Path of Miracles: A 21st-Century Conductor's Guide to Joby Talbot's Choral Masterpiece

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Abstract

A 21st-Century Conductor's Guide to Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles*

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Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles* has established its place in the Western choral music canon, receiving numerous accolades from critics, audiences, and performers alike. The piece has been recorded by two of the world's leading choral ensembles, Tenebrae conducted by Nigel Short, and Conspirare, conducted by Craig Hella Johnson. Despite the piece's success, little has been written about Talbot or *Path of Miracles* in academic literature. Using primary sources, including interviews with Joby Talbot, Robert Dickinson, Gabriel Crouch, and numerous conductors, this dissertation fills in the knowledge gaps. The purpose of this document is to provide conductors a resource to assist their preparation for future performances of *Path of Miracles.* Of particular interest to conductors is the detailed analysis of the libretto, which illuminates the source material for many of Robert Dickinson's references.

Additionally, an International Phonetic Alphabet guide for the entire piece is included in the appendix of this document. The analysis chapters focus on the rhythmic and melodic cells found throughout *Path of Miracles* which comprise the structural foundation of the work. Elements of Talbot's instrumental background are highlighted, particularly how *Path of Miracles* emulates a symphonic structure.

Practical considerations for performing *Path of Miracles* are presented, helping conductors navigate the many logistical elements required to present this piece in concert. These practical and artistic insights come not just from this author but from many notable conductors who have performed this masterpiece. Finally, the concept of audience engagement is discussed, and notable performances of *Path of Miracles* are presented, including more traditional concert performances, intricate interdisciplinary programs, and excerpted movements from the piece. These examples are meant to inspire conductors as they develop their own artistic vision for performing *Path of Miracles.*

Path of Miracles is one of the first choral masterpieces of the 21st century. One of the reasons for its success is the extra-musical elements, such as staging directions, included in the score. Just as *Path of Miracles* seeks to break the expectations of what choral music can be, this document seeks to expand upon a traditional conductor's guide.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I first heard *Path of Miracles* in 2009 while earning my M.M. in Choral Conducting at the University of Oregon. My friend, Aaron Cain, loaned me his copy of the Tenebrae recording for a long road trip. Not knowing anything about the piece, I was curious to hear the mysterious glissando emerge from the silence before erupting with the soprano and alto entrance several minutes into the work. I was captivated. As the music continued, I began to recognize quotations and references to the *Codex Calixtinus,* which I had studied during my musicology courses. I purchased my copy of Tenebrae's CD, as well as a score, as soon as possible. Now, over a decade later, I am grateful for the opportunity to present this dissertation to the public. Through these years and months of in-depth study, *Path of Miracles* remains my favorite choral work. Each time I open the score or listen to a recording, I discover something new. It has been an honor to work on this project and provide a resource that will hopefully play a small role in the life of *Path of Miracles.* This would not have been possible without the help of many individuals. I want to thank them here.

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I wrote this dissertation during the global COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has been catastrophic in the loss of life around the world. There have also been losses in musical experiences, time with family and friends, and rites of passage. However, during this time I have witnessed the best of our shared humanity and passion for the choral art. I can find no better example than in the numerous conductors and artists who were willing to speak to me about *Path of Miracles* and allow me to interview them to glean their insights. A clear passion for Talbot's music was evident throughout this process. Thank you to Kristina Boerger, Gabriel Crouch, Matthew Culloton, Robert Geary, Craig Hella Johnson, Joe Miller, KT Nelson, and Matthew Olson, for your wisdom, passion, and willingness to share your experiences with *Path of Miracles*. Your knowledge enriches this document.

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I want to thank my Aunt Sara, who took me to Carnegie Hall to hear my first classical music concert when I was just seven years old – it left a lasting impression.

I want to thank Steve Schroeder and Cheryl Beighle, for inviting my family to live in your home while I completed this degree. I also want to thank you both for encouraging me to take this leap to fulfill my dreams. This degree would not have been possible without your support. Additionally, I want to thank Steve for being one of the editors of this document. Your creativity compounds your scholarship and research acumen. Thank you for your thoughtful and thorough edits.

Most importantly, I would like to thank my wife, Jessica Schroeder, and daughters, Silvia and Lark. Jessica, thank you for being willing to uproot our lives for me to earn my terminal degree. Thank you for being the beautiful pianist and artist you are, and for continually pushing me to be my best. Thank you for picking up the slack as the primary parent as we waded through this process together and for encouraging me along the way. Thank you for reading my document and providing me with the many detailed, thoughtful edits. I am so grateful for your

patience and love. Finally, to my daughters, thank you for showing me what is most important in this life. I love you both more than you can even imagine.

DEDICATION

For my wife, Jessica, and our two wonderful daughters, Silvia and Lark.

We can do hard things.

Chapter 1.
Introduction

Statement of Purpose

Since its premiere in 2005, Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles* has been performed by some of the world's leading choral ensembles, helping to cement its place in the Western choral music canon quickly.[1] The work is celebrated by performers and audience members alike.[2] This document explores *Path of Miracles* in detail, providing insights that would be unavailable to conductors who may not have access to Joby Talbot, Robert Dickinson (the librettist), or other influential musicians and artists who have been key figures in the life of this work. Through the lens of composer, librettist, conductor, historian, and anthropologist, this dissertation will assist the needs of a 21-century conductor as they prepare to present *Path of Miracles*.

Chapter Two offers biographical information on Joby Talbot and explores aspects of his compositional style. While Talbot has demonstrated his ability to compose for the voice and test the limits of vocal technique, his diverse musical background makes much of his music difficult to classify. Developing an understanding of Talbot's wide-ranging compositional output will help illuminate why this is the case. An overview of Talbot's compositional oeuvre is provided, including his time with the band *The Divine Comedy,* his film music, his ballet, instrumental, and orchestral scores, as well as his opera *Everest*. At the time of this publication, Talbot's second opera, *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly,* has not yet been premiered.[3] Talbot's background as

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[1] Joby Talbot, "Calendar," Recent Performance List, accessed on January 2, 2021, http://www.jobytalbot.com/performance-calendar.
[2] Alexandra Coghlan, review of Joby Talbot *Path of Miracles*, by Conspirare and Craig Hella Johnson, Gramophone, http://www.gramophone.co.uk/review/talbot-path-of-miracles.
[3] The Dallas Opera, "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly-World Premiere," accessed February 1, 2021, https://dallasopera.org/performance/diving-bell-and-the-butterfly/.

primarily an instrumental composer provides a different perspective when trying to grasp *Path of Miracles.* Finally, a survey of Talbot's choral works (there are currently 9) is presented.[4] While Talbot has composed in a variety of genres, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to explore the entirety of Talbot's music in depth. However, a brief commentary on each genre of music is included.

Chapter Three discusses the origin story of *Path of Miracles,* explaining the variety of decisions made leading to the piece as it is known today.

Chapter Four provides background information about St. James, the Camino de Santiago, and the *Codex Calixtinus*. The Camino de Santiago is the name for the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain, where the tomb of St. James the greater is located.[5] This pilgrimage is both the subject matter and inspiration for *Path of Miracles.* The folklore behind the pilgrimage's origins is explained, and how Talbot and Robert Dickinson (the librettist) tell this story through *Path of Miracles*.

Chapter Five explores the libretto in detail. This chapter is a comprehensive investigation into how Dickinson and Talbot used the *Codex Calixtinus* and other sources, both medieval and modern, to create the libretto for *Path of Miracles.*[6] Using information gathered through

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[4] "Joby Talbot," Wise Music Classical, accessed on February 2, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/composer/1558/Joby-Talbot/

[5] Camino de Santiago, The Pilgrimage Routes to Santiago de Compostela, accessed February 5, 2021, http://santiago-compostela.net/.

[6] Richard Taruskin, "Polyphony in Practice and Theory," in Music from the Earliest Notations to the Sixteenth Century (New York: Oxford University Press), https://www-oxfordwesternmusic-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/view/Volume1/actrade-9780195384819-div1-005005.xml. Of particular note is the piece Congaudeant catholici contained within the Codex Calixtinus. Richard Taruskin affirms that this is indeed an early example of written polyphony. He refutes the claim, suggested by other scholars, that this is the first example of a three-part polyphonic setting. Taruskin argues that this piece includes two separate counterpoints not meant to be sung together. However, Congaudeant catholici is perhaps the first polyphonic piece with a credited composer. It is attributed to Albertus, who was a cantor at the Notre Dame cathedral in the mid 12th-century.

interviews with Dickinson and Talbot and significant outside research, this chapter is of great use for conductors who are trying to understand and communicate the pilgrimage story through *Path of Miracles.*

Path of Miracles defies formal description. Nevertheless, Chapters Six through Nine explore each movement chronologically and attempt to guide the reader into a perception of the work as a choral symphony. Each chapter illuminates Talbot's symphonic conception of *Path of Miracles*. When applicable, connections are made between movements, showcasing Talbot's development of both the rhythmic and melodic thematic material, once again connecting *Path of Miracles* back to the symphonic tradition. A complete functional analysis of *Path of Miracles* is not provided in this dissertation; Talbot composes in a way that does not lend itself to a classical, theoretical framework. For example, a Schenkerian analysis would be uninformative. While Talbot composes within a tonal context, *Path of Miracles* does not follow the same harmonic traditions as used by composers of the 18th and 19th centuries. However, an overview of the broad structure, an analysis of the rhythmic cells that serve as motoric building blocks and the melodic cells that comprise the thematic material are provided. Joby Talbot describes himself as being drawn to storytelling through music and assigns text-painting significant importance when writing vocal music.[7] This storytelling ability is readily apparent when analyzing *Path of Miracles*, where Talbot displays a mastery of skill and creativity as he brings the text to life. Examples of text painting are showcased throughout each movement. While many examples are highlighted, in no way does this claim to be an exhaustive list – close observers will certainly find their own insights.

[7] Joby Talbot, interview by author, Seattle, January 14, 2021. Interview transcript located in the appendix of this document.

Chapter Ten outlines practical considerations conductors face when planning to program *Path of Miracles:* these elements include ensemble type and size, venue considerations, concert attire, and more.

Chapter Eleven explores the concept of audience engagement and the possible ways to present *Path of Miracles.* Interdisciplinary art forms can be profoundly effective in engaging audiences and potentially draw in new listeners.[8] While it does not contain an in-depth analysis of the concept, this chapter also reviews the performance style of *choral theater*.[9] This concept directly applies to *Path of Miracles,* as Talbot instructs the choir to utilize movement in exciting ways to help tell the story within the score.[10] While Talbot's instructions are sparse, various ensembles have expanded upon his stage directions. This chapter contributes to the broader discussion of choral theater by exploring ways to navigate this trend while maintaining artistic integrity to the best of our abilities. Finally, this chapter explores several notable performances of *Path of Miracles.* In doing so, potential ways to expand Talbot's stage instructions are presented as examples to increase audience education and engagement. Providing these examples will hopefully spark creativity as conductors contemplate their performances of *Path of Miracles*. Because there are many possibilities for utilizing interdisciplinary performing forces, as well as the practical issues of venue capacity and limitations, a prescribed staging diagram is not provided.

Chapter Twelve summarizes this document's content and encourages conductors to explore various paths as they present choral music concerts. In doing so, art organizations will

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[8] Johan Idema, "Present!: Rethinking Live Classical Music," Muziek Centrum Nederland, 2012.

[9] Molly Ann Getsinger, "Reinventing the Concert Experience: Investigating the Effect of Staging on the Performance of Choral Music" (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 2020), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

[10] Joby Talbot, "Path of Miracles," London: Chester Music Ltd, 2005.

make choral music more inclusive, not just for performances of *Path of Miracles* but also for other concerts going forward.

Survey of Literature

This section highlights some of the most applicable scholarship as it pertains to this dissertation. Because of the broader scope of the research included in this document, the survey of literature is divided into four separate categories: 1. Research on Joby Talbot and *Path of Miracles.* 2. Scholarship on the libretto for *Path of Miracles,* particularly sources that explore the various medieval-era documents that inspired the libretto. 3. Several pertinent dissertations and articles that explore minimalism and postminimalism, as well as sources that connect these compositional trends to *Path of Miracles.* 4. Recent scholarship discussing audience engagement.

Joby Talbot and Path of Miracles

As of 2021, three doctoral dissertations examine *Path of Miracles*, and only two focus solely on the work. Joy Elizabeth Meade has written a document that illuminates elements of postminimalism in *Path of Miracles.*[11] While Joby Talbot does not categorize his oeuvre as postminimal, Meade convincingly shows the influence of minimalist and postminimalist techniques in *Path of Miracles*.[12] Meade analyzes the work in two additional ways: how it structurally represents the act of pilgrimage and how it embodies both the sacred and secular nature of the Camino de Santiago. Meade's analysis has paved the way for future research on *Path of Miracles.* This dissertation uses Meade's research to continue the discussion of minimalism and postminimalism as it relates to *Path of Miracles.*

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[11] Joy Elizabeth Meade, "Pilgrimage and Postminimalism in Joby Talbot's Path of Miracles" (DMA diss., University of Georgia, 2016), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

[12] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021.

Jeffery Goolsby's dissertation explores the concept of pilgrimage in depth, demonstrating how Talbot's *Path of Miracles,* and *To the Field of Stars,* by Gabriel Jackson, and *Footsteps,* by Owain Park, all find ways to musically represent the act of pilgrimage.[13] Goolsby provides important information about the Camino de Santiago and the *Codex Calixtinus's* influence on *Path of Miracles,* and provides some straightforward considerations for conductors who are planning their own performances. This document continues Goolsby's work by providing more research on the libretto and how it relates to the pilgrimage story.

Joseph Stuligross's dissertation analyzes *Path of Miracles* and highlights ways that Talbot generates dramatic intensity in the music.[14] Stuligross's melodic and harmonic analyses provide a framework for understanding the construction of *Path of Miracles.* Because Stuligross's goal was to provide insights into the dramatic nature of the work, this type of analysis is appropriate. Stuligross also includes some considerations for conductors wishing to perform *Path of Miracles*. This document builds upon Stuligross's descriptions of the source material that influenced Robert Dickinson's libretto.

Engaging with primary sources when analyzing any piece of music is essential. The *Path of Miracles* score is one of the primary guiding influences of this research. However, the score is supplemented by several other important sources. Interviews with Joby Talbot can be readily found online and on YouTube, where he discusses a wide range of topics. Culling from these interviews and conducting original interviews with the composer, librettist, and prominent conductors have all proved to be invaluable in developing a full comprehension of the piece. Although Talbot and Dickinson have spoken with Máire-Keary Scanlon for her master's thesis,

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[13] Jeffrey H Goolsby, "A Pilgrimage Triptych: A Conductor's Guide to Three Contemporary Choral Works" (DMA diss., Texas Tech University, 2018), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

[14] Joseph Stuligross, "Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles:* Musical and Dramatic Analysis" (DMA diss., West Virginia University, 2020), abstract, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

that document is not available to the public.[15] Finally, the liner notes included in both the Tenebrae album and the Conspirare program notes are helpful resources.[16]

Literature that Inspired Path of Miracles

A plethora of scholarship on the *Codex Calixtinus* is readily available. Each of the dissertations listed in the previous section discuss the *Codex Calixtinus* in relation to *Path of Miracles*. However, many other sources (both medieval and modern) that helped inspire the work have been discussed only tangentially. The liner notes to Tenebrae's CD reference these sources, and yet little has been written about what they are and how they relate to the piece.[17] Stuligross's brief descriptions have provided an essential step in adding to this scholarship. Stuligross writes:

> "POM also includes texts from a variety of other ancient sources:
>
> - *Breviarium Apostolorum*, an 8th century history of the lives of the apostles;
> - *Miragres de Santiago*, a primary source of medieval Jacobean culture;
> - *Martyrology* of Floro de Lyon, a 9th century manuscript;
> - *Legenda*, or "Golden Legend," written around 1260 by the Genoese Dominican monk Jacques de Voragine and which describes St. James's life in Spain; and
> - *Carmina Burana*, a manuscript of poems and dramatic texts created c. 1230, only a few years later than the *Codex Calixtinus*."[18]

Stuligross provides some additional insights into these sources throughout his dissertation. This document continues to parse these sources to help conductors contextualize these

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[15] Joby Talbot, email message to author, January 19, 2021.

[16] Joby Talbot, "Path of Miracles," performed by Tenebrae and Nigel Short, Signum Records, 2005, CD; Joby Talbot "Path of Miracles," performed by Conspirare and Craig Hella Johnson, program notes, accessed February 3, 2021, https://www.conspirare.org/wp-content/uploads/path-of-miracles-program-booklet.pdf.

[17] Gabriel Crouch, "Path of Miracles CD Liner Notes," Signum Records, 2005.

[18] Stuligross, 15.

documents and provide additional privileged information to the compositional intent of Talbot and Dickinson.

Minimalism and Postminimalism

As referenced earlier, Meade's dissertation does a superior job arguing that *Path of Miracles* exhibits many of the techniques of minimalism and postminimalism. Meade's primary sources were three articles; all included in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Minimalist and Postminimalist Music.*[19] That same resource contains many other articles helpful to anyone interested in furthering their understanding of minimal and postminimal music.[20]

Outside of the *Ashgate Research Companion*, there are many important sources to understand the parameters of minimalism and postminimalism. Paul Hillier and Steve Reich's *Writings on Music* includes the famous essay, "Music as a Gradual Process," where Reich outlines some of the characteristic elements of minimalism.[21] Robert Schwarz compares Reich's strict processes with the looser, more intuitive compositional style of John Adams.[22] For one of the clearest (albeit somewhat lacking) explanations of minimalism, Timothy Johnson writes about the difference between aesthetic, style, and techniques.[23] Of importance to this paper are two articles by Jonathan Bernard: "The Minimalist Aesthetic in the Plastic Arts and in Music," and "Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American

[19] Meade, 13-14.
[20] Keith Potter, Kyle Gann, and Pwyll Ap Siôn, eds., *The Ashgate Research Companion to Minimalist and Postminimalist Muisc* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2016).
[21] Steve Reich and Paul Hillier, *Writings on Music, 1965-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[22] Robert K. Schwarz, "Process vs. Intuition in the Recent Works of Steve Reich and John Adams," *American Music* 8 (1990): 245-273.
[23] Timothy A. Johnson, "Minimalism: Aesthetic, Style, or Technique," *The Musical Quarterly* 78, no. 4 (1994): 742-773.

Music."[24] These articles argue that utilizing techniques of minimalism is insufficient to justify labeling a piece of music "minimal." There are many more critical articles and books on minimalism and postminimalism. Since Meade has already laid some vital groundwork on this topic, this dissertation mostly avoids the area. Nevertheless, Chapter Two briefly contributes to the discussion of minimalism's influence on *Path of Miracles*.

Audience Engagement

The need to engage audiences is not a new concept for artistic directors, although there is relatively little research supporting this endeavor. Molly Ann Getsinger's dissertation examines the practice of staging choral music.[25] Some are labeling this trend "choral theater."[26] Getsinger examines how staging can enhance choral music performances by adding narrative and drama to a performance. She argues that doing so increases audience enjoyment and understanding of complex choral music. Getsinger articulates potential opposition to the use of staging choral music when it was not intended by the composer, demonstrating an awareness of the potential pitfalls in this practice. In her document, Getsinger highlights the Westminster Choir College (conducted by Joe Miller) performance of *Path of Miracles* at Gailliard Center in Charleston as a part of the Spoleto Festival USA.[27] This performance is notable for being the first fully staged production of *Path of Miracles*; impressively, the Westminster Choir College completely memorized the work.[28]

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[24] Jonathan W. Bernard, "The Minimalist Aesthetic in the Plastic Arts and in Music," *Perspectives of New Music* 31, no. 1 (1993); Jonathan W. Bernard, "Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American Music," *American Music* 21, no. 1 (2003).

[25] Getsinger, "Reinventing the Concert Experience," 2020.

[26] Judith Malafronte, "The Emerging Art of Choral Theater," *The Voice of Chorus America* 40, no. 2 (2017): 10-19.

[27] Getsinger, 15-19.

[28] Anne Sears, "Westminster Choir Brings 'Path of Miracles' to Life," Rider University, July 2019, www.rider.edu/news/2019/06/16/westminster-choir-brings-path-miracles-life.

Johan Idema's book, *Present!: Rethinking Live Classical Music,* is incredibly insightful.[29] An easy read, filled with vibrant images and short anecdotes describing successful programs, *Present!* provides plenty of inspiration for any classical musician who is wanting to explore new avenues of concert presentations. Examples of adapting historically significant choral music to provide a more visceral experience for audience members are found in the numerous staged productions of the Bach Passions.[30] One of the more recent and high-quality examples is seen in Simon Rattle and Peter Sellars's collaboration with the Bach *St. Matthew Passion.*[31]

Need for Study

As *Path of Miracles* continues to gain popularity, a need to provide conductors with a comprehensive resource to prepare for their performances has become apparent. A case study employing ethnographic techniques and interviews with Joby Talbot, Robert Dickinson, and many prominent conductors who have performed the work, this document offers a comprehensive overview and history of *Path of Miracles.* This document provides insights to the composition process, the compilation of the libretto, and practical considerations for conductors. These insights to *Path of Miracles* provide a detailed guide of the work that meets the needs of a 21st-century conductor. As a result, conductors will gain a deeper understanding of the piece and be better equipped to achieve excellence in their performances. While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to be all-inclusive, it can provide insight into the most pertinent details relevant to a conductor researching Talbot's momentous choral achievement. For conductors wishing to dive deeper into their study of the work, the reference lists should prove invaluable. In no way

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[29] Johan Idema, *Present!: Rethinking Live Classical Music* (Musziek Centrum Nederland, 2012).

[30] John Butt, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions* (Cambridge, University Press, 2010).

[31] *Saint Matthew Passion*, directed by Peter Sellars, conducted by Simon Rattle, music by Johann Sebastian Bach, Berlin: Berliner Philharmoniker, 2012.

does this author claim to provide a definitive interpretation of this work; many who read this document will find points of contention and offer their analyses. This resource is a launching point for conductors to aid their score study and a place to find inspiration.

While conductors must learn the music and develop their own interpretations, there are many confounding elements in the score. These elements include the melodic and rhythmic cells that make up the formal structure of the work and the challenging libretto, which weaves both original poetry by Robert Dickinson with many different ancient texts. While Jeffrey Goolsby provides texts and translations to *Path of Miracles,* more scholarship is needed to dissect the complicated libretto to provide a practical aid for conductors.[32] Perhaps most notably, no scholarship has isolated the libretto but instead limited the research to directly comparing the text to the music – this is a natural response, as the text and music are unequivocally connected. Doing so, however, makes the job of understanding the complexities of the libretto more perplexing. Throughout Stuligross's dissertation, he presents research that helps to unpack the libretto. Nevertheless, Stuligross's document demonstrates a need to provide more thorough scholarship that examines these sources in more detail – this document seeks to fill this void. Insights gleaned from interviews with Joby Talbot and Robert Dickinson will help clarify this inspiring yet complicated libretto. The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) pronunciation guide coupled with new scholarship will prove invaluable sources for conductors and their ensembles.

This dissertation expands upon the growing body of research that attempts to analyze the musical material in *Path of Miracles* through original analysis coupled with insights from the composer. Meade and Goolsby have provided primarily melodic and harmonic analyses yet have

[32] Goolsby, "A Pilgrimage Triptych," 89-98.

neglected the interlocking rhythmic cells that drive the piece. While much of the melodic and harmonic analysis within this document may align with Meade, Goolsby, and Stuligross, some disagreements are bound to arise. These disagreements are not intended to diminish the work of other scholars, but rather to provide alternative perspectives on the piece. Furthermore, no scholarship has examined how Talbot's instrumental background, particularly his film and orchestral background, directly influenced the symphonic-like construction of *Path of Miracles*. This dissertation provides a more detailed biography on Talbot and the broad range of his compositional output, providing context to how *Path of Miracles* fits within his oeuvre. As Meade focused on elements of postminimalism and Stuligross focused on the dramatic nature of the work, the modus operandi of the analysis contained in this document is twofold: to understand the most essential elements of the construction of the music directly related to performance considerations and to provide insights as to how the music depicts the text.

This document provides valuable considerations for conductors as they prepare to present *Path of Miracles,* while adding to a small body of current research.[33] Examples of notable performances are surveyed, including practical advice from some of the leading conductors in our field. The performances examined include outstanding traditional concert presentations, innovative interdisciplinary performances, and excerpted single movements. Molly Getsinger's dissertation investigates compelling ways to present choral music and interested readers should explore her dissertation for more detailed information.[34] The exploration of the performances in this document is intended to showcase the versatility of *Path of Miracles* and spark conductors' own creativity.

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[33] Stuligross, "Joby Talbot's Path of Miracles," 81-90; Goolsby, "A Pilgrimage Triptych," 40-43.

[34] Getsinger, "Reinventing the Concert Experience," 2020.

Chapter 2.
Biography and Survey of Works

Biography

Joby Talbot's experiences as a musician and composer span a wide range of genres. Born in London in 1971, Talbot began his musical studies as a young child playing piano and oboe.[35] Talbot's musical creativity began early, performing his first composition at age nine.[36] From listening to symphonies to playing in orchestras and singing in choirs to playing bass guitar in his rock band, Talbot's childhood showcases a continual pursuit of music: "As a teenager I was completely obsessive about music. I just loved it so much. I loved playing it. I loved the experience of playing in an orchestra more than anything. That didn't mean I wanted to be an orchestral player exclusively. I also liked making a horrible noise with my bass guitar."[37] Talbot recalls, modestly, how playing in his childhood rock band provided him early chances to hone his compositional skills: "Even though the band was appalling, I learnt how to write for it very quickly. Before I knew it [I] was writing for my friends in orchestras."[38] Talbot went on to study music and composition with Brian Elias at Royal Holloway and Bedford New College and then earned his Master of Music in composition with Simon Bainbridge at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.[39] Talbot entered university at an interesting moment in time; the minimalists of the 1960s and 70s had intentionally unshackled themselves from the serialism orthodoxy

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[35] Joby Talbot, "About," accessed January 11, 2021, Http://www.jobytalbot.com/about:.

[36] Joby Talbot, interview by Kaya Savas, December 6, 2016, at 57 seconds https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jv4Jqd9VfGw

[37] Joby Talbot, interview by Peter Simek, The Dallas Opera, May 15, 2012, at 10:50 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sm4HnJN6K4.

[38] Joby Talbot, interview by Darryn King, October 9, 2015, https://darrynking.com/2015/10/09/interview-joby-talbot/.

[39] Joby Talbot, "About," accessed January 11, 2021, Http://www.jobytalbot.com/about.

pervasive in composition departments around the world, and paved the way for future composers to write music in a wider range of styles. Talbot reflects on his education: "I was lucky to study with some really great composers, particularly my main teacher, Brian Elias, who is still one of my very closest friends and the person I looked to for guidance more than anyone else; and he's a fully paid up, 12-tone serial composer."[40] Talbot studied serialism and other 20th-century compositional techniques during his education but has a sense of gratitude for entering school when he did:

> I graduated from high school in 1989, so, [minimalism] was a big thing whilst I was in school during the early 80s. I think it really kind of spread from being this sort of little niche thing to being a very important movement in music. But it was still quite hermetically sealed. Before John Adams came along…it was very much something that didn't really cross over into the wider classical music world. And I guess I was lucky to just sort of emerge at a point in time where that was not controversial and not forbidden somehow.[41]

Although Talbot says it was not forbidden to write tonal music inspired by minimalism, there was still a strong influence of serialism during his studies. On writing tonal music in academia, Talbot reflects: "It wasn't *such* an okay thing to do…My son is studying composition now at the Royal Academy of Music. He's 18 and he cannot even begin to fathom the fact that…the 12-tone serial, post-Boulez thing was the orthodoxy."[42] Clearly, the classical music world has loosened its grip even further since Talbot was in school. Talbot respects serialism but is glad to see an evolution away from serialism as a type of orthodoxy:

> I don't think there's an argument to say that [serialism] doesn't deserve a hearing, doesn't deserve a place in the history of music. But the fact that it became the orthodoxy is just downright *weird*. And rather unfortunate, I think, that it *became* the orthodoxy at the exact moment when the dissemination of music through recordings became big, big, big business, and possible on a global scale. They're looking at record sales going from a few hundred subscribers in the 1920s to millions and millions and millions of people in the

[40] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 9.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.

> 1950s. It's rather unfortunate that classical music decided, at that very moment, to basically decide that this is going to be the most impenetrable and hardest to understand music that has ever been written. So that was a bit of a bad call, I feel. And we're still kind of dealing with the fallout from that, I think.[43]

Despite his feelings that serialism was overemphasized during the 20th-century, Talbot is grateful for the education he received and for the opportunities he has enjoyed since. He applies his egalitarian attitude towards a variety of music to his own students:

> I always say to my students: You go to college to learn. Do what they tell you to do. They say write a crab canon, write a crab canon. If they say to write them some piece of serialism, write some serialism. You're only going to learn. It doesn't mean that's your voice. And only when you finish with education, really, then it's time to take stock. You think: Well, everything I've learned, what I am I going to do with it? And I reached that point in about 1995.[44]

Talbot has undoubtedly found his voice – the next section briefly explores Talbot's compositional style.

Talbot's Compositional Style:

Joby Talbot has never allowed himself to be classified into one style, nor has he limited his taste in music. Growing up in London, Talbot had access to many different types of music, and he took advantage of those opportunities.[45] Talbot's diversity of musical taste continues to inform his compositions: "It's not like I had a completely undiscriminating taste [as a child], but I certainly was finding things to love in all different kinds of music. When I sit to write a piece of music now, all those things come into play."[46] While he acknowledges that people will naturally

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[43] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 9.
[44] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 10.
[45] Joby Talbot, interview by Peter Simek, The Dallas Opera, May 15, 2012, at 9:03 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sm4HnJN6K4.
[46] Joby Talbot interview by Darryn King, October 9, 2015, https://darrynking.com/2015/10/09/interview-joby-talbot/.

categorize his music, he wishes that weren't the case: "I'd love it if, when you get into the record store (when they used to have record stores) you would find my music in one place and then also in another place and also another. But [that idea] shows how naive I was. In reality, they make a call; and they decide it's going to live in *one* place."[47] Partially because of Talbot's diversified interest in music, it has been problematic for some listeners to identify his style:

> Tenebrae did *Path of Miracles* in Chicago a couple of years ago and Chicago Opera Theater were doing my opera, *Everest*. And there's 15 years or something between those two pieces. But somebody who came and enjoyed both pieces, said they "never would have guessed that they were both by the same composer," which was a little dispiriting. I would hope that I have some kind of personal stamp on these things[48]

While it is potentially challenging to identify the style of such a versatile composer, there are some identifying traits in Talbot's music.

General Observations

Since *Path of Miracles,* Joby Talbot has been commissioned to write many long-form, large-structured works.[49] Talbot relies on smaller rhythmic motors to keep these large-structured works moving. He describes how he achieved this in *Path of Miracles*: "Building these rhythmic cells, these ostinati, out of words, finding little chunks of phrase that can be repeated or where they're rhythmically similar enough and you can apply repetitive rhythmic patterns to them to just kind of give the piece a motor to speed it along."[50] In addition to interlocking rhythmic cells, Talbot often plays with texture and layering. This includes layering sweeping melodies over the rhythmic ostinati and linking multiple rhythmic and melodic cells together. Talbot likes the way this technique creates an emotional experience:

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[47] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 2
[48] Ibid., 8.
[49] Ibid., 12.
[50] Ibid, 7-8.

