

Audivi vocem de coelo

Edited by Jason Smart

Thomas Tallis (c.1505–1585)

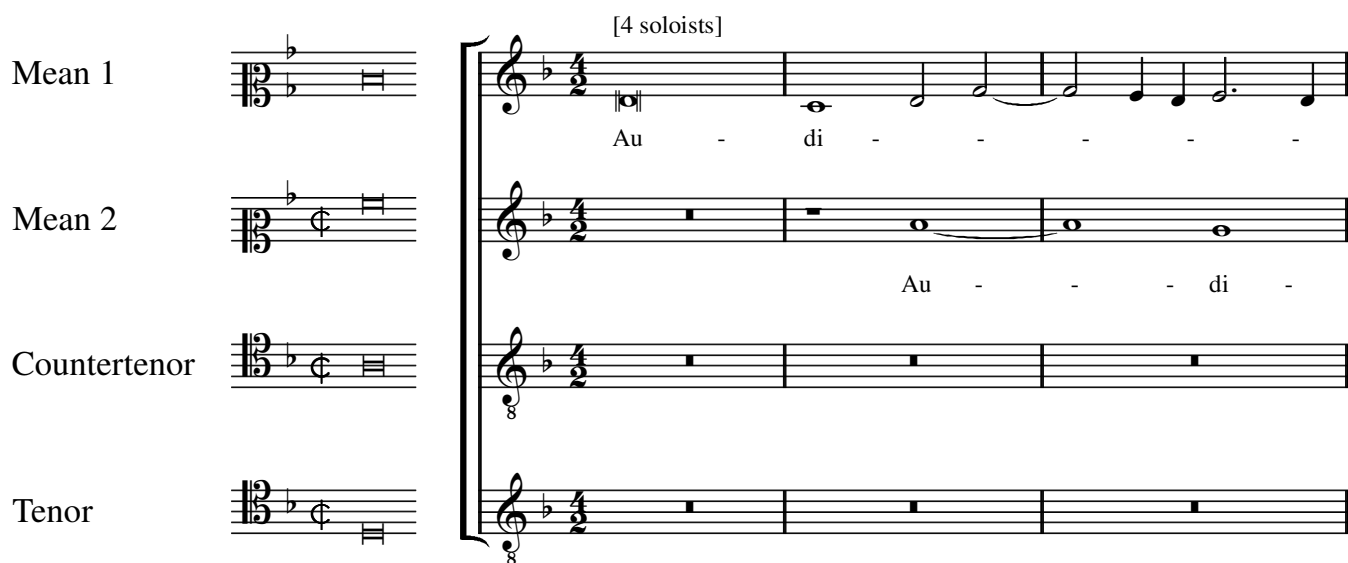
[4 soloists]

Mean 1


Mean 2

Countertenor

Tenor



4



8



21

no - - - - - cte cla - - - - - mor
 - - [cte] cla - mor fa - ctus
 - di - a no - - cte [cla - mor fa - ctus
 - - - - - cte cla - mor fa - ctus

26

fa - - - - - ctus
 est, fa - ctus [est,] fa - ctus
 est, fa - ctus est,] fa -
 est, fa - ctus

31

est: ec - ce spon - sus ve - nit,
 est: ec - ce spon - sus ve - nit,
 - ctus est: ec - ce
 est: ec -

36

[Ec - ce spon - sus,] ec - ce
 [ec - ce spon - sus,] ec - ce spon - sus
 — spon - sus ve - - - nit, [ec - ce spon - sus — ve -
 - ce spon - sus ve - - - nit, ec - ce spon - sus ve - - -

41

spon - sus ve - - - nit, ve - - -
 ve - - - nit, ve - - - [nit, ve] -
 - - - nit,
 - [nit, ec - ce spon - sus ve] - - - nit, ve -

46

- - - nit.
 - - - nit.
 ve] - - - nit.
 - - - nit.

REPEAT FROM **A** TO END

Translation

I heard a voice coming from heaven: Come, all you most wise virgins; store oil in your vessels until the bridegroom shall come.

✠ In the middle of the night a cry went forth: Behold the bridegroom comes.
Store oil in your vessels until the bridegroom shall come.

Liturgical Function

In the pre-Reformation Use of Sarum, *Audivi vocem* was the eighth respond at Matins on the feast of All Saints (1 November). It was also the first respond at Matins when the Common of Virgins was sung, viz. the feasts of saints Perpetua and Felicitas (7 March) and the 11,000 Virgins (21 October), but performances on these latter occasions will have been in plainsong only.

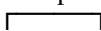
The Sarum service books directed that, on All Saints Day, the solo parts of the respond be sung by five boys. Tallis, however, did not observe this rubric. His setting requires three distinct types of voice. The compasses suggest the scoring given here, as does the need for the monophonic plainsong to be singable by a full choir.

Editorial Conventions

The nomenclature of the voice-parts follows the Tudor convention.

The original clef, staff signature, mensuration sign and first note of each part are shown on the prefatory staves.

Editorial accidentals are placed above the notes concerned and remain operative throughout the bar. Accidentals not present individually in the source but implied by the original staff signatures are placed before the note and have a superscript dot.

The sign  denotes a ligature.

Spelling of the text has been modernised.

Text repetition signs in the underlay have been expanded editorially in italics.

Sources

Polyphony: London, British Library Add. MSS 17802–5 (c.1570–c.1578).

17802	(M2)	f.106	at beginning:	Audiui m ^r talles
17803	(M1)	f.101 ^v	at beginning:	Audivi M ^r Talles
17804	(Ct)	f.104 ^v	at beginning:	Audivi M ^r Talles
17805	(T)	f.98	at beginning:	Audivi mster Talles

Plainsong: *Antiphonarij ad usum Sarum volumen secundum vulgo pars Estivalis nuncupata* (Paris: Wolfgang Hopyl for Franz Birckman, 1520), f.153 of the Sanctorale.

Notes on the Readings of the Source

The scribe was inconsistent in his application of repeat signs in the underlay. Tallis's normal practice in imitation-led music was to repeat text at points of imitation and after substantial rests, so it is likely that the scribe's sins are of omission rather than commission. Something has gone awry after bar 33. If the repeat signs are to be interpreted consistently, they must all stand for the single word *venit*; but this is solely on the authority of bars 37–39 of M1, which are set to that word. M2 has no underlay in bars 37–38; nor does the Countertenor in bars 39–48 (where at least one repeat underlay sign has been omitted). The repeat sign in the Tenor at bar 38 could stand either for the single word *venit*, or for the complete phrase *Ecce sponsus venit*. Conceivably the scribe's copy text had this latter reading in the T, but omitted the repeat signs in M1 and M2 at bar 37, this absence of text prompting the scribe to tinker with M1 but not M2. Either way, if the scribe's underlay in M1 is unscrambled, so that bars 33–35 match the same phrase in the Tenor entry, and the missing repeat signs are restored, the imitative entries in bars 37–42 can then carry the whole phrase *Ecce sponsus venit*. This is more typical of Tallis's underlay practice and makes better sense of the repeated notes in bars 39 and 40.

14–15	Ct	the two tied As (a semibreve in the original) are a corrected minim
21	M1	-cte below third A
33	M2	b for B
34–35	M2	-sus ve- ambiguously aligned below CFE+EA
35	M1	-sus below E, (37) ve- below C, (39) -nit below D
36	Ct	sponsus ve- ambiguously aligned below CDFE