

Media vita

Edited by Jason Smart

John Sheppard (c.1558)

Treble

Mean

Countertenor 1

Countertenor 2

Tenor [Missing]

Bass

Me - di - a

Me - di - a vi - - -

Me - di - a vi - ta _____

Me -

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of the musical score. It features six staves: Treble, Mean, Countertenor 1, Countertenor 2, Tenor, and Bass. The Tenor part is marked as '[Missing]'. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: 'Me - di - a' (Treble), 'Me - di - a vi - - -' (Countertenor 2), 'Me - di - a vi - ta _____' (Tenor), and 'Me -' (Bass). The Countertenor 1 and Mean parts have rests.

4

vi - - - - - ta in mor - te

Me - di - a vi - - - ta in mor - te su -

Me - di - a vi - - - - -

- - - - ta in mor - te su - mus, in

in _____ mor - te _____ su - - - -

- di - a vi - - - - - ta in

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of the musical score, starting at measure 4. It features six staves. The lyrics are: 'vi - - - - - ta in mor - te' (Treble), 'Me - di - a vi - - - ta in mor - te su -' (Countertenor 2), 'Me - di - a vi - - - - -' (Countertenor 1), '- - - - ta in mor - te su - mus, in' (Countertenor 2), 'in _____ mor - te _____ su - - - -' (Tenor), and '- di - a vi - - - - - ta in' (Bass). The Mean and Bass parts have rests.

8

su - - - - - mus, in mor - te
 - - - - - mus, in
 - ta in mor - te su - - - mus:
 mor - te su - - - - -
 - - - - - mus: quem _____ quae -
 mor - te su - - - - - mus:

11

su - - - - - mus: quem quae - ri -
 mor - - - - te su - mus: quem quae - ri - mus _____
 quem quae - ri - mus ad - ju - to - - - -
 - mus: quem quae - ri - mus _____
 - ri - mus _____ ad - - - -
 quem quae - ri - mus _____

14

- mus _____ ad - ju - to - - - - - rem

_____ ad - ju - to - - - - - rem ni - si te, Do - mi -

8 - - - - - rem ni - si te, Do - mi - - - -

8 _____ ad - ju - to - - - - - rem

- ju - - - - - to - rem _____

ad - ju - to - - - - - rem ni - si te, Do - mi -

17

ni - si te, Do - mi - ne, _____

- - - - - ne, ni - si te, Do - mi - ne, _____

8 - - - - - ne, ni - si te, Do - mi - ne? _____

8 ni - si te, Do - mi - - - - - - - - - - -

_____ ni - - - - - si _____

- - - - - ne, ni - si te, Do - mi -

20

ni - si te, Do - mi - - - - -

[ni - si te, Do - mi -

8 Qui pro pec - ca - tis

- ne, ni - si te, Do - mi - ne? _____

te, _____ Do - mi - - - - -

- ne? _____ Qui pro pec - ca -

23

- ne, ni - si te, Do - mi - ne? Qui pro pec - ca - tis no - - - -

- - - - - ne?]

8 no - stris, qui pro pec - ca - tis no - - - -

_____ Qui

- - - - ne? _____ Qui pro pec -

- tis no - - - -

26

- stris, qui pro pec-ca - tis no -

Qui pro pec-ca - tis, qui pro pec-ca - tis no - stris ju -

- - stris, qui pro pec-ca - tis no - - - -

pro pec-ca - tis no - - - - stris ju - ste i -

- ca - tis no - - - - - stris

- - - - - stris

29

- - - - -

- ste i - ra - sce - ris.

- ra - sce - ris, ju - ste i - ra - sce - ris.

ju - - - - - ste i - -

ju - ste i - ra - sce - ris.

32

- stris ju - ste i - ra - sce - ris. _____

- stris ju - ste i - ra - sce - ris. _____

- ra - - - - - sce - - - - -

A

35

San - - - - -

San - - - - -

San - cte De - - - - -

San - - - - - cte

- - - - - ris. San - - - - - cte _____

San - - - - - San - - - - -

38

Musical score for measures 38-40. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "cte De". The piano accompaniment includes a right hand with eighth and sixteenth notes and a left hand with a simple bass line. A fermata is placed over the final note of the vocal line in measure 40.

