vi-gi-la-te: ne-sci-tis e-nim,

vi-gi-la-te: ne-sci-tis e-nim, e-nim,

vi-gi-la-te, vi-gi-la-te: ne-sci-tis e-nim, qua-ni-

quando do-mi-nus do-mus ve-ni-at, ve-ni-

quando do-mi-nus do-mus ve-ni-at, do-mus

quando do-mi-nus do-mus ve-ni-at, e-nim, e-nim,
an ma - ne, an ma - ne, an ma - ne, an ma - ne, an ma - ne, an ma - ne, an ma - ne, an ma - ne, an ma - ne.
Vi - gi-la-te er - go, er - go, vi - gi-la-
ne. Vi - gi-la-te er - go, vi - gi-la-ne, an ma - ne, an ma - ne.
Quod autem
dormientes.

Quod autem
dormientes,
dormientes.

dormientes.

dormientes.

dormientes.
di-co vo-bis, quod au-tem co vo-bis, quod au-tem di-

Quod au-tem di-co vo-bis, quod au-tem di-co vo-bis, quod au-tem di-co vo-bis, quod au-tem di-co vo-bis, om-ni-bus di-

Quod au-tem di-co vo-bis, quod au-tem di-co vo-bis, om-ni-bus di-

Quod au-tem di-co vo-bis, quod au-tem di-co vo-bis, om-ni-bus di-

om-ni-bus di-co, di-

om-ni-bus di-
About this edition

This performing edition has been compiled from a digital reproduction of the Huntington Library’s copy of the original printed parts to Byrd’s Cantiones sacrae I (1589), available online via IMSLP.1 Original note values have been retained, though a modern time signature and barlines have been added for the benefit of non-specialists. The notated pitch has been transposed upward by one whole step to facilitate performance by a modern SATBarB ensemble. This is consistent with the evidence from original instruments that pre-1642 traditional English “quire pitch” was roughly 1 to 2 half steps higher than the modern A440 standard.2 However, as Byrd’s Latin motets were intended for unaccompanied performances by small groups of singers (likely one to a part) in a domestic rather than liturgical context,3 the choice of performing pitch must have been somewhat flexible. Cautionary accidentals (unambiguous in the source) are shown in parentheses, while editorial accidentals are placed above the staff. Horizontal brackets indicate ligatures. The comingling of dotted and undotted rhythms in m. 35 and mm. 65–74 is confirmed in most contemporary MSS and is therefore retained.4 Fermatas approximate the early modern custom of writing final notes as longs. A keyboard reduction has been supplied as a rehearsal aid; it has been optimized for playability and is not intended to be a faithful representation of the original voice-leading.

About the text

The text of this motet is adapted (with minor alterations) from Mark 13:35–37 (Vulgate), part of the parable of the faithful servant within the so-called Olivet discourse. In this passage, Jesus, having just related an apocalyptic vision of the Son of man’s coming at the end of time, likens his followers to servants charged with keeping watch over their master’s house in anticipation of his imminent return. This exhortation to pious vigilance must have resonated clearly with Byrd’s fellow recusant Catholics, living as they did in an age of high precarity, under constant fear for their personal and spiritual wellbeing, and looking forward with righteous defiance to their vindication on the day of reckoning.

For this edition, the composer’s spelling and punctuation have been retained, except for minor adjustments like the substitution of .amazon/a/ for consonantal остоя. Text that expands a ditto sign (“ij”) in the source is italicized. The full Latin text with Byrd’s exact orthography is given below (top), along a phonetic transcription of a reconstructed period pronunciation (middle), and an English translation adapted from the 1582 Douay–Rheims version6 of the New Testament (bottom).

Vigilate: necfitis enim quando dominus domus veniat, fero, an media nocte, an gallicantu, an mane.
Vigilate ergo, ne cum venerit repente, inueniat vos dormientes. Quod autem vobis dico, omnibus dico: vigilate.

[vɪdʒɪˈlæte
ɛˈsəitɪs
ˈenɪm
kwando
ˈdɒməs
ˈvɛnʤæt
ˈsero
ˈan
ˈmedʒə
ˈnɔcte
ən
ˈɡalɪˈkæntə
ən
ˈmene
vɪdʒɪˈlætɛ
təˈɡnəʊ
nə
kɒm
ˈvɛnɛrt
rɛˈpentɛ
mɨˈvɛnʤæt
vɒs
dɔrˈmɪntɛz
kwɔd
ˈətʊm
ˈvɒbɪs
dəɪkə
əməˈbɒs
dəɪkə
vɪdʒɪˈlætɛ]

Watch: for you know not when the lord of the house commeth, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning. Watch ye therefore, lest coming upon a sudden, he find you sleeping. And that which I say to you, I say to all: watch.

5. Considerable uncertainty attaches to the precise vowel qualities that Byrd would have expected from singers. By the 1617 publication of Robert Robinson’s The Art of Pronunciation, the long stressed vowels e (as in sebro) and a (as in vigilate) had—for some speakers, in some words—already raised to [i] and [e], respectively. However, under the hypothesis that singers would have tended to be somewhat conservative in their pronunciation, I have opted to reconstruct long stressed e as [æ], long stressed a as [a], and short a (as in gallicantu) as [a]. For more possibilities, see A. G. Riggs, “Anglo-Latin,” chap. 4 in Singing Early Music, ed. Timothy J. McGee (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).
6. Spelling and capitalization modernized; original from https://n2t.net/ark:/13960/t8pc36c0j. The Douay–Rheims translation of the Vulgate was prepared by exiled priests (chiefly Gregory Martin) at the English College in Douai, France, for use by English Catholics living under the Protestant regime. There is ample evidence that Byrd was familiar with this translation and its copious, politically charged annotations. See Philip Brett, William Byrd and His Contemporaries, ed. Joseph Kerman and Davitt Moroney (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 142–44, 185.

5. Considerable uncertainty attaches to the precise vowel qualities that Byrd would have expected from singers. By the 1617 publication of Robert Robinson’s The Art of Pronunciation, the long stressed vowels e (as in sebro) and a (as in vigilate) had—for some speakers, in some words—already raised to [i] and [e], respectively. However, under the hypothesis that singers would have tended to be somewhat conservative in their pronunciation, I have opted to reconstruct long stressed e as [æ], long stressed a as [a], and short a (as in gallicantu) as [a]. For more possibilities, see A. G. Riggs, “Anglo-Latin,” chap. 4 in Singing Early Music, ed. Timothy J. McGee (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).
6. Spelling and capitalization modernized; original from https://n2t.net/ark:/13960/t8pc36c0j. The Douay–Rheims translation of the Vulgate was prepared by exiled priests (chiefly Gregory Martin) at the English College in Douai, France, for use by English Catholics living under the Protestant regime. There is ample evidence that Byrd was familiar with this translation and its copious, politically charged annotations. See Philip Brett, William Byrd and His Contemporaries, ed. Joseph Kerman and Davitt Moroney (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 142–44, 185.