

O Columba

for unaccompanied SATB voices (with divisions)

Ken Johnston

O Columba was commissioned by the Scottish choir, Cadenza, with subsidy from the Scottish Arts Council. The piece was composed in honour of Cadenza's 10th anniversary for a first performance on August 16, 2003.

Both the Latin text and the basic melodic ideas are derived from fragments of plainchant found in a manuscript known as the *Inchcolm Antiphoner*.

This manuscript was most probably written on the island of Inchcolm in the Firth of Forth, either at the end of the 13th century or the beginning of the 14th, and the surviving fragments are now preserved in the library of Edinburgh University.

The music celebrates the Feast of St. Columba (June 9th).

Below are the three fragments of plainchant that form the basis of *O Columba* (in the order that they are used in the piece), and following that is the complete text with translation.

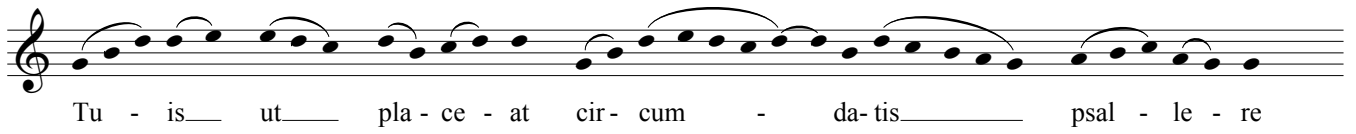
Fragment no. 1

Au - ro - ra ru - ti - lat lu - cis pre - nun - ci - a
 le - tos nos ex - ci - tat a somp - no - len - ci - a
 vo - len - tes ce - le - bre fes - tum re - co - le - re
 Col - um - be ve - ne - ra - bi - lis

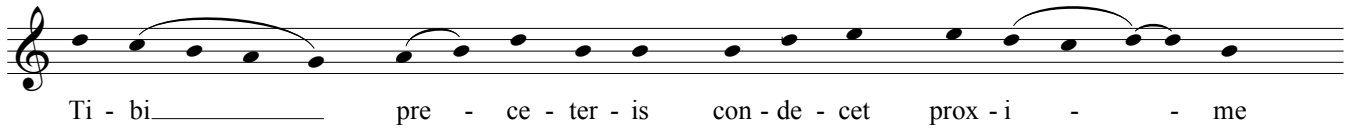
After this first fragment there are two further stanzas of text, beginning *Qui fuit humilis.....* and *Columbe merita.....*. Both stanzas use the same melody as above.

Fragment no. 2

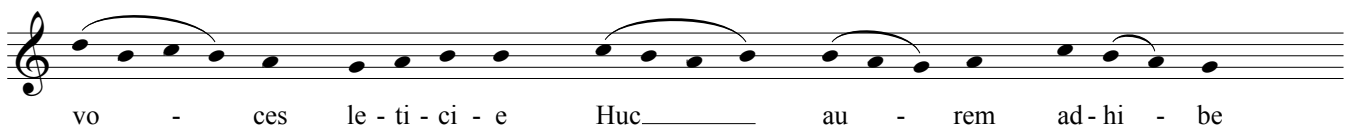
O Col - um - ba in - sig - nis sig - ni - fer
 men - tes mun - da ne fal - lens pes - ti - fer
 ser - vis of - fi - ci - at ma - ris dis - cri - mi - ne



