Medieval Art and Music between Heritage, Modernity, and Multi-Media
Symposium, Stanford University, February 11, 2023

This symposium explores the role of multi-disciplinary scholarship in uncovering and communicating the multi-media nature of medieval art. Focus is on the cult of Ste. Foy at Conques, a site where the eleventh-century architecture, relief sculpture, golden statue, and liturgical poetry, and music have survived intact to this day. The chants written for the feast have not been performed for over a thousand years. Stanford's "Enchanted Images" (http://enchantedimages.stanford.edu) project is the first to transcribe, translate, and perform this corpus of music and explore the visual art through its aural envelopment. The symposium engages the results of this research project and engages the first live performance of Ste. Foy's medieval Office featured in Stanford Live program for February 10. Art historians, curators, and musicologists of international reputation are invited to participate.

Medieval art does not fit modern art historical categories. The field's secular, atheistic bent has put aside interest in the study of this tradition, excised religion, and prioritized an engagement with modern and contemporary. But is medieval art distant and irrelevant to our times? Is it also art? Should this tradition be placed on the slide between modern and heritage? Medieval images and architecture were not designed as art, but as a medium through which to reach to the metaphysical. Heritage lives with us, continuously taping into past and future and staying us in the present, giving us identity. How does the performance of medieval art and its installation in museums can strengthen heritage and the relevance of this tradition to contemporary audiences? These are some of the questions the art historians and curators will address. While we hope that the musicologist would engage the issue of performance and will also uncover the importance of Aquitanian chant for our understanding of the development of medieval music.

Abstracts

Exhibiting Medieval Art in the Twenty-First Century at Musée de Cluny
Isabelle Bardiès-Fronty, Musée de Cluny- Musée national du Moyen Âge

At this time of globalization, how to display medieval art in the permanent collections or special exhibitions has acquired new urgency. Many of the medieval objects have come to the museum through a process of secularization; extracted from excavations, princely collections, and church treasuries. In the museum, their meaning, function, and aesthetics have been subjected to the categorizations and classifications dictated by art history. These processes of decontextualization and re-contextualization often deplete the aura of the medieval objects.

Recent decades have been marked by several important essays focusing on these questions of decontextualization and recontextualization. The museological issues have also been explored through the application of alternative means such digital technology in order to renew the presentation of medieval art. My focus here is on the path taken by the Musée de Cluny-Musée national du Moyen Âge in Paris. A major renovation and the construction of a new building addition exacted the re-installation of the permanent collection. My talk will explore how the space was reconfigured for the current display of medieval art to a global public.

Staging Medieval Art at the Getty Museum
Kristen Collins, the Getty Center

Medieval art objects, once intended to be seen, carried, intoned, and performed, are suspended motionless within the spaces of museums. Displayed in steady, unchanging lighting conditions and removed from architectural contexts that might help modern viewers imagine both their original functions and sensory effects, they depend on curatorial intervention (or the prior knowledge of the visitor) to activate them. Having long incorporated film and audio in their galleries, museums today are exploring with greater frequency the potential of digital and artistic interventions, both in gallery and in parallel online presentations meant to enrich the primary display. This paper will explore several projects that virtually activated medieval objects on

display at the J. Paul Getty Museum, bringing the sounds of St. Catherine's monastery, along with its icons, into the exhibition space and enabling a virtual translation of the Latin text of the St. Alban's Psalter so that visitors might experience it as if read aloud from the richly illuminated page. Curators increasingly are also turning to contemporary art as an additional lens through which historical art might be interpreted. The upcoming exhibition, *Lumen: The Art and Science of Light* aims to create multiple sensory dialogues in the hope that key themes for the medieval material, such as movement and perception, find added resonance with museum visitors.