> Basically, if you can push the complexity of what you're doing to the limits of what's actually intelligible, then you are taking people to a very special place. But the step beyond that can lead to confusion, and, even worse, risk boring the audience, so you don't want to go that far. But if you can take them just as far as is about knowable, then that's an exciting place to be.[51]

One final generalized observation on Talbot's compositional style is his ability to pace his music to maximize the dramatic effect (examples in *Path of Miracles* are explored in the following chapters). Talbot mentions that this single aspect is the most difficult to achieve, so it "is always at the forefront of my mind."[52] Finally, much of Talbot's music is tonal or modal. While unafraid of dissonance and chromaticism, Talbot utilizes these harmonies within a broader tonal context. The combination of these elements underlines Talbot's commitment to his own artistic intuition:

> I'm no longer writing for my teachers. I'm no longer writing for the other composers [to] stroke their beards and say, "how clever you are." I'm actually now writing for well… maybe I'm writing for me. Maybe I want to write music that I want to listen to. And maybe, I'm not looking for anybody else's approbation.…If I was sitting in the front row at the premier of *Path of Miracles* at St. Bartholomew the Great, what would I want to hear? That's kind of been my kind of touchstone ever since; just to try and write something that I feel that I would like to listen to.[53]

Talbot's compositions resonate with countless listeners and performers while staying true to his artistic voice and writing music that he would want to hear. Numerous repeat commissions he has received, including those from the Royal Ballet, the Dallas Opera, the BBC, and other regional organizations, are a testament to the success of Talbot's compositions.

Storytelling

Joby Talbot's music demonstrates a keen ability to tell stories, and he is drawn to projects that let him do so: "I spend half my time scoring movies and the other half doing things like writing

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[51] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 11.
[52] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 12.
[53] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 24, 2021, 10.

opera, ballet, other kinds of storytelling music, but in different fields. Those are the things I really enjoy doing, telling stories through music."[54] Talbot is also inspired by nature, as can be seen in the titles of many of his works. His film music naturally reflects the images on screen. However, like the best film scores, the music itself is pictural. One of the ways that Talbot accomplishes this cinematic landscape is through musical texture. By expanding the texture, Talbot can depict broad scenic shots. By limiting the texture, Talbot can zoom in on the action. Observing this technique in *Path of Miracles,* Joe Miller says: "It goes from themes of being hugely descriptive of a landscape or a landmark [to] being incredibly personal. In that way it is very film like."[55] This cascading stream of musical images can also be found in his narrative ballets, his orchestral music, and opera. Talbot creates momentum by placing a premium on rhythm and motoric rhythmic cells. These ostinati keep the musical images moving at a steady pace until, at very intentional moments, Talbot composes static music to stop the action and allow for reflection. This emphasis on rhythm is why Talbot is often associated with minimalism and postminimalism.

The Influence of Minimalism

When asked if he thought it fair for his music be categorized as minimal or postminimal, Talbot lightheartedly joked: "I read some article the other day which described me as a neo-romantic. I don't even know what that is!"[56] Again, Talbot actively avoids being pigeonholed and has worked in many different genres. Nevertheless, before and while writing *Path of Miracles,* Talbot listened to minimalism and even studied with Louis Andriessen (Andriessen's music has

[54] Joby Talbot, interview by Kaya Savas, December 6, 2016, at 2:23, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jv4Jqd9VfGw
[55] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 1.
[56] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 8.

been associated with minimalism, even though he dislikes the term; at one point, Andriessen described himself as a "maximalist").[57] Talbot goes as far as to admit:

> *Path of Miracles* certainly has got those repetitive rhythmic things that you do find in the music of the great minimalist composers. At the time, I did listen to a lot of John Adams and Steve Reich, Phillip Glass, Michael Nyman, and studied briefly with Louis Andriessen. I guess I was trying to use some of those techniques because they're there, because they exist, because they're available to us, because they function well, and then apply a level of emotion and the sort of emotional breadth of expression and sense of humanity to it.[58]

Talbot's own description of his process when writing *Path of Miracles* affirms Joy Meade's argument that his music is an example of postminimalism. Since the field of postminimalism is new, there is not a working definition for the term. Meade synthesizes the various writings on postminimalism and distills the genre into this list of characteristics:

1. Rhythms are continuous and tempo is consistent
2. Dynamics tend to be monochrome or terraced
3. Affect remains the same throughout
4. Harmonic language is diatonic or modal
5. Form ranges from highly structured to completely intuitive
6. Harmonic progressions are guided by a stream of consciousness technique with very simple tonalities
7. Composers reference a panoply of genres
8. Style is eclectic but maintains a seamlessly even surface.
9. Melodies result from smaller melodic fragments
10. Rhythms are jumpy and propulsive
11. Programmatic themes refer to larger, non-musical concerns

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[57] Anne Midgette, "MUSIC; A Maximal Minimalist, a Renegade Follower of Tradiiton," *The New York Times,* May 2, 2004, accessed February 16, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/02/arts/music-a-maximal-minimalist-a-renegade-follower-of-tradition.html.

[58] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 8.

12. Compositional devices include use of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque techniques and forms[59]

Meade's ability to provide a working framework for postminimalism is important. However, only time will tell if postminimalism remains an enduring classification of music. Talbot himself ponders this: "Eventually, you [have] sort of left minimalism so far behind that, you wonder."[60]

Timothy Johnson's article, "Minimalism: Aesthetic, Style, or Technique," while insightful and well written, overemphasizes the importance of using minimalist techniques when classifying minimalist music. Jonathan Bernard's article "Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American Music" provides insights.[61] Joseph Stuligross references this article in his dissertation to support the claim that Talbot is a postminimalist. However, perhaps Stuligross misses one of Bernard's key points. Bernard describes how the general public's inexperience with minimalist art led to misattributing pieces as being minimal: "It has encouraged the idea that minimalism could be acquired, slipped into and out of like some fashionable costume, by simply adopting these same surface features."[62] Bernard is not necessarily condemning the practice of using minimalist techniques but is stating that doing so does not, by default, classify a work as an example of minimalism.

This is perhaps where Meade's analysis of *Path of Miracles* goes astray – as Bernard states, simply using techniques of minimalism is not sufficient criteria for being labeled as such. Talbot's own statement describing how he uses minimalist techniques exhibits a Bernard-like

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[59] Joy Elizabeth Meade, "Pilgrimage and Postminimalism in Joby Talbot's Path of Miracles" (DMA diss., University of Georgia, 2016), 66.

[60] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 9.

[61] Jonathan W. Bernard, "The Minimalist Aesthetic in the Plastic Arts and in Music," *Perspectives of New Music* 31, no. 1 (1993); Jonathan W. Bernard, "Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American Music," *American Music* 21, no. 1 (2003).

[62] Bernard, "Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality," 114.

perspective. Talbot references his working knowledge of minimalism but refrains from labeling himself as a postminimalist composer. Talbot acknowledges the validity of (and his affinity for) the compositional techniques developed by minimalist composers, but he claims to use these techniques in a more utilitarian manner. In other words, Talbot is simply using the gamut of compositional devices at his disposal to create something unique. Therefore, showing the ways that Talbot employs minimalist techniques is, by itself, insufficient evidence to suggest that Talbot is a postminimalist composer. Again, Meade and Stuligross provide undeniable evidence of minimalism's influence on *Path of Miracles*, but a more nuanced argument for or against Talbot as a minimalist or postminimalist is an area ripe for future study and debate. Regardless of semantics, the influence of minimalism and postminimalism on Talbot's music is apparent.

Closing Thoughts

Talbot's unabashed love for popular music comes as a breath of fresh air in the classical music realm, where musicians often exude elitism and an unjustified disdain towards non-classical repertoire. Talbot addresses this issue in an interview in 2012, before the premiere of his first opera, *Everest,* with the Dallas Opera:

> There's still a real kind of snobbery in the UK about people who work, for example in, film or television, that somehow if you've written a film score you shouldn't be treated as a serious composer. Which I think is ridiculous.…Certainly, I think if Mozart was alive today, he would probably be sunning himself by a swimming pool in Hollywood, making the big bucks writing [film scores]. Because at the end of the day it's a craft, and you should really be able to apply your craft to whatever you're being asked to do.…But I love the fact that I get asked to do so many different kinds of things and try to rise to the challenge and take that experience onto whatever comes next.[63]

[63] Joby Talbot, interview by Peter Simek, The Dallas Opera, May 15, 2012, at 9:20 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sm4HnJN6K4.

As this chapter continues to unfold, it becomes clear that Talbot's ability to embrace many genres is one reason why *Path of Miracles* is so engaging yet can be challenging to classify. Without question, the broad scope of Talbot's career showcases an incredible versatility, which sets him apart from many other celebrated classical music composers: "I don't think I ever made a decision [on what genre of composer I wanted to become]. I think things just came my way and every interesting opportunity that came up I took and tried to do as well as I could."[64] There have certainly been a lot of exciting opportunities that have arisen for Talbot. He has composed numerous ballets, operas, orchestral works, choral music, chamber music, and film scores.[65] However, perhaps nothing exemplifies his willingness to take on unique opportunities better than the near decade he spent touring with the band, the Divine Comedy.[66]

Survey of Works

The Divine Comedy and Rock Bands

During his time at the Guildhall School of Music, Joby Talbot met Neil Hannon, who invited him to join his band, the Divine Comedy.[67] Talbot created arrangements, served as music director, played various instruments, and conducted the orchestra to accompany Hannon's band.[68] A selected list is found in Table 2.1.

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[64] Joby Talbot, interview by Peter Simek, The Dallas Opera, May 15, 2012, at 10:25, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sm4HnJN6K4.
[65] Joby Talbot, "Works List," Wise Music Classical, accessed February 3, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/composer/1558/Joby-Talbot/.
[66] Joby Talbot, interview by Darryn King, April 2014.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.

Table 2.1 Select Rock Band Compositions by Joby Talbot

Piece	Date	Premiere	Instrumentation	Length	Recordings
Grizzly Knife Attack	1998	Co-written with Michael Nyman and Neil Hannon	Rock band plus string quartet	6m	N/A
The Certainty of Chance	1998	Co-written with Neil Hannon for The Divine Comedy's "Fin de Siècle" album	Rock band	3m	Fin de Siecle, The Divine Comedy
Eric the Gardener	1998	Co-written with Neil Hannon for The Divine Comedy's "Fin de Siècle" album	Rock band	12m	Fin de Siecle, The Divine Comedy
The Case Continues	1999	Co-written with Neil Hannon for Ute Lemper's album "The Punishing Kiss"	Rock band	4m	Punishing Kiss, Ute Lemper
Split	1999	Co-written with Neil Hannon for Ute Lemper's album "The Punishing Kiss"	Rock band	3m 41s	Punishing Kiss, Ute Lemper
You Were Meant for Me	1999	Co-written with Neil Hannon for Ute Lemper's album "The Punishing Kiss"	Rock band	5m 13s	Punishing Kiss, Ute Lemper
The Watchers	2002	Commissioned by the BBC for the series "Between the Ears"	Rock Band, samples, string quartet	45m	N/A
601	2011		Rock band	N/A	N/A
Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D					

Darryn King writes of the Divine Comedy and Talbot:

> The lovechild of Morrissey and Electric Light Orchestra, the Divine Comedy was a big player in '90s Britpop. Talbot's contribution was crucial: songs were draped in lush strings, or else erupted into majestic mini-symphonies that ventured far beyond the frontiers of pop-rock. The band's biggest LP, 1996's *Casanova*, builds to a finale worthy of Puccini.[69]

[69] Joby Talbot, interview by Darryn King, April 2014.

While not the band's frontman, clearly Talbot's role was more than peripheral. The mere longevity of Talbot's tenure with the band signifies the important role that he played and the value he provided Hannon. The Divine Comedy has never had a set group of band members: "Technically, the rest of the band are actually session musicians who are used repeatedly and do every gig. Neil is the only member of the band who actually has a contract."[70] Talbot is credited with contributing to the albums *Promenade, Casanova, A Short Album About Love, Fin de Siècle,* and *Regeneration.*[71]

Several factors contributed to Talbot's eventual departure from the Divine Comedy. First, he was becoming increasingly busy with his other compositional opportunities. He received commissions from the King's Singers, the BBC Philharmonic, Paul McCartney, and film studios, all while touring with the band.[72] Talbot describes these increasing demands on his time: "I spent eight years on the road with them [the Divine Comedy] while at the same time starting my career as a classical composer. I'd be at the back of the bus, every spare minute, just filling ream after ream of manuscript paper with little squiggles, everybody looking at me like I was mad."[73] Talbot must have been feeling exhausted, and perhaps burnt out, towards the end of his touring days with the Divine Comedy.

Another factor leading to Talbot's departure from the Divine Comedy was his desire to have more challenging musical experiences. Reflecting on his desire to play more complex music, Talbot said: "After about the first ten gigs you can play the Divine Comedy's music in

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[70] The Divine Comedy-the Band, accessed January 11, 2021 https://h2g2.com/approved_entry/A430174.

[71] The Divine Comedy, "Credits" section on Allmusic.com, https://www.allmusic.com/artist/the-divine-comedy-mn0000150185/credits, accessed January 11, 2021.

[72] Joby Talbot, interview by Darryn King, April 2014, https://darrynking.com/2015/10/09/interview-joby-talbot/.

[73] Joby Talbot, interview by Peter Simek, The Dallas Opera, May 15, 2012, at 11:27 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sm4HnJN6K4.

your sleep…so you need to make sure you do what you need to do, fulfill yourself rather than just working for someone else."[74] To fulfill this bit of an artistic void, Talbot started his own band, Billiardman. When asked what kind of music Billiardman plays, Talbot responded: "five-minute mini symphonies for band."[75] These symphonies for band represent Talbot's knowledge of and affinity for symphonic music, which has become embedded in much of his compositional output.

Beyond a desire to play more challenging music, Talbot wanted to become more in control of his schedule. Talbot found himself waiting on the whims of Neil Hannon. In 1999, Hannon was producing his greatest-hits album, *A Secret History…The Best of the Divine Comedy,* leaving the rest of the band members without work. Talbot recalls: "*Fin de Siècle* had been done and then the 'best of' album came out and we weren't really doing anything. You can't just sit around for eight months doing nothing."[76] Following *A Secret History*, Hannon continued to take more artistic control over the band, leaving fewer opportunities for Talbot.[77] All of these factors eventually led to Joby Talbot leaving The Divine Comedy: "After a while I realized that I was having to turn away so much stuff on my own to work on somebody else's project and, however much fun it was, it had to end. And that's when I left."[78] Despite leaving the band, Talbot has fond memories and is grateful for his time with Neil Hannon. Talbot attributes his time with the Divine Comedy as formative as a composer: "It taught me an awful lot about music making. Doing the arrangements for Neil, I was really learning a lot from his

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[74] Joby Talbot, interview by Michael Hubbard, November 1, 2001, accessed on January 11, 2021, https://www.musicomh.com/features/interviews/interview-joby-talbot-2.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Joby Talbot, interview by Michael Hubbard, November 1, 2001, accessed on January 11, 2021, https://www.musicomh.com/features/interviews/interview-joby-talbot-2.
[78] Joby Talbot, interview by Darryn King, April 2014, https://darrynking.com/2015/10/09/interview-joby-talbot/.

songwriting craft, finding out how different musical elements could relate to one another. Looking back at it now, it was the best school for learning more about music really."[79]

Film

Talbot's first foray into writing for film came in 1999 with a commission by the British Film Institute to compose original music for Alfred Hitchcock's 1921 silent film *The Lodger.*[80] Since then, Joby Talbot has composed numerous film scores, as seen in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Joby Talbot's Film and TV Scores, in Chronological Order

Film Scores	Director	Dates	Length	Recordings
The Lodger	Alfred Hitchcock (Silent Film)	1999	1h 30m	N/A
Dark Ages (TV series)	Steve Bendelack	1999	N/A	N/A
Let the Good Times Roll	Dalia Ibelhauptaite	1999	35m	N/A
The League of Gentlemen (Series)	Steve Bendelack	1999-2002	N/A	N/A
Wild West (TV Series)	Simon Nye	2002	N/A	N/A
Robbie the Reindeer in Legend of the Lost Tribe (TV movie)	Peter Peake	2002	N/A	N/A
Grass (TV series)	Martin Dennis	2003	N/A	N/A
The League of Gentlemen's Apocalypse	Steve Bendelack	2005	42m	Silva Screen SILCD1189
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy	Garth Jennings	2005	1h 10m	Hollywood Records 5050467-8135-2-0
Penelope	Mark Palansky	2006	54m	Lakeshore Records LKS-339142 (2008)
Son of Rambow	Garth Jennings	2007	1h 2m	Bulletproof Records 91041 (2008)

[79] Joby Talbot, interview by Darryn King, April 2014, https://darrynking.com/2015/10/09/interview-joby-talbot/.

[80] Joby Talbot, "The Lodger," Wise Music Classical, accessed February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/11838/The-Lodger--Joby-Talbot/

Franklyn	Gerald McMorrow	2008	46m	Silva Screen Records, ASIN: B003EMO0KC (2010)
Is Anybody There?	John Crowley	2008	N/A	N/A
The Palace	Metin Hüseyin and Mauice Philips	2008	N/A	N/A
Psychoville (Television Score)	Matt Lipsey	2009-2011	N/A	N/A
Hunky Dory	Marc Evans	2011	N/A	N/A
Closed Circuit	John Crowley	2013	55m	Backlot Music (2013)
Sing	Garth Jennings	2016	34m	Backlot Music (2016)
Vampyr	A new soundtrack to Carl Dreyer's 1931 Horror Film	2018	1h 5m	N/A
Sing 2	Garth Jennings	2021*Not yet released	N/A	N/A

Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D,
as well as Talbot's IMDb page, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0847926/

Talbot's film music success jump-started with his score to the famous British Series, *The League of Gentlemen.*[81] His first feature film came with *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy.* Talbot refers to this film as being an immense challenge:

> It was actually my first feature film I did. It was huge! There was an hour and ten minutes of orchestral music. I had to write a big Busby Berkeley-ish showstopping song and dance number, I had to write a hymn, I had to write some sort of electronic bleepy cocktail music (which they might listen to in a cool lounge in outer space). Any kind of music you could imagine having to write, I had to write it for that thing. It was a real kind of baptism of fire, and I loved it.[82]

[81] Joby Talbot, "Selected Works," accessed on February 9, 2021, http://www.jobytalbot.com/works/#/screen/

[82] Joby Talbot, interview by Peter Simek, The Dallas Opera, May 15, 2012, at 27:28, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sm4HnJN6K4.

It was this project that led to a long-lasting relationship with film director Garth Jennings. Talbot says, "Garth is one of my very closest friends, as well as being a wonderful collaborator and a fantastic director and writer."[83] Since that first collaboration, Talbot and Jennings have collaborated on three other films, including *Son of Rambow, Sing,* and *Sing 2. Sing* is the largest film that Talbot has been a part of; it had a budget of $75,000,000 and grossed more than $600,000,000 worldwide.[84]

Ballet and Dance

In the realm of classical music, Talbot has enjoyed numerous successes in ballet and dance, of which a list can be found in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Joby Talbot's Dance Music, in Chronological Order

Ballet	Date	Premiere	Choreographer	Instrumentation	Length	Recordings/Video
Chroma	2007	The Royal Ballet, Covent Garden, London	Wayne McGregor	2+pic.2+ca.2+bcl ssx.asx.2+cbn43 31 timp.perc.hp.pf.s tr + amp	25m	Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, 2020
Genus	2007	Paris Opera Ballet	Wayne McGregor	Electronics	45m	Talbot and Deru, Genus, 2009, CD
Fool's Paradise	2007	Morphoses Dance Company, Sadler's Wells Theater	Christopher Wheeldon	hp.pf.str	30m	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Christopher Austin, Conductor, Signum Classics
Tide Harmonic (alt. Eau)	2009	CCN Roubaix	Carolyn Carlson	4perc.2hp..2pf. 2handpumped harmoniums. str(4.0.1.2.1)	1h 15m	Tide Harmonic, Joby Talbot, Signum Classics

[83] Joby Talbot, interview by Kaya Savas, December 6, 2016, at 5:50, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jv4Jqd9VfGw

[84] Sing, IMDb, accessed February 13, 2021, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3470600/?ref_=nm_flmg_com_7.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland	2011	The Royal Ballet, Covent Garden, London	Christopher Wheeldon	3(3pic,1afl) 2(oboe d'amore,ca) 3(Eflcl:bcl) 2(cbn)43(shofar) 2+btn1timps.5perc.2hp.2pno(celeste+toy piano)(str(10.10.8.8.6)+amp 4 female voices (or keyboard)	1h 55m	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Christopher Austin, Conductor, Signum Classics
Chamber Symphony	2012	Commissioned by the Nederlands Dans Theater, premiered at Dr. Anton Philips Hall, The Hague. Andrew Grams, Conductor	Medhi Walerski	2(pic:afl)2(ca)2(Ebcl,bcl)2(cbn)2.2.1+btn.0timp(perc).3percpfstr(8.6.4.3.2)	30m	N/A
The Winter's Tale	2014	The Royal Ballet, Covent Garden, London	Christopher Wheeldon	2.2.2.24.3.3.1timp.2perchp12.10.8.8.6	2h	Opus Arte DVD 1156D
Human Animal	2017	Performed by Ballet Boyz at Sadler's Wells, London on October 10, 2017	N/A	0.0.0.sx.0/0110/2perc/2kbd/str(1.1.1.1.1)	12m 30s	N/A

Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D

Talbot's first experience with dance came during his time as a composition student in the 1990s. It was not until 2007 that he had another opportunity to compose for dancers. Talbot reflects: "When I was a student, we did a dance collaboration with the London School of Contemporary Dance. I really enjoyed it and then I always hoped more would come of that and then it didn't.

And then, rather like busses, suddenly there's about 15 of them."[85] Indeed, the opportunities to compose for dance snowballed after *Chroma,* Talbot's first collaboration with Wayne MacGregor and the Royal Ballet. A few years after *Chroma,* Talbot began writing *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* the first full-length narrative ballet that the Royal Ballet in London had commissioned in twenty years.[86] Talbot describes his experience writing a nearly two-hour ballet:

> It was a huge undertaking. I wouldn't be surprised [if *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*] as single piece of music, has more notes than any other piece ever written. It's enormous. And also [ballets] tend to break things down into 5-minute chunks for a solo, trio or duet, or a big chorus or whatever. So, there's 24 or so of these little chunks. Every time you get going, you'd have to stop again because you're at the end of a scene and then start again. And also, the thing that Tchaikovsky, for example, does so effortlessly is making it seem as though it's actually one big, long arc, where actually it's made up of loads of numbers. So yeah, it was really hard trying to tell a story of that kind of complexity without recourse to words. All along I was thinking: "If only I had words!"[87]

Despite the challenges Talbot humbly described, he has received high accolades from numerous critics for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.*[88] This international success led to other commissions, including a second full-length narrative ballet with the Royal Ballet, *The Winter's Tale*, in 2014.[89]

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[85] Joby Talbot, interview by Peter Simek, The Dallas Opera, May 15, 2012, at 20:10, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sm4HnJN6K4.

[86] Joby Talbot, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," Wise Music Classical, accessed February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/43051/Alices-Adventures-in-Wonderland--Joby-Talbot/.

[87] Joby Talbot, interview by Peter Simek, The Dallas Opera, May 15, 2012, at 23:07, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sm4HnJN6K4.

[88] Joby Talbot, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," 2010, Reviews, Wise Music Classical, accessed February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/43051/Alices-Adventures-in-Wonderland--Joby-Talbot/.

[89] Joby Talbot, "The Winter's Tale," 2013, Wise Music Classical, accessed February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/48488/The-Winters-Tale--Joby-Talbot/.

Orchestral and Instrumental Music

Joby Talbot's first love is orchestral music, specifically the symphonic literature: "The great symphonies of the Romantic, late Romantic, and Early Modern period, those are the pieces that, if I were to be marooned on a desert island, I would take with me."[90] Talbot has composed dozens of symphonic, orchestral, chamber music, and solo instrumental pieces. A select list of his larger orchestral works can be found in Table 2.4, while a table of his other instrumental music can be found in appendix A.

Table 2.4 Joby Talbot's Selected Orchestral Compositions, in Chronological Order

Orchestral Scores	Date	Premiere	Instrumentation	Length	Recordings
Luminescence	1997	Commissioned by the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Peter Maxwell Davies, conductor	Perc/hp.pf/str(16.14.12.10.8)	12m	N/A
Incandescence (percussion concerto)	1998	N/A	1(pic)11.ssx.1/1111/2perc/hp.pf/str(1.1.1.1.1)	20m	N/A
Lovers' Ink	1999	N/A	3(pic) 2(ca) 3(2bcl) 34331 timp 3perc.hp.pf. str	20m	N/A
Hovercraft	2004	Kensington Symphony Orchestra	3(pic).3(ca).2+bcl.3(cbn)4.3.2 +btbn.1timp.3perchp.pf(cel)str	5m	N/A
Sneaker Wave	2004	BBC National Orchestra of Wales at the 2004 BBC Proms	3(2+3=pic) 2+ca.2+bcl 3(3cbn) 4331 timp. 3perc hp. pf. cel.[org] str	15m	N/A
Desolation Wilderness	2006	Royal Liverpool and Turku Philharmonic	2(1&2=pic)1+ca.2(2=bcl)2 (2=cbn) 2220 timp.3perc hp str	23m	N/A

[90] Joby Talbot, interview with author, January 14, 2021.

(Trumpet Concerto)		Orchestras, Alison Balsom soloist			
Chacony in G Minor (after Purcell)	2011	BBC Symphony Orchestra (Proms 2011), Jiri Belohlavek, Conductor at the Royal Albert Hall, London	22223230timp.3percstr	6m	N/A
Fool's Paradise	2012	N/A	hp.pf.str	30m	https://signumrecords.com/product/alices-adventures-in-wonderland/SIGCD327/
Meniscus	2012	Commissioned by the National Centre for the Performing Arts, Beijing for the World Environment Day concert, 2012. World premiere by the Symphony Orchestra of the NCPA on June 3, 2012	3(pic).3(ca).2(Clarinet in Eb) +bcl. 2+cbn /4.3.2+btbn.1/ timp(tal). 2perc / hp.pf /str	8m 30s	N/A
Ink Dark Moon (Guitar Concerto)	2018	Commissioned by BBC Radio 3 and Borusan Istanbul. First performed by Miloš Karadaglic with the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Vedernikov on 2nd August 2018 in the Royal Albert Hall, London as part of the 2018 BBC Proms.	2(2pic)2(2ca)22(2cbn)/2.2.1+ btbn.0/timp.3perc/hp.pf(cel) str	25m	N/A

Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D

Talbot's orchestral and instrumental music has been performed all over the world. In 1997, while still touring with the Divine Comedy, Talbot received a commission from the BBC Philharmonic, for whom he wrote *Luminescence*; his first commission by a prominent

orchestra.[91] Since then, Talbot's has been commissioned by the BBC on several occasions, and by orchestras in Beijing and Istanbul.[92]

Opera

Joby Talbot has composed two operas, *Everest,* and *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly,* both commissioned by the Dallas Opera.[93] *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* was scheduled to be premiered on March 5 of 2021 but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It will receive its premiere in the 2022-2023 concert season at the Dallas Opera.[94] Details about both *Everest* and *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* can be found in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5 Joby Talbot's Operas, in Chronological Order

Opera	Date	Librettist	Premiere/Commission	Orchestration	Soloists	Length	Recordings
Everest	2014	Gene Scheer	Commissioned by The Dallas Opera. Keith Cerny, General Director and CEO. Nicole Paiement, conductor.	3(2pic;afl). 3(ca). 3(Eb,bcl;bcl, cbcl). 2(cbn) 4.3inC(pic). 2.1 btn.1timp. 4perc pf.hp.cel (MIDI.Kbd). str (12.10.8.8.6)	Mezzo Soprano, Soprano, Tenor, 2 Baritones	1h 15m	N/A
The Diving Bell and the Butterfly	2021	Gene Scheer (Based on the novel by Jean-Dominique Bauby)	Commissioned by The Dallas Opera. Scheduled to be performed in 2021, postponed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D

[91] Joby Talbot, "Luminescence," Wise Music Classical, 1997, accessed on February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/8651/Luminescence--Joby-Talbot/.

[92] Joby Talbot, "composer page," Wise Music Classical, accessed on February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/composer/1558/Joby-Talbot/.

[93] Joby Talbot, "Biography," Wise Music Classical, accessed on February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/composer/1558/Joby-Talbot/.

[94] "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly," The Dallas Opera, accessed on February 14, 2021, https://dallasopera.org/performance/diving-bell-and-the-butterfly/.

Everest tells the story of the deadly 1996 expedition to Mount Everest, made infamous by the book *Into Thin Air* by John Krakauer. The opera was premiered in 2015 by the Dallas Opera with, directed by Leonard Foglia and conducted by Nicole Paiement.[95] The characters are Rob Hall, the expedition leader, and two of the clients he is helping reach the summit, Doug Hansen and Beck Weathers. The other characters are Meg (Beck Weather's daughter) and Jan (Rob Hall's wife).[96] Gene Scheer interviewed survivors of the expedition in his process of writing the libretto.[97] The chorus, representing the ghosts of climbers who have died on the mountain, plays a significant role in *Everest*.[98] Talbot mentions the substantial amount of writing for the chorus in his opera: "*Everest* has a ton of choral writing. It's not as complicated as the choral writing in *Path of Miracles*, but it's one of my maybe three big choral pieces."[99] Anyone curious about Talbot's choral music would find it meaningful to study *Everest.* Although no public recording is currently available, Talbot expects one will become available in the future.

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly libretto, also by Gene Scheer, tells the story of Jean-Dominique Bauby, the editor-in-chief for Elle magazine, who becomes paralyzed from a stroke. Out of desperation to communicate with the outside world, Bauby develops a system of blinks. With the help of his ex-partner, Bauby writes a memoir.[100] This highly emotional and deeply

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[95] Dallas Opera, "Everest," accessed May 26, 2021, https://dallasopera.org/performance/everest/.

[96] Joby Talbot, "Everest," Wise Music Classical, 2014, accessed February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/51141/Everest--Joby-Talbot/.

[97] Bill Zeeble, "The Cold Wrath of Nature, Given Operatic Voice," NPR, February 7, 2015, accessed February 14, 2021, https://www.npr.org/sections/deceptivecadence/2015/02/04/383888665/the-cold-wrath-of-nature-given-operatic-voice.

[98] Stu Lewis, "Talbot's Everest: In-Depth Guide," Lyric Opera Kansas City, 2017, accessed on February 14, 2021, https://kcopera.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Everest-Draft-FINAL.pdf.

[99] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 8.

[100] Joby Talbot and Gene Scheer, "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly," Wise Music Classical, 2021, accessed February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/59876/The-Diving-Bell-and-the-Butterfly--Joby-Talbot/.

human story is full of operatic drama. It will undoubtedly be a "can't miss" event when it becomes safe to stage the production following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Choral and Vocal Works

The bulk of Joby Talbot's compositional output is instrumental. Talbot has, however, had numerous successes with his vocal writing. This success is consistent for Talbot – no matter the genre, he finds a way to compose music that is demanding yet enjoyable for both performers and audiences. In 2002, Talbot composed "The Wishing Tree," a commission from the King's Singers, premiered at the BBC Proms that same year.[101] "The Wishing Tree" utilizes short melodic fragments reminiscent of both David Lang and Arvo Pärt, yet distinctly exemplifying the most engaging aspects of Talbot's choral writing. The harmonies are pleasing and develop slowly. Talbot presents a melodic and rhythmic cell, then adds a contrasting yet interlocking cell, providing rhythmic energy to the development of the material. The development of these cells often results in dissonance yet resolve to consonances shortly after. Talbot's pacing, layering, and development of the thematic material maximize the dramatic effect in the piece. As the music builds energy, the hocket-like interjections from the various voices give way to broad sweeping melodic material before becoming static. Talbot returns to the opening material to close the piece. Just as Talbot described his compositions for Billiardman as "five-minute symphonies for band," "The Wishing Tree" takes the listeners on a thrilling, emotional journey in this short, four-minute work.[102]

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[101] Joby Talbot, "The Wishing Tree," Wise Music Classical, 2002, accessed February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/13764/The-Wishing-Tree--Joby-Talbot/

[102] Joby Talbot, interview by Michael Hubbard, November 1, 2001, accessed on January 11, 2021, https://www.musicomh.com/features/interviews/interview-joby-talbot-2.