Tu - is ut pla - ce - at cir - cum - da - tis psal - le - re

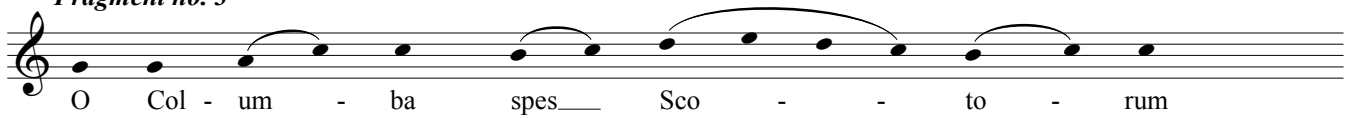


Ti - bi pre - ce - ter - is con - de - cet prox - i - me



vo - ces le - ti - ci - e Huc au - rem ad - hi - be

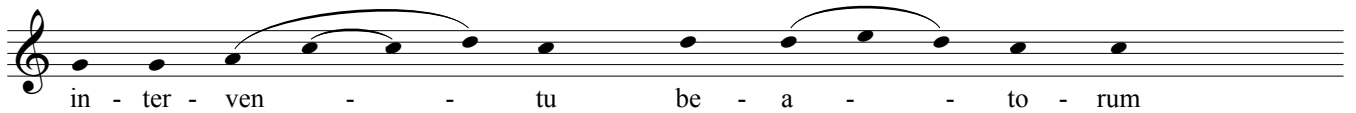
Fragment no. 3



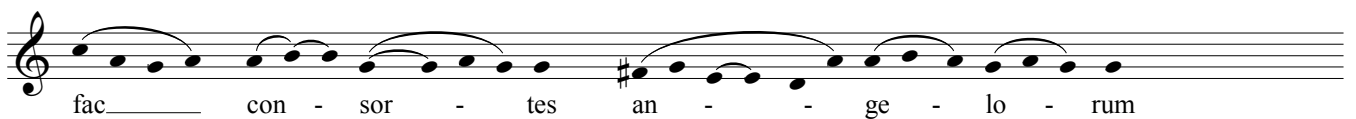
O Col - um - ba spes Sco - to - rum



nos tuo - rum me - ri - to - rum



in - ter - ven - tu be - a - to - rum



fac con - sor - tes an - ge - lo - rum

O Columba
Text and translation

<p>Aurora rutilat lucis prenuncia: letos nos excitat a sompnolencia, volentes celebre festum recolere Columbe venerabilis.</p>	<p>The dawn, the herald of light, glows red. She wakes us gladly from our sleep, wishing to devote ourselves again to the celebrated feast of venerable Columba.</p>
<p>Qui fuit humilis, mitis, affabilis, vultu vir hilaris, vir venerabilis, ortu vir nobilis, vir statu stabilis, corpore castus et mente.</p>	<p>He was humble, gentle, friendly, a man with a cheerful face, a man to be revered, a man of noble birth, a steadfast man, pure in body and mind.</p>
<p>Columbe merita et signa singula, facta prophetica, clara miracula, vel dictis dicere vel scriptis scribere, nemo novit totaliter.</p>	<p>No one has fully learned either to put into words or to describe in writing the merits of Columba and each one of his signs, his prophetic deeds and miracles revealed.</p>
<p>O Columba insignis signifer, mentes munda ne fallens pestifer servis officiat maris discrimine. Tuis ut placeat circumdatis psallere.</p>	<p>Columba, illustrious standard-bearer, cleanse our minds for fear that the deceitful destroyer harms your servants with danger from the sea, so that it may please those around you to sing psalms.</p>
<p>Tibi preceteris condecet proxime voces leticie. Huc aurem adhibe</p>	<p>It is fitting that voices of joy be closest to you above all others. Listen to our pleas.</p>
<p>O Columba spes Scotorum nos tuorum meritorum interventu beatorum fac consortes angelorum.</p>	<p>Columba, hope of the Scots, make us consorts of the blessed angels by the assistance of your services.</p>
	<p>Translation by F Robson</p>

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Slow, unaccented ♩ = 56

S Au - ro - ra ru - ti - lat

A Au - ro - ra

7

S lu - cis pre - nun - ci - a, le - tos nos ex - ci -

A

13

S -tat a somp - no - len - ci - a, vo - len - tes ce - le - bre

A

19

S fes - tum re - co - le - re Col - um - be

A

Duration: 14'

24 *pp*

S ve - ne - ra - bi - lis.

A *pp*

T *pp* Au - ro - ra Au - ro - ra

B *pp* div.

30 *p* (slightly stronger top part)

S *pp* Qui fu - it hu - mi - lis, mi - tis, af - fa - bi - lis, vul - tu vir

A *pp*

T *pp* Qui fu - it hu - mi - lis, mi - tis, af - fa - bi - lis, vul - tu vir

B *pp*

35 *mp*

S *p* hi - la - ris, vir ve - ne - ra - bi - lis, or - tu vir no - bi - lis,

A *p*

T *p* hi - la - ris, vir ve - ne - ra - bi - lis, or - tu vir no - bi - lis,

B *p* unis.

40

S
vir sta-tu sta - bi - lis, cor - po - re cas- tus et men-

A
vir sta-tu sta - bi - lis, cor - po - re cas- tus et men-

T
vir sta-tu sta - bi - lis, cor - po - re cas- tus et men-

B
vir sta-tu sta - bi - lis, cor - po - re cas- tus et men-

46 **A little faster** ♩ = 64

S
te.