41

Musical score for measures 41-43. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "De". The piano accompaniment includes a right hand with eighth and sixteenth notes and a left hand with a simple bass line. A fermata is placed over the final note of the vocal line in measure 43.

B

44

Musical score for measures 44-46. The score consists of six staves. The top four staves are vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and the bottom two are piano accompaniment. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The lyrics are: "us, san - us, san - us, san - us, san - cte us, san -".

47

Musical score for measures 47-50. The score consists of six staves. The top four staves are vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and the bottom two are piano accompaniment. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The lyrics are: "cte For - cte For - cte For - cte For - cte For -".

50

Musical score for measures 50-52. The score consists of six staves. The top four staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The lyrics are: "For - - - - -".

C

53

Musical score for measures 53-55. The score consists of six staves. The top four staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The lyrics are: "tis, san - - - - -", "tis, san - - - - -", "tis, san - - - - -", "tis, san - - - - -", "tis, san - - - - - cte", "tis, san - - - - -".

56

- - - - - cte et mis - se - ri - cors Sal - va -
 - - - - - cte et mis - se - ri - cors Sal - va - - -
 - - - - - cte _____
 _____ et _____
 - - - - - cte et mis - se - ri - cors Sal - va - - - -

59

- - - - - cte et mis - se - ri - cors Sal - va -
 - tor, et mi - se - ri - cors Sal - va - tor,
 - - - - - tor, _____
 _____ et mis - se - ri - cors Sal - va - - - -
 _____ mis - - - - se - ri - - - - cors Sal - - -
 - - - - - tor, et mi - se - ri - cors Sal - va - - - -

62

- - - - - tor, a - ma - rae mor - - - - -
 a - ma - rae mor - - - - -
 8 et mi - se - ri - cors Sal - va - tor, a - ma - rae mor - ti
 - tor, et mi - se - ri - cors Sal - va - tor, a - ma - rae mor -
 - va - - - - - tor, a - - - - -
 - - - - - tor, a - ma - rae mor - - - - -

65

- - - - -
 - - - - - ti ne - - - - -
 8 ne tra - das - - - - -
 - ti ne tra - das - - - - -
 - ma - rae mor - - - - - ti ne - - - - -
 - - - - - ti - - - - - ne

68

ti ne tra - das

tra - das

[nos, ne tra - das]

tra - das

71

END

nos.

nos.


nos.

nos.

nos.


nos.

I from the higher stalls *All on the opposite side of the choir (side B)*




Nunc di - mit - tis ser - vum tu - um Do - mi - ne: se - cun - dum ver - bum tu - um in pa - ce.

All on the beginner's side of the choir (side A) *Side B*




Qui - a vi - de - runt o - cu - li me - i: sa - lu - ta - re tu - um.

Side A *Side B*




Quod pa - ra - sti: an - te fa - ci - em o - mni - um po - pu - lo - rum.

Side A *Side B*




Lu - men ad re - ve - la - ti - o - nem gen - ti - um: et glo - ri - am ple - bis tu - ae I - sra - el.

Side A *Side B*



Glo - ri - a Pa - tri et Fi - li - o: et Spi - ri - tu - i San - cto.

Side A *Side B*



Si - cut e - rat in prin - ci - pi - o et nunc et semper: et in sae - cu - la sae - cu - lo - rum. A - men.