Shortly after writing "The Wishing Tree," Talbot was commissioned by Tenebrae to compose *Path of Miracles,* which undoubtedly is Talbot's most famous choral work.[103] Despite these early successes in choral music, Talbot has written surprisingly few pieces for choir. While he wrote several smaller choral works shortly after *Path of Miracles,* choirs had to wait thirteen years for his next major choral work: *A Sheen of Dew on Flowers*.[104] *A Sheen of Dew on Flowers* is an hour-long cantata for orchestra and mixed chorus, with baritone and mezzo-soprano soloists. The libretto is a compilation of poetry, all by female poets, that spans three thousand years. Jane Hirshfield served as librettist and translated the poems for Talbot.[105] Talbot writes that "*A Sheen of Dew on Flowers* is a piece about the strength of love, the fragility of life, and the symbolic power of objects."[106] Talbot, although very humble, admits that he is quite proud of this work.[107] There is no definitive recording of this piece yet, and, at the moment, the score is only available for rental through Chester Music. Because of these factors, few people are aware of this latest addition to the choral canon by Talbot, and it is a prime candidate for future dissertations and scholarly writing.

Talbot's interest in a variety of music and his background as an instrumentalist are two reasons he has composed relatively little choral and solo vocal music. At present day, Talbot only has nine published choral works (eight if you don't include "All things are too small to hold

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[103] Joby Talbot, "Path of Miracles," Wise Music Classical, 2005, accessed on February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/14740/Path-of-Miracles--Joby-Talbot/.
[104] Joby Talbot, "A Sheen of Dew on Flowers," Wise Music Classical, 2018, accessed on February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/59333/A-Sheen-of-Dew-on-Flowers--Joby-Talbot/
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Joby Talbot, message to author, January 14, 2021.

me," which is excerpted from *A Sheen of Dew on Flowers),* as seen in Table 2.6.[108] Four of the nine choral works are choral-orchestral (see Table 2.7).

Table 2.6 Joby Talbot's Choral Works, in Chronological Order

Piece	Date	Librettist	Premiere	Instrumentation	Length	Recordings
Lost Forever (SA)	2000	Roddy Lumsden	N/A	Female Chorus, piano (optional strings and percussion)	4m	Rising w/ The Crossing, Donald Nally, Conductor
The Wishing Tree	2002	Kathleen Jamie	Premiered by the King's Singers at the BBC Proms, 2002	Available for 6 male voices or SATB Chorus	4m	Evoco Voice Collective Mixed Ensemble, David Fryling, Conductor
Path of Miracles	2005	Robert Dickinson	Commissioned by Tenebrae, premiered at the City of London Festival in July 2005.	SSSSSAAAATTTT BBBB	1h	Ensemble: Tenebrae, Nigel Short, Conductor Signum Classics, catalogue Number SIGCD078 Conspirare, Craig Hella Johnson, Conductor Harmonia mundi, catalogue number HMU 807603
Ave Verum Corpus	2006	Either Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) or Pope Innocent IV (1243-1254) *Information from the Jeffers Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Volume 1: Sacred Latin Texts	Commissioned by the Norfolk and Norwich Festival, premiered by the Academy of Ancient Music; Norfolk and Norwich Festival Chorus, John Aplin, Conductor	SATB Chorus and Strings	8m	N/A

[108] Joby Talbot, composer page, Wise Music Classical, accessed February 14, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/composer/1558/Joby-Talbot/.

All things are too small to hold me	2019	Hadewijch II. Translated by Jane Hirshfield	A choral arrangement taken from the 5th movement of "A Sheen of Dew on Flowers"	SATB, piano	4m 30s	N/A

Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D

Table 2.7 Joby Talbot's Choral Orchestral Works, in Chronological Order

Title	Date	Premiere	Instrumentation	Length	Recordings
Finding Silence	1997	Commissioned by Crouch End Festival Chorus	1(afl) 1(ca) 0011(flg) 10perc. dmkit hp. pf str(6.6.4.4.3(C extension)) Large SATB Chorus	30m	N/A
The Same Dog	2000	Commissioned by Crouch End Festival Chorus	1(pic)120/2221/pf/4perc/str(4.4.2.2.1)(amplified orchestra and samples) SATB Chorus Soloists: Medium-low voice Soprano Saxophone	N/A	N/A
Worlds, Stars, Systems, Infinity	2012	Philharmonia Orchestra, Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor at the Royal Festival Hall, London on July 8, 2012	2(pic).3(Bass Oboe)+ca.2+Clarinet in A+bcl.3+cbn6.4.2+btbn.02timp(cym). 4perc 2hp.cel+org. str SSSAAAA Chorus	7m	N/A

A Sheen of Dew on Flowers	2018	Commissioned by Independent Opera at Sadler's Wells. Premiered on April 11, 2018 at the Barbican Centre, London by the Britten Sinfonia and Britten Sinfonia Voices, Natalie Murray Beale, Conductor	2(2pic)2(ca)2(bcl)2(cbn)2200 timp.4perchp.pf+celstr SATB Chorus Soloists: Baritone/Mezzo Soprano	55m	N/A

Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D

Factoring into Talbot's relatively small vocal output is his discernment when setting texts. Talbot states:

> You're constantly asking yourself the question: why am I bothering to set this to music? Why isn't this text just spoken? This is the reason I've actually written, I think, so few songs. It's very rare for me to come across a poem that I feel needs to be set to music. If I like it enough to like it, usually it's because it works as a poem.[109]

While Talbot does set other poets' texts (in addition to his choral works, Talbot has seven publications of solo vocal works, as seen in Table 2.8) his reluctance to do so is apparent. For both of Talbot's operas and *Path of Miracles* and *A Sheen of Dew on Flowers,* Talbot worked with a librettist to write or translate texts specifically for him to set to music. As discussed in Chapter Three, there are accommodations that poets make knowing the text will be set to music, especially when sung by a choir.

Table 2.8 Joby Talbot's Solo Vocal Works, in Chronological Order

Piece	Date	Librettist	Premiere	Instrumentation	Length	Recordings
Three Songs from the Underground	1995	N/A	N/A	Baritone [mezzo-soprano] / pf	9m	N/A
The Seafarer	1996	N/A	N/A	Mezzo Soprano / 3 per	13m	N/A

[109] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 7.

Queen Caroline's Estate	1997	Tanya Gupta	N/A	Soprano / 2cl/va.vc.db	6m	N/A
Two Tuberama Songs	1997	Georgina Starr	N/A	Voice / 0.0.0.ssx+asx.00110percpfElectric Bass Guitarstr(1.1.1.1.0)	11m 43s	N/A
Life Support	1998	Hugh Montgomery	N/A	Mezzo soprano / pf	6m	N/A
Cicerones	2002	N/A	N/A	Mezzo Soprano / cl/tbn/vib.hmn.pf/ electronic programming	8m	N/A
Mistress Mine, well may you fare	2016	Thomas Morely	Commissioned by Marie Luise Werneburg	Soprano/lute, viola da gamba	2m	Marie Luise Werneburg, Diaphenia 2019

Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D

Chapter 3.
An Origin Story

Path of Miracles is a remarkable achievement as each facet is so intrinsically woven into the others. Hindsight makes it easy to assume that the final product was inevitable. However, perusal of the background of *Path of Miracles'* conception reveals how easily it could have become a very different piece than the one that Talbot created. It was the happy product of a chain of integral decisions, each one complementing the prior – Nigel Short commissioned the work, Gabriel Crouch introduced Joby Talbot, the composer, to Short, and Talbot brought on Robert Dickinson, the librettist – resulting in the piece that is available today. Should any of these connections not have been made, *Path of Miracles* may not have become such a unified work. While many people helped guide this work from its origin, Gabriel Crouch was one of the most significant contributors. Crouch currently serves as the Director of Choral Activities at Princeton University. Before his life as a conductor, Crouch spent years as a professional singer in England, including eight years with the King's Singers. While, at first glance, Crouch may seem like a peripheral affiliate to *Path of Miracles,* he was intimately involved with every aspect of its creation. Crouch introduced Talbot to Nigel Short and was Short's biggest confidant throughout the project. Crouch met with Talbot on numerous occasions to encourage him and act as a sounding board. Gabriel Crouch connected Jack Sage, the medieval Spanish scholar, and expert on the Camino de Santiago, with Robert Dickinson to help create the libretto. Crouch even identified the four staging posts along the Camino de Santiago (Roncesvalles, Burgos, Leon, and Santiago) and decided to name the movements after those Cathedral cities. No one has sung *Path of Miracles* more than Crouch, and, finally, Gabriel Crouch produced Tenebrae's

recording of the *Path of Miracles,* which is a triumphant success.[110] As in life, it is interesting to look back on the multitude of events and choices that led to what we now call *Path of Miracles* and realize all the places it could have gone astray. Thank goodness it stayed on track, or rather, thank Gabriel Crouch.

Nigel Short, who commissioned and conducted the *Path of Miracles* premiere*,* is a renowned countertenor and conductor. Short has performed with some of the great choral ensembles in England, including the Westminster Abbey Cathedral, the Tallis Scholars, the King's Consort, and the King's Singers.[111] When Nigel Short left the King's Singers in 2000, he wanted to start a new chapter in his artistic life. After spending a season skiing in the Swiss Alps, Short set about founding Tenebrae, whose motto is "Passion and Precision."[112] Joby Talbot describes how Nigel Short formed Tenebrae by "taking singers who were very much from the English choral tradition and then sort of sweetening it with Baroque opera singers. Not big warbly operatic voices, but Handelian operatic voices buried inside the chorus."[113] In doing so, Tenebrae has established itself as possessing one of the most powerful chamber choir sounds in the world.

In addition to creating a robust yet precise choral sound, Short wanted to impact choral repertoire. Gabriel Crouch says: "What is the point of Tenebrae? What does Tenebrae exist for? Nigel was very clear that this wasn't the Monteverdi Choir, and it wasn't the Sixteen. He wanted to make a deep footprint in repertoire that felt apart from other groups. And also, to have a kind

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[110] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 15.
[111] Keith Finke, "Artist Biography of Nigel Short," *All Music*, accessed on February 20, 2021, https://www.allmusic.com/artist/nigel-short-mn0000590137/biography.
[112] Nigel Short, "Nigel Short Biography," *Path of Miracles CD Liner Notes,* Signum records, 2005, CD, 15-16.
[113] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 2.

of performing ethos that was apart from other groups as well."[114] To make an impact on repertoire, Short "wanted to have some 'signature' works that would make Tenebrae different, adding a theatrical element that would involve singers moving around as if on stage."[115] This desire to add theatrical elements led Nigel Short to commission a new choral work, one that took the audience on a journey along the Camino de Santiago (the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain). Nigel Short had "this obsession with journeys, with geographical location, space, and choral music," says Crouch.[116] With a germinating idea, Nigel Short set out to fund the project before selecting a composer or composers.

Barbara Pollock had been a part of Tenebrae from the outset and was to a great deal responsible for the ensemble's success. Nigel Short describes how Pollock "took the choir under [her] wing offering us management for many happy years, helping me to establish Tenebrae's reputation for delivering on its motto – Passion and Precision – in all our performances."[117] Gabriel Crouch confirms that Barbara Pollock "was the person who did more than anyone else to get Tenebrae off the ground…She's a huge part of [the creation of *Path of Miracles*]."[118] In addition to Barbara Pollock, the City of London Festival helped co-commission the work.[119] With funds in hand, Nigel Short sought out the right composer(s) and poet(s) for *Path of Miracles*.

In the beginning stages of the commissioning process, Nigel Short and Gabriel Crouch planned to contract four composers and four poets rather than have one composer write the

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[114] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 17.
[115] Nigel Short, "Nigel Short Biography," *Path of Miracles CD Liner Notes,* Signum records, 2005, CD, 16.
[116] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 17.
[117] Nigel Short, "First Person: 15 years of Tenebrae, a lifetime of choral music," theartsdesk.com, 2017, accessed February 20, 2021, https://theartsdesk.com/classical-music/first-person-15-years-tenebrae-lifetime-choral-music.
[118] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 5.
[119] Ibid.

whole piece.[120] While Crouch was performing with the King's Singers, he met Joby Talbot through a similar commissioning project. In 2002-2003, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the queen's coronation, the King's Singers commissioned eight composers and eight poets for a concert at Royal Albert Hall.[121] Talbot was one of the composers selected, and his resultant piece was "The Wishing Tree" – one of Talbot's first choral compositions and, at the time, his highest-profile choral work. Despite Talbot's lack of choral writing experience, Crouch remembers that it was "The Wishing Tree" that grabbed the group's attention, and more importantly, the attention of Nigel Short: "Nigel Short […] was listening to the concert on the radio, and he phoned me up immediately to say: 'Loved the concert, but I *really* loved the Joby Talbot piece.'"[122] Part of the appeal of "The Wishing Tree" stems from Talbot's instrumental background. Crouch says that he is "really into the idea of seeing what non-choral composers do when given a choir to work with. I think exciting things happen."[123] The instrumental nature of Talbot's vocal writing continued with *Path of Miracles.*

However, both Short and Crouch initially had reservations and were not ready to give Talbot the reigns to *Path of Miracles*. They were reluctant to rely on one composer for such a large work. Crouch says that, in a way, they were hedging their bets:

> The mindset at this time is driven by fear of commissions that you've experienced in the past. I've been part of a lot of musical commissions and, honestly, the number of commissions that really turn out to be successful is well under 50 percent. Think about all of the commissioned music and how much of it is only heard once. Sometimes that's not the fault of the music at all. But, still, we felt like the law of averages meant that it would be safer for us to commission a sequence of pieces in the hope that one of them would turn out to be brilliant.[124]

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[120] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 3.
[121] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 1.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 3-4.

Despite the excitement of having composers from outside the choral tradition compose choral music, Talbot's relative inexperience heightened the risk for Tenebrae. However, after many meetings between Short, Crouch, and Talbot, it became increasingly clear that Talbot was the right choice. Crouch remembers:

> The three of us were just getting on really well. It really did feel like we were onto something. That Joby was onto something and that we should really trust him. He was incredibly passionate about the idea right from the very beginning.…It did feel like some kind of magical alchemic process was happening. At the point where he [Talbot] went: "You know, why don't you just trust me to write the whole piece?" I have to admit, it did make a lot of sense. Nigel and I started to think, "well, what are we worrying about?" And that turned out, gosh, I don't know how the future's going to look back on this piece, but someone said that it's the first choral masterpiece of the 21st-century. And I do see it that way. I feel incredibly proud to have been involved.[125]

It is remarkable to think that the piece came close to becoming a project for a consortium of composers. As logical as that might seem, with each composer uniquely scoring a particular movement, *Path of Miracles* would not be the unified journey, a picture of a pilgrimage, that it is. In a similar fashion, the story of how Robert Dickinson, the librettist, became involved is equally compelling.

Initially, Gabriel Crouch wanted to work with Andrew Motion, the poet laureate in England, to create the libretto for *Path of Miracles.* Crouch was a fan of Motion's writing and asked him to be a part of this project:

> I can remember really clearly Andrew, quite belatedly, writing me a letter [essentially saying] he didn't want to be involved in a project which had, at its heart, a kind of spiritual notion. Even though I was impressing on him the fact that we didn't want this to be an overtly Catholic piece. We wanted this to be a human piece. I remember that he said, "I feel fatally divorced on the subject matter," which was an incredibly nice way of saying he wasn't interested, and so we felt slightly on our own at that point.[126]

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[125] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 4.
[126] Ibid., 3.

Andrew Motion's declination of the offer coincided with Talbot advocating for himself to compose the entire work. Furthermore, Talbot knew the poet to create the libretto. There was just one problem. Talbot did not have the poet's contact information and could not remember his name. Robert Dickinson recalls the story:

> Back in late 90s, one of my poems won a prize in England; a national poetry prize that came third was published in one of those Sunday newspapers. [Joby Talbot] told me he'd seen this poem in his newspaper and liked it enough to sort of cut it out and keep it. He did eventually lose it. Originally the collaboration for *Path of Miracles* was supposed to be with another poet, but that fell through for other reasons. And [Talbot] thought, as a backup: "who was the person who wrote that poem that I liked that I read all those years ago which I no longer have a copy of?" Fortunately, the poetry society, which is an organization that arranges readings, and it organized the competition, was able to name that person. They had my contact details and they brought us together initially.[127]

Dickinson's award-winning poem is titled "Proofs," which is about medieval French saints; the connection between the medieval nature of the Camino de Santiago and Dickinson's poem made him an excellent choice as the librettist.[128] To help provide source material for the libretto, Gabriel Crouch contacted Jack Sage, an academic from King's College who was an expert on medieval Spain.[129] Crouch had worked with Sage on various projects with the King's Singers and put him in contact with Talbot and Dickinson.[130] The libretto is discussed in detail in Chapter Five, however it is important to note that it was a combination of the information provided to Dickinson by Sage, as well as Dickinson's own extensive research on the Camino de Santiago, which helped form the libretto.[131] Crouch recalls: "I very quickly got the impression that Robert knew what he was doing…And what he didn't know, he really knew how to research…Robert

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[127] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 1.
[128] Joby Talbot, "A Note By Joby Talbot," *Path of Miracles CD Liner Notes,* Signum records, 2005, CD, 5.
[129] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 3.
[130] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 7.
[131] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 3.

was a very capable academic himself, as it struck me."[132] Dickinson got to work, and he and Talbot developed a positive collaborative relationship.

As the composition process began, Talbot was experiencing an assortment of emotional life events. Talbot and his wife had a young child, he simultaneously received three of the most significant commissions of his life (up to that point), and his father was dying.[133] Talbot remembers:

> My father was very ill, so I was rushing up and down to the hospital…it was just incredibly intense. When I had a few days to work on *Path of Miracles*, I had to grab it and do it…I had to do a lot of prep to make sure that I wasn't going to just wander off, because there was no time for writing big chunks of music that I then cut. I mean, I think of my writing process now, how much music I write hits the cutting room floor; I don't think a single note of *Path of Miracles* hit the cutting room floor. Everything I wrote is in there.[134]

Considering the scale of *Path of Miracles,* the fact that everything Talbot composed made it into the score demonstrates the clarity of his vision for the work. It is interesting to note that during the composition process, Talbot wrote the movements out of order. Instead of "Roncesvalles," "Burgos," "Leon," "Santiago" (as they appear in the score), Talbot wrote "Leon" first, followed by "Burgos," "Roncesvalles," and finally "Santiago."[135] When Talbot finished a section, he would send it on to Nigel Short. Gabriel Crouch and Nigel Short would play through excerpts of the music that Talbot sent them on a piano. While they were excited about what they saw in "Leon," they were equally worried about what they saw in "Burgos." Crouch recalls their initial reaction to "Burgos:"

> I do remember that Nigel's first reaction to it was: "Oh, God." [in a cringing tone]. That second movement, it nags. Deliberately, it hurts. It is the musical manifestation of blisters. And we sat with those nagging chords, and you play them on the piano, and it is

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[132] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 8.
[133] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 5.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 4.

> a bit like, "what on earth are we going to do? What are we going to make of this?" We were quite worried about it, both of us.[136]

However, any misgivings they had about "Burgos" melted away when the rehearsal process began. Crouch says that as soon as you "put it in human voices and you attach words to it, it immediately makes sense."[137] While the dissonance in "Burgos" is painful, it is in service of the text and appropriate in the pilgrimage story. Furthermore, singers can tune the minor-second dissonances more purely than a piano can, so the bitterness is slightly sweetened. While the musical affect in "Burgos" turned out to be a non-issue, the rehearsal process was not always smooth.

As mentioned earlier, Joby Talbot came to the *Path of Miracles* project relatively inexperienced as a choral composer. While there was excitement from Nigel Short and Gabriel Crouch to have a primarily instrumental composer push the limits of the human voice, some of the Tenebrae members felt that Talbot occasionally pushed too far. Crouch recalls a tense moment: "I can remember a rehearsal where there were some blunt words exchanged between the low bass contingent and the composer."[138] Talbot asks a lot of each voice part, but perhaps none so demanding as the low basses who are occasionally asked to sing low-Ds at a fortissimo dynamic. These demands, coupled with a desire from all parties to be successful, resulted in a heated exchange. It must have been an uncomfortable situation, but Crouch describes Talbot's response as being incredibly respectful: "With a straight back and an open heart [Talbot said] 'Okay, if this isn't quite going to work, what is going to work?' [He was] not just engaging with the conductor or with me, but with the singers as individuals."[139] It was this mutual respect

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[136] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 16-17.
[137] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 17.
[138] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 16.
[139] Ibid.

between all of the musicians that allowed this conflict to be resolved amicably. Crouch makes it clear that in no way was this detrimental to the rehearsal process, and in fact helped to strengthen the relationship between the choir and Talbot: "Because of the spirit of the rehearsal, it was not a problem. It really felt like it was part of the creative process…It wasn't anger or protest, but it was passion."[140] However, Crouch admits that "for a fleeting second it was quite heart stopping."[141]

Crouch contextualizes this conflict, offering an extreme amount of empathy for the plight of professional singers. Crouch explains how these singers are some of the most skilled musicians in Britain, and yet many of them are barely making ends meet each month. These personal and financial stresses can lead to conflict, especially when the singers feel like too much is being demanded of them. Throughout the rehearsal process, many edits were made to the score as Talbot and Tenebrae found the right balance of pushing the limitations of the voices without crossing the figurative line. Recounting this story is not meant to solicit drama but instead intends to show the intensity of the creative and collaborative process that went into bringing *Path of Miracles* to life. Despite these minor conflicts, the overall experience for the singers in Tenebrae, Nigel Short, Gabriel Crouch, and Joby Talbot was overwhelmingly positive. Additionally, each person involved was keenly aware of the historical significance of their work. Crouch says: "Outside of the King's Singers, I've never had an experience as a professional singer in Britain where I was part of a group that was so swept up in something that we were doing; to be in a group where everyone recognizes the significance of what they're involved with."[142] Being aware of history as it is happening is a rare experience and one to be treasured.

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[140] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 16.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 15.

As the rehearsal process was wrapping up and the premiere was drawing near, there was a lot of excitement among Tenebrae and the City of London Festival. The premiere was to be held on July 7, 2005 at the church Saint Bartholomew the Great, in London. Crouch recalls: "We had two performances in a day lined up and it was going to be in Saint Bart's, which is the only medieval church in London…a really atmospheric venue. These premiere concerts were going to be a huge deal [with] lots and lots of press."[143] However, on the morning of the premiere, London experienced one of its worst terrorist attacks in recent history. Crouch remembers: "This was an extraordinary time in London because the day before we'd just found out that the 2012 Olympics were coming to London. So, the night before, London was this huge party. Then at 9:00 a.m. the next morning all these bombs started going off on buses."[144] Crouch was actually on a bus in London when the bombs exploded: "I was heading to rehearsal. All of a sudden, the bus driver's like, 'everybody off, everybody off the bus,' and that was it."[145] Naturally, the concerts were postponed as London shut down for several days.

The concerts were rescheduled for July 17, a mere ten days after the bombings. Nick Breckenfield, who reviewed the premiere performances, wrote: "It was heartening that both the City of London Festival, Tenebrae and the church authorities of St. Bartholomew the Great were able to reschedule the premiere so quickly."[146] Indeed, it surely took the efforts of many people to make these concerts happen. The premieres were still extraordinary performances. However, as a result of the terrorist attacks, it was difficult to generate a buzz around the piece due to the lack

[143] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 5.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Nick Breckenfield, "Joby Talbot – Path of Miracles Review," Classicalsource.com, July 17, 2005, accessed on February 20, 2021, https://www.classicalsource.com/concert/joby-talbot-path-of-miracles/.

of press that otherwise would have been present.[147] Out of respect for the lives lost, each of the concerts began in "silent contemplation and then in prayer."[148] Crouch confirmed that "they were certainly quite thoughtful, solemn, muted occasions," but said that "there was a lot resolve in the air as well."[149] Due to the lack of press, news about *Path of Miracles* disseminated much more slowly than Nigel Short, Gabriel Crouch, and Tenebrae would have liked. It took about five years for the piece to begin generating momentum in the United States. Crouch said he had been tracking the progress of *Path of Miracles* since its inception, and "suddenly, in 2010, it seemed to go all over the country. Conspirare made their recording, and The Crossing performed it, and then good amateur choirs started to take it on and started to realize that student choirs can do this piece."[150] Since then, *Path of Miracles* has been performed around the world by numerous ensembles.

Despite the delayed premiere, Tenebrae and Nigel Short wasted little time. They began recording *Path of Miracles* the day after the bombings and wrapped on July 11, 2005.[151] *Path of Miracles* was recorded at All Hallows Church, Gospel Oak, in London, with Gabriel Crouch producing the CD. Gabriel Crouch says: "Adrian Peacock was the producer of choice for Tenebrae. But, if you've got Adrian Peacock in the booth and you're recording *Path of Miracles*, you're doing something wrong. Adrian needs to be singing. I don't need to be singing this piece. That's why I was in the booth."[152] Crouch, ever humble, downplays his skill and role in this project. The recording he produced for Tenebrae is a remarkable accomplishment. Talbot

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[147] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 5.
[148] Nick Breckenfield, "Joby Talbot – Path of Miracles Review," Classicalsource.com, July 17, 2005, accessed on February 20, 2021, https://www.classicalsource.com/concert/joby-talbot-path-of-miracles/.
[149] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 5.
[150] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 6.
[151] "Path of Miracles Liner Notes," Signum Records, 2005, 19.
[152] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 19.

concurs: “Never before or since have I had such an absolutely consummately, perfect set of performances and a recording of a piece. I mean, it's every bit as good as I possibly could have imagined, which never happens.”[153]

The success of *Path of Miracles* was a confluence of events. Nigel Short had come up with a brilliant concept for a piece of choral music, and Joby Talbot was ready to take on a project of this magnitude. Gabriel Crouch considers the various aspects that made *Path of Miracles* such a special project:

> Finding all of this fruitful material, getting on board with this composer who was so obviously juiced by the idea and who was at that stage in his career where he was ready to write the big piece. And Tenebrae was ready to perform the big piece. And we were all the right age as well.…We all had that kind of endless energy for it and belief in it.…It is all so much value added to this project because of the passion of the creative force. Because of Joby’s passion for it and Nigel’s energy for it.[154]

It is rare to be part of a creative project like this, and most artists spend their careers searching for those experiences. When opportunities arise, a person must be able to grab hold of it. Gabriel Crouch is incredibly aware and appreciative of that fact: “I can't imagine if I was involved in another commission project like this that I would be able to get so swept up by it, because life is different now. And I'm Sure Nigel would say the same thing, and I'm sure Joby would say the same thing.”[155]

Path of Miracles is a powerful piece of music. Choirs love to perform it, and audiences love to hear it. Even Joby Talbot, who also is a humble man and has enjoyed many compositional successes, says that *Path of Miracles* holds a special place in his heart:

> If somebody said, “show us one thing you've done that you're really proud of,” it would be *Path of Miracles*. I've had huge success with other things that I'm also very proud of. But there's something about that piece. Maybe because it was the first piece where I

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[153] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 3.
[154] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 17-18.
[155] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 17.

> really feel I reached a place with my writing where I thought, I see now why I have devoted my entire life to this.[156]

As important as this work is to Talbot personally, he appreciates that it has grown beyond him. Much like a proud father, Talbot enjoys watching the piece develop a life of its own:

> [*Path of Miracles*] means a lot to me, but then conversely, and almost more gratifyingly…how it's really nothing to do with me. Stravinsky said when you finish a piece you send it out into the world and it's no longer anything to do with you. It's like a balloon that flies off; you let go of the string and that's the end of that. And so it is. It's gone. So, when I hear ensembles do it (whether it's choirs like Tenebrae who I've heard do it so many times before or on new choirs) I'm just an audience member now. My idea of sitting there trying to imagine how I would feel if I was sitting in the front row listening to it has come true.[157]

Path of Miracles is not just loved by Talbot, performers, and audiences, but also by critics. Nick Breckenfield wrote in his review that, *Path of Miracles* "is a major statement and supremely assured. Tenebrae…have surely got a major hit; I would go as far to suggest that Talbot's 'Path of Miracles' is to the first decade of the 21st-century what Arvo Pärt's 'Passio' was twenty years earlier."[158] As the 21st-century marches on, the evidence suggest that Breckenfield was right. Considering the continued success of the piece and Talbot's broad-ranging success as a classical music composer, *Path of Miracles* is sure to remain a fixture of the Western choral music canon for generations. One of the hopes of this dissertation is to help illuminate the reasons why it should be.

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[156] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 15.

[157] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 15-16.

[158] Nick Breckenfield, "Joby Talbot – Path of Miracles Review," Classicalsource.com, July 17, 2005, accessed on February 20, 2021, https://www.classicalsource.com/concert/joby-talbot-path-of-miracles/.

Chapter 4.
Saint James the Greater, The Camino de Santiago, and the *Codex Calixtinus*

Saint James the Greater

Path of Miracles is a choral work that emulates the Camino de Santiago. The Camino de Santiago refers to the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, the accepted burial place of Saint James the Greater (Santiago translates from Spanish to Saint James). The libretto to *Path of Miracles* tells the story of St. James' life and martyrdom and takes the audience on a musical journey. But who was St. James? Saint James the Greater, son of Zebedee and brother of John, was one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ.[159] St. James is given the distinction as "the greater" to distinguish him from James of Alpheus, who is called "the less."[160] Following Jesus' death and resurrection, St. James the Greater traveled to Spain to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. However, St. James was largely rejected by the people of Spain. Varying accounts state that during his time proselytizing, he gained somewhere between one and nine disciples.[161] Returning to Jerusalem, St. James was promptly arrested and beheaded by Herod Agrippa (see Figure 4.1).[162]

The Translatio of St. James

Following St. James' martyrdom, the story becomes murky. Many varying legends describe how James' body found its way back to the Galician region of Spain. Transferring the

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[159] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints,* translated by William Granger Ryan, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 389.
[160] Ibid, 269-277.
[161] Ibid, 389-390.
[162] Ibid, 391; Acts 12: 1-3 (King James Version).

remains of a saint from their original burial plot to a different location is called *translatio.*[163] In his book *The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James,* William Melczer writes: "The *translatio* of his body, its burial and, centuries later, the rediscovery of his lost tomb are all part of a puzzle-work of quite incredible magnitude and complexity."[164] However, Robert Dickinson, the librettist to *Path of Miracles,* uses one of the more fantastical versions of this story. In this account, St. James' body was exhumed by his disciples, and the stone from James' tomb becomes a rudderless boat, guided to Spain by the grace of God.[165] Upon arriving in Spain, St. James' disciples sought to find an appropriate burial location.

Figure 4.1 The Beheading of St. James. Painting by Philip Galle, 1582

[163] Thomas Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, *The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James* (New York: Italica Press, 2019), LIX.
[164] William Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela* (New York: Italica Press, 1993), 7.
[165] Robert Dickinson, "Libretto," Path of Miracles CD Liner Notes, Signum Records, 2005, CD, 7-8.

After several miracles credited to St. James, the disciples were able to convert Queen Lupa (the ruler of that region) to Christianity; Queen Lupa in turn converted her palace to a church dedicated to St. James.[166] However, the burial site and body of St. James became lost over time.

The Inventio of St. James

In 830, St. James' tomb was rediscovered. The first written account of the *inventio* (discovery of the tomb) comes from an anonymous writing called the *Concordia de Antealtares.*[167] The legend states that angels guided a hermit named Pelayo to a field of stars. Pelayo and other people from the area brought Bishop Theodemir of Iria Flavia to the location.[168] Coffey and Dunn write: "The bishop, after three days of fasting, accompanied by a crowd of faithful, finds the sepulcher of the apostle under a marble cover.…Filled with joy, he goes immediately to report what they have found to King Alfonso."[169] A chapel was built over the tomb, and the area received its name, Compostela. Melczer writes: "The geographic site, Compostela, in one of its possible etymological derivations, is made to hark back to *campus stellae,* the field of stars that appeared to the eyes of the astonished shepherds."[170] Over the next several hundred years, various churches were built for St. James. It was not until the end of the 11th-century that the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela was constructed (see Figure 4.2). Melczer writes: "In 1078, as the last of the large pilgrimage churches, the building of the vast Romanesque Cathedral of Santiago was begun: it would, henceforth, proclaim its magnificence

[166] Voragine, 391-392.
[167] Coffey and Dunn, XXXVI.
[168] Melczer, 21.
[169] Coffey and Dunn, XXXVI.
[170] Melczer, 21.

until our own day."[171] With a cathedral erected and the body of St. James enshrined, pilgrims began to flock to Santiago de Compostela along a network of routes that became known as the Camino de Santiago.