A
Col - um - be me -

T
te. Col - um - be Col - um - be Col - um - be me - ri - ta

B
Col - um - be Col - um - be Col - um - be me - ri - ta

mp

p

mp

51

S
fac - ta pro - phe - ti - ca, cla - ra mi - ra -

A
- ri - ta et sig - na sin - gu - la, fac - ta pro - phe - ti - ca, cla - ra

T
et sig - na sin - gu - la, fac - ta pro - phe - ti - ca, cla - ra mi - ra -

B
et sig - na sin - gu - la, fac - ta pro - phe - ti - ca, cla - ra mi - ra -

mp cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

56

S - cu - la, vel dic - tis di - ce - re vel scrip - tis scri - be - re, —

A mi - ra - cu - la, vel dic - tis di - ce - re vel scrip - tis scri - be - re, —

T - cu - la, vel dic - tis di - ce - re vel scrip - tis scri - be - re, —

B *f* div.

63

S ne - mo no - vit to - tal - i - - ter. rit.

A unis. ne - mo no - vit to - tal - i - - ter.

T ne - mo no - vit to - tal - i - - ter.

B unis. *mp*

70 **Tempo primo** ♩ = 56 **A little faster** ♩ = 64

S *div. p* Col - um - ba Col - um - ba *mp* O Col -

A *div. p* Col - um - ba Col - um - ba unis. *mp* O Col -

T *div. p* Col - um - ba Col - um - ba unis. *mp* O Col -

B *div. p* Col - um - ba Col - um - ba *mp* O Col -

75 unis. 3 cresc. cresc. cresc. unis. cresc.

S um - ba in - sig - nis

A um - ba in - sig - nis sig -

T um - ba in - sig - nis sig -

B um - ba in - sig - nis sig -

79 p p p p

S sig - ni - fer, men - tes

A - - ni - fer, men - tes mun - da ne

T - - ni - fer, men - tes mun - da ne fal -

B - - ni - fer, men - tes mun - da ne

84 cresc. molto cresc. molto 3 cresc. molto 3 cresc. molto

S mun - da ne fal - lens pes - ti - fer

A fal - lens pes - ti - fer ser - vis of - fi -

T lens pes - ti - fer ser - vis of - fi - ci -

B fal - lens pes - ti - fer

89

S ser - - - vis_ of - fi - ci - - - at

A - ci - - - at ma - ris_

T - at ma - ris_ dis - cri - mi -

B ser - vis_ of - fi - ci - - - at ma -

93

dim. molto **rit.** *p* **Light, rhythmical** ♩ = 136 *mp*

S ma - - ris_ dis - cri - mi - ne. Tu - is_ ut_ pla -

A dis - cri - mi - - - ne. _____

T ne. _____

B - ris_ dis - cri - mi - - - ne. _____

98

S - ce - at_ tu - is_ ut_ pla - ce - at_

A Tu - is_ ut_ pla - ce - at_ tu - is_ ut_ pla -

T Tu - is_ ut_ pla - ce - at_ tu - is_

B Tu - is_ ut_ pla - ce - at_

104

S
tu - is ut pla - ce - at tu - is

A
- ce - at tu - is ut pla - ce - at

T
8 ut pla - ce - at tu - is ut pla -

B
tu - is ut pla - ce - at

109

S
ut pla - ce - at cir - cum - da - tis

A
cresc. tu - is ut pla - ce - at cir - cum -

T
8 - ce - at cir - cum - da - tis

B
cresc. tu - is ut pla - ce - at cir - cum - da - tis

115

S
psal - le - re

A
- da - tis psal - le - re

T
8 psal - le - re cir - cum - da - tis

B
psal - le - re cir - cum - da - tis

121

mf cresc.

S
cir - cum - - da - tis psal - le -

A
mf cresc.
cir - cum - - da - tis psal - le - re.