Mary Magdalen and Sainte Foy: Exemplars of Spiritual Embodiment and Theosis in the Sculpture and Liturgy of Vézelay and Conques
Thomas Dale, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The west tympana of Conques and Vézelay are routinely included in the canon of French Romanesque sculpture as exemplars of theophanies marking the threshold of sacred space of monastic churches. Yet, until recently, relatively little attention has been given to the fact that in each case these visions are mediated for their male monastic populations and a larger audience of lay pilgrims by a female patron saint. Focusing primarily on Vézelay, I will argue that a comparison between Conques and Vézelay reflects the particularly strong gendering of visionary experience in the twelfth century, with vision and other physical senses, offering pathways to contemplation of, and union with the transcendent yet incarnate God in Christ.

In the case of Conques, the teenage patron saint, appears in the glorified form of her reliquary portrait, kneeling before the Hand of God at the right side of Christ in the Last Judgement; liturgical texts and music recently analyzed by Bissera Pentcheva complement the image with an emphasis on the saint infusion with the Holy Spirit to reach the heavenly heights. At Vézelay, as a nineteenth century drawing first published by Neil Stratford shows, a female figure is clearly present, kneeling on the lintel with her back to the spectator as she looks up to the theophanic vision of Christ empowering the disciples with the fire and breath of the Holy Spirit. As I will argue in this paper, Mary Magdalen, who was a model of the contemplative life, thus becomes a crucial "thirteenth" apostle, a surrogate for the viewer, whose scale, position, and gender allow her to mediate for the corporeal senses of the spectator the transcendent, contemplative state of theosis, that momentarily disrupts the narrative (*historia*) of the Pentecost and mission of the apostles. The insertion of the Magdalene complements the dramatic emphasis on spiritual embodiment in the rest of the sculpted tympanum both in the representation of the empowerment of the apostles by the Holy Spirit, and the contrary demonstration of spiritual deformity in the images of the disabled and monstrous races. Mary Magdalene's particular role as "seer who experiences the presence of the living God in Christ in multiple senses" is also emphasized in the liturgical texts associated with her feasts.

Two Aquitanian Versions of the Office for Sainte Foy de Conques: Scribal and Institutional Initiatives
James Grier, University of Western Ontario

Two versions of the Office for Sainte Foy de Conques survive in discrete libelli that now form part of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS nouvelles acquisitions latines 443, and Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS latin 1240 (for both of which I use the system of manuscript sigla introduced by the Corpus Troporum group of researchers in Stockholm, Pa 443 and 1240, respectively). Both versions present the same Office, both use Aquitanian musical notation, and both seem to have originated around the same time. The notation and general mise-en-page closely resemble the musical portion of Pa 5240, which I date to the 1040s. I would place the production of the Offices in Pa 443 and 1240 in the middle of the eleventh century. This date finds confirmation from the fact that both libelli use a single-line staff between the rules used to align the literary text. This staff aids in the accurate heighting of the neumes to indicate the intervallic relationships between the notes thus represented. The single-line staff first appears at Saint Martial de Limoges mid-century.

Both versions differ in significant ways that indicate each scribe introduced independent initiatives that may have corresponded to personal or individual preferences. These initiatives involve musical and

broader liturgical issues. For example, Pa 443 includes lengthy melismatic interpolations at the end of several responsories, to which the scribe adds fully texted versions of the melisma introduced by the rubric PROSA. Such interpolations occur at many institutions across the Latin West, including Saint Martial. But the scribe of Pa 1240, which was apparently produced at or for Saint Martial, has eliminated these interpolations. Similarly, both versions use contrasting differentiae in the first antiphon of First Vespers. This brief passage of music makes a smooth connection between the end of the Psalm tone (the musical formula used for the intoning of the Psalm that is framed by the antiphon) and the beginning of the antiphon that follows the intoning of the Lesser Doxology, which serves as the last verses of the Psalm. Both these variations, the elimination of the interpolations from the responsories and the use of contrasting differentiae, indicate the each scribe has shaped his version of the Office to correspond to personal tastes or institutional preferences.