Figure 4.2 Facade of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.
Photograph by Antoine Cadotte, 2009

[171] Melczer, 22.

Figure 4.3 The many roads to St. James. Credit to the Spanish Credencial.

The Camino de Santiago

The Camino de Santiago, or the Way of St. James, is a system of roads and paths that all lead to the Cathedral at Santiago de Compostela. Melczer writes:

> The Road to Compostela is nothing but a metaphor. By the mid-eleventh century western Europe, including eastern and northern Spain, was crisscrossed by a complex network of roads, partly ancient Roman pavements, partly high-medieval itineraries that served, among many other purposes, to facilitate the pilgrimage to the Galician shrine.[172]

[172] Melczer, 23.

As seen in Figure 4.3 above, the network of roads was vast. Pilgrims traveled from all over Europe to visit the tomb of St. James. However, when pilgrims reached Spain, most traveled from east to west along northern Spain; a route known as the *camino francés* (see Figure 4.4). It is this route that provides the context for Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles.*

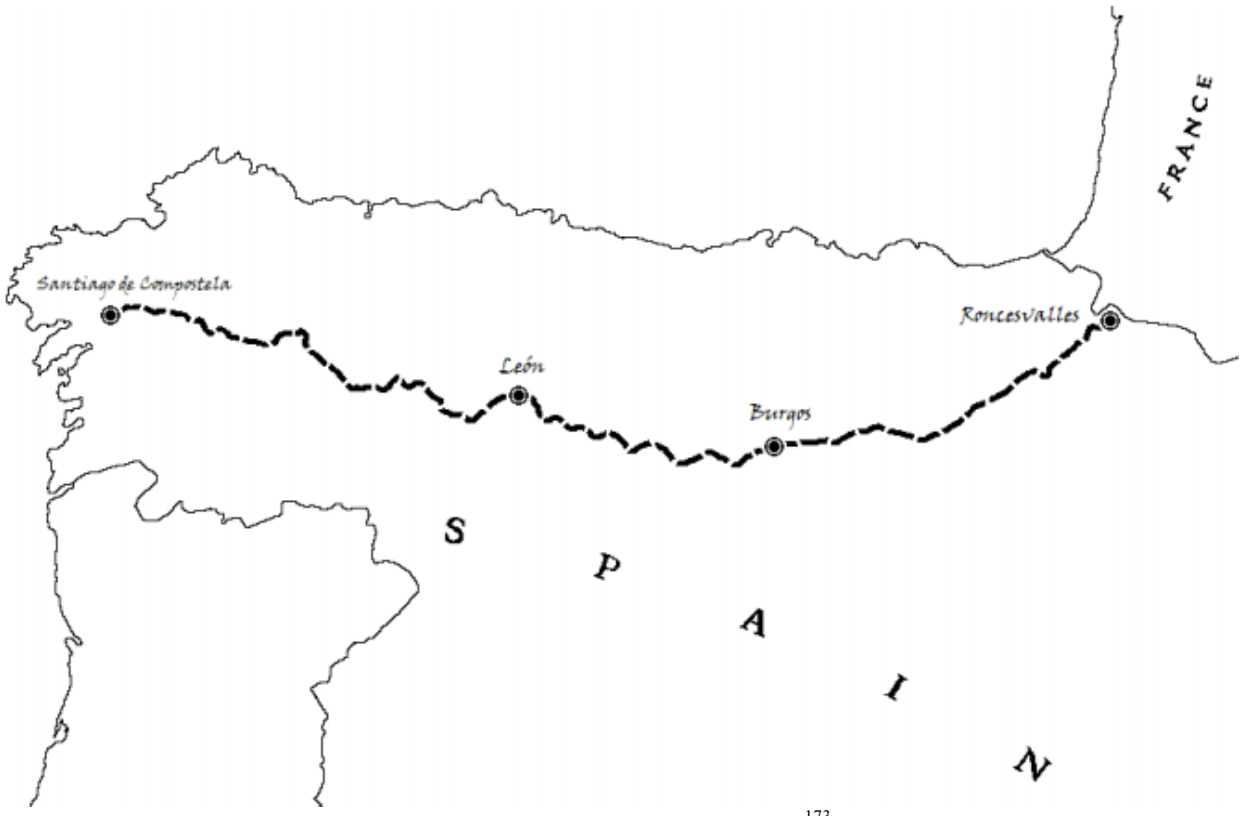

Figure 4.4 The *Camino Francés*[173]

Beginning in the Pyrenees mountains at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, pilgrims would climb the pass before descending to Roncesvalles. When walking the *camino francés*, the pilgrims travel through many small towns and villages and four larger cities, Roncevalles, Burgos, León, and

[173] Debra Shearer-Dirié, "Fusion Vocal Ensemble Program, Path of Miracles," April 2017, 1, fusionvocalensemble.org/uploads/2/1/2/1/21215054/fusion_programme_path_of_miracles_marc h-april_2017.pdf.

Santiago (See Figure 4). These larger cities have famous churches and cathedrals associated with them. Joby Talbot uses the names of these four cities as the staging posts and titles of the four movements in *Path of Miracles.* Whereas most of the small hamlets the pilgrims encountered offered few comforts, these larger cities would provide pilgrims an opportunity to get a good meal and rest. Rest was sorely needed; the journey from Roncesvalles to Santiago de Compostela is 450-miles. However, unlike modern pilgrims who benefit from aviation, the medieval pilgrim would have to voyage by horse or foot from their city, town, or village. For context, a pilgrim traveling from Paris to Santiago and back would have trekked almost 2000 miles.[174]

After reaching Santiago, most pilgrims walk an additional 50 miles to the Galician coastal town of Finisterre. Even though Finisterre is not the most western part of Europe, it was considered to be the edge of the world during the Medieval era, hence the name, *Finis* (End) and *Terre* (Earth.)[175] The beaches in Galicia are famous for having an abundance of *concha venera,* or scallop shells. The scallop shell has been a symbol of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage for the past thousand years. Melczer explains: "Various medieval legends speak of a prince who, having fallen into the ocean waves, was rescued, covered with shells, by St. James…The importance of the shell, however, … lies in the symbolism…of the good works the pilgrim is expected to perform: it reminds him of the spread out fingers of the back of the hand."[176] Furthermore, the image of the scallop shell has many lines leading to one point, symbolic of the many roads leading to Santiago de Compostela. All along the Camino de Santiago, images of a scallop shell can be found (see Figure 4.5). The reliance on the goodwill of others for their

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[174] Annie Shaver-Crandell, Paula Lieber Gerson, and Alison Stones, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago De Compostela: A Gazetteer* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1995), 20-21.
[175] Billington, "Santiago's Golden Legend."
[176] Melczer, "The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela," 58.

survival was pervasive in the mind of the Pilgrim, and the scallop shell helped remind them that they were to be of service to others. Pilgrims wear the shell as a badge of honor, and many carry them to their graves.

Figure 4.5. Scallop Shell Image along the Camino de Santiago.
Photo by Geertivp, 2012.

While many people along the Camino de Santiago acted with goodwill, the journey was filled with dangers. Treacherous terrain, the lack of potable water, wild animals, and sudden weather shifts were natural hazards. However, bandits, thieves, and murderers were also a reality of the road. For the entire journey, pilgrims relied on local establishments to provide food,

shelter, and other necessities.[177] A guidebook was created to promote the pilgrimage and help would-be pilgrims navigate the perils of the road. The *Liber Sancti Jacobi* is a collection of five books on St. James and the Camino de Santiago. A spurious letter attributed to Pope Callixtus II (served as Pope from 1119-1124) serves as a preface to this document, hence the name by which we call this book today – the *Codex Calixtinus.*

Figure 4.6 Illumination of Pope Callixtus in the Codex Calixtinus

Codex Calixtinus

The Codex Calixtinus contains five separate books of interest to pilgrims and scholars alike. The first book is "a collection of liturgical pieces of various sorts and for various uses, but

[177] For detailed accounts of the logistics for the medieval pilgrim, the introduction to William Melczer's book, "The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela," is of extreme interest. Melczer describes the geography, hazards, lodging, monetary concerns, and clothing found on the Camino de Santiago.

chiefly meant to serve for the cult of Santiago on the two days specifically designated for his worship: July 25, the day of his martyrdom, and December 30, the day of his translatio."[178] The second book is a collection of the miracles of St. James, and the third book on the *translatio* of St. James.[179] The fourth book is known as the *Historia Turpini* and recalls the feats of Charlemagne in Spain. It tells the legendary story of Roland, who was betrayed and killed at Roncesvalles, and recounts the dream of Charlemagne, in which St. James appeared, telling him to follow the Milky Way along Northern Spain to defeat the Moors.[180] The final book, book five, is a pilgrim's guide to the Camino de Santiago. The chapters in book five include logistics of where to meet, which rivers to avoid, where to find potable water, reliable lodging, avoid bandits, and other details of the road. Melczer's book (*The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela)* includes a complete English translation of the fifth book and offers extensive notes and commentary – a very insightful resource for anyone interested in this topic.

The Codex Calixtinus also includes an appendix containing both monophonic chants as well as some of the earliest notated examples of polyphony. The piece *Congaudeant catholici* (see Figure 4.7) has long been claimed to be the first example of three-part polyphony. However, some scholars point out that the extreme dissonance created when performed simultaneously make it unlikely that it was intended as such. Richard Taruskin argues that this piece includes two separate counterpoints not meant to be sung together. Nevertheless, *Congaudeant catholici* is perhaps the first polyphonic piece with a credited composer. It is attributed to Albertus, who

[178] Melczer, 29.
[179] Coffey and Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James."
[180] Melczer, 32-35.

was a cantor at the Notre Dame cathedral in the mid 12th-century.[181] Of particular interest relating to *Path of Miracles* are the *Dum pater familias* and the *O ajutor omnium* chants, both of which Robert Dickinson quotes extensively in the libretto (see figures 4.8 and 4.9).

Figure 4.7 *Congaudeant catholici* polyphony in the Codex Calixtinus

[181] Richard Taruskin, "Polyphony in Practice and Theory," in *Music from the Earliest Notations to the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press), https://www-oxfordwesternmusic-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/view/Volume1/actrade-9780195384819-div1-005005.xml.

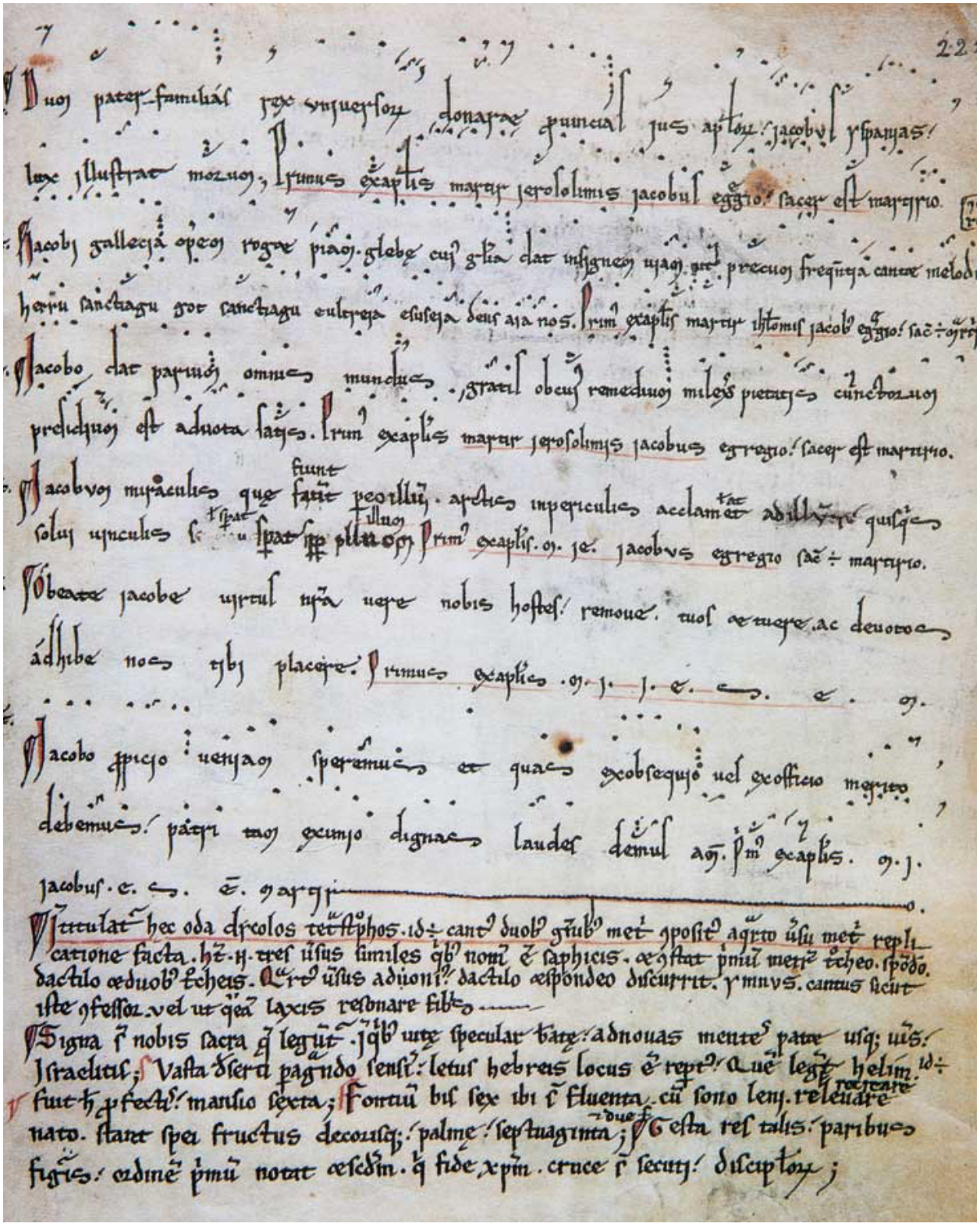

Figure 4.8 *Dum pater familias* chant in the Codex Calixtinus

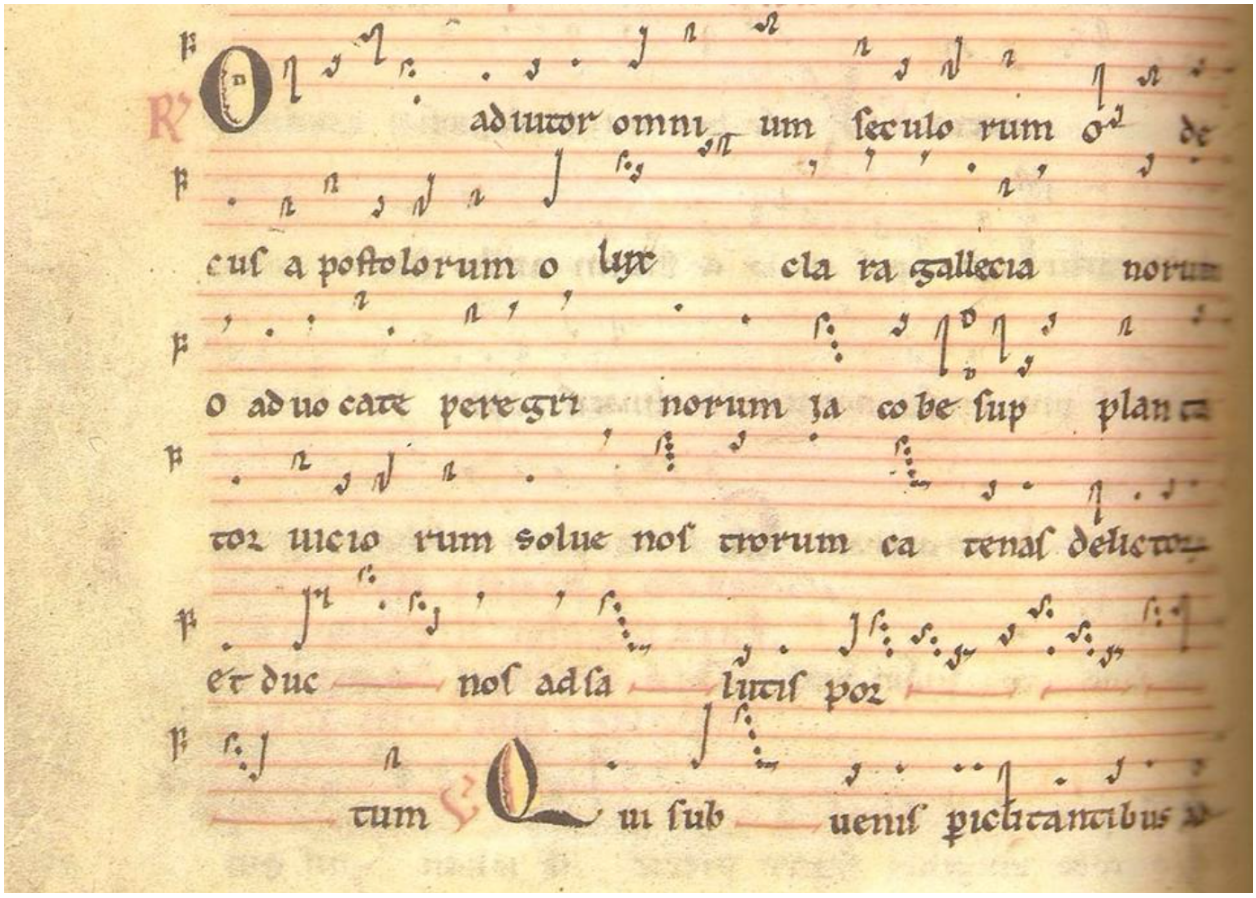

Figure 4.9 *O adjutor omnium* chant in the Codex Calixtinus

An Enduring Pilgrimage

The ancient roots and the continued relevance of Camino de Santiago provide the foundation for *Path of Miracles.* The Camino de Santiago remains one of the most famous pilgrimages in the world. In 2019, more than 347,000 people earned a Compostela certificate.[182] In order to receive a certificate, one must acquire a pilgrim's passport (which can be obtained at one of the Pilgrim's Offices or local churches located at popular starting points along the Camino). Pilgrims get their passport stamped daily at their place of lodging, documenting where they have stayed, proving they completed their journey.

[182] "Statistics," Oficina de Acogida al Peregrino, accessed January 4, 2021, https://oficinadelperegrino.com/en/statistics/.

Chapter 5.
The Libretto

Introduction

Gabriel Crouch states that Nigel Short has an "obsession with journeys, with geographical location, space, and choral music."[183] That obsession led Nigel Short to the idea of commissioning a choral work that emulated the pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago.[184] Crouch, who worked closely with Short on the project's concept, says: "I felt that this story had four movements and that there were four staging posts. I think we always had those four movements [Roncesvalles, Burgos, Leon, and Santiago] in mind."[185] The way Crouch remembers it, Short came up with the piece's concept, and he came up with the titles of the four movements. When Joby Talbot was brought on as the composer, Talbot set out to find inspiration for the piece by visiting the four staging posts that were to be the movements of this work: "I went to do the research, to get an idea of what I might do with it. And I began to ask myself about individual locations along the way. What was it that made each of these places so unusual?"[186] To capture the ethos of each location, Talbot drew inspiration from the scents, sights, tastes, and experiences. With a firm concept of the piece in mind, Talbot brought on the poet Robert Dickinson.

Dickinson almost missed being involved with the *Path of Miracles* project. As told in Chapter Three, the original hope was for Andrew Motion, England's poet laureate from 1999-

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[183] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 17.
[184] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 7.
[185] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 3.
[186] Porter Anderson, "Music for Writers: Joby Talbot on the 'Path of Miracles,'" *Thought Catalog,* (May 22, 2015): accessed March 1, 2021 http://tcat.tc/1IQb8b8.

2009, to create the libretto.[187] Then, after Motion declined the invitation, Joby Talbot remembered a poem written by Robert Dickinson; although he did not remember Dickinson's name, nor did he have his contact information. Talbot was able to get a hold of Dickinson through the Poetry Society in England, and Dickinson agreed to be a part of the project.[188] Gabriel Crouch introduced Talbot and Dickinson to Jack Sage, an academic at King's College who was an expert on the Camino de Santiago and medieval Spain.[189] When Dickinson joined the project, Talbot explained his desire for the poetry to interweave with the ancient texts that Jack Sage had provided him.[190] Sage helped provide many valuable sources, but Dickinson was doing a considerable amount of his own research. Dickinson remembers: "I was going through *The Golden Legend*, for instance, and also looking further afield. I was doing a lot of reading around medieval literature that wasn't specific to the pilgrimage. It becomes apparent later on, because I quote things from medieval texts that have nothing to do with the pilgrimage to Santiago, such as the French ballade that gets quoted in the Leon section."[191] Dickinson also brought the joyful Carmina Burana text to Talbot, who incorporated it in the final movement, "Santiago."

Throughout the process of creating the libretto, Talbot and Dickinson worked together closely. Talbot recalls: "He was really collegiate, and it was a really great experience collaborating with him on it."[192] Dickinson agrees that it was a very positive partnership, although he jokes that he was a bit nervous: "It also was a source of anxiety because you're always concerned that you're going to produce something that he'll just say: 'no that's not good

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[187] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 3.
[188] Barry Ife, "Jack William Sage," *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* XCV, no. 7 (2018): https://doi.org/10.1080/14753820.2018.1501231
[189] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 3.
[190] Ibid.
[191] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 3.
[192] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 13.

enough' or 'that's not what I wanted.'"[193] Of course, Dickinson's self-deprecating worries never happened; they held each other in high regard. Talbot explained to Dickinson the character he had in mind for each movement, so that the poetry could evoke the correct tone and atmosphere:

> We had the initial discussion which set the tone for each of the movements.…Joby wanted each movement to reflect the kind of emotional impact that these cathedrals had on him. And so, Roncesvalles was always going to be about the gathering together; the origin of it, as it were, of the story. And Burgos was dark and oppressive, he felt. And so that was supposed to be about some of the terrors and the fears of the road.…And Leon was going to be the more, almost sunlit, because of the nature of Leon Cathedral itself, which is much brighter.…That it was going to be a polyglot piece was established…very early on.[194]

Adding to Dickinson's nerves was his inexperience writing for music: "This was a first for me…You have to take a different tone, because writing for chorus you can't use irony in quite the same way that you might with a poem that is meant to be read as if it's being spoken by single voice. It meant a kind of chastening at the start. You had to think in a slightly different way when it comes to writing music."[195] While writing poetry for music may have been a new challenge for Dickinson, he was an excellent choice to tackle the subject matter. Dickinson humbly remembers:

> I was excited [to be a part of this project]. I knew a little about the pilgrimage because I had a very slight, non-academic, interest in medieval history. So, I was aware of it as an important event and as an important part…of medieval life, and the importance of pilgrimages generally. And an abiding interest in the nature of religious belief. And so, I had these things already to bring to it and I had some languages; I can read French and Spanish reasonably well, and a bit of liturgical Latin that I have picked up enroute.[196]

Dickinson's humility is readily apparent in the quote above, but Gabriel Crouch recalls Dickinson's exceptional skill: "I very quickly got the impression that Robert knew what he was

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[193] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 2.
[194] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 2-3.
[195] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 2.
[196] Ibid.

doing. I mean, *really* knew the subject matter. And what he didn't know, he really knew how to research."[197] Robert Dickinson's libretto demonstrates his fluency and ability to work with the dense academic subject matter and make it coherent and beautiful.

The form of Dickinson's poetry is intentionally fluid, as he knew it was to be set to music: "Generally, the form is quite loose because it's being written to be sung by voices and the music is going to provide the pulse and a lot of the meter. I did, at one point, ask if Joby wanted it really in any particular meter or form and he said: 'just make it beautiful.'"[198] As Dickinson wrote, he would send material to Talbot, who had some influence over the text's appearance in the score. Talbot says: "When I asked Robert to be involved, I asked him whether he would be OK with me having some sort of creative control over how the text unfolded, and he was very good about it without losing ownership of it."[199] Talbot recalls that Dickinson "gave me a ton of material…there was a kind of mosaic creative process, where I was taking chunks of text and moving them around the piece, ordering things differently."[200] The result is a compelling and profound libretto. However, the inclusion of so many ancient texts interspersed with Dickinson's poetry presents challenges for conductors. Many conductors are confused by this complex libretto and lack the time needed to uncover the depth of its nuances. The remainder of this chapter closely examines the libretto, illuminating the sources of the quoted material as well as the documents that inspired Dickinson's own poetry. This chapter also corrects some of the errors that have been previously published regarding this source material. Appendix B of this

[197] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 8.
[198] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 5.
[199] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 13.
[200] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 3.

dissertation includes four tables that contain the complete texts, translations, source material, and IPA guide.

Table 5.1 Complete Text to "Roncesvalles"

Herr Santiagu
Grot Sanctiagu
Eultreya esuseya
Deius aia nos.

κατ εκεινον δε τον καιρον επεβαλεν ηρωδης ο βασιλευς τας χειρας κακωσαι τινας των απο της εκκλησιας
ανειλεν δε ιακωβον τον αδελφον ιωαννου μαχαιρα

Eodem autore tempore misit Herodes rex manus ut adfligeret quosdam de ecclesia occidit autem Iacobum fratrem Iohannis gladio.

En aquel mismo tiempo el rey Herodes echó mano a algunos de la iglesia para maltratarles. Y mató a espada a Jacobo, hermano de Juan.

Aldi hartan, Herodes erregea eliz elkarteko batzuei gogor erasotzen hasi zen. Santiago, Joanen anaia, ezpataz hilarazi zuen.

Ver ce temps-là, le roi Hérode se mit à persécuter quelques-un de membres de l'Église. Il fit mourir par l'épée Jacques, frère de Jean.

Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands
to vex certain of the church.
And he killed James, the brother of John with the sword.

Um dieselbige Zeit legte der König Herodes die Hände an, etliche von der Gemeinde, sie zu peinigen. Er tötete aber Jakobus, den Bruder des Johannes, mit dem Schwert.

Before this death the Apostle journeyed,
preaching the word to unbelievers.
Returning, unheeded,
to die in Jerusalem –
a truth beyond Gospel.

Jacobus, filius Zebedaei,
frate Johannis,
Hic Spaniae et occidentalia
loca praedicat,
foy el o primeiro que preegou en Galizia

Herod rots on a borrowed throne,
while the saint is translated
to Heaven and Spain,
the body taken at night from the tomb,

the stone of the tomb becoming the boat
that carries him back *ad extremis terrarum*,
back to the land that denied him in life.

Huius beatissimi apostoli
sacra ossa ad Hispanias translata;

Et despois que o rrey Erodes mãdou matar en Iherusalem, trouxerõ o corpo del os diçipolos por mar a Galiza.

From Jerusalem to Finisterre,
from the heart of the world
to the end of the land
in a boat made of stone,
without rudder or sail.

Guided by grace to the Galician shore.

abandonnant à la Providence
la soin de la sepulture,

O ajutor omnium seculorum,
O decus apostollorum,
O lus clara galicianorum,
O avocate peregrinorum,

Jacobe, suplantatur viciorum
Solve nostrum
Cathenes delitorum
E duc a salutum portum.

O judge of all the world,
O glory of the apostles,
O clear light of Galicia,
O defender of pilgrims,
James, destroyer of sins,
deliver us from evil and lead us to safe harbour.

At night on Lebredon
by Iria Flavia
the hermit Pelayo
at prayer and alone

saw in the heavens
a ring of bright stars
shining like beacons
over the plain

and as in Bethlehem
the Magi were guided
the hermit was led
by this holy sign

for this was the time
given to Spain
for St. James to be found
after eight hundred years

in Compostella, by the field of stars.

Herr Santiagu
Grot Sanctiagu
Eultreya esuseya
Deius aia nos.

Figure 5.1 The Colegiata of Santa María, Roncesvalles.
Photo by Marianne Casamance

Roncesvalles

After pilgrims cross the Pyrenees, many arrive in the town of Roncesvalles. Roncesvalles was made famous by the epic poem, *La Chanson de Roland* (c. 1100), telling the tale of the *Battle of Roncesvalles* in 778. During this battle, Roland (the nephew of the French king Charlemagne) was betrayed by his stepfather, Ganelon, and was surrounded by the Basque army.[201] Although fighting bravely, Roland was defeated and killed. This story encompassed the entirety of book four in the *Codex Calixtinus* and served as part of the marketing campaign for the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage. Melczer writes about the significance of Roncesvalles for pilgrims:

> Pilgrims could rest now in relative comfort in the proximity of the stone parted by Roland's mythic sword Durandel; they could also sleep in the immediate vicinity, and actually in the shadow, of the so-called *silo* of Charlemagne, a graveyard reputed to hold the remains of at least some of Roland's rear guard as well as the rank and file of Charlemagne's army. The notion of sleeping in the proximity of a saint was important:

[201] *Encyclopedia Britannica,* "La Chanson de Roland," accessed March 1, 2021, https://www.britannica.com/topic/La-Chanson-de-Roland.

> some medieval churches have preserved until our own days elevated reliquary caskets, actually tombs, under which pilgrims used to spend the night protected by the beneficial influence of some saintly remains.[202]

Today, many pilgrims still sleep at the Collegiate Church of Roncesvalles (see figure 5.1) as they journey along the *camino francés* (French Route) towards Santiago de Compostela.

During his visit to Roncesvalles, Joby Talbot was inspired by all the different languages he heard. Talbot reflected on how significant this pilgrimage must have been for people in the Medieval era. Talbot posits that this would have been "the only opportunity most people would have ever had to actually meet somebody from another village, let alone another country. This wonderful coming together of people and setting aside of prejudice…I wanted to celebrate that in the piece."[203] It is a powerful thought, amplified by the kinds of people who made this pilgrimage. Melczer writes that:

> Pilgrims belonged to all social stations of life, from the humblest, dispossessed, and miserable to the highest and most distinguished…but the large masses, those that carried upon themselves the living tradition of the pilgrimage and that converted ideology and theology into the very substance of everyday culture, of vigorous folklore, were without any doubt, the penniless, the dispossessed, the indigent, the miserable peasants.[204]

These destitute pilgrims often undertook this voyage at the end of their lives, after their years as laborers came to an end. Not only would this journey have been the first time many pilgrims left their village, but it very often was the last they saw of their homes; many died along the way – those that did return home likely only had a few years of life remaining.[205]

The text in the "Roncesvalles" movement is by far the most complicated for conductors to decipher. It is filled with quotations from ancient tomes, set in eight different languages as

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[202] William Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela* (New York: Italica Press, 1993), 26.
[203] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 4.
[204] Melczer, 37.
[205] Melczer, 36-63.

Talbot and Dickinson attempt to capture the international significance of this pilgrimage. After the opening music emulating the Pasiputput tradition (which is discussed in detail in Chapter Seven), the first words uttered in *Path of Miracles* are a quotation from the Codex Calixtinus.

Herr Santiagu,	Holy St. James,
Grot Sanctiagu,	Great St. James,
Eultreya esuseya,	God helps us now
Deius aia nos,	and evermore.