74



Ne pro - ji - ci - as

Ne pro - ji - ci - as

Ne pro - ji - ci - as nos

77

8
 nos in tem - po-re se - ne - ctu - - - - -
 8
 nos in tem - po-re se -
 in tem - po-re se - ne - ctu - - - - -

80

8
 - - - - - tis cum de - fe - [ce] rit, _____
 8
 - ne - ctu - - - - - tis cum de - fe - ce -
 - - - - - tis cum de - fe - ce - rit _____ vir -

83

cum de - fe - ce - rit vir - tus no -
 - rit vir - tus no -
 - tus no -

86

- - - - - stra, ne de - re - lin - quas nos, Do - mi -
 - - - - - stra ne de - re - lin - quas nos, [Do - mi - ne,] ne de - re -
 - - - - - stra, ne de - re - lin - quas nos, Do -

89

Musical score for measures 89-91. It consists of six staves: two grand staves (treble and bass clef) and two vocal staves (soprano and bass clef). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/2. The vocal staves contain the lyrics: "ne. - lin - quas nos, Do - mi - ne. - mi - ne."

REPEAT
FROM **A** TO **B**

92

Musical score for measures 92-94. It consists of six staves: two grand staves (treble and bass clef) and two vocal staves (soprano and bass clef). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/2. The vocal staves contain the lyrics: "No - No - No -"

No - - - - -

95

95

- li clau - de - re _____ au - res tu -

- li clau - de - re _____ au -

- li clau - de - re _____

Detailed description: This system contains five staves. The top two staves are vocal staves in G major (one sharp). The third staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The fourth staff is another vocal line with lyrics. The bottom two staves are piano accompaniment in G major. The lyrics are: "- li clau - de - re _____ au - res tu -" on the first vocal staff, "- li clau - de - re _____ au -" on the second, and "- li clau - de - re _____" on the third.

98

98

- - as ad pre - ces no - - - -

- res tu - - - - as _____ ad pre - ces

- au - res tu - - - - as ad pre - ces no -

Detailed description: This system contains five staves. The top two staves are vocal staves in G major. The third staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The fourth staff is another vocal line with lyrics. The bottom two staves are piano accompaniment in G major. The lyrics are: "- - as ad pre - ces no - - - -" on the first vocal staff, "- res tu - - - - as _____ ad pre - ces" on the second, and "- au - res tu - - - - as ad pre - ces no -" on the third.

101

Musical score for measures 101-103. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: [stras, ad pre-ces no] - - - - - no - - - - - stras, ad pre - ces no - - - - - stras, ad pre - ces no - - - - -

104

Musical score for measures 104-106. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: - - - - - stras. - - - - - stras. - - - - - stras. To the right of the score, there is a instruction: REPEAT FROM **B** TO **C**. The score ends with repeat signs and arrows indicating a repeat.

106

Qui co - gno - - - - -

Qui co - gno - - - - -

Qui co - gno - - - - -

Qui co -

109

- - - - - scis oc -

- gno - - - - -

111

- cul - ta cor - - - - -
 - - - - - scis oc - cul - ta cor - - - - -
 - - - - - scis oc - cul - ta cor - - - - -
 - - - - - scis oc - cul - ta

113

- dis, par - ce pec-ca - tis no - - - - -
 - - - - -
 dis, par - ce pec-ca - tis no - - - - -
 cor - - - - -
 Qui co - gno - - - - -

115

stris,
 dis, par - ce pec - ca - tis no -
 dis, par - ce pec - ca - tis no -
 scis oc - cul -

117

par - ce pec - ca - tis no -
 stris, par - ce pec - ca - tis no -
 ta cor - - - - - dis,

119

par - - - - - ce

121

stris.
stris.
stris.
stris.

pec-ca - tis no - stris.

REPEAT
FROM **C** TO END

Translation

In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek for succour, but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased? Yet, O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

✠ Cast us not away in our old age when our strength faileth, neither forsake us, O Lord,¹

O God most holy.

✠ Shut not thy merciful ears to our prayer,

O Lord most mighty.

✠ Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts; pardon our sins.

O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.

(All except verse 1 from the Book of Common Prayer)

Editorial Conventions

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

The prefatory staves at the start of the piece show the original clef, mensuration symbol and first note for each voice; the piece needed no staff signature.

Editorial accidentals are placed above the notes concerned.

Ligatures are denoted by the sign \lrcorner .

Repeat signs in the underlay have been expanded using italicised text.

Underlay between square brackets is entirely editorial.

The lost Tenor part has been restored editorially (see below) and is printed in small notation.