Decorative Melismas in Aquitaine
Thomas Forrest Kelly, Harvard University

The Aquitanian tonaries, graduals, and tropers include melismas, apparently optional, to decorate the ends of psalm-verses for introits. Coming at the end of the soloistic portion, they could be heard as a final flourish, a sort of cadenza, before the choir takes up the repetition of the introit. On a few exceptional occasions there are also melismas within the introit itself. Melismas in tonaries are perhaps meant to be applicable to any introit of the mode; those in graduals and tropers may be intended for more limited or specific use—although sometimes they are the same melisma as one found also in a tonary.

These melismas were considered long ago by Michel Huglo, and more recently in a study of my own. Here, however, we will consider the musical aspects of these melismas. What is there that is exemplary about the melismas provided by tonaries? How do the various melismas for chants in Mode 1 reflect musical aspects of that mode?This abstract is written before the close study of the melismas (although they have all been identified), and so the results will not be apparent, or audible, until the conference.

In a larger sense, these melismas as a whole can be taken as an aspect of ornamentation within the bounds of the official liturgy, in many ways akin to the spectacular decorations of the tonaries that contain them, and indeed similar to the role of gold and gems on liturgical objects or the relief sculpture in architectural spaces.

Glimpses, echoes, shadows: performing a festal office by night
Henry Parkes, University of Nottingham

Reanimating the medieval office of Ste Foy presents considerable challenges to the contemporary singer, not only notational, but also technical, stylistic, and interpretative. But the problems do not end with the notated page. Written records of medieval liturgical custom reveal that on the highest feasts – especially patronal feasts, such as that of Ste Foy at Conques -- the liturgy of the Office deviated from its well-worn ferial patterns, above all in the nocturnal sequence of services from Vespers to Lauds, metamorphosing into a form of maximal complexity. Certain aspects of this change one could predict, such as the use of precious vestments, the ringing of bells, and the copious use of incense. However, the transformation went far deeper than that. Reading the rubrics closely, we discover that different chants and liturgical texts would be accompanied by different kinds of sensory elaboration – visual, aural, olfactory – in carefully choreographed patterns, with carefully selected numbers and types of performers, using a variety of material objects, such that the office's two principal axes of word and melody were augmented to become an immersive, three-dimensional spectacle. No stage directions of this sort survive from Conques, yet texts from neighbouring institutions in southern France allow us to hypothesise the conditions under which the music was performed. My paper will conclude with reflections on the degree to which we can separate the Ste Foy compositions from the (still uncertain) conditions of their performance.

Entwining the Ephemeral with the Eternal: *Locus*, *Conca*, and *Margarita* at Conques
Bissera V. Pentcheva, Stanford University

This paper explores how the installation of the *imago* of Ste. Foy and the liturgy train the faithful to pay attention to the ephemeral and fleeting occurrences that channel the presence of the divine such as light fog, smoke, fragrance, and chiastic structures invested in the chants, poetry, and images. The material shell-*conca*––be it the ecclesiastical building, the golden statue, or the valley of Ouche—are vessels containing this invisible energy and making it perceptible. The shell bestows special valence at Conques because the site carries this name: Conchas. This study explores the *conca* through the medieval concept of *locus* (*topos*) as a place/container conjoining the terrestrial and the celestial, matter and spirit. The analysis casts its net widely: the eleventh century music for the Office of Ste. Foy composed at the monastery in the mid-eleventh century; the relief sculpture and gold statue; the texts of the *Liber miraculorum*; architectural inscriptions; and the natural environment at Conques. The methodology includes the reading of text-painting in the melodies (the understanding that the melodic form seeks to express the content of the poem); iconographic analysis; Begriffsgeschichte of terms such as *locus* and *concha, margarita*; engagement with chiasm in the music, poetry, and images; and finally, the use of digital reconstructions of the architecture and time-lapses in order to explore the course of natural light in the sanctuary and its role in producing dramatic fleeting effects in the display of the *imago* of Ste. Foy. Among the major conclusions is the recognition that the *conca* as *locus* conjoins human and divine, makes the metaphysical—the pearl/*margarita*—sensorially perceptible, and elicits from the faithful love for and fear of the divine.