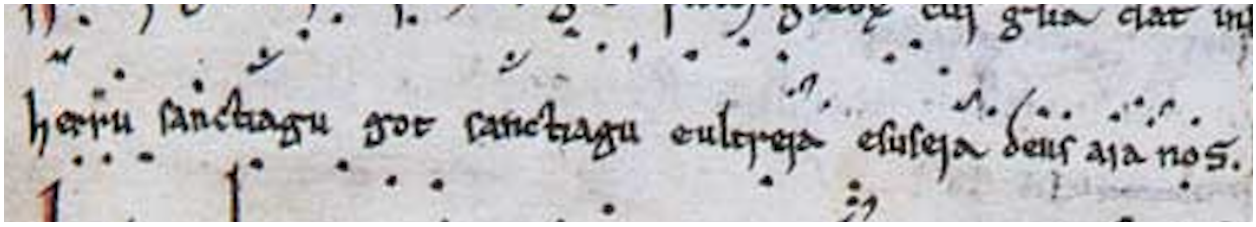

Figure 5.2 *Herr Sanctiagu* excerpt from the Dum pater familias

This text comes from the *Dum pater familias* chant (see Figure 5.2). The poetic translation (as above) is the exact translation that Dickinson uses in the very last lines in *Path of Miracles.* However, this translation misses the more significant meaning for pilgrims, who have used this phrase as a greeting for nearly a thousand years. While the salutation "Buen Camino" (meaning "good road" or "good path") has become the more popular greeting for modern pilgrims, there are still many images of the Latin phrase that can be found along the journey (see Figure 5.3). The Ultreya Tours blog explains this ancient greeting: "If you were to walk [the Camino de Santiago] in Medieval times, when meeting another fellow pilgrim you would say 'Ultreya,' meaning let's go further, to which they would respond 'e Suseya Santiago,' and higher, to Santiago de Compostela."[206] As used in the *Dum pater familias,* this phrase has become known as the "Pilgrim's Hymn." Talbot returns to this text several time throughout the composition.

[206] "The Meaning of Ultreya Suseya Santiago de Compostela," Ultreya Tours (Blog), accessed March 1, 2021, https://www.ultreyatours.com/blog/the-meaning-of-ultreya-suseya-santiago-de-compostela/

Figure 5.3 Ultreya e Suseya image from the Ultreya Tours Blog

The text following the "Pilgrim's Hymn" is a quotation from the New Testament of the Bible: Acts, Chapter 12 verses 1-2. Dickinson used the King James version of the Bible; an appropriate translation for the antiquated English, which sounds evocative of the ancient pilgrimage, but also for the shared name with the apostle upon which this pilgrimage is based. This text is first heard in Greek, then Latin, Spanish, Basque, French, English, and finally German. The first appearance of Dickinson's own poetry appears with the text:

Before this death the Apostle journeyed
Preaching the word to unbelievers.
Returning, unheeded,
To die in Jerusalem –
a truth beyond Gospel.

"This death" to which Dickinson refers is that of St. James. Dickinson's verse is clearly inspired by Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea,* which describes St. James' unsuccessful proselytizing in Spain before returning to Jerusalem, where he was beheaded. Immediately following this stanza of poetry by Dickinson, there is another quotation:

Jacobus, filius Zebedaei, frate Johannis, *Hic Spaniae et occidentalia loca* *praedicat.*	James, son of Zebedee, brother of John, at that time preached in Spain and the Western places.

The quotation comes from the *Breviarium apostolorum,* a Latin text from the sixth or seventh century; it is one of the earliest texts to speak of James's evangelism in Spain.[207] However, Dickinson does not excerpt the entirety of the quote, which when translated reads: "James, whose name means supplanter, son of Zebedee and brother of John, went to the western parts of Spain and preached, and after being killed with a sword by Herod, was buried and has rested in the Achaia marmarica. Eighth calends of August."[208] Coffey and Dunn point out that the "Achaia marmarica" could refer to "a geographic place, the location of James's sepulcher, or as a description of his tomb."[209]

Immediately following the quotation from the *Breviarium apostolorum,* Dickinson quotes another ancient source, the 15th-century manuscript *Miragres de Santiago.* This document is written in the Galician dialect (Galicia is the northwest region of Spain where Santiago de Compostela is located) and includes an assortment of information on St. James the Great, including twenty-four miracles attributed to St. James.[210] The *Miragres de Santiago* is an important document, especially considering it was written in the vernacular of the people of northern Spain; however, much of the information is redundant to the Codex Calixtinus. The relative obscurity of this text highlights the volume of source material that Dickinson was immersed in when preparing for this project. However, the inclusion of the Galician text in the libretto served two practical purposes. It provides an additional language to the babel of voices in

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[207] Melczer, 10; Thomas Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, *The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James* (New York: Italica Press, 2019), XXVIII-XXIX.
[208] Coffey and Dunn, XXIX.
[209] Ibid.
[210] E.S. Proctor, "Miragres de Santiago, ED. By J.L. Pensade" (Book Review), *The Modern Language Review* 55 (1960): 457.

the "Roncesvalles" movement, and it highlights the region of Galicia, where all the pilgrims hope to arrive.

Dickinson's next stanza of poetry follows, where he was trying to create "a narrative element of how St. James came to be in Santiago."[211] In this verse, Dickinson includes the Latin phrase, *ad extremis terrarum,* meaning "at the edge of the world." This invented line of Latin by Dickinson refers to the region where St. James' body miraculously returned in *translatio* (for a more detailed account of the *translatio,* see Chapter Four). As reported in Chapter One of the third book of the *Codex Calixtinus*, James' disciples returned his body to Iria Flavia, "an early settlement near the coast at the confluence of the Sar and Ulla rivers now in the municipality of Padrón, A Coruña, Galica."[212] This area was believed to be the edge of the world during the Medieval era. Dickinson mentions his use of this Latin phrase within his poetry, saying he wanted to "mix the languages and also, I felt it gave the line a good cadence."[213] The importance of cadence was significant to Dickinson, especially in this section of text. Dickinson recalls: "After a few stabs at it, I came up with a style that approximated a kind of ballade without being in a ballade meter. It reads almost like a translation of a ballade."[214] It is the careful attention to detail, including meter, pacing, language, and cadence, that makes Dickinson's poetry fit so well in the context of so many ancient texts. Through careful craftsmanship, Dickinson's own poetry seamlessly weaves between languages and texts spanning thousands of years.

Yet another ancient text follows. A quote describing the *translatio* of St. James to Spain:

Huius beatissimi apostoli *sacra ossa ad Hispanias translata*	The sacred bones of the blessed apostle taken to Spain.

[211] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 5.
[212] Coffey and Dunn, 77.
[213] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 5.
[214] Ibid.

This text comes from the *Martyrologium* by Floro de Lyon. Floro de Lyon was a teacher, scholar, and poet living in France from the late 8th to mid-9th-centuries.[215] A martyrology is a liturgical resource detailing the names of martyrs and saints recognized by the church, noting their feast days, a few details of their lives, and information about their martyrdoms.[216]

Following the text by Floro de Lyon, Dickinson returns to quoting the *Miragres de Santiago* and then includes his original poetry, adding details of the miraculous *translatio* of St. James' body. The French text that follows is an adaptation of a French translation of the *Legenda Aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine.

Abandonnant à la Providence	Abandoning to Providence
La soin de la sepulture	The care of the tomb

The complete English translation of Voragine's text reads: "Commending the burial to divine providence they set sail, an angel of the Lord being their pilot, and made port in Galicia, Spain."[217] Since the Legenda Aurea clearly inspires Dickinson's poetry, it is correct to cite it as originating from this source as it is shown in the Tenebrae CD liner notes.[218] However, Dickinson indeed modified it to fit the poetic structure of the libretto.[219]

The following Latin text appears in the libretto, yet a citation is missing from the Tenebrae liner notes.

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[215] Michel Sot, "Florus of Lyon," *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, 2002, accessed March 1, 2021, https://www-oxfordreference-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780227679319.001.0001/acref-9780227679319-e-1058?rskey=mOS9F4&result=1

[216] Jean-Loup Lemaître, "Martyrology," in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, 2002, accessed March 1, 2021 https://www-oxfordreference-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780227679319.001.0001/acref-9780227679319-e-1803.

[217] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints* translated by William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 391.

[218] Joby Talbot, *Path of Miracles CD Liner Notes,* Signum Records, 2005, CD, 8.

[219] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 5.

O ajutor omnium seculorum,	O judge of all the world,
O decus apostollorum,	O glory of the apostles,
O lus clara galicianorum,	O clear light of Galicia,
O avocate peregrinorum,	O defender of pilgrims,
Jacobe, suplantatur viciorum	James, destroyer of sins,
Solve nostrum	deliver us
Cathenes delitorum	from evil
E duc a salutum portum.	and lead us to safe harbour.

This text is a direct quotation from Chapter Eight of the second book in the *Codex Calixtinus*.[220] The second book of the *Codex Calixtinus* is a collection of St. James' miracles. This particular miracle tells a story of a bishop, in the year 1102, who was swept off his ship into the sea. Upon calling out to St. James, the saint appeared and guided the bishop safely back to his ship. The writer of the miracle states:

> Afterwards, this venerable bishop of the Lord, who had been rescued from the dangers of the sea through the help of Saint James, went to the most glorious apostle in the region of Galicia and composed the following responsory in the saint's honor in the first tone of the musical art. He intoned it joyously singing in this way.[221]

The responsory the bishop intoned is the *O ajutor omnium* text (above). The *Codex Calixtinus* also contains the notated chant referred to in the miracle (as seen in Figure 4.9).

The remainder of "Roncesvalles" is Dickinson's poetry, inspired by the *inventio* of St. James' body (see Chapter Four for details on the *inventio).* Dickinson tells the story of the Pelayo seeing stars, guiding him to the burial site of St. James, which had been lost for eight hundred years. The final verse is a recapitulation of the Pilgrim's Hymn, the same text that began the movement.

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[220] Coffey and Dunn, 31.
[221] Coffey and Dunn, 31.

Table 5.2 Complete text to "Burgos"

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal,
The devil waits at the side of the road.
We trust in words and remnants, prayers and bones.

We know that the world is a lesson
As the carved apostles in the Puerta Alta
Dividing the damned and the saved are a lesson.
We beat our hands against the walls of heaven.

St. Julian of Cuenca,
Santa Casilda, pray for us.

Remember the pilgrim robbed in Pamplona,
Cheated of silver the night his wife died;
Remember the son of the German pilgrim
Hanged as a thief at the gates of the town,
Hanged at the word of an innkeeper's daughter.

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal,
The devil waits at the side of the road.
We trust in words and remnants, prayers and bones.

Santiago Peregrino:

His arm is in England, his jaw in Italy,
And yet he works wonders.
The widower, the boy on the gallows –
He did not fail them.
One given a horse on the road by a stranger,
One kept alive for twenty-six days,
Unhurt on a gallows for twenty-six days.

His jaw is in Italy, yet he speaks.
The widower robbed in Pamplona:
Told by the Saint how the thief
Fell from the roof of a house to his death.

His arm is in England, yet the boy,
The pilgrim's son they hanged in Toulouse
Was borne on the gallows for twenty-six days
And called to his father: Do not mourn,
For all this time the Saint has been with me.
O beate Jacobe.

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal.
We are sick of body, worthy of hell.

The apostles in the Puerta Alta
Have seen a thousand wonders;
The stone floor is worn with tears,
With ecstasies and lamentations.
We beat our hands against the walls of heaven.

Santiago Peregrino:

The devil waits in a turn in the wind
In a closing door in an empty room.
A voice at night, a waking dream.

Traveller, be wary of strangers,
Sometimes the Saint takes the form of a pilgrim,
Sometimes the devil the form of a saint.

Pray to the Saints and the Virgen del Camino,
To save you as she saved the man from Lyon
Who was tricked on the road by the deceiver,
Tricked by the devil in the form of St. James
And who killed himself from fear of hell;

The devil cried out and claimed his soul.
Weeping, his companions prayed.
Saint and Virgin heard the prayer
And turned his wound into a scar,
From mercy they gave the dead man life.

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal,
We are sick of body, worthy of hell.
We beat our hands against the walls of heaven
And are not heard.
We pray for miracles and are given stories;
Bread, and are given stones.
We write our sins on parchment
To cast upon his shrine
In hope they will burn.

We pray to St. Julian of Cuenca,
To St. Amaro the Pilgrim,
To Santa Casilda,
To San Millan and the Virgin of the Road.
We pray to Santiago.

We know that the world is a lesson
As the carved apostles in the Puerta Alta
Dividing the damned and the saved are a lesson.
We pray the watching saints will help us learn.

Ora pro nobis, Jacobe,
A finibus terrae ad te clamavi.

Figure 5.4 Burgos Cathedral. Photo by Mario Martí

Burgos

Talbot portrayed the cathedral at Burgos as being "dark, gloomy, dripping with saints' relics…your archetypal uber-Catholic cathedral with lots of gilt, lots of shrines, and great, big gory oil paintings in various stages of neglect."[222] Beyond depicting the darkness of the cathedral, Talbot wanted to explore the weariness of the pilgrims during this movement: "after your initial burst of energy at the beginning, you get to a point where the blisters are now really beginning to hurt, and you really are absolutely knackered, and you were wondering what on earth you were ever thinking of embarking on this." Melczer describes the brutal nature of the *camino francés:* "Hot in summer days, cold during the nights of the intervening seasons, crisscrossed by streams that were liable to suddenly become impetuous torrents, wrought with dangerous mountain

[222] Joby Talbot, interview by Porter Anderson, May 22, 2015, accessed March 1, 2021, http://tcat.tc/1IQb8b8.

routes skirting deep precipices…all in all, a bitter trial for the already overtaxed and often exhausted pilgrims."[223]

Figure 5.5 Burgos Cathedral Interior. Photo by Marcp_dmoz

After the mélange of texts in "Roncesvalles," "Burgos" predominantly comprises Robert Dickinson's own poetry. While the poetry is his, Dickinson drew from his research to capture the dark mood that he and Talbot agreed upon: "This was going to be the [movement] about the nightmares and fears of the road, and it would express it with the darker more despairing side of medieval belief."[224] Dickinson tells fragmented stories of death, murder, theft, and deceitful tricks by the devil: "I wanted to find a way that would bring different stories in, but without telling the stories in full; almost alluding to them. As if they are stories that the listeners should know already."[225] In doing so, the stories emerge like wisps of Camino legends. Melczer's accounts of the pilgrimage amplify Dickinson's poetic insight:

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[223] Melczer, 27.
[224] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 6.
[225] Ibid.

> On such inordinately long marches, tall tales, adventurous stories, mouth-to-mouth pieces of news and information were passed along, sometimes on the route itself, at other times in the hospice or over the inn-counter. No matter how questionable, flimsy, or braggart, these accounts and reports were always welcome. They were the very stuff of which the dreams and realities of the pilgrimage folklore were made of.[226]

Indeed, rumors abounded on the Camino de Santiago, and the pilgrims were constantly in fear of the hazards.

The tales of suffering that are enshrined in pilgrimage folklore undoubtedly played on the minds of the travelers. Dickinson describes his desire to capture the mindset of the medieval pilgrim: "It was the sense of peril that I was trying to put across. It would have been felt far more immediately than we would feel it, I suspect. And not just physical peril, but moral peril and spiritual peril. The sense that the devil was present and omnipresent and close at hand." Dickinson interjects some Latin phrases amongst his poetry, including: *O beate Jacobe* (O Blessed St. James), *Ora pro nobis, Jacobe* (Pray for us, St. James), and *A finibus terrae ad te clamavi* (From the end of the Earth I cry to you). The first two texts, while common phrases, can be found in the *Statim percullit hero* chant located within the Codex Calixtinus (see Figures 5.6 and 5.8). *O beate Jacobe* can also be found in the *Dum pater familias* chant (see Figure 5.7). The *A finibus terrae ad te clamavi* is found in Psalm 60 (not Psalm 61, as stated in the Tenebrae program notes).[227] Dickinson says that these Latin phrases are like "a kind of prayer that's not quite completed."[228] These prayers allude to a question that surely crossed the pilgrims' minds: will St. James be by my side when the devil comes for me?

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[226] Melczer, 52.

[227] Psalmi Chapter 60, verse 3, Vulgate.org, accessed on February 25, 2021, https://vulgate.org/ot/psalms_60.htm

[228] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 7.

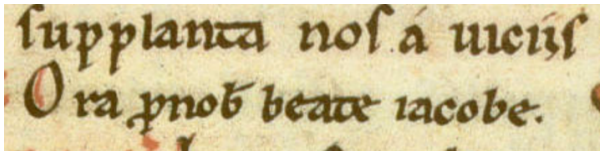

Figure 5.6 “Ora pro nobis beate Iacobe,”
from *Statim percullit hero* in the *Codex Calixtinus*

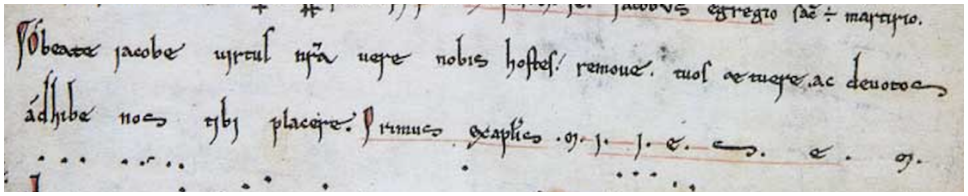

Figure 5.7 “O beate jacobe” portion of the *Dum pater familias*

While beyond the scope of this dissertation to present each of the miracles in full, this section summarizes the source material that inspired Dickinson’s poetry. Each of the miracles described in this chapter can be found in book two of the *Codex Calixtinus*, “The Miracles of Saint James.” Thomas Coffey and Maryjane Dunn’s book, *The Miracles and Translatio of Satin James,* provides a complete translation of this text with accompanying notes and commentary; a beneficial source for any conductor wishing to develop a deeper connection to the libretto story. While many examples will be shown in this chapter, this is an area available for further research.

Figure 5.8 *Statim percullit hero* in the *Codex Calixtinus*

As Dickinson weaves these stories throughout "Burgos," he bifurcates them and does not tell them in their entirety. This choice helps Dickinson achieve his goal of making it seem like the listener should already know these stories; it is as if they are overhearing many different groups of people telling the same story in different locations along the pilgrimage route. Furthermore, splitting the text is a metaphor for the dismemberment and veneration of saint's bodies as relics, a common practice within the Catholic church. Although the entirety of St. James' body is purported to be buried at Santiago de Compostela, Dickinson plays into this tradition, as seen in his verse: "His arm is in England, his jaw in Italy, and yet he works wonders." Here, each bifurcated story is spliced together into a cohesive unit to aid in the reading of this chapter:

Remember the pilgrim robbed in Pamplona,
Cheated of silver the night his wife died;
The widower robbed in Pamplona:
Told by the Saint how the thief
Fell from the roof of a house to his death.

This story, and many others, are told in full in the second book of the *Codex Calixtinus.* The sixth miracle of St. James inspires this tale.[229] In this miracle, a family traveling to Santiago de Compostela stops in Pamplona. The wife dies, and the husband and children are robbed of their money and horse. As they continue towards Santiago, the man is forced to carry his children. A stranger appears to them and gives them a donkey for their journey. Upon reaching Santiago, St. James appears before the man, revealing that he was the one who provided the donkey. St. James assures the man that he has taken vengeance on the thief. As told in the Codex Calixtinus, these miracles served to inspire pilgrims and function as a warning to merchants and innkeepers along

[229] Coffey and Dunn, 25-27.

the Camino de Santiago. Pilgrims rely heavily on the good will of service providers along the road; fear was used to dissuade would-be malefactors from taking advantage of weary travelers.

The second story in "Burgos" is reconstructed here:

Remember the son of the German pilgrim
Hanged as a thief at the gates of the town,
Hanged at the word of an innkeeper's daughter
One kept alive for twenty-six days,
Unhurt on a gallows for twenty-six days.
The pilgrim's son they hanged in Toulouse
Was borne on the gallows for twenty-six days
And called to his father: Do not mourn,
For all this time the Saint has been with me.

The story of the boy on the gallows is inspired by a miracle of St. James recounted in Chapter Five of the second book of the *Codex Calixtinus*. The miracle described in the source material states the length of time on the gallows as 36 days. This same story (and length of 36 days) is corroborated in the *Legenda Aurea.*[230] In an early meeting, Talbot suggested that Dickinson avoid sibilants.[231] Dickinson's use of 26 instead of 36 does just that. Therefore, this slight adjustment to the story was not a mistake but rather a deliberate choice to enhance the lyrical quality of the poetry.

The following story is one of the more brutal tales. Inspired by the 17th chapter of the second book of the *Codex Calixtinus*, Dickinson's poetry retells the story in a less graphic form:

Traveller, be wary of strangers
Sometimes the Saint takes the form of a pilgrim,
Sometimes the devil the form of a saint.
Pray to the Saints and the Virgen del Camino,
To save you as she saved the man from Lyon
Who was tricked on the road by the deceiver,
Tricked by the devil in the form of St. James
And who killed himself from fear of hell;

[230] Coffey and Dunn, 24; Voragine, 393.
[231] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 2.

The devil cried out and claimed his soul.
Weeping, his companions prayed.
Saint and Virgin heard the prayer
And turned his wound into a scar,
From mercy they gave the dead man life.

The final identifiable miracle in "Burgos" is found in Dickinson's verse: "We write our sins on parchment / To cast upon his shrine / In hope they will burn." This verse is a reference to the second miracle of St. James. Since Dickinson simply alludes to this story, it bears further explanation. A man who committed an egregious, unnamed sin went to Bishop Teodomiro (the Bishop at Iria Flavia when St. James' burial place was discovered in the 9th-century) to confess.[232] When the sin was finally admitted, the transgressor was instructed to write down the iniquity on a piece of parchment. Later, Bishop Teodomiro found the parchment near the altar, yet, when he picked it up there was no writing. It was deemed a miracle, representing God's forgiveness of the sin.[233]

[232] Coffey and Dunn, 11.

[233] Coffey and Dunn, 3; Voragine, 392. This is inspired by the second chapter of the second book in the Codex Calixtinus, which accounts some of St. James' miracles.

Table 5.3 Complete text to "Leon"

Li soleus qui en moi luist est mes deduis,
Et Dieus est mon conduis.

We have walked
In Jakobsland:

Over river and sheep track,
By hospice and hermit's cave.

We sleep on the earth and dream of the road,
We wake to the road and we walk.

Wind from the hills
Dry as the road,

Sun overhead,
Too bright for the eye.

Li soleus qui en moi luist est mes deduis,
Et Dieus est mon conduis.

Rumours of grace on the road,
Of wonders:

The miracles of Villasirga,
The Virgin in the apple tree.

The Apostle on horseback –
A journey of days in one night.

God knows we have walked
In Jakobsland:

Through the Gothic Fields,
From Castrogeriz to Calzadilla,

Calzadilla to Sahagun,
Each day the same road, the same sun.

Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Dominum virtutem.

Here is a miracle.
That we are here is a miracle.

Here daylight gives an image of
The heaven promised by His love.

Beate, qui habitant in domo tua, Domine;
In saecula saeculorum laudabant te.

We pause, as at the heart of a sun
That dazzles and does not burn.

Figure 5.9 Leon Cathedral, Spain. Photo by Elsua

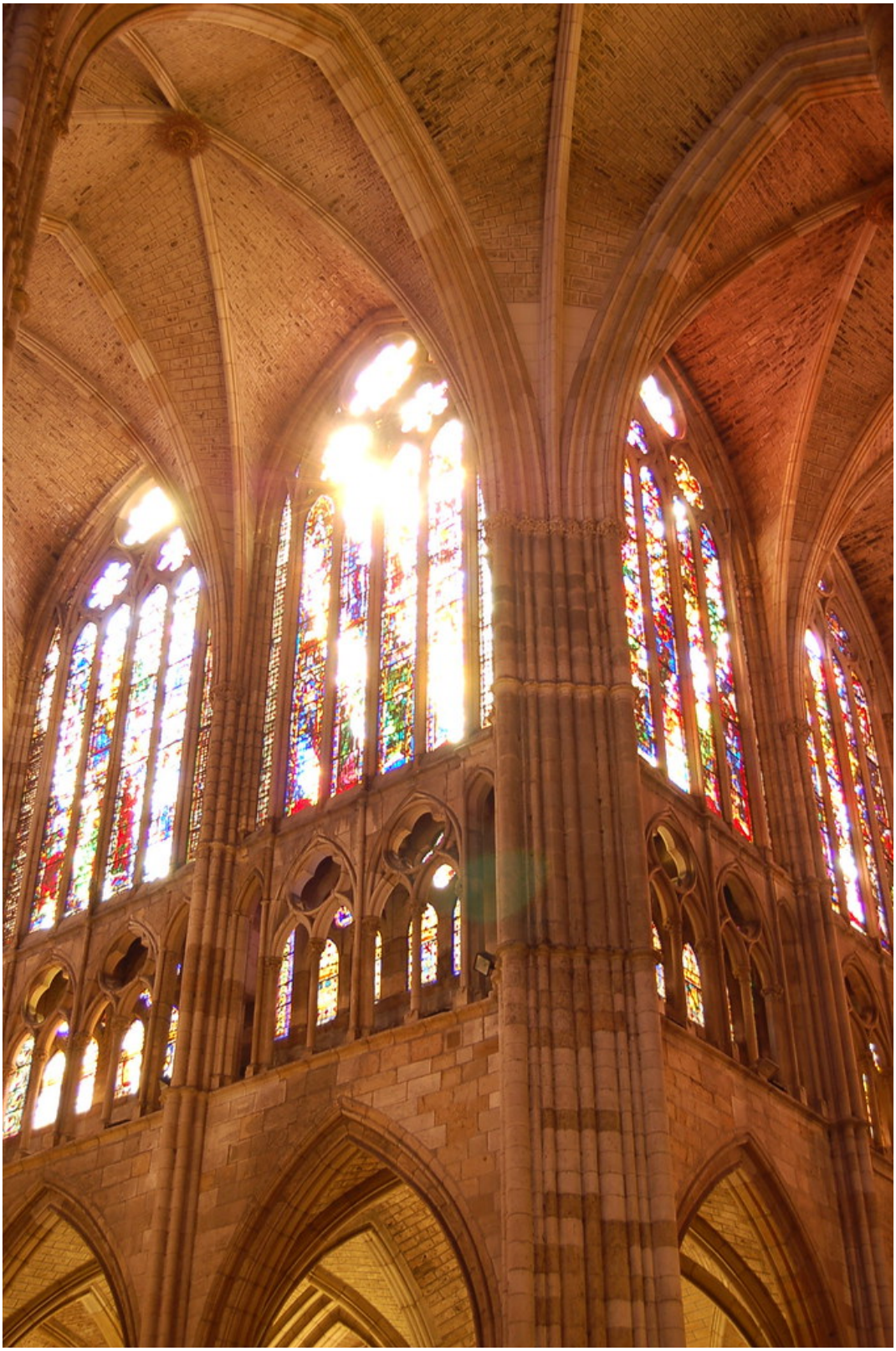

Figure 5.10 Light through stained glass at the Leon Cathedral, Spain.
Photo by Andrew Gould

Leon

The third movement, "Leon," offers a respite from the dissonant and fearful "Burgos" movement. Joby Talbot was inspired by the beautiful light in "Leon" (see Figure 10): "Standing in Leon Cathedral while the sun was setting and seeing this extraordinary quality of light through the beautiful medieval stained glass…I thought of a *Lux Aeterna*."[234] For the libretto, Dickinson "wanted to suggest a kind of blissed-out exhaustion. My idea for this movement was that it would be the part where the worst of it is over."[235] Dickinson once again immerses himself in source material, including the *Codex Calixtinus*, *Legenda Aurea,* and medieval poetry, as well as pilgrims accounts, both ancient and modern.[236] As with "Burgos," the poetry to "Leon" is primarily Dickinson's, however there are several quotations and references to the *Codex Calixtinus* that are worthy of explanation.

The opening poetry is a quotation from a much longer poem of medieval French verse. The poem is anonymous and without title, however some publishers label it "Chanson Pieuse."[237]

Li soleus qui en moi luist est mes deduis, *Et Dieus est mon conduis.*	The sun that shines within me is my joy, and God is my guide.

The text is representative of the light shining through the stained glass at the Leon Cathedral and captures the spiritual devotion of the medieval pilgrim. Dickinson recalls: "I sent Joby a copy of this poem and a translation of it and said: 'is this something that we could weave in?' And he chose a very small section of it because it seemed to fit the mood."[238] The incorporation of this

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[234] Joby Talbot, interview by Porter Anderson, May 22, 2015, accessed on March 1, 2021, http://tcat.tc/1IQb8b8. Talbot is referring to the *Lux Aeterna* antiphon, which traditionally includes some of the most beautiful music of a Requiem Mass. Literally, *Lux Aeterna* translates to "light eternal."

[235] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 7.

[236] Ibid.

[237] Brian Woledge, *The Penguin Book of French Verse I: To the Fifteenth Century* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958).

[238] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, 3.

line of text and how it weaves throughout the poetry is an example of the mosaic process described by Talbot earlier in this chapter.

Dickinson proceeds with narrative poetry, describing the hardships of the pilgrimage. Yet, in contrast to "Burgos," the poetry in "Leon" is steeped in hope. Dickinson evokes the spiritual significance of the pilgrims walking in close proximity of St. James by using a German word "Jakobsland" to describe the Galician region. Following another iteration of the "Chanson Pieuse," Dickinson offers snippets of miracles, as he did in "Burgos:"

Rumours of grace on the road,
Of wonders:

The miracles of Villasirga,
The Virgin in the apple tree.

The Apostle on horseback –
A journey of days in one night.

Dickinson states: "these are all actual stories, and they're the counterparts to the stories in Burgos, in that they're not told in full. But these are the happy stories, as it were."[239] The third stanza, describing the Apostle on horseback, is a reference to the fourth miracle of St. James, accounted in both the *Codex Calixtinus* and the *Legenda Aurea*.[240] In this miracle, a group of pilgrims is traveling along the Camino de Santiago. One of the men becomes sick, and all but one from the group abandons the ill-fated traveler. The sickness ends up killing the pilgrim, leaving his companion in a state of fear. The racist and xenophobic elements of the *Codex Calixtinus* are in full display in this chapter, stating that the man became terrified by "the horror of that barbarous people – the impious Basques – who were lingering around the pass. He was

[239] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, 8.
[240] Coffey and Dunn, 20; Voragine, 392-393.

afraid beyond measure."[241] In this tale, St. James appears on horseback and places both the dead body and the living pilgrim on the horse. The pilgrim wakes the following day to find they have traveled the distance of a twelve-day journey. St. James instructs the pious pilgrim to bury his companion before returning home. St. James prophesizes that the pilgrim will reconvene with the remainder of his traveling companions in the city of Leon. The man does so and tells his story, causing great shame and penance among his companions. As is often the case with the miracles contained in the *Codex Calixtinus,* it implies a practical ethics lesson for pilgrims: take care of each other along the road, or your journey and prayers will be displeasing to both God and St. James.

The remaining text in "Leon" describes the pilgrimage journey, offering images of the geography. Much like in "Burgos," several Latin phrases, both quoted from Psalm 84, serve as prayers the pilgrims utter along their journey. Following the Psalm 84 quotation, Dickinson continues with his own poetry. Here, the pilgrims are grateful for making it this far in the journey:

Here is a miracle.
That we are here is a miracle.
Here daylight gives an image of
The heaven promised by His love…

We pause, as at the heart of a sun
That dazzles and does not burn.

Dickinson says that the closing stanza was "meant to invoke the experience of being in the Cathedral of Leon during the day."[242] This verse demonstrates Dickinson's imaginative capacity to enter the mind of the medieval pilgrim. Entering a building like the Leon Cathedral would

[241] Coffey and Dunn, 20.
[242] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 8.

have been an astonishing experience for most pilgrims, most of whom had never left their hometowns. This experience would be heightened by the fact that pilgrims would have experienced sunburn during their journey. Being inside a building with sparkling light shining through stained glass without burning them would have been a memorable and awe-inspiring experience for these travelers.

Table 5.4 Complete text to "Santiago"

The road climbs through changing land.
Northern rains fall
On the deepening green of the slopes of the valley,
Storms break the summer's heat;
At Foncebadon a pass can be lost,
In one night, to the snow.

The road climbs for days through the highlands of Bierzo,
to the grassland and rocks of the Valcarce valley.
White broom and scrub-oak,
Laburnum and gorse
Mark the bare hills Beside the road.