Source

Oxford, Christ Church, Mus. 979–83 (c.1575–1581 with later additions; lacking T).

979	(M)	no.118	at end:	m ^r iohn shepperde
980	(Ct1)	no.118	at end:	m ^r S
981	(Ct2)	no.118	at end:	m ^r shepperde
982	(Tr)	no.118	at end:	m ^r shepperde
983	(B)	no.118	index heading:	M ^r John Shepperde. [later hand]
			at head of first page:	6 parts
			at end:	S

A Note on the Music

In the pre-reformation Sarum Rite, *Media vita* was the Nunc dimittis antiphon at Compline from the third Sunday in Lent to Passion Sunday. The three verses included in Sheppard's setting were sung on the Saturdays, Sundays and feasts of nine lessons within this period.

Sheppard composed his setting around the proper plainsong which he placed in the Tenor. The Tenor partbook from the Christ Church manuscripts has long been lost and the chant is restored here from the printed Sarum antiphonal of 1519.² Sheppard's verses are free-composed, although verses 1 and 3 paraphrase the beginning of the chant. It is highly unlikely that a Tenor part needs to be reconstructed for the first two verses. Although a four-part male ensemble of Ct Ct T B was a commonplace texture in Tudor music it appears not to be appropriate here. It is impossible to construct such a part that treats the points of imitation persuasively, even allowing for Sheppard's typically flexible approach to imitation, and his texture is perfectly complete in three parts.

The Sarum liturgical books give no information about how the Nunc dimittis was chanted. That the two sides of the choir alternated with every half verse is suggested by the treatment of the canticle in the polyphonic settings of The Purification antiphon *Lumen ad revelationem* by Thomas Packe in London, British Library, Add. MS 5665, f.62^v and by an anonymous composer in Cambridge, Magdalene College, Pepys MS 1236, f.55^v, in both of which the second half of every verse of the canticle is set in polyphony. The matter is uncertain, however, since *Lumen ad*

¹ Cf. *Book of Common Prayer*: 'Suffer us not, at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from thee.'

² *Antiphonarij ad usum Sarum volumen primum vulgo pars hyemalis nuncupata* (Paris, 1519), printed by Wolfgang Hopyl for Franz Birckman (Revised English Short Title Catalogue 15790), f.163 of the Temporale.

revelationem was a unique processional chant and its performance may have been unusual. It is not impossible, therefore, that at Compline the *Nunc dimittis* was sung in the same way as other canticles and psalms with the sides of the choir alternating with each verse. There seems to be no reason to assume that the *Nunc dimittis* was sung to the solemn form of the plainsong tone. For the antiphon *Lumen ad revelationem* the printed Sarum processions present the *Nunc dimittis* with the plain tone.

The form of *Media vita* has generally been misunderstood. In the printed Sarum breviaries the first verse is followed by the words ‘*Sancte Deus*’, the second by ‘*Sancte fortis*’ and the third by the complete text from *Sancte et misericors Salvator* to the end of the antiphon. Visually these resemble the cues found at the end of the large office responds and Procter and Wordsworth interpreted them in precisely that way.³ As Frank Harrison pointed out, this was indeed how the antiphon was performed in the Use of Hereford, but the practice at Exeter Cathedral, which followed a variant of the Use of Sarum, was different.⁴ In the Exeter ordinal of 1337 both the first two cues are followed by the words ‘*non ulterius*’ (‘no further’).⁵ That this was also the Sarum practice seems clear enough from the way the chant is presented in the 1519 antiphonal, the Barnwell Antiphonal (Cambridge University Library MS Mm.ii.9),⁶ the Penwortham Breviary (London, British Library Add. MS. 52359, f.115^v) and the antiphonal belonging to the church of St Helen, Ranworth, Norfolk. The amount of notation that these sources give for the repeats is far more extensive than would be needed for mere cues. The spacing of the words in the 1519 antiphonal, which is governed by the notation, is also unnecessarily generous for cues. This source appears to notate the repeats exactly as they are to be sung and the notation in the other three sources cited is broadly similar, leaving little doubt that in the Sarum Use the form of *Media vita* agreed with the rubrics in Exeter ordinal.