Mirrors of Invention: Santiago, Conques, and the Re-Discovery of the Romanesque (1923-2023)
Francisco Prado-Vilar, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

"A peculiarity of the school of the pilgrimages," wrote A. Kingsley Porter in his landmark work *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads* (1923), "is the creation of oases of art in the midst of deserts." Prime among those oases – situated far apart but interconnected by the "flow" of the pilgrimage roads – that he analyzed in his book were Santiago de Compostela, in the northwest corner of the Iberian Peninsula, and Conques, in mountainous Rouergue. In these centers, monumental churches were built at the turn of the twelfth century which are so closely related in architectural features and sculptural decoration that seem different extensions emerging from a single overarching project. The same teams of sculptors, as Porter discusses in several brilliant pages of formal analysis in his book, participated in the decoration of both monuments at several phases of their construction, leaving their stylistic signature in ensembles that have become "icons" in the definition of the Romanesque, such as the Platerías Façade of the cathedral of Santiago and the west portal of the abbey church of Ste. Foy in Conques. As we mark the centennial of the publication of *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads*, which set the terms for the discussion of these buildings in twentieth-century historiography, it is time to look anew at Santiago and Conques in view of the new research conducted on both monuments over the past decade from different methodological perspectives. Establishing a dialogue with Bissera Pentcheva's work at Conques in her project *Enchanted Images*, I examine in this paper the complex and brilliant liturgical scenography of Santiago Cathedral focusing on its twelfth-century stone choir. In addition to presenting a new reconstruction of the choir in light of the recent archaeological discoveries, I develop a novel analysis of the meanings and synesthetic effects of its sculptural decoration that reveals it to be a key work in the corpus of medieval art.

Yes, It Is Polyphony: Revisiting the *72 Verses for St. Martial*
Laura Steenberge, independent scholar

The enigmatic *72 Verses for St. Martial* is one of the many works by Ademar de Chabannes crafted to promote the false narrative that St. Martial of Limoges, rather than being a third-century bishop, was actually a first-century apostle, one of the seventy-two called forth by Christ in the Gospel of Luke. Included in the manuscript Paris B.N. lat. 909 (1028-29), the composition is visually striking for the acrostic formed from the first letter of each tercet, MARTIALIS APOSTOLVS XRISTI. Equally striking is its cryptic notation: two overlapping melodies, one in black ink and the other in red.

The relationship between the two notations is debated still: some see them working together to form polyphony, while others see them as two separate versions of the same monophonic chant. Paul Hooreman's conclusion of monophony is countered by Manuel Pedro Ferreira, who argues that Hooreman's reasoning is insufficient to rule out polyphony. I agree with Ferreira's assessment and use it as a jumping off point for the current analysis, which investigates the compositional processes underlying the creation of the 72 Verses. If the verses are thoughtfully and intricately composed, as I believe they are, then the answer to the monophonic/polyphonic question ought to be contained in the music itself.

A polyphonic composition does not just require more than one part, it also requires a relationship between or among the parts. Each component part is incomplete and when scrutinized will offer evidence of its own incompleteness, which could present in a myriad of ways. Hooreman describes many details in the chant as subject to disorganization, scribal error, lack of ability, etc. His observations are scrupulous and the conclusions he draws each make sense on their own, but when assessed together they suggest that there may be more than meets the eye with this chant, and when analyzed polyphonically, the problems resolve.

Looking beyond the polyphonic question, further investigation of the chant's unusual features reveals that there is a great deal of extra information packed into the 72 Verses. The music and poetry do not just proceed linearly as melody and narrative, but are also shaped by a complex interaction of wordplay, geometry, visual imagery and numerology. By reconstructing these underlying processes, secret forms emerge: the shape of a *corona* (crown) is found embedded within the poetry, and the polyphony is revealed to have been generated by the interaction of two acrostics, one overt and the other clandestine.