At O Cebreiro, mountains.
The road follows the ridgetop
By meadows of fern, by fields of rye.

By Fonfria del Camino, by Triacastela.
Towns are shadows
The road leaves behind.
It moves over the slate hills
Palas do Rei. Potomarin.
The names are shadows.

Then, from the stream at Lavacolla
To the foot of Monte de Gozo,
A morning;
From the foot of Monte de Gozo
To the summit of Monte de Gozo
The road climbs,
Before the longed-for final descent
To Santiago.

Herr Santiagu
Grot Sanctiagu
Eultreya esuseya
Deius aia nos.

Ver redit optatum
Cum gaudio,
Flore decoratum
Purpureo;
Aves edunt cantus
Quam dulciter,
Cantus est amoenus
Totaliter.

Jacobo dat parium
Omnis mundus gratis
Ob cuius remedium
Miles pietatis
Cunctorum presidium
Est ad vota satis.

O beate Jacobe
Virtus nostra vere
Nobis hostes remove
Tuos ac tuere
Ac devotos adibe
Nos tibi placer

Jacobo propicio
Veniam speramus
Et quas ex obsequio
Merito debemus
Patri tam eximio
Dignes laudes demus.

At the Western edge of the world
We pray for our sins to fall from us
As chains from the limbs of penitents.

We have walked out of the lives we had
And will return to nothing, if we live,
Changed by the journey, face and soul alike.

We have walked out of our lives
To come to where the walls of heaven
Are thin as a curtain, transparent as glass,

Where the Apostle spoke the holy words,
Where in death he returned, where God is close,
Where saints and martyrs mark the road.

Santiago, *primus ex apostolis,*
Defender of pilgrims, warrior for truth,
Take from our backs the burdens of this life,

What we have done, who we have been;
Take them as fire takes the cloth
They cast into the sea at Finisterre.

Holy St James, great St. James
God help us now and evermore.

Figure 5.11 Santiago de Compostela, Spain. Photo by bernavazqueze

Santiago

The final movement, "Santiago," includes both the climax and resolution of the story told in *Path of Miracles*. The movement begins with beautiful imagery, including descriptions of vegetation, weather, towns, and landscapes. Dickinson says: "The thing I wanted to get at was a sense of building towards something and a sense of eagerness. As if they were ticking off the last place names on the route before they get there."[243] By capturing all these details, Dickinson also shows the heightened awareness of the pilgrims; knowing they are nearing the end of their journey, the pilgrims take in every last detail of their surroundings. The poetry begins to change with the stanza:

[243] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 9.

Then, from the stream at Lavacolla
To the foot of Monte de Gozo,
A Morning;
From the foot of Monte de Gozo
To the summit of Monte de Gozo
The road climbs,
Before the longed-for final descent
To Santiago

In this section, Dickinson slows the pace of the poetry: "Although it's not written in a strict meter, I did want that particular last line to run like that…Because I wanted to…delay, as it were, the final appearance of 'Santiago,' at the end of the line."[244] Delaying the word "Santiago" just a bit longer is highly effective, achieved through shortened phrases that disrupt the pace of the poetry. These shortened phrases are appropriate, as it represents the slowing down that the pilgrims would have experienced as they climbed the final mountain.

Dickinson mentions Monte de Gozo, which is a significant marker for pilgrims completing the Camino de Santiago. Coffey and Dunn write: "Monte de Gozo (*Monte Gaudii* "Mount Joy") is about five kilometers east of Compostela. From there, pilgrims could, and still can, see for the first time the cathedral of Compostela."[245] Today, there is a statue located at the summit of Monte de Gozo, showing two pilgrims pointing towards Santiago de Compostela; a joyful sight to behold (see Figure 5.12). The location of the word "Santiago" in the libretto is incredibly significant. Just as the pilgrims have enjoyed their first glimpse of the city and its cathedral, this is the first time in *Path of Miracles* that the word "Santiago" has been spoken in reference to Santiago de Compostela; every other instance of the word "Santiago" has been about Saint James himself. By withholding the word "Santiago" until this point in the libretto,

[244] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 9.
[245] Coffey and Dunn, 21.

Dickinson has effectively brought the audience along the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage. Much like the pilgrims who have been traveling for months, the audience have sustained fifty minutes of music before enjoying the gratification of arriving at their destination. After summiting Monte de Gozo, the Pilgrim's Hymn, "Herr Santiagu," returns, which has been absent since the end of the first movement; it serves as a prayer of thanks to St. James, who has safeguarded their passage to Santiago de Compostela.

Figure 5.12 Monte de Gozo - the first sighting of Santiago. Photo by Simon Nathan

Following this iteration of the "Pilgrim's Hymn," Dickinson inserts a section of text from the *Carmina Burana*, the 13th-century German collection of poetry.[246] While this poetry has no correlation to the Camino de Santiago, it was chosen because it depicts the joyfulness felt with the arrival of spring after a long winter – an apt metaphor for completing the pilgrimage.

Ver redit optatum Cum gaudio,	Longed-for spring returns, with joy,
Flore decoratum	adorned with shining flowers.
Pupureo;	The birds
Aves edunt cantus	sing so sweetly,
Quam dulciter,	the woods burst into leaf,
Cantus est amoenus	there is pleasant song
Totaliter.	on every side.

Talbot reflects upon a scene he witnessed at Santiago de Compostela, which influenced the choice of placing the Carmina Burana text at this point in the libretto:

> I was standing at the top of the stairs on the west-front, looking over the square. It was pouring with rain (as it always does in Santiago) and a party of French teenagers arrived that had obviously done the pilgrimage. And they piled all their backpacks into a huge, great big pyramid in the middle of the square, and then just started dancing around it. It all just sort of unfolded…It was just this amazing spontaneous [event]. They all pulled down their hoods, the rain was coming down, and they were all just ecstatically jumping around…And I just thought how it must feel to get in after all the effort to arrive there. That combined with the original west-front…there's just this incredibly welcoming, exciting, beautiful [atmosphere].[247]

This unbridled expression of joy is reflected in the music (which is analyzed in Chapter Nine). Talbot then layers the text from *Carmina Burana* with the remaining text of the *Dum pater familias* chant (see Figure 5.13), refocusing the joyfulness of this secular text back to praising St. James.

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[246] Alison Latham, "Carmina Burana," in the *Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford University Press), accessed March 2, 2021, https://www-oxfordreference.com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780199579037.001.0001/acref-9780199579037-e-1181.

[247] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 5-6.

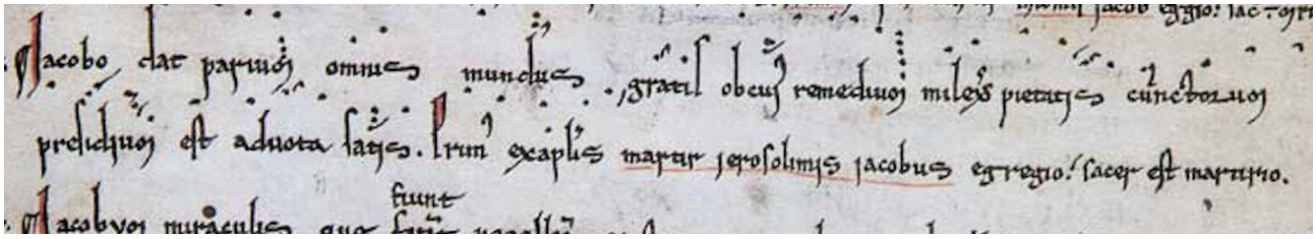

Figure 5.13 "Jacobo dat parium omnis mundus" portion of the *Dum pater familias*

The last eight stanzas of poetry are Robert Dickinson's, except for the final iteration of the "Pilgrim's Hymn," which brings *Path of Miracles* to a close. Dickinson's verses function like a coda. The pilgrims continue their journey to the sea to visit where the boat bearing St James' body berthed. Many others would travel to the end of the Earth at *Finisterre*. Oliver Guiberteau writes:

> The final few kilometers of the Finisterre section of the Camino de Santiago wind along the coast, ending at the lighthouse at Monte Facho's southern tip where the bronze boot is [see Figure 5.14]. For those who have walked from St-Jean-Pied-de-Port in south-west France… these are the final steps of an 870km journey. A symbolic distance marker showing 0.0km sits just north of the lighthouse [see Figure 5.15], behind which lies a wide craggy area that descends almost like a natural amphitheater before plunging off the edge. This is where pilgrims would burn an item of clothing as an act of re-birth.[248]

Dickinson captures this spirit of this ritual in his poetry:

Take from our backs the burdens of this life,
What we have done, who we have been;
Take them as fire takes the cloth
They cast into the sea at Finisterre

After this ritualistic burning of their clothes (the practice of which has been banned in modern times for environmental reasons), Pilgrims "could gather as many scallop shells as their hearts desired. It was only after all this that the pilgrims set out upon their homeward trail."[249] Indeed,

[248] Oliver Guiberteau, "The Camino de Santiago's Ancient Secret," BBC, April 12, 2019, accessed March 2, 2021, http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20190411-the-camino-de-santiagos-ancient-secret.
[249] Melczer, 62.

all journeys come to an end, and the pilgrims must return to their homes. However, as they return home, they reflect upon the physical and spiritual transformation they experienced, as Dickinson phrases it, “Changed by the journey, face and soul alike.”

Figure 5.14 Bronze statue of pilgrim's boot at Finisterre. Photo by Graham Stanley

Figure 5.15 0.0 Kilometers Sign at Finisterre, Spain. Photo by Compostelavirtual

Commentary on the Text, Translations, Source and IPA Tables

Accompanying this chapter are four tables (see Appendix B), one for each movement, including the complete text, language identification, translations, source material identification, and IPA transcriptions. The texts were transcribed from the liner notes to the Tenebrae *Path of Miracles* recording.[250] The poetry is not broken into lines and stanzas, as they would appear in printed poetry, to save space in the table. Therefore, it is inadvisable to copy the text as written in these tables for any performance program notes. Rather, this source is intended to guide conductors as they prepare their own scores for performance, and to distribute freely to their ensembles to aid in the rehearsal process. For consistency, the poetic translations included are also derived from the liner notes to the Tenebrae recording. However, as discussed previously in this chapter, there are instances where a better understanding of the word-for-word translations provides helpful context. Included in these tables are some citations linking the libretto text to the source material that inspired it.

The IPA Transcriptions

Many decisions were made to create the most accurate and valuable International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) transcriptions. To assist the transcription process, the PhoneticSoft software was used to provide a basic template of the IPA, which was then meticulously edited by the author.[251] Because Robert Dickinson often used multiple languages within his poetry (including the names of people and locations) all foreign language words were transcribed adhering to the rules of the originating language, not an anglicized version of those words. All Latin texts were transcribed using Ecclesiastical Latin pronunciation. However, if an ensemble

[250] Joby Talbot, *Path of Miracles CD Liner Notes,* Signum Records, 2005, CD, 7-14.
[251] PhoneticSoft, accessed March 2, 2021, https://ipanow.com/.

were interested in performing the work with Germanic, Classical, French, or other Latin pronunciation systems, the international nature of the pilgrimage would fully support that choice.

There is a Latin-alphabet transcription of the Greek text in the Path of Miracles score, which is useful for those less comfortable with IPA. However, the transcription in the table presents a more detailed pronunciation guide for Greek diction. Because of the nature of this pilgrimage and the age of the biblical text, this transcription follows the ancient Greek pronunciation instead of a modern dialect. Talbot's score and the Tenebrae recording provide clues that this was the composer's intent. An example can be seen in the word επεβαλεν, which in modern Greek would be pronounced [epevalen] instead of [epebalen], as it is indicated in the score. J. Wells' "IPA Transcription of Ancient Greek" was used to transcribe the Greek phonetics accurately.[252] Because this passage borrows two names from outside the Greek language (Herod and John) there are irregularities in the Greek phonetic rules. In these instances, the Tenebrae recording guided the phonetics.

A Castilian Spanish dialect was used for all Spanish texts in the libretto. This dialect accurately reflects the European Spanish roots of the Camino de Santiago as well as common lyric-diction practices.

To aid the phonetic transcription of the Basque language, the Basque Phonetics Guide through the UCLA phonetics archive was used.[253]

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[252] J. Wells, "IPA transcription of Ancient Greek," UCL Department of Speech, Hearing, and Phonetic Sciences, accessed February 24, 2021, https://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/greek.htm.

[253] Basque Phonetics Guide, UCLA Phonetics archive, accessed February 24, 2021 http://archive.phonetics.ucla.edu/Language/EUS/eus_word-list_1983_01.html.

Most of the French texts were transcribed into modern French phonetics, save the excerpted 13th-century French poem used in "Leon." Because of the medieval origins of that text, medieval French diction was used. John Austin and Lyn Schenbeck's article, "Spelling and Pronunciation of Old French," served as the guide for creating this transcription.[254]

Texts taken from the *Miragres de Santiago* were written in the Galician dialect. Andrew Casson's resource, "Pronunciation guide for medieval Galician-Poruguese," served as the primary resource for creating these phonetic transcriptions.[255]

German texts were transcribed following guidelines of modern German diction.

[254] John Austin and Lyn Schenbeck, "Spelling and Pronunciation of Old French," *The Choral Journal,* 37, no. 3 (1996): 33-35, accessed February 27, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23552208.

[255] Andrew Casson, "Pronunciation guide for medieval Galician-Portuguese," *Cantigas de Santa Maria for Singers,* 2019, accessed February 24, 2021, http://www.cantigasdesantamaria.com/pronounce.html.

Chapter 6.
Roncesvalles Analysis

Overview of "Roncesvalles"

Path of Miracles is a unique choral form that is difficult to categorize. It is madrigalian, yet not a madrigal cycle. It is like a cantata or oratorio yet does not follow the formal structure of those genres. It is pictorial but not exactly a film score. Describing *Path of Miracles,* Talbot says: "I conceived it symphonically…I'm always kind of thinking in terms of symphonic meaning in the way I develop material."[256] While not a symphony, *Path of Miracles* is clearly symphonic. Thinking of *Path of Miracles* symphonically helps conductors understand the pacing and development of the music and helps the listener wade through the complexities of each movement. To help illuminate the symphonic influence, each of the analysis chapters highlight some of the symphonic elements found within *Path of Miracles*.

"Roncesvalles" is in three large sections and displays similarities to sonata form and the symphonic tradition. While not in sonata form, the "exposition" of "Roncesvalles" consists of a large section that presents the primary melodic material. The "development" section manipulates the rhythmic and melodic cells. The "recapitulation" repeats the opening thematic material before bringing the movement to a close.

Typical of Talbot's compositional style, "Roncesvalles" explores texture in many interesting ways. Talbot starts with small melodic cells in soft dynamics and slowly builds the intensity of the music until it reaches its breaking point, whereupon he reduces the texture and begins the process again. Often, multiple melodic and rhythmic cells are heard simultaneously.

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[256] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 1.

Although not always notated through time signature, Talbot utilizes polymeter and polyrhythms throughout *Path of Miracles.* Talbot does so to amplify the tension between the rhythms and the text, adding to the dramatic nature of the music. Throughout "Roncesvalles," various rhythmic cells propel the piece forward. In referencing "Roncesvalles," Talbot said: "Those motoric rhythmic cell sections…it just is sort of thrilling, isn't it? It's like a big machine with all these different cogs, all different sizes, all kind of working together."[257]

Pasiputput: Addressing Issues of Cultural Appropriation

The opening page of the *Path of Miracles* score is a musically notated approximation of the Pasiputput tradition of the people from the Bunun tribe in Taiwan.[258] Joby Talbot first heard the Pasiputput as a teenager listening to the BBC:

> I clearly remember lying on the floor of the attic room in my parents' house. As the slow, endless glissando of one particular piece – the Bunun tribe's hauntingly unique Pasiputput – drew me in, I became aware that I was hallucinating that the room's eaves were bowing outward. It was a moment of alarming intensity. At some point, the idea of trying to recreate something similar in a piece of my own must have lodged at the back of my brain. A decade and a half later, when Nigel Short of the English choir Tenebrae approached me with the idea of writing a piece about the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, the Pasiputput sprang to mind.[259]

Describing his inspiration to use this technique in *Path of Miracles,* Talbot says:

> The experience of first hearing a Bunun choir singing the Pasiputput ritual was one of the formative moments of my musical life. I had no idea the human voice could sound like that, nor did I realize that music could have such a profound, visceral effect on the listener. When I learned of the cultural significance of the music and the intention behind its traditional performance, I was even more moved. My decision to open Path of Miracles with my own stylized reaction to the original folk song was as much to do with the meaning of the ritual as it is to do with the sound of it. Path of Miracles is about the coming together of peoples with a common purpose. It's about a universal faith in the

[257] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 11.

[258] It is important to note that some online sources use the alternate spelling "pasibutbut." This word is approximately pronounced [ˈpa ʃi pʊt pʊt].

[259] Joby Talbot, "From the Composer," in Program Notes by Conspirare, 4.

> redemptive power of love and shared experience. The Pasiputput feels to me to be an especially pure and direct expression of that faith. I've always been entirely candid about where the idea for the opening glissando came from. Indeed, part of my reason for wanting to include it was to share my enthusiasm for the extraordinary and beautiful choral tradition of the aboriginal Taiwanese. I hope that their music has reached a wider audience as a result. I hope that people don't consider me guilty of cultural appropriation. My intention was never to steal, but to celebrate and revere.[260]

As artists, it is essential to examine the concept of cultural appropriation, as Talbot has. At first glance, Talbot's use of the Pasiputput seems to be completely unrelated to the story of *Path of Miracles,* utilizing an aboriginal Bunun ritual to grab the audience's attention. While it is exciting to listen to, the sonic experience is analogous to the Camino de Santiago. The continuous glissandos and shifting pitch of the Pasiputput are like the many different roads of the Camino de Santiago that originate throughout Europe. Just as the many roads consolidate to a few primary paths and ultimately one destination, so too does the many pitches consolidate into a single pitch. Therefore, the Pasiputput accomplishes three things: it grabs the audience's attention by providing an unexpected sonic experience, highlights the pilgrimage's international nature, and acts as a sonic metaphor for the Camino de Santiago.

The Oxford Reference defines *cultural appropriation* as: "A term used to describe the taking over of creative or artistic forms, themes, or practices by one cultural group from another. It is in general used to describe Western appropriations of non-Western or non-white forms, and carries connotations of exploitation and dominance."[261] It is the latter part of the definition that makes it difficult identifying cultural appropriation. Who decides what is exploitive and what is a respectful honoring of a cultural practice that differs from your own?

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[260] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 15, 2021, 15.

[261] "Cultural appropriation," Oxford Reference, accessed March 6, 2021, https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095652789.

Dr. Kristina Boerger addressed the concept of cultural appropriation at length in her dissertation, "Whose Music is it Anyway? Black Vocal Ensemble Traditions and the Feminist Choral Movement: Performance Practice as Politics." While Boerger specifically examined predominantly White feminist choirs performing Black music, several concepts transfer to *Path of Miracles.* Boerger interviewed several prominent black choral musicians, including Melanie DeMore and Ysaye Maria Barnwell (two prominent black choral musicians in the United States).

DeMore says that it is important "knowing the origins of something. And giving respect for that. And not thinking that just because it's out there, you can turn it into something else… I am not averse to people doing other people's stuff as long as they will ask the questions and be willing to go through it and be willing to listen to those people's stories."[262] In a separate interview on cultural appropriation with Boerger, Barnwell says: "In some ways it's very, very simple, and in some ways it's very deep and very complicated. In *this* society, it becomes *very* complicated…the lack of knowing - and not taking the responsibility for knowing - the piece, the circumstance from which it came, the context, not attributing credit to the culture or the composer, using it out of context without regard-all those things…are part of it."[263] For both DeMore and Barnwell, being respectful to the culture by spending time studying the context from which a composition comes is an essential step the artist must take. Talbot has certainly done so with the opening Pasiputput in *Path of Miracles.*

Talbot pays respect to the Bunun tribe with an attribution in the program notes, as well as with the research he has done to inform his compositional rendering of the Pasiputput, an oral

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[262] Melanie DeMore, interview by Kristina Boerger, in "Whose Music is it Anyway? Black Vocal Ensemble Traditions and the Feminist Choral Movement: Performance Practice as Politics" (DMA diss., University of Illinois, 2000), 285.

[263] Ysaye Maria Barnwell, interview by Kristina Boerger, in "Whose Music is it Anyway? Black Vocal Ensemble Traditions and the Feminist Choral Movement: Performance Practice as Politics" (DMA diss., University of Illinois, 2000), 285.

tradition. Talbot writes: "Pasiputput is a traditional ritual, sung to celebrate the sowing of the year's crops, and a successful performance – judged by the purity of the final chord's intonation – is believed to correlate directly to the success of the resultant harvest."[264] Boerger speaks of the concept of paying a debt to another culture in her dissertation:

> It is absolutely clear…that the first payment on the "debt" is one that money cannot cover; it must come in the form of acknowledgement of a song's origins and meanings. This is part of a larger, more general debt of "respect," a word that interviewees used repeatedly. Another non-monetary payment of respect, one that is also extremely important, is the performers' serious engagement with the music."[265]

By giving proper credit to the Bunun tribe from which the Pasiputput tradition originates, Talbot pays respect to the Bunun people of Taiwan. It is up to performers to continue to pay the debt by dedicating time to seriously understanding this tradition and how it is performed.

One such way an ensemble could engage responsibly with the Pasiputput is by hiring a culture bearer to help teach the music to the ensemble. If *Path of Miracles* were composed today, it is likely that Talbot, Nigel Short, and Tenebrae would have taken this step. Gabriel Crouch states that:

> Obviously, if this piece had been written and premiered in 2020, we definitely would have, honestly….Back in those days, that kind of cultural vampirism (as it would be seen now as because it is) was seen as virtuous…to explore another mode of singing. I certainly didn't put the thought in to continue to honor the tradition in the way that I absolutely would now…I think it's probably worth saying that Joby makes the conscious link [to the Bunun people] …We now call it the Pasiputput because we love it. We love the connection.[266]

Crouch, Talbot, and Tenebrae have demonstrated cultural awareness since *Path of Miracles* was premiered while acknowledging continued room to grow. For conductors wishing to explore this

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[264] Joby Talbot, "From the Composer," in Program Notes by Conspirare, 4.

[265] Kristina Boerger, "Whose Music is it Anyway? Black Vocal Ensemble Traditions and the Feminist Choral Movement: Performance Practice as Politics(DMA diss., University of Illinois, 2000), 350.

[266] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 11.

concept further, Boerger's dissertation is an excellent place to start. One of the recurring themes in Boerger's dissertation is the disagreements between various artists about what is appropriate and what is not appropriate. This disagreement supports the argument against cultural ambassadorship; one person cannot speak definitively for an entire group of people. What is "approved" by one person can be perceived as offensive by another.

The problem of cultural appropriation is an issue of an imbalance of power. Boerger highlights this power dynamic in a personal comparison:

> I am no more a Christian worshiper in the Thirty Year's War than I am an African-American slave, but I have had far more empathy with the concerns of the latter than the former. I believe, then, that the greater ease with which I feel I could claim the former music as "mine" has only to do with the fact that no one whose feelings I care about would challenge my right to do so in terms that were highly politically charged. When I find a route through Schütz's settings of scriptural texts to my own feelings - in other words, when I *appropriate* his expressions for my own practical and emotional purposes - no one accuses me of an ethical breach. This is because the culture to which I am seen to belong is not oppressing the culture to which his music is seen to belong. The same cannot ever be said between people and musics seen - even if inaccurately - to be White and Black in the contemporary United States.[267]

Boerger's comparison of two examples of appropriation is powerful. Nevertheless, Boerger does not shy away from performing music from other cultures: "Still, if there is music that I love and that I think I can perform convincingly, I will look for a way to present it that is likely to be appreciated - or at least tolerated - by any audience members who might feel that it is theirs."[268]

As conductors continue to program *Path of Miracles,* many will have to contend with this issue. Crouch agrees, stating: "Those questions of honoring, in terms of tradition, I think it would hit me in a different way now…This is a very, very important part of our art-making now, so let's

[267] Boerger, 349.
[268] Ibid.

not shy away from it."[269] For those wanting to explore additional ways to pay back any debts to the Bunun tribe, Boerger has some suggestions:

> There are several possibilities White choral conductors can consider for the monetary payment of this "debt."…The GALA Choruses handbook *Embracing Diversity* (1994) offers a suggestion for choirs performing oral-tradition music in the public domain: in lieu of royalties, donations can be made to organizations serving the identity groups from which the music came.[270]

In summary, debts to the Bunun tribe can be paid through giving credit to their tradition, engaging seriously with the music, hiring an expert from their culture (if possible) to teach your ensemble, learning about the tradition through research (there are several YouTube videos on the Pasiputput tradition), or setting aside funds to donate to an organization serving the Bunun people. Conductors may also choose to consult with members of the Bunun people to discuss any questions they may have.[271] Whatever actions a conductor and ensemble make, honoring the Bunun tribe and the Pasiputput tradition is of the utmost importance. The worst mistake a person could make is to ignore the topic.

Analysis of "Roncesvalles"

The remainder of this chapter analyzes the primary melodic and rhythmic cells found in "Roncesvalles." "Roncesvalles" exemplifies many of Talbot's compositional trademarks and highlights his instrumental background. Due to the instrumental nature of this movement, "Roncesvalles" contains the least amount of text painting in *Path of Miracles*. Nevertheless, examples can be found and are illuminated throughout the chapter. Because the libretto text was discussed at length in Chapter Five, the only references to the text in the musical analysis

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[269] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 11.
[270] Boerger, 350.
[271] There is a Bunun Cultural Museum in Haiduan Township of Taiwan. Contact information can be found on their webpage https://museum.haiduau.gov.tw/Contact.php.

chapters highlight instances of text painting. To aid in analyzing "Roncesvalles," tables of the primary melodic and rhythmic cells are located below (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2). The melodic cells are labeled with capital letters and the rhythmic cells with Arabic numerals. All references to the score are communicated through measure numbers to avoid confusion between rehearsal letters in the score and the cell labels. The measure numbers included in the tables indicate the first time that motivic idea is introduced.

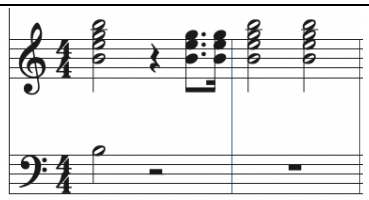
Timestamps are included throughout the analysis chapters. Doing so expedites the process of listening to each example for the interested reader. Each timestamp corresponds with the Tenebrae recording with Nigel Short. This recording was chosen because it was the commissioning ensemble and the recording in which Talbot was most involved. Each timestamp is shown in parenthesis following each description like so – (Track 1, 1:55).

In this chapter, examples of Talbot layering both rhythmic and melodic cells together are highlighted. Isolating these cells becomes very useful for the conductor and ensemble, as it clarifies the rhythmic intricacies and complex sonorities. Talbot points out that: "It sounds just like an infinite number of things coming at you at once, but actually it's just a few. Basically, if you can push the complexity of what you're doing to the limits of what's actually intelligible, then you are taking people to a very special place."[272]

Table 6.1 Roncesvalles Melodic Cells

Cell Letter	Melodic Cell	M.
A		5

[272] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 11.

B		8
C		19
D		25
E		55
F		131
G		147
H		210
I		261

Source: All cells were engraved by the author using Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles* score as the source material.

Table 6.2 Roncesvalles Rhythmic Cells

Cell Number	Rhythmic Cell	M.
1		15

2		92
3		123
4		143
5		230
6		296
7		336
8		360

9		368

Source: All cells were engraved by the author using Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles* score as the source material.

As stated earlier, the opening material (measures 1-52) functions like a slow introduction to a symphony, followed by a faster tempo with the primary melodic material beginning in measure 54. Much like sonata form, Talbot introduces several melodic themes throughout this section then begins to develop the material further, beginning at measure 296. At measure 440, Talbot recapitulates the opening material before bringing the movement to a quiet finish.

Path of Miracles opens mysteriously, almost inaudibly, in the low bass register. Crouch explains how the singers achieve the effect inspired by the Pasiputput tradition:

> We…try to find overtones within fourths and fifths, and we just sort of sit in there and then just kind of push a little. Just push, twist a little bit, breathe, go back down to the bottom of our voices, and then just kind of slide back into those…fourths and fifths overtones, and then just push a little more and then breathe, go back down. So, it's constantly pushing, going back for air, pushing a little more. And everyone's doing this in a random way so that you hear these kinds of uncoordinated but thoughtful, gradual, rising to the pitch.[273]

This complicated technique can last for a long time, depending on the room's acoustic. Crouch, who produced the Tenebrae recording, says: "my original cut of [the Pasiputput] might have been nine minutes in its original. That's how slowly the pitch raised."[274] After the tenors and basses arrive on a B-natural, they quickly glissando up an octave, providing the inversion of the E-minor triad for the soprano and alto entrance. The sopranos and altos enter with an explosive triple-forte on cell B (see Figure 6.1) (Track 1, 2:40). This melodic theme is the "Pilgrim's

[273] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 10.
[274] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 10.

Hymn" which returns throughout "Roncesvalles" and again in the final movement of *Path of Miracles.* Through the soprano and alto entrance, Talbot captures the excitement of the pilgrims as they begin their journey, shouting their praise of St. James. However, the instability of E-minor chord in second inversion highlights the precarious nature of the pilgrimage, and the anxiety of the pilgrims. Cells A and B overlap each other for several measures before the tenors and basses join the texture of cell B in measure 15, where rhythmic cell 1 is introduced (see Table 6.3) (Track 1, 2:57).

Table 6.3 Melodic Cells A/B/C/D and Rhythmic Cell 1

A		5
B		8
1		15
C		19
D		25

At measure 19, the crotales enter presenting melodic cell C, which is doubled by the tenors and basses. This descending arpeggio provides the harmonic framework for the alto soloist to intone the chant-like melody of cell D (see Table 6.3) (Track 1, 3:43). Following the chant, the pilgrim's hymn returns. However, the sopranos and altos omit the third of the E-minor triad, while the basses and tenors sing an A-minor triad (see figure 1) (Track 1, 4:46). While the

chord can be labeled as A-minor-9, the different aural timbres make it sound like two separate chords; this effect is heightened when the tenors and basses are physically separated on stage from the sopranos and altos, as the score instructs. Beginning in measure 46, rhythmic cell 1 returns before the sopranos and altos imitate the Pasiputput glissando, this time in inversion, bringing the slow introduction of "Roncesvalles" to a close.

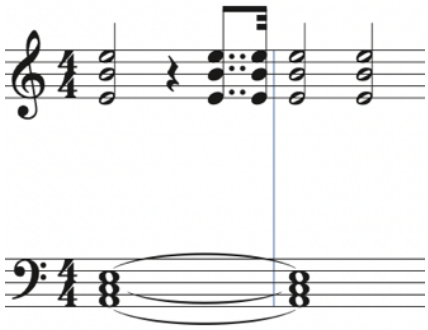


Figure 6.1 A-minor/E-open 5th at m. 40

At measure 55, the tempo becomes much faster as melodic cell E is introduced for the first time (see Figure 6.2) (Track 1, 5:57). Cell E is present for much of "Roncesvalles," and returns to open the final movement, "Santiago." The melodic alternation between G-sharp and G-natural keeps the listener questioning the modality of this section; this uncertainty effectively reflects the unknown dangers that lay ahead on the Camino de Santiago. Talbot maintains interest in the motive by changing timbre and tessitura, weaving this cell between voices; sometimes one voice begins the cell and another voice finish the melodic idea. The incessantly steady tempo combined with the mixed meter gives the sense of the pilgrims walking on uneven terrain. The evocation of walking is reinforced when the basses enter in measure 92 with the steady plodding of accented dotted-half notes (See figure 6.3) (Track 1, 6:35).

Figure 6.2 Melodic Cell E

Figure 6.3 Rhythmic Cell 2

As cell E and cell 2 interact for the subsequent measures, the first instance of polymeter occurs. The basses and tenors continue to sing accented notes that sustain for three beats, even when the meter is notated as four-four (See Figure 6.4) (Track 1, 7:00). Talbot continues to build the intensity of the music at measure 123 by overlapping rhythmic cells 3 and 2. Cell E drops out at measure 127 as Talbot prepares to introduce a second theme.

