twenty years in the making, as it were. As a women's ensemble, our programming purposely focuses on music that is intended for women's voices, or is thematically connected in a way that is meaningful to us and, hopefully, to our audience. This led me to the plainchant devoted to Saint Brigid, which provides the theme and structure of our program. My introduction to this great lady came much more recently and is deeply personal and is too lengthy to recount here. I surmise that many in attendance at this performance share some similar experience that captivated and motivated us to discover Brigid, or Ireland, or both, in our own way.

We present to you a tapestry of songs, stories, poems, and prayers dedicated to Brigid, a person of intrigue and wonder. Her story captures our imagination. She has two identities: Brigid the pre-Christian pagan goddess and Saint Brigid, the holy woman who not only founded a ground-breaking monastic foundation at Cill Dara ("the Church of the Oak," present day Kildare) but is renowned for her life-giving miracles and open-hearted generosity. Both divine women uncannily share many similar characteristics, and it is my belief that they are intrinsically connected, their attributes interwoven, and their divinity enhanced by the mysterious syncretism that surrounds their legacy. Their most basic connections are their association with February 1st as the Feast of St. Brigid and the Celtic pagan festival of Imbolc, as well as their symbolic connection with sacred, eternal fire. Devotees of both holy women tended flames in their honor, a practice which continues to this day throughout the world.

On this Brigid's Day, we present chants devoted to Saint Brigid, all of which are contained in two important sources, MS78 and MS80 at Trinity College Dublin, dating from the 15th century. These manuscripts contain music that was devoted to various saints, as well as other important church feasts. Liturgical practices in Ireland were, generally speaking, not standardized except within areas in and around Dublin, which had adopted the Sarum Rite, or, the forms that were in use at Salisbury Cathedral in England. The makeup of these manuscripts reflect this English form and use. I have created performing editions drawn from MS78, the later of the two manuscripts, known as the "Clondalkin Breviary," which was evidently in use at St. Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny, a marvelous medieval church. Of interest in this particular manuscript are the chants that were used to honor Irish saints on their feast days, notably Patrick, Brigid, and Columba. These chants are specifically Irish in provenance, found in only these few extant sources, and help us develop an understanding of medieval Irish style and flavor. This includes our choice to include the splendid sonorities of the *clársach*, or wire-strung harp, with improvised accompaniments by Cynthia Cathcart. The Irish chants tend to rove somewhat freely from the "tonic," or final, of the melodic mode, especially in the responsories. There is evidence that the addition of an instrument was a standard practice. In the case of these chants, I would deem the harp a crucial addition!

Eya presents music from the office of Saint Brigid, specifically the chants from the office of *matins*. The service (or "office") of matins was typically celebrated at break of day and could be quite grand and elaborate, especially on a major feast day. Matins is distinguished by its unique structure: the service is divided into three sections, or *nocturns*. The material we present from MS78 includes an invitatory, antiphons, and responsories intended for matins on St. Brigid's feast. What MS78 does not

contain, that MS80 does, are the accompanying nine lections, or stories, which comprise the majority of content for the matins office. Here we are inspired, listening to the stories and miracles that add depth and breadth to our saint. During the office,

each lection is preceded by a blessing and followed by a musical response. The lections for St. Brigid from MS80 are lengthy, elaborate, and colorful! However, they lack musical notation. There is an excellent recording, "Flame of Ireland," by the Scottish women's ensemble, Canty, who have nobly (and with great sophistication) recreated the entire office of matins with all of the lections from MS80. However, in envisioning this program, it was not my intention to recreate a medieval office, but rather to enhance our understanding of Brigid, to be inspired by her, to sing her praises, and, of course, to be enrapt in the music composed in her honor.

So, we have adopted the formal structure of matins (with a few strategic rearrangements, notably of the antiphons), divided into three nocturns. We have substituted the lections of MS80 with selected miracles drawn from the earliest biography of St. Brigid, penned by Cogitosus in the 7th century. We have also added our own gloss on the "blessing" that precedes each lection. The blessings are a gift for all of us. We present a variety of other works that praise and admire and call upon Saint Brigid on a more personal level. Here is where the ancient meets the new, as we hear songs, stories, poems, and prayers in her

honor, presented by Brigid's Circle, a volunteer women's ensemble formed especially for this performance. We have also included several musical selections from other Irish sources, including two settings of a *prosa*, a stanzaic, rhyming form from another important source of medieval Irish plainchant, the "Dublin Troper"; a hymn from MS 78 from the office of First Vespers; as well as a traditional song in Irish devoted to Brigid.

What an honor it has been to raise our voices together, not only in praise of Brigid, but to sing the medieval music of Ireland: singular works of special character and harmonious melodies. It is also our honor to partner with Georgetown University, and especially Prof. Anthony Deldonna and the staff in the Department of Performing Arts, Prof. Julia Lamm in the Department of Theology, Russ Weismann of Campus Ministries, and Prof. Cólín Parsons and the late Prof. Gerard Mannion of Global Irish Studies. This program threads into many different areas of study and interest, and its positive and lasting impact is made through these valuable partnerships across campus and beyond. I extend my sincerest gratitude to those who have championed this project and recognized its value. I offer my blessing to all of you, our audience, and hope that St Brigid may inspire you to tend your own, magnificent flame.

Allison Mondel