Notes on the Readings of the Source

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 a comma and readings in different voices by a semicolon. The order within each entry is: (1) bar number(s); (2) voice; (3) reading of the source (with any subsequent bar numbers in brackets). Pitches are in capital letters, preceded by a number where necessary, e.g. ¹A = first note A in the bar. Pitches quoted are those of the edition. To save space the abbreviation ‘amb’ has been used to indicate underlay that is ambiguously positioned below the notes.

Staff signatures and accidentals


22 M # for D below G / 23 Ct2 # for A / 25 Ct1 # for ¹A / 28 M # for ¹G / 38 Tr # for ¹A / 42 Tr # for D; B new staff with # for C (= B at original pitch) begins with ²E / 49 Ct1 # for ¹D / 57 B new staff without signature begins with rest / 61 B # for ¹C / 68 B # for C / 103 Ct1 # for ¹A / 110 Tr2 # for A / 121 Tr2 # for A /

Ligatures and underlay

6–7 M -*ta* amb below ²A²F, *in morte su-* one note later / 10–11 B -*mus quem quaerimus* one note later / 12 Ct1 -*juto*-amb below ¹DC²B²D / 13–14 M *quem quaerimus* amb below ¹G¹B²BA²GFED / 14 Tr -*mus* below ²C / 15 M -*rem* amb below ²F²EDC / 21 Ct1 -*ne* below A (not in 19) / 27–28 Ct2 -*stris juste* one note earlier / 28 M -*tis no-* below EA, (29) -*stris juste i-* below AE¹G²G, (30) -*rasce-* below AG, -*ris* below ²D, (32) *irasce-* below D¹EF, (35) -*ris* below ²F / 33 Ct1 *irasce-* below ²E²DC, (35) -*ris* below A / 34 Tr -*ris* below ²B (not in 33), *i-* below ³B, (35) -*rasce-* below ¹CD, -*ris* below ²A; 34 Ct2 *juste i-* below ²A³D²B, (35) -*rasce-* below FE, -*ris* below C / 35 B -*ris* below F (not in 30) / 49 Ct1 -*cte* amb below ²E³D, *for-* below G / 64 Tr -*ti mor-* below CB / 67 M -*te* for -*ti* / 75 Ct1 Ct2 -*ijas* for -*jicias* / 78 B *senectu-* below ²DAC / 82 Ct1 -*ris* for -*rit* below ²A / 88 Ct2 *nos* below ²A / 97 Ct1 -*re* below ¹D (not in 95) / 98–99 B *tu-* amb below ²G¹FB³D / 111 Tr1 -*ta* amb below ¹D¹E, *cor-* below A; 111–112 M1 -*ta cor-*amb below D²E¹A / 112 Tr2 -*ta* amb below D¹E, *cor-* below A / 114 B -*scis* below C, (115) *oc-* below ²D, (116) -*cul-* below D, (118) -*ta* below A, (119) *cordis parce* below ¹BA²BC, (120) *pec-* below G, (121) -*catis* below ²GA /

Other readings

9 B ²B is a breve / 44 M ³F is a semibreve / 45 Ct1 two superfluous crotchet rests before B / 106 Tr1 ‘Gimell primis’; Tr2 ‘Gimell Secundus’; M1 M2 ‘Gimell’; Ct2 *qi cognos.* below staff; B ‘rest’ below staff /

114–115 Tr1  (perhaps the result of a momentary eye-skip to bar 118 followed by a clumsy amendment of the extra beats) /

³ *Breviarium ad usum insignis ecclesiae Sarum*, ed. F. Procter and C. Wordsworth, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1879–86), ii, col. 230.

⁴ *Music in Medieval Britain*, 2nd edn. (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), p.60, fn.2.

⁵ *Ordinale Exon*, ed. J. N. Dalton, 4 vols. (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1909–40), i, p.120.

⁶ *Antiphonale Sarisburiense*, ed. W. H. Frere for the Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society (London, 1901–25), pl.170.