Figure 6.4 An example of polymeter in Path of Miracles

Next, Talbot introduces melodic cells F and G in quick succession. The driving rhythms of cell 3 yield to rhythmic cell 4 at measure 143, providing a moment of clarity in the new 5/4 meter (see Table 6.4) (Track 1, 7:14-7:30). At measure 162, Talbot reintroduces cell E and pairs it with rhythmic cell 4 (see Figure 6.5) (Track 1, 7:53). This provides interesting rhythmic tension, as the 5/4 rhythmic pattern interacts with the mixed meter of cell E. To add to the rhythmic tension, Talbot has cell 4 sung by two tenor parts, offset from each other.

Table 6.4 Cells F, 4, and H

F		131
4		143
G		147

Figure 6.5 Cells 4 and E interacting

The development of the material between measures 162 and 210 provides a clear example of Talbot's technique of slowly layering material and the interlocking of melodic and rhythmic

cells. As seen in figure 6.5 (above), Talbot has reduced the texture to just three voices. By measure 186, the texture has expanded to 9 voices. Although the texture is thick, there are only four cells operating simultaneously, as seen in Figure 6.6 (Track 1, 8:16).

Figure 6.6 Cells 2, 3, 4, and E interacting

Talbot slowly reduces the texture before introducing cell H for the first time at measure 210 (see Figure 6.7) (Track 1, 8:39).

Figure 6.7 Cell H at measure 210

When cell H is introduced, the only other voice present is the low bass, who are singing cell 3, creating a three against two polyrhythm. A few measures later, the baritones join the texture, presenting cell 5 for the first time. The entire choir joins just three measures later (at measure 229), singing accented, single quarter-note rhythms. These shouts occur without a predictable pattern, creating a chaotic, disconcerting experience for the listener. These interjections from the choir effectively represent the text, which is depicting the martyrdom of St. James (see Figure 6.8) (Track 1, 8:58).

Figure 6.8 Cells 3, 5, and H, with accented choral interjections

Talbot ends the “exposition” of this movement with cell I, the final melodic cell of the movement (see Figure 6.9), introduced by the baritones and lower tenor voices. It is accompanied by rhythmic cell 5 in the upper voices (Track 1, 9:28).

Figure 6.9 Cell I

The tension continues to build with the repetitive cells and loud dynamics. Four-measure phrases have dominated this section. However, as Talbot moves into the next large, “development” section of “Roncesvalles,” he extends the last phrase by two measures (see Figure 6.10) (Track 1, 9:55-10:00).

Once in the development, Talbot pushes the vocal ranges to further extremes, including low-Cs in the basses and high-As in the sopranos and tenors. At measure 368, Talbot restates cell E, this time transposed up a sixth from its original key (Track 1, 11:09). This section is exceedingly taxing vocally and mentally; the rhythmic precision is essential to the success of this piece, and the counting is challenging throughout this section. Talbot occasionally reduces the texture to aid with the clarity of the text. However, the driving rhythms, the loud dynamics, and the high tessitura make this section very dramatic. As the development section comes to a close, Talbot augments the rhythms before the recapitulation begins. The recapitulation is signaled by the return of the crotales which burst back into the texture at measure 440 in the tempo primo (Track 1, 12:20).

Figure 6.10 Transition to the development

At measure 440, Talbot returns to cell C, as in measure 20. However, when the chant melody (cell D) enters at measure 454, it is presented by the bass instead of the alto voice (see Figure 6.11) (Track 1, 13:23).

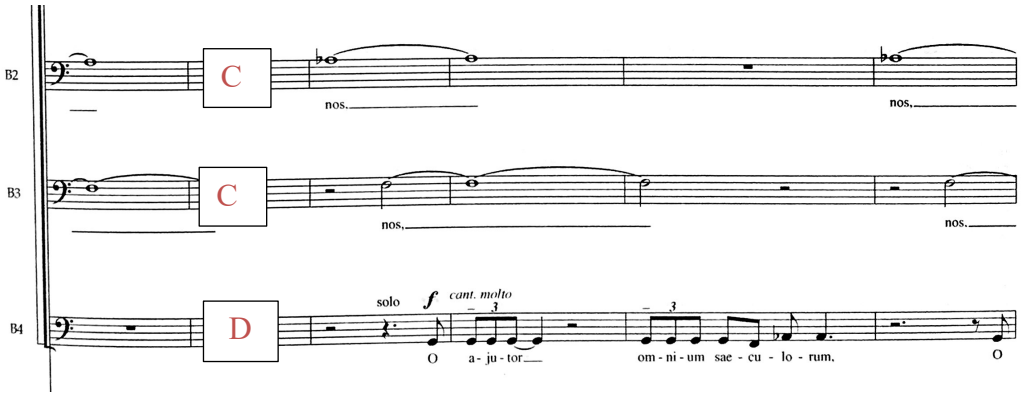


Figure 6.11 Cells C and D in the recapitulation

As the bass solo ends, there is silence before cell E returns once more (just as in the slow introduction of the piece) however in a slightly slower tempo than the original (see Figure 6.12) (Track 1, 14:41). Hearing silence followed by a single voice provides much-needed break, for the voices and audience alike, from the loud and thick texture of the development.

Figure 6.12 Cell E in the recapitulation

At measure 513, Talbot augments the "Pilgrim's Hymn" with the tenor and baritone voices (see Figure 6.13) (Track 1, 15:26). After a brief pause, the pilgrim's hymn reemerges at 537, in a slightly altered state (see Figure 6.14) (Track 1, 15:54). No longer in E-minor, Talbot offers a second inversion B-flat chord, although it is missing the third. The tonal ambiguity is less important than the hollow soundscape that this provides. The tenors and basses repeat cell A (emulating the Pasiputput), before inverting the same cell to finish the movement. While the text the choir is singing translates to "let's go higher," the final tones heard are a B-flat and F open fifth; a tritone *lower* than where the piece began. Falling the distance of a tritone, the interval

long perceived as the “devil’s interval,” is a chilling foreshadowing of the terrors that are to come in movement two, “Burgos.”

Figure 6.13 Tenor augmentation of the Pilgrim's Hymn (Cell B)

Figure 6.14 Return of the Pilgrim's Hymn

Chapter 7.
"Burgos" Analysis

Introduction

"Burgos" is the darkest and most dissonant movement in *Path of Miracles.* Talbot said: "The whole idea of the Burgos movement is that, after your initial burst of energy at the beginning, you get to a point where the blisters are now really beginning to hurt, and you really are absolutely knackered, and you were wondering what on earth you were ever thinking of embarking on this."[275] Gabriel Crouch described "Burgos" succinctly: "It is the musical manifestation of blisters."[276]

The Symphonic Influence

When Talbot was conceiving how he wanted *Path of Miracles* to be structured, he thought that the second movement would be like "a very sort of angular scherzo in a symphony."[277] The scherzo slowly replaced the minuet and trio in symphonic literature, and typically would have been placed in the third movement. However, just as in *Path of Miracles,* the scherzo in Beethoven's 9th symphony is the second movement, and similar examples can be found across the symphonic literature. While the term "scherzo" is Italian for "joke," this movement is by no means lighthearted. However, Talbot would not be the first composer to write a darker, more somber scherzo: "Haydn's quartets op.33 (1781) … [scherzo] movements

[275] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 15, 2021, 6-7.
[276] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 16.
[277] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 15, 2021, 4.

are not, as a body, lighter or more humorous than his usual type of minuet, and one (no.3) is decidedly serious, even somber, in color."[278]

Wendy Thompson writes that the scherzo is "generally in ternary form, with a contrasting middle section, or trio."[279] Scherzos were also typically written in 3/4, as is much of "Burgos." However, while most scherzos have a faster tempo followed by a contrasting trio, Talbot inverts the structure; the A sections are slow, with a faster, contrasting B section. In "Burgos," the form is ABA′: A (measures 1-222) B (measures 223-268) A′ (measures 269-345). It is important to be clear that "Burgos" does not exactly fit the style of a scherzo, just as "Roncesvalles" does not fit neatly into sonata form. However, the intention is to show that Talbot was thinking symphonically when composing *Path of Miracles* and demonstrate how Talbot's instrumental background influenced the compositional structure – of this, there is no doubt.

"Burgos" Analysis

Tables of the primary melodic and rhythmic cells found in "Burgos" are shown in tables 7.1 and 7.2. The labeling system is a continuation from "Roncesvalles," which is why the first melodic cell in "Burgos" is letter J, and the first rhythmic cell is number 10. It is important to keep the labeling continuous between movements, as Talbot returns to previously used melodic and rhythmic cells in movement four.

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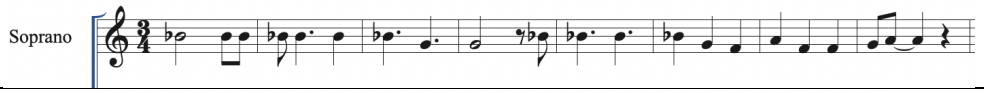
[278] Hugh Macdonald, "Scherzo," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, accessed March 9, 2021, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000024827.

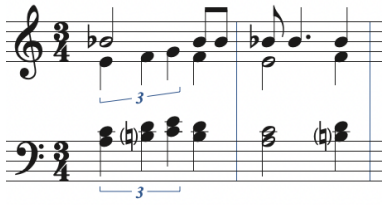
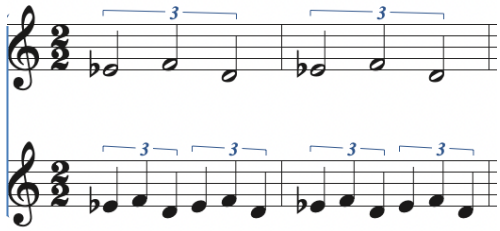
[279] Wendy Thompson, "Scherzo," in *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford University Press, 2011), accessed March 9, 2021, https://www-oxfordreference-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780199579037.001.0001/acref-9780199579037-e-5951.

Table 7.1 Melodic Cells in "Burgos"

Cell Letter	Burgos Melodic Cells	M.
J		1
K		30
M		80
N		87
M/N Comb.		87
O		114
P		191
Q		223
R		283
S		291

Source: All cells were engraved by the author using Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles* score as the source material.

Table 7.2 Rhythmic Cells in "Burgos"

Cell Number	Burgos Rhythmic Cells	M.
10		1
11		49
12		80
13		84
14		170

Source: All cells were engraved by the author using Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles* score as the source material.

Gabriel Crouch's description of this movement as being the "musical manifestation of blisters" is quite insightful. Talbot creates this painful friction in two ways, both of which are omnipresent in this movement. From the very first measure, there is a minor-2nd (or minor-9th) interval sounding. This is often achieved as one voice singing a B-flat while another sings a B-natural (see Figure 7.1). The second way Talbot creates friction is rhythmically, through either the alternation of triple and duple meter or three against two polyrhythms (see Figure 7.1) (Track

2, 0:00-0:04).[280] The combination of the rhythmic and intervallic dissonances is a musical representation of the pilgrim's aching feet.

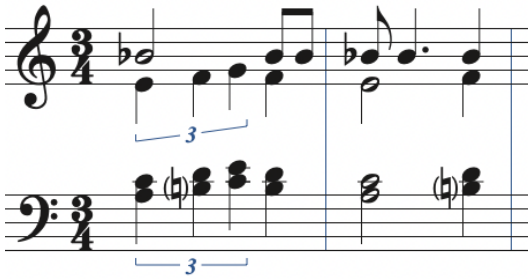


Figure 7.1 Minor-9th interval and Duple vs. Triple meter in measure 1 of "Burgos"

At Measure 30, Talbot expands texture from four to nine voices and offers a homophonic, hymn-like phrase, introducing melodic cell K (see Figure 7.2) (Track 2, 1:22). For the brief two measures in this example, there is no minor-2nd nor is there a polyrhythm, as the pilgrims ask St. Julian for prayers of supplication. This is a common theme throughout this movement. As the pilgrims experience hardships, trials, and terrors, they offer prayers. Talbot is showing musically that these prayers are providing some relief, however brief, from the pain. Talbot also moves from the F-minor triad to the submediant, a D-flat-major-7 chord, a harmonic motion often associated with heroism. However, keeping the common tone of C-natural in this harmonic shift brings back the nagging major-7th (minor-2nd inversion) clash between D-flat and C. After the prayer, the pilgrims return to telling horror stories of the Camino de Santiago. As they do, the music begins clashing again, both rhythmically and harmonically, as before (Track 2, 2:06).

Beginning in measure 80, the tempo becomes steadier and more consistent. The opening 79 measures were marked with pauses, as if the pilgrims were taking many breaks as they

[280] Timestamps reference the Tenebrae recording. See Chapter Six for commentary on the timestamps.

walked. However, much like on a long journey, the necessity to make progress becomes apparent despite their pain.

Figure 7.2 Measures 30-34 of "Burgos"

This is represented musically by melodic cell M, which is constantly heard for the next 126 measures, with the alternating B-natural and B-flat, as if the pilgrims are limping (see Figure 7.3) (Track 2, 3:55). Throughout the opening 79 measures, the altos are conspicuously absent, although perhaps unnoticed since the sopranos are divided into five parts and cover the inner

Figure 7.3 Melodic Cell M

notes normally assigned to the alto voices. The absence of the altos is functional for the drama of the work, as it gives them time to move to a different part of the performance space for their entrance at measure 87 (see Figure 7.4) (Track 2, 4:10). Ideally, the altos would sing these phrases antiphonally. The physical distance between the singers on stage is a visual representation of the dismemberment of St. James. When the alto cell N is combined with the bass cell M, text painting of the pilgrims limping becomes even more pronounced through the polyrhythms and the minor-second dissonances (see Figure 7.5) (Track 2, 4:10).

Figure 7.4 Alto entrance at measure 87

Figure 7.5 Combined cells M and N

Measures 80-206 steadily build in intensity and texture but contain only a few interlocking rhythmic and melodic cells. The basses sing cell M, the tenors sing cell 12, the baritones sing cell 13, the altos sing either cell N or O, and the sopranos are tacet (see Figures 7.6 and 7.7).

Figure 7.6 Interlocking Cells 12, 13, M, and N

Figure 7.7 Cell O

At measure 178, the sopranos reemerge into the texture with cell K, the same cell they were singing when they were last heard almost 100 measures earlier (see figure 7.8) (Track 2, 7:17).

Figure 7.8 Sopranos reemerge singing cell K

However, just as the sopranos enter, the altos drop out of the texture; Talbot has withheld the full force of the ensemble for all this time. It is not until measure 205 that Talbot unleashes the full power of the choir, and he does so in a dramatic fashion. Over the course of two measures, the entire choir performs a crescendo from piano to fortissimo (see figure 7.9) (Track 2, 8:16).

Figure 7.9 The first time the entire choir sings together in "Burgos"

Over the course of this movement, Robert Dickinson's poetry has described many of the terrors of the Camino de Santiago. In this section, the choir sings "we beat our hands against the walls of heaven." While this is not the first time this text has been sung in this movement, this is by far the most forceful. The dramatic crescendo represents the desperation of the pilgrims, depicting their fear that the devil could be anywhere. The music from measures 207-222 serves as a transition from the A section to the B section of "Burgos."

In measure 223, the B section begins. The tempo is dramatically faster than the A section. While written in a 3/2 meter, Talbot switches between duple and triple groupings of the notes (see Figure 7.10) (Track 2, 8:46).

Figure 7.10 Alternating duple and triple rhythmic groupings

The text describes the devil tricking a pilgrim into committing suicide, the most gruesome story of the piece, and the dance like tempo and rhythms (more like traditional scherzos) sounds like a demonic *danse macabre*. After the pilgrim kills himself, the libretto says: “The devil cried out and claimed his soul.” This phrase marks the first time in the movement that the choir sings in unison. This unified sound is striking, representing the assured victory for the devil. When the choir sings the word “out,” Talbot writes an incredibly dissonant B-minor triad with an added C-natural; an appropriately dissonant sound to represent the devil’s cry (see Figure 7.11) (Track 2, 9:31-9:40). Included in the devil’s cry is a tritone, the “devil’s interval,” between C-natural and F-sharp.

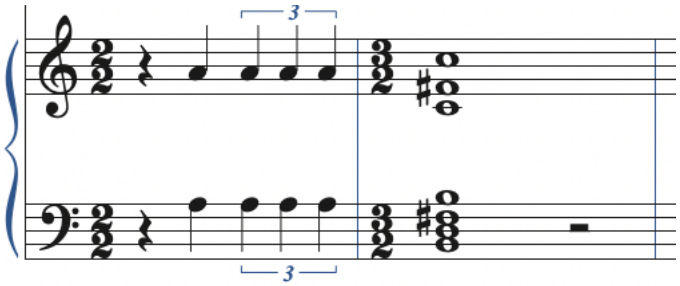


Figure 7.11 "The devil cried out" variation of cell K

The text that follows this dramatic moment is: “Saint and Virgin heard the prayer and turned his wound into a scar. From mercy they gave the dead man life.” The music heard during this miracle is the retrograde of the devil’s music; Talbot moves from the dissonant B-minor triad with an added C to a unison A-natural in the treble voices. This movement from a dissonant, splayed chord to a unison melody is an aural and visual representation of the healing of the pilgrim’s wounds (see Figure 7.12) (Track 2, 10:05). The choice to set this section with only

treble voices also helps depict the text – separating the devil below with the angels and saints above.

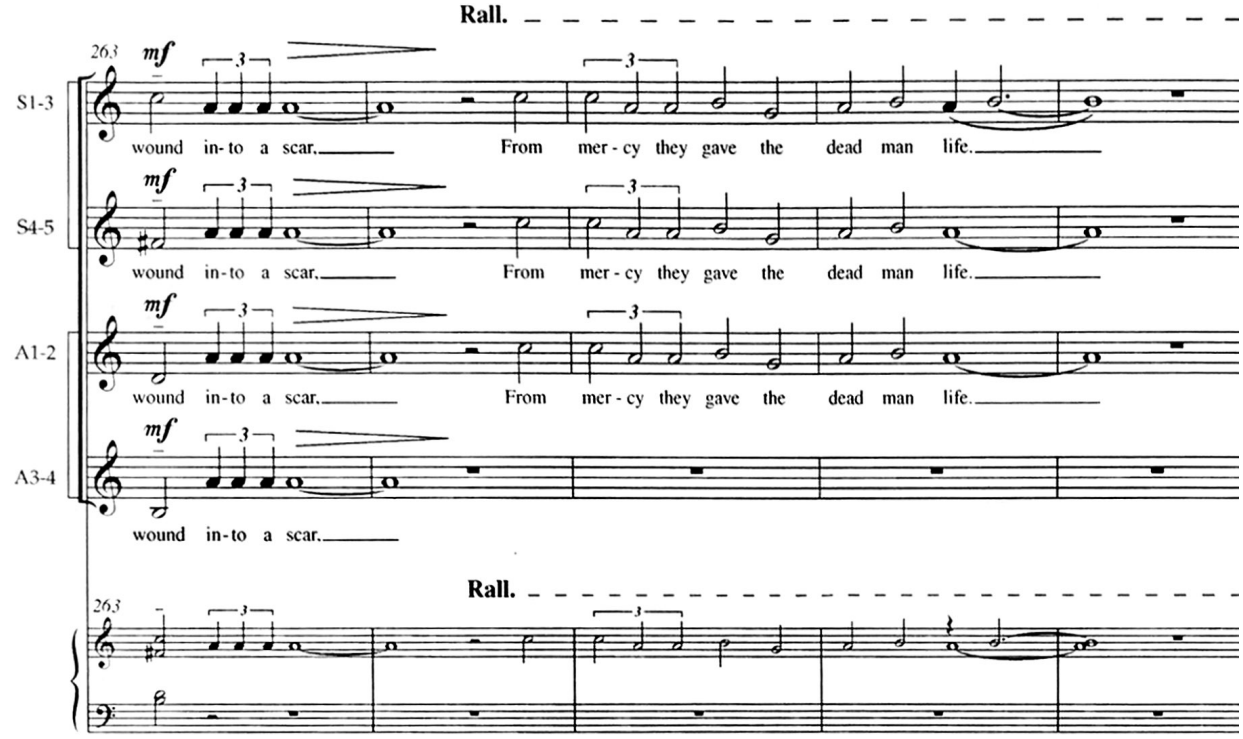


Figure 7.12 The healing of the wound

The return to the A′ section follows and depicts the pilgrims' continued struggle on their journey. The realities of the road (cheating innkeepers, thieves, and illness) are still present. While the previous story described a miracle in response to prayers, it appears that the pilgrims' own prayers are falling on deaf ears. The pilgrims sing: "We beat our hands against the walls of heaven and are not heard." At measure 283, the tenors and baritones sing in descending parallel motion. As they slowly slide downward, various dissonances occur (see Figure 7.13) (Track 2, 11:29). This murky motive, always sliding downwards, represents the pilgrims' prayers failing to reach the ears of God and St. James.

Figure 7.13 Cell R, Slow glissandos from minor-3rds to minor-2nds

At measure 291, Talbot sets more of the pilgrims' prayers to music, which is the counterpart to the music at measure 30. At measure 30, the music is characterized by homophonic motion with cell K, a melody that ascends by a minor-third with a supporting F-minor triad. Here, at measure 291, the music is clearly related to measure 30 in texture, tempo, and text. However, Talbot has changed the motive in several ways to reflect the desperate state of the pilgrims. Instead of the melody moving up by a minor-third, it descends by minor-third, and instead of a consonant F-minor triad, Talbot writes a second inversion E-minor triad with an added F-natural (see figure 7.14) (Track 2, 12:09). The descending melodic motive coupled with the more dissonant harmonies signify that, despite the pilgrims' prayers, their situation is not improving. In fact, it is worsening. They are tired and scared. Their heightened fatigue is further represented by the added pauses in the music. As the movement sputters to a close, the pauses get longer and longer; the staggering pilgrims are barely hanging on to hope.

Figure 7.14 Cell S at measure 291

In a final gasp, the pilgrims whisper a Latin prayer: “Pray for us, St. James, From the end of the earth I cry to you.” Talbot sets this prayer at a pianissimo dynamic in the bass voices only, a counterpart to the angelic representation of the unison trebles earlier in the movement. The final chord of the movement is an E-7 with a missing third. The opening key in “Roncesvalles” was E-minor. Ending this movement on the same chord as the opening movement, this time without the third, makes it seem as if the pilgrims have made no progress on their journey and are in an even more vulnerable position. However, hope will begin to shine in movement three, “Leon.”

Chapter 8.
Leon Analysis

Introduction

If "Burgos" is the musical manifestation of blisters, "Leon" is the musical manifestation of light. Talbot describes "Leon" as a "balm to [Burgos], a sort of *Lux Aeterna*."[281] As discussed in Chapter Five, Talbot's desire to compose Leon as a *Lux Aeterna* (light eternal) stems from his experience at the Leon cathedral, where he was moved by the beautiful stained-glass windows which bathe the sanctuary in warm light. Typical of the slow movement in a symphony, "Leon" has beautiful harmonies and memorable melodies.

Analysis

The melodic and rhythmic cells found in "Leon" are shown in tables 8.1 and 8.2. Gabriel Crouch describes the spirit of this movement: "The journey is more than half complete, the pain barrier has been crossed and the pilgrim's worries have indeed been sloughed off…As with the previous movement, there is a steady, almost hypnotic walking pulse, but the steps have lost their heaviness."[282]

Table 8.1 Melodic Cells in "Leon"

Cell Letter	Leon Melodic Cells	M.
T		1
U		4

[281] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 15, 2021, 4.
[282] Gabriel Crouch, "Path of Miracles CD Liner Notes," Signum Records, 2005, 4.

V		19
W		28
X		41
Y		57
Z		121

Table 8.2 Rhythmic Cells in "Leon"

Cell Number	Leon Rhythmic Cells	M.
15		28
16		79

Structurally, Talbot composes “Leon” in a rondo-like form. As shown in Table 3, Talbot introduces new melodic content in an overarching A-B-A-C-A-B-A-C-A pattern, very similar to a rondo (note that in this paragraph, as well as Table 3, all letters refer to formal structure and not melodic cells). However, unlike a true rondo form, the A section does not always appear in its entirety. When the A section is presented in its complete form, it receives its own column, as shown in Table 8.3. When just a portion of A’s thematic material appears, it is listed alongside the primary letter of that section.

Table 8.3 Form of "Leon"

Measures:	M.M. 1-27	M.M. 28-56	M.M. 57-88	M.M. 89-138	M.M. 139-159	M.M. 160-184
Form Letter	A	B/A	C/A	A’	B’/A	C/A

The difference in tonality from the dark oppressive “Burgos” to the bright and shimmering “Leon” is a welcome contrast for pilgrim and audience member alike. The primary recurring theme throughout “Leon” is melodic cell T (see Figure 8.1) (Track 3, 0:00-0:04).[283] This melodic cell is the musical representation of light beams entering the church through the stained-glass windows.

Figure 8.1 Melodic Cell T

The text that always accompanies melodic cell T comes from an anonymous 13th-century French ballade. This text translates to “the sun that shines within me is my joy, and God is my guide.” Talbot sets this text as a prayer, or mantra, that returns again and again as a touchstone as the pilgrims have pushed through the dark and despairing emotional phase of “Burgos” and are beginning to find hope. The image of light represents this hope throughout the movement. While melodic cell T is composed in 4/4, the motive is a 3 beat repeating pattern. Beyond Talbot’s affinity for three against two polyrhythms (of which there are many examples in *Path of Miracles*), this bending of the rhythmic accents is another musical depiction of light refracting through stained glass. Talbot accentuates the representation of light melodically. The serpentine melody of varying intervals is like the varied wavelengths of the different colored light from the

[283] Timestamps reference the Tenebrae recording. See Chapter Six for commentary on the timestamps.

stained glass. Furthermore, setting this melody in the soprano's high tessitura creates a bright shimmering sound that surrounds the audience with the overlapping pattern. Performing this motive antiphonally envelops the listener in the warm light from multiple directions.

As melodic cell T continues to unfold, Talbot layers in a sweeping melody in the lower voices (see Figure 8.2) (Track 3, 0:14-1:17). Incorporating shorter melodic phrases with longer

Figure 8.2 Melodic Cell U

melodic lines is one of Talbot's signature compositional techniques. As the first section draws to a close, Talbot offers a descending melodic idea to contrast cell U (see figure 8.3) (Track 3, 1:19).

Figure 8.3 Melodic Cell V

This cell serves as a recurring motive throughout "Leon." The short light waves of the soprano motive combined with the longer light waves of the lower voices is yet another example of how Talbot mimics light waves in melodic form.

After a clear break in music, the B-section of "Leon," (mm. 28-56) begins statically with the lower voices only (see Figure 8.4) (Track 3, 1:56). Moving from a unison C-natural with a descending C-major arpeggio, Talbot adds an accented 16th-note in the tenor line, a musical depiction of glinting light. At measure 36, Talbot interrupts the static harmonies of the tenors and basses with a return of cell T, this time transposed down a sixth and sung by the altos (see Figure 8.5) (Track 3, 2:22). Talbot slightly augments the rhythm of cell T for the altos in measure 38, once again playing with simple and compound meter. Talbot slowly expands the texture from a

unison C-natural in measure 41 to a F-Major+9 chord in second inversion in measure 49 (see Figures 8.6 and 8.7) (Track 3, 2:42-3:08). At measure 49, this highly unstable tonality is made even more unstable with the addition of cell T, most clearly visible in measures 49-50 in the piano reduction of Figure 8.7. The accompanying crescendo in these measures leading to measure 49 make the accented arrival on the F+9 chord sound like a burst of light.

Figure 8.4. Measures 28-32 in "Leon"

Figure 8.5. Measures 34-40 in "Leon"

Figure 8.6. Measures 41-45 in "Leon"

Figure 8.7. Measures 46-50 in "Leon"

Talbot slowly thins the texture over the next six measures, until a lone soprano voice remains on a C-natural. This crystalline note evokes a single beam of light piercing through the Leon cathedral.

Talbot uses the sustained C-natural from section B as a unifying thread to begin section C, which becomes the third of an A-flat major chord. In measure 57, the simplicity of a major triad in second inversion (see Figure 8.8) on very static rhythms produces a breathtaking sense of weightlessness (Track 3, 3:30-3:41). This is an incredibly poignant moment in the piece that perfectly reflects the text: “Rumours of grace on the road. Of wonders.” The pilgrims have been traveling for many weeks at this point. Many have suffered tremendous losses along the way (as experienced in “Burgos”). No longer are they only hearing of the terrors of the road, they are hearing stories of miracles. This transition from measure 56 to 57, the single beam of light captured in the C-natural which morphs into a warm A-flat major triad, captures the ray of hope for the pilgrims.

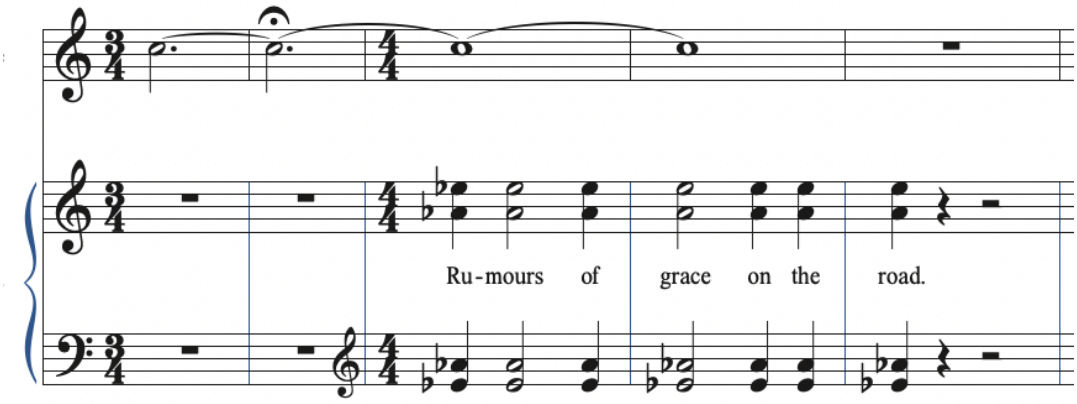


Figure 8.8. Measures 55-60 in "Leon"

One of the most interesting aspects of section C is the harmonic motion and tonal development. The movement thus far has been, roughly, in C-minor. Talbot begins to obscure the tonal development in measures 57-72 by constantly shifting between E-flat major and A-flat major chords. The listener is left wondering if it is simple motion between the tonic and the dominant in A-flat major or if it is a plagal cadence in E-flat major. What follows is one of the most dramatic moments in *Path of* Miracles (see Figure 8.9) (Track 3, 4:33-4:59). At measure

73, A-flat major becomes A-flat minor, quickly followed by a unison E-flat pitch. Utilizing a similar common tone modulation as before, Talbot moves to C-flat-major, to F-half diminished, to A-flat+9 without a 3rd. Talbot delays harmonic gratification even further by augmenting the rhythmic cells and adding a *rallentando*. Finally, in an intensely satisfying moment, Talbot resolves to an E-flat major chord in measure 79, the relative major to the C-minor where the movement began. This transition to the major reflects the changed perspective for the pilgrims; fear is yielding to hope. This musical shift towards hope beautifully depicts the text: "God knows we have walked in Jakobsland." Jakobsland (a German term for the Galician region of Spain) is a very descriptive word referring to St. James, which captures the significance that this area represents for pilgrims. With the shift to the relative major at this moment, it is as if the pilgrims are rejuvenated just by recognizing they have entered "Jakobsland." They are getting closer to their goal.

Talbot captures the holiness of Jakobsland in both the key and the meter. In Western music, the key of E-flat major has long been used to represent pastoral themes, as well as God and the holy trinity – the three flats of the key signature representing the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In addition to establishing the E-flat major tonality, Talbot changes the meter from 4/4 to 3/4. Like the spiritual associations of E-flat major, triple meters were considered "perfect" in mensural notation of early music. Talbot's use of these characteristics here, whether intentional or not, evoke a deeply affective resonance in the listener. Filled with a new sense of hope, determination, and confidence, the pilgrims continue to march forward on their journey, represented musically with the return of cell T in measure 83. Talbot gradually reduces the texture to two voices before returning to the A section in measure 89.