T
psal - le - re *cresc.* cir - cum - - da - tis

B
cresc.
cir - cum - - da - tis

Slower, legato ♩ = 96

127

f

S
- re. Ti - bi pre - cet - er - is ti - bi

A
f
Ti - bi pre - cet - er - is ti - bi

T
psal - le - re. *f* Ti - bi pre - cet - er - is

B
psal - le - re. *f* Ti - bi pre - cet - er

134

rit. dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

Slower ♩ = 64

S
pre - cet - er - is

A
dim.
pre - cet - er - is

T
ti - bi *dim.* pre - cet - er - is

B
is ti - bi *dim.* pre - cet - er - is

Sustained, legato

140 *mp* *div.* *unis.* *3*

S O Col - um - ba

A *mp* O Col - um - ba *cresc.* in - sig - -

T *mp* *div.* *8* *unis.* O Col - um - ba *cresc.* in -

B *mp* *div.* O Col - um - ba *cresc.* *unis.* in - sig -

144 *cresc.* **Light, rhythmical, 2 in the bar** $\text{♩} = 78$

S in - sig - nis_ sig - ni - fer,

A *mp* nis_ sig - - ni - fer, con - de - cet_ prox - i - me

T *8* -sig - nis_ sig - - ni - fer,

B nis_ sig - - ni - fer,

150 *p*

A vo - ces_ le - ti - ci-e_ vo - ces_ vo - ces_

B *mp* con - de - cet_ prox - i - me_

156 *p*

A vo - ces_ vo - ces_ vo - ces_ vo - ces le - ti - -

B vo - ces_ le - ti - ci-e_ vo - ces_

161

A *ci - e con - de - cet prox - i - me*

T *con - de - cet prox - i - me* *mp*

B *vo - ces vo - ces vo - ces vo - ces vo - ces*

166

S *con - de - cet prox -* *mp*

A *vo - ces le - ti - ci - e*

T *vo - ces le - ti - ci - e vo - ces* *p*

B *vo - ces vo - ces le - ti - ci - e*

170

S *i - - me vo - ces le -*

A *vo - ces vo - ces vo - ces vo -* *p*

T *vo - ces vo - ces vo - ces vo - ces*

B *con - de - cet prox - i - - me* *mp*

174

S ti - ci - e_ vo - ces_ vo - ces_ vo - - ces

A ces_ vo - ces_ vo - - ces_ le -

T vo - ces_ vo - - ces_ le - ti - ci - e_

B vo - - ces_ le - ti - ci - e_ le -

poco cresc.

poco cresc.

poco cresc.

poco cresc.

178

S le - ti - ci - e_ vo - ces_ con - de - cet_

A ti - ci - e_ vo - ces_ le - ti - ci - e_

T vo - ces_ le - ti - ci - e_ vo - ces_ le -

B ti - ci - e_ le - ti - ci - e_ le - ti - ci - e_

mf

mf

mf

mf

183

S prox - i - me_ vo - ces_ vo - - ces

A vo - ces_ vo - - ces

T ti - ci - e_ vo - - ces_ vo - - ces

B vo - - ces_ vo - - ces

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

190 **poco rit.** **rit.** *p*

S vo - ces. vo - ces.

A vo - ces. vo - ces.

T vo - ces. vo - ces.

B vo - ces. vo - ces.

198 **Slow, sustained** ♩ = 60 *p* **div.**

S Huc au - rem ad -

A Huc au - rem ad -

T Huc au - rem ad -

B Huc au - rem ad -

207 *poco cresc.* **unis.** *poco cresc.*

S - hi - be huc au - rem ad - hi -

A - hi - be huc au - rem ad -

T - hi - be huc au - rem ad - hi -

B **unis.** - hi - be huc au - rem ad

215

S *dim.* *pp molto cresc.*
- be huc au - rem

A *dim.* *pp molto cresc.*
- hi - be huc au - -

T *dim.* *pp molto cresc.*
- - - be huc au - - -

B *dim.* *pp molto cresc.*
hi - - - be huc au -

223

S *f*
ad - hi - be huc au - rem ad -

A *f*
rem ad - hi - be huc au - rem ad -

T *f*
rem ad - hi - be huc au - rem ad -

B *f*
- rem ad - hi - be huc au - rem ad -

231

S *cresc.* *ff*
- hi - be huc au - -

A *cresc.* *ff*
- hi - be huc au - -

T *cresc.* *ff*
- hi - be huc au -

B *cresc.* *ff*
hi - be huc au - -

239 *poco dim.* *f*

S rem ad - hi - be

A rem ad - hi - be

T rem ad - hi - be

B rem ad - hi - be

247 *rit.* *sub.p* **Tempo primo** ♩ = 56

S ad - hi - be.

A ad - hi - be.

T ad - hi - be. *pp* O Col - um - ba

B ad - hi - be. *pp*

254 *mp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

S sopranos div. O Col - um - ba spes Sco - to - rum

S O Col - um - ba

A altos div. O Col - um - ba

A O Col - um - ba

T O Col - um - ba O Col - um - ba O Col - um - ba

B O Col - um - ba

260

S
ah in-ter-ven -

S
ah in-ter-ven -

A
ah in-ter-ven -

A
nos tuo - rum me - ri - to - rum in-ter-ven -

T
O Col - um - ba O Col um - ba in-ter-ven -

B

266

S
-tu be - a - to - rum fah

S
-tu fac con - sor - tes

A
tu fah

A
tu fah

T
-tu O Col - um - ba

B

271

A *unis. altos* ***p*** **A little slower**
an - - - -

T O Col - um - ba

B

274 **rit.**

A - ge - lo - rum.

T O Col - um - ba

B