Figure 8.9. Measures 73-81 in "Leon"

At measure 89, the A-section returns in its entirety. However, Talbot rearranges the texture. Here, the sopranos sing the melody while the altos and tenors sing cell T (see figure 8.10) (Track 3, 5:32).

Figure 8.10. Measures 89-92 in "Leon"

By measure 105, the basses have joined the texture and, along with the tenors, have taken over the primary melodic material. The sopranos and upper altos sing an augmented version of cell T, the low altos and low tenors sing cell T, while the upper tenors and basses sing cell V (see Figure 8.11) (Track 3, 6:35). Talbot builds anticipation by extending the A' section through repetition. This repetition perfectly reflects the text, which states: "Each day the same road. Each day the same sun." The steady tempo coupled with these various ostinati paint the monotonous nature of the journey. However, the tonality is bright, reflecting the mindset of the pilgrims. While still

trekking forward on their long journey, they have a more hopeful attitude; or as Robert Dickinson said, the pilgrims are experiencing a "blissed-out exhaustion."[284]

Figure 8.11. Measures 105-108 in "Leon"

[284] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 2021, 7.

In measure 110, the lowest bass voices join the texture and sing cell V an octave lower (see Figure 8.12) (Track 3, 7:00).

Figure 8.12. Melodic Cell V an octave lower

Talbot offsets these low bass voices from the baritones and tenors, who are singing in a homophonic texture. By setting the low basses apart from the other voices, Talbot creates added dissonances of 7ths and 9ths. Furthermore, the text overlaps, adding to the piece's rhythmic, textual, and harmonic tension. This buildup of tension prepares the climactic moment of the movement, which occurs between measures 119 and 126. As the low basses sing cell V, Talbot sustains the penultimate note of the cell, E-flat, delaying the resolution of the cell. Instead of descending to a D-natural as has been done throughout, Talbot modulates to D-flat major. This shift to D-flat major coincides with the first iteration of the Latin text from Psalm 84: “How admirable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts.” This text is accompanied by cell Z, heard for the first time at measure 121 (see Figure 8.13) (Track 3, 7:40).

Figure 8.13. Melodic Cell Z

Talbot writes a *forte* dynamic at this moment for the first time in “Leon,” signifying its importance: the pilgrims have finally arrived at the Leon cathedral and are struck with awe and wonder at the architectural and artistic beauty of the sanctuary, praising God through the Psalm.

Talbot slowly thins the texture between measures 126 and 138 as cell Z is repeated in softer dynamics.

At measure 139, the B-section returns in an expanded version as the treble voices present the melodic content transposed to F-major, while the tenors and basses sustain an open fifth of F and C (see Figure 8.14) (Track 3, 8:40).

Figure 8.14. Measures 139-145 in "Leon"

These sustained pitches coupled with the melodic cells capture the warmth of the cathedral's light, as well as the mystery and holy atmosphere of the sanctuary. In the B-section, Talbot adjusts the texture to reflect the poetry. Rather than having the choir sing homophonically, a single soprano voice offers a chant melody, as if the pilgrims have entered a worship service at the cathedral (Track 3, 9:53).

Following the chant, Talbot returns to the material from section C. The intimacy of this section, achieved through the homophonic texture with soft dynamics, restores a sense of calm. This beautifully depicts the text which reads: "We pause as at the heart of a sun that dazzles and does not burn." The music reflects the pilgrims' physical and spiritual restoration during this brief stop along their pilgrimage journey. Between measures 168 and 177 (see Figure 8.15) (Track 3, 10:30), Talbot offers a similar transition as he did between measures 74 and 79 (as shown in Figure 9 earlier). At measure 177, instead of modulating to E-flat major as before, Talbot modulates to D-major with an immediate return of the ostinato cell T. This upward modulation with the return of the ostinato represents the pilgrims returning to the road, uplifted from their time in Leon, filled with courage and energy to complete their pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

Figure 8.15. Measures 168-178 in "Leon"

Chapter 9.
Santiago Analysis

Introduction

The final movement of *Path of Miracles,* "Santiago," is the longest and most dramatic of the entire piece. It is through-composed and contains three large sections. Each section corresponds with a different closing stage of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage. Section one, measures 1-200, describes the pilgrims approaching Santiago de Compostela. The music steadily flows and captures the excitement and anticipation of completing the journey. Section two, measures 201-354, depicts the pilgrims' arrival in Santiago. The music is very fast with complex rhythmic and melodic cells and aptly depicts the joyful, unbridled celebration of the pilgrims' arrival in Santiago de Compostela after all these months of walking. The third section, measures 355-470, portrays the pilgrims continuing to Finisterre. The music becomes introspective and reverent as the pilgrims reflect upon this transformational experience. The piece ends with the pilgrims giving thanks to God and Saint James for their metamorphosis while praying that their lives will be changed, not just now, but evermore.

Analysis

"Santiago" is very much like the final movement of a 19th-century symphony in that it is fast, muscular, developmental, and includes both new and recapitulatory material. Talbot uses many different cells throughout the movement, as seen in Tables 9.1 and 9.2. Typical of Talbot's style, the cells build, develop, and interlock to push the limits of what is intelligible in an exciting and dramatic fashion. These cells behave like waves; they slowly emerge, build in intensity before cresting and receding as the next wave emerges. A detailed analysis of

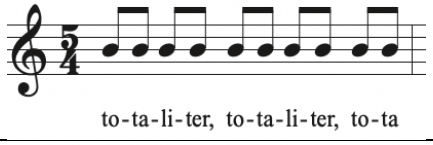
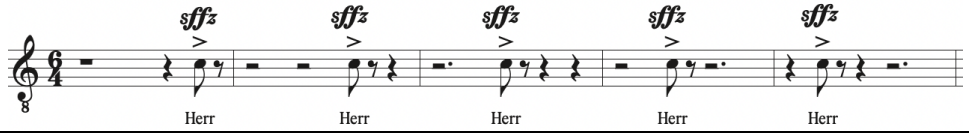
"Santiago" follows, highlighting both the interworking of the musical cells, as well as the ways that Talbot's music expertly reflects the text and the drama of the final stages of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage.

Table 9.1 Santiago Melodic Cells

Cell Letter	Santiago Melodic Cells	M.
E		1
E'		33
AA		56
AB		121
AC		150
B		171
AD		182
AE		190
AE′		201

AF		221
AG		242
AH		241
AI		253
AJ		266
AK		289
AL		313
AM		360
AN		377
AO		455

Table 9.2 Santiago Rhythmic Cells

Cell Number	Santiago Rhythmic Cells	M.
17		49
1		183
18		213
19		281
20		287
21		291
22		292
23		315
24		355

The opening motive in “Santiago” is cell E, one of the primary themes from the first movement. In this movement, the motive is transposed to C-sharp, as seen in Figure 9.1 (Track 4, 0:00).[285]

Cell E

Figure 9.1 Cell E

As “Santiago” begins, Talbot inserts pauses, using rests, between iterations of this motive. These pauses serve to slow the pace of the developing material, which builds the dramatic tension. In this section, the libretto describes the road climbing through the hills and mountains surrounding Santiago. The pauses in the music, therefore, also depict the text. They are like the brief rests that the pilgrims take between bursts of effort during their ascent. The second half of cell E (see Figure 9.2) is excerpted by Talbot and is used extensively throughout this movement and is heard continuously from measure 29-148.

Figure 9.2 Cell E’

At measure 49, Talbot introduces rhythmic cell 17, one of the prevailing themes used throughout this movement (see Figure 9.3) (Track 4, 0:52). While most cells are set to a variety of texts, this cell exclusively sets *Laudabant te*, meaning “I praise you.” Interestingly, this line is not included in the libretto for “Santiago,” but is borrowed from Psalm 84 used in “Leon.”

[285]Timestamps reference the Tenebrae recording. See Chapter Six for commentary on the timestamps.

Figure 9.3 Cell 17

Borrowing this laudatory text from "Leon" emphasizes the changing mindset for the pilgrims. Even though they have walked many more miles since Leon, they can hold on to hope. This repeated prayer functions like a mantra as the pilgrims continue to walk towards Santiago de Compostela. Through each step, no matter how painful, they will keep moving and praising God and St. James. This cell is an example of Talbot's affinity for setting texts that sometimes match the agogic stress and, at other points, actively work against it. Talbot says: "I'm constantly thinking about the natural rhythm of the words and thinking about it in two ways: one is how best to deliver the text so that it's audible and you capture the rhythm and control of the beauty of the words, but also then thinking about how can you do the opposite? How can you go against the natural rhythm of the words to create a tension?"[286] Cell 17 is a prime example of Talbot utilizing this technique. Setting this four-syllable phrase in a 3/4 meter with equal quarter notes makes the accented syllables fall on both strong and weak beats. The text aligns every four measures, making it essential for the singers to maintain an even legato line without adding metric or agogic accents.

Beginning with a single soprano voice in measure 49, a wave of energy and sound slowly builds from high to low. Here, Talbot uses three different cells: 17, E′, and AA (see Figure 9.4). Cell AA is heard for the first time at measure 56 (see Figure 9.5) (Track 4, 0:58). Typical of Talbot's aesthetic, this sweeping yet straightforward melody juxtaposes the short driving cells

[286] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 7.

that accompany it. The combination of these cells creates a steady current of energy under a very smooth surface. This atmosphere that Talbot has created perfectly fits the text describing the passing scenery and towns. The lack of any strong accents gives the sense that the journey is painless; it is as if the pilgrims are watching their surroundings float by effortlessly.

Figure 9.4 Measures 53-61 in “Santiago”

Figure 9.5 Cell AA

At measure 121, Talbot introduces cell AB (see Figure 9.6), a descending melodic figure ending on a low G-sharp (Track 4, 2:01). As this cell unfolds, Talbot slows the music's momentum by augmenting the final note of cell E′; rather than constantly overlapping and driving the music forward, this causes the music to stall. As the section sputters to a close, he ends on an incredibly unstable A-major-7 chord in third inversion, leaving the listener to wonder what will come next (see Figure 9.8) (Track 4, 2:20).

Figure 9.6 Cell AB

Following the A-major-7 chord, Talbot inserts a grand pause. When the music returns, it is on a unison F-sharp that slowly expands in contrary motion to a D-major triad (see figure 9.7) (Track 4, 2:34).

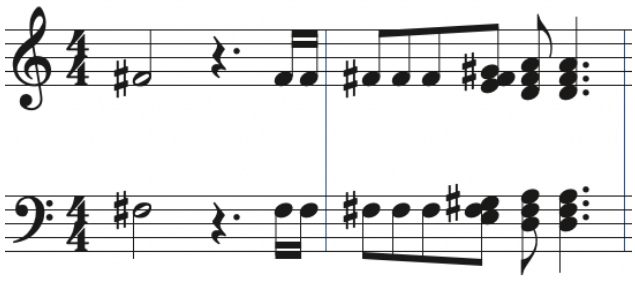


Figure 9.7 Cell AC

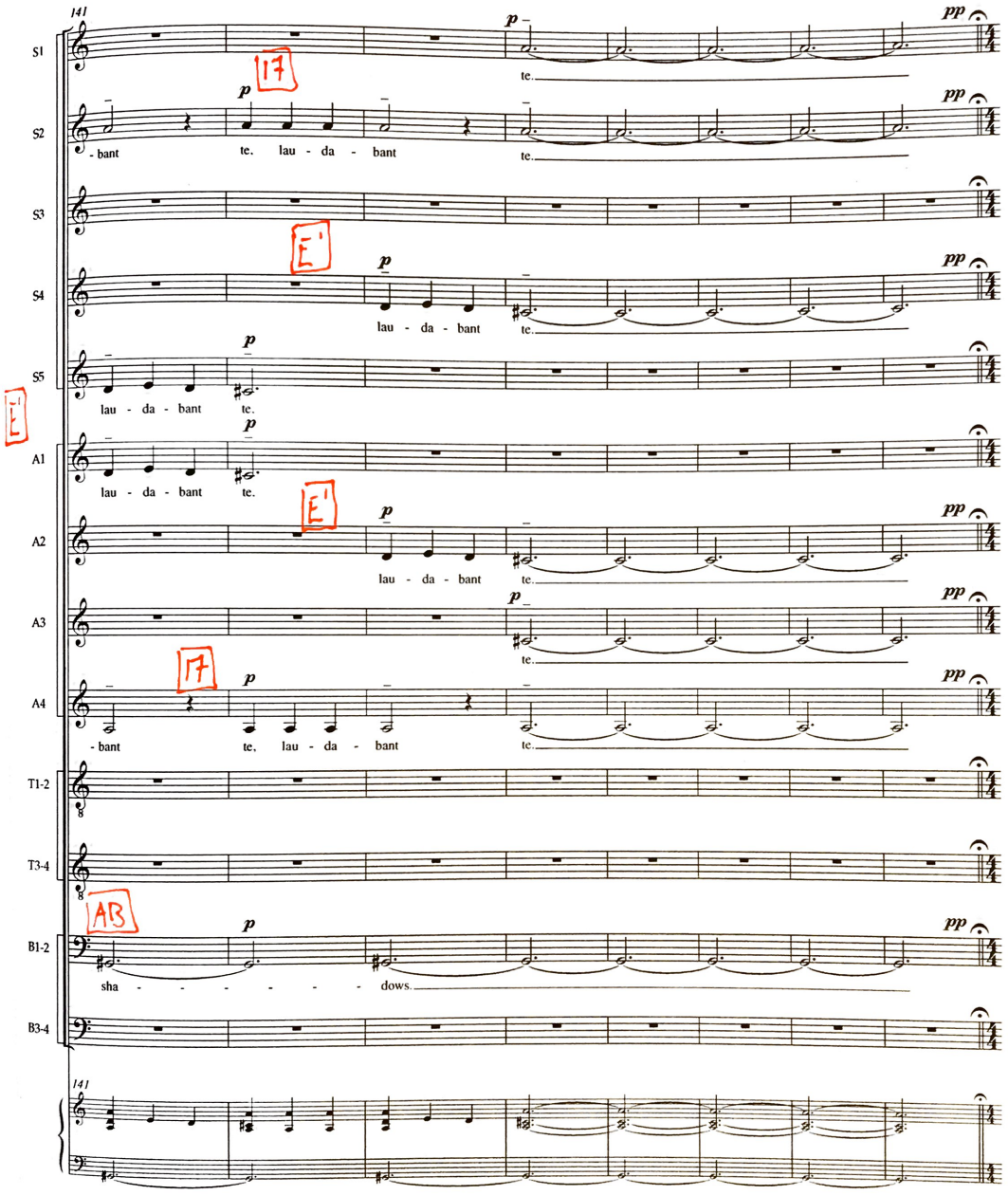


Figure 9.8 Measures 141-148 in “Santiago”

This is a profound dramatic moment in the story, as the pilgrims are ascending *Monte de Gozo*. Once the pilgrims reach the summit of the mountain, they will see Santiago de Compostela for the first time. Talbot builds this excitement in the music through the harmonic tension, moving from a unison pitch through a dissonance cluster to a D-major triad. Furthermore, the rhythms

increase the anticipation. The motion from the faster sixteenth-note rhythms to longer note durations intensifies the suspense, which is compounded by the swelling dynamics and the interrupted phrases (see Figure 9.9) (Track 4, 2:58).

Figure 9.9 Cell AC

From measure 159-161, Talbot builds energy through the homophonic setting of the text coupled with the harmonic tension created as the voices move in contrary motion. The delayed gratification is satisfied with the resolution to G-major at measure 162. Talbot creates the feeling of weightlessness by writing beautifully balanced chords in a piano dynamic that moves homophonically in half notes (see Figure 9.10) (Track 4, 3:20).

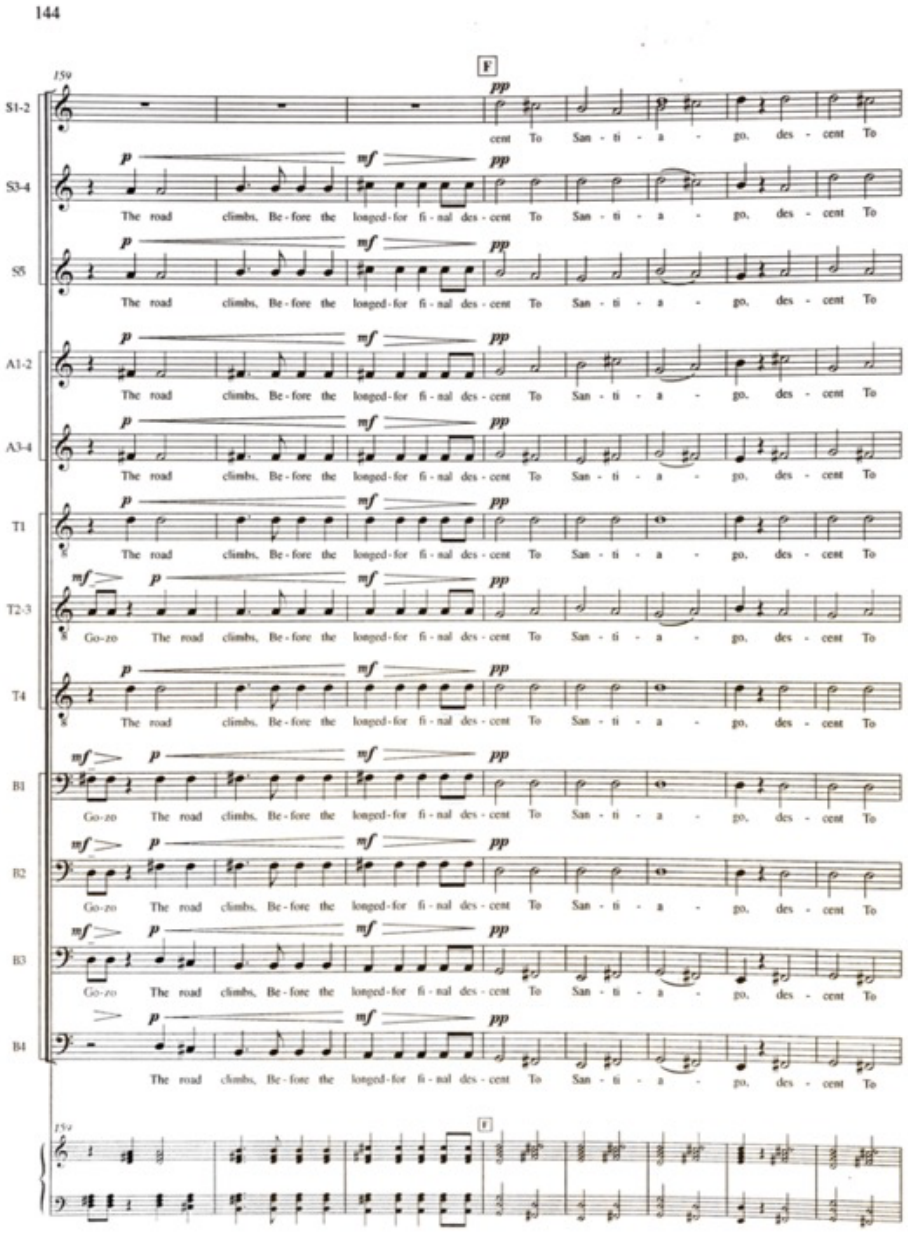


Figure 9.10 Measures 159-166 in “Santiago”

The incorporation of the D/C-sharp dissonances that occur throughout this section reflects the pilgrims' overwhelming emotions at this moment. What follows is a restatement of the Pilgrim's Hymn (cell B) from the first movement in one of the most poignant moments in *Path of Miracles* (see Figure 9.11) (Track 4, 4:01).

Figure 9.11 Pilgrim's Hymn Returns

When the Pilgrim's Hymn was first presented in measure 8 of "Roncesvalles," it appeared as a second inversion E-minor triad sung at a triple-forte dynamic. The ominous, determined, and outward nature of that chord appropriately reflected the excitement and nervousness for the journey that lay before the pilgrims. With Santiago de Compostela in their sights, the expression is not outward but inward, not in a minor key but D-major. This quiet dynamic and the major tonality set in a more comfortable tessitura combine to capture this humble and introspective moment for the pilgrims. The chord is still presented in second inversion with the tenors and baritones singing an A-natural. While less stable than root position, the inversion adds to the sense of weightlessness of the moment. It is as if the emotional nature of the moment is defying the gravitational pull of a root position triad. The inverted chord also reflects the unfinished pilgrimage, as the pilgrims have yet a few more miles to walk.

After the reverent, introspective moment the pilgrims took at the top of Monte de Gozo, their excitement starts to boil over, and the pilgrims pick up speed, racing towards the finish line. Talbot accomplishes this musically through an extended accelerando from measures 182-200. Cell AE, the primary theme for the entire next section, is introduced at measure 190 (see Figure 9.12) (Track 4, 5:10).

Figure 9.12 Cell AE

Talbot introduces cell AE in the tenor-4 voice and takes the second half of the cell and repeats it over and over again, slowly layering in other tenor and bass voices (see Figure 9.13) (Track 4, 5:10-5:32). This short, repeated ostinato that gradually gets faster and louder sounds like an

engine slowly turning over. The music continues to gain momentum and erupts in a full roar at measure 201, in a new key, marking the beginning of the second section.

Figure 9.13 Cell AE revving to life

At measure 201, the entire choir sings a variation of cell AE (labeled AE′) in homophony, but rather than singing the text from the pilgrim's hymn, they burst into the joyful text from the *Carmina Burana.* The translation of the poetry reads:

Longed-for spring returns, with joy
Adorned with shining flowers.
The birds sing so sweetly,
The woods burst into leaf,
There is pleasant song on every side.

This poetry has nothing to do with the Camino de Santiago, and yet it perfectly captures the spirit of the moment. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the music for this section was inspired by Talbot's observation of a group of French pilgrims. They arrived in the square in front of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela and spontaneously burst into dance. The mixed meter of cell AE′ captures this joyful moment for the pilgrims (see Figure 9.14) (Track 4, 5:32).

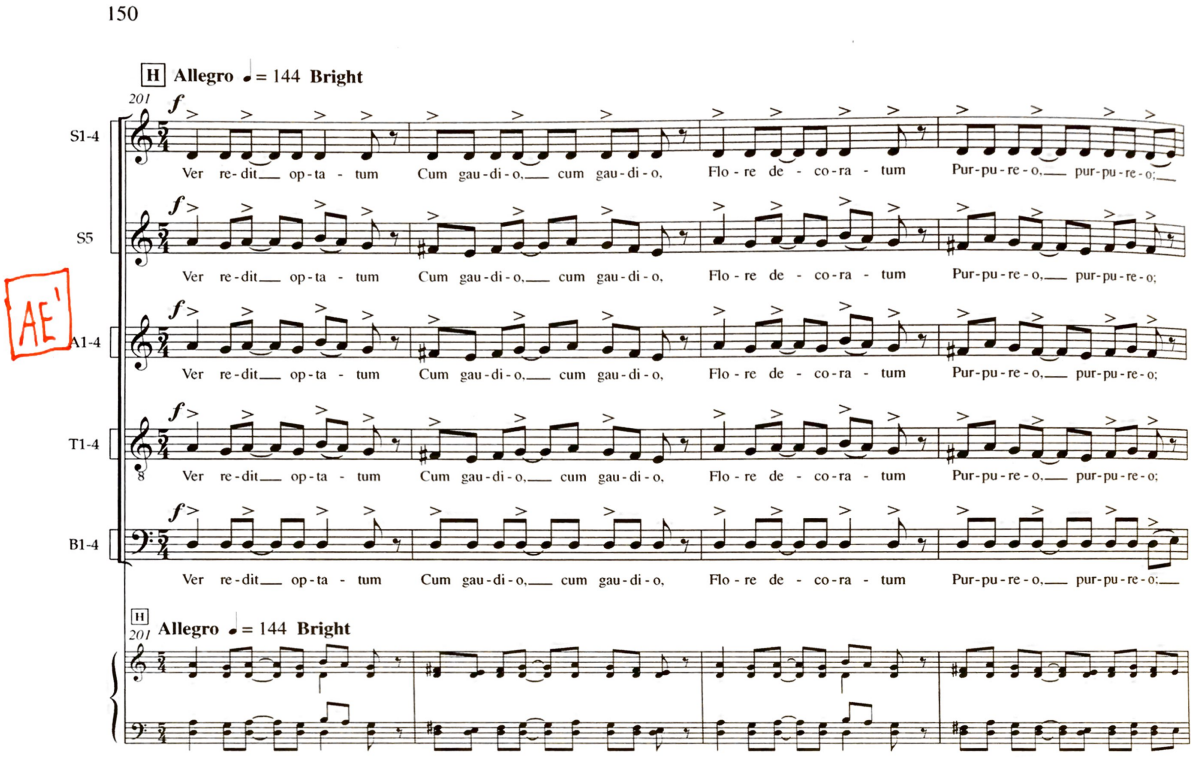


Figure 9.14 Cell AE′

For the following 135 measures, Talbot develops this melodic material and introduces other cells. At measure 213, cell 18 is introduced. In a similar fashion to cell 17 mentioned earlier in this chapter, cell 18 is repeated at uneven intervals, occurring on different beats and offbeats each measure (see figure 9.15) (Track 4, 5:57). With the motoring rhythms of cells AE′ and 18 firmly humming along, Talbot layers in a sweeping melodic line beginning at measure 221, which eventually clears the texture for Talbot to begin a new section.

Figure 9.15 Cell 18

At measure 241, Talbot introduces cells AG and AH, and offers a truncated version of cell 18 (see Figure 9.16) (Track 4, 6:56). This section is another clear example of Talbot treating the voices instrumentally. The scoring itself is broad, and each voice utilizes different timbres and styles to create a rich texture. Cell AG's dramatic crescendo offers a lyrical layer to cell AH, which is propelling the energy of the piece forward while maintaining the celebratory dance rhythms. Meanwhile, cell 18 creates a counter rhythmic tension as it works against the natural rhythms of the agogic accents of the text.

Figure 9.16 Cells AG, AH, and 18

Throughout this entire section, the text has been secular – a very human and universal celebration. However, beginning in measure 296, the pilgrim's hymn returns, joined with the last word of the *Carmina Burana* text, *totaliter.* Talbot combines five different cells, as seen in figure 9.17 (Track 4, 8:56).

Figure 9.17 Measures 297-300 in "Santiago"

The energy builds for the subsequent 40 measures as the rhythmic cells slowly yield to the Pilgrim's Hymn. A molto rallentando between measures 335-336 results in the largest climatic moment of *Path of Miracles.* At measure 337, the choir erupts into a triple-forte exclamation of the Pilgrim's Hymn (see figure 9.18), echoed by an exclamatory single bass voice (Track 4, 10:30).

Figure 9.18 Pilgrim's Hymn at m.m. 337-342

Here, the Pilgrim's Hymn is heard in F-major and, for the first time, in root position. The pilgrims have finally arrived. This half-step ascension from the original E-minor to F-major mirrors the pilgrim's hymn text, *Eultreya esuseya, Deius aia nos,* which means "let's go further and higher, God will help us."

As the choir sings the final iteration of *eultreya esuseya,* the musical atmosphere dramatically shifts, and the music becomes static. While most of the choir sings a sustained C-major triad, the alto voices sing a mysterious triplet motive in stepwise motion (see Figure 9.19) (Track 4, 11:32).

Figure 9.19 Cell 24

The effect is very spiritual, with a feeling of weightlessness, created by this triplet pattern. This depicts the text, set to a beautiful yet simple melody sung by the basses, describing the mystery of the pilgrimage:

At the Western edge of the world
We pray for our sins to fall from us
As chains from the limbs of penitents

We have walked out of the lives we had
And will return to nothing, if we live,
Changed by the journey, face and soul alike.

We have walked out of our lives
To come to where the walls of heaven
Are thin as a curtain, transparent as glass…

What we have done, who we have been;
Take them as fire takes the cloth
They cast into the sea at Finisterre

With the poetry in mind, the triplet pattern of cell 24 can reveal a new image of a simple fire burning. Fire has often been used as a metaphor for transformation. This metaphor has added meaning for pilgrims who, traditionally, would burn an article of clothing at the end of the journey symbolizing this transformation. This peaceful, static, and mysterious music crafted by Talbot brings this image to life.

As *Path of Miracles* draws to a close, Talbot captures the ongoing nature of the pilgrimage in the music. He sets an English translation of the Pilgrim's Hymn in a newly composed ostinato that functions like a recessional (Track 4, 15:27). While the music slowly fades away, it reminds the audience that the pilgrims now must retrace all of their steps as they begin their journey home. While they are returning to where they came from, they are coming back changed by their experiences. Talbot captures this idea in the score in a beautiful way. The music repeats *ad libitum*, at least as long as it takes the ensemble to recess from the concert space. While the prevailing tonality is D-major, the final notated chord on the score is E-minor, the same chord that began *Path of Miracles.* The alternating shifts between E-minor and D-major shows that, while they may be returning to where they started, they return transformed.

Chapter 10.
Conductor's Considerations

Introduction

Mounting a performance of *Path of Miracles* requires the conductor to face many considerations, ranging from ensemble size and concert attire to venue selection and staging options. Each conductor brings their expertise, and each ensemble has its unique strengths and challenges. Therefore, it is impossible to provide a complete list of considerations. This chapter aims to equip conductors with information gathered from a consortium of experience and insights. The content of this chapter includes the author's discernments in addition to the experiences of many renowned conductors who have presented this piece. Conductors interviewed for this project include Kristina Boerger, Geoffrey Boers, Gabriel Crouch, Matthew Culloton, Craig Hella Johnson, Joe Miller, Matthew Olson, and Giselle Wyers. Additional insights from Joby Talbot are also included.

Ensemble Type

When choosing to program *Path of Miracles,* conductors must assess the ability of their ensemble to perform this work successfully. For many years, only professional ensembles attempted this challenging piece. However, in recent years more and more talented collegiate and community ensembles have been tackling this work. Gabriel Crouch remembers the evolution of this process:

> Suddenly, in 2010, it seemed to go all over the country. Conspirare made their recording, and The Crossing performed it, and then good amateur choirs started to take it on and started to realize that student choirs can do this piece…People aren't afraid of it anymore. They've worked out that it is actually approachable, and what a joy that is. What a joy.

> The piece is absolutely an astonishing piece like nothing else. The way that my students have responded to singing [*Path of Miracles*] is like no other piece I've done with them.[287]

This piece can be performed by talented amateur ensembles, including university choirs. However, certain considerations must be addressed before performing *Path of Miracles*, especially with less developed voices.

The range and tessitura required to perform *Path of Miracles* is incredibly demanding. As told in Chapter Three, these demands (especially those of the low basses) stretched even the fully developed professional voices of Tenebrae (the ensemble that premiered the work). If it is an option for an ensemble, hiring a professional basso profundo to take care of the lowest and most vocally taxing passages will enable talented younger choirs to perform *Path of Miracles* safely and effectively.

A related issue to tessitura is the problem of stamina. Performing this piece is incredibly demanding on the voices, but sustaining the level of intensity needed for over an hour exacerbates the issue. Joe Miller, who successfully performed *Path of Miracles* with the Westminster Choir College, says:

> Take a 19-year-old bass. They can be the most talented person in the world, but to compare that to the same talent level in a twenty-six-year-old is not comparable. Because the twenty-six-year-old, their bodies grown, they're through puberty. Their vocal mechanism is in a different place and their ability, if they have the same training, to sustain an hour of singing like this is just different. So, with the younger basses, you need more of them just to be able to sustain it.[288]

Joe Miller's insight into this issue is sage. Creating a choral texture by adding more voices to the original 17 parts reduces the physical and mental demands on the individual ensemble members.

[287] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 6-7.
[288] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021 5.

Ensemble Size

While *Path of Miracles* was composed for a chamber ensemble with one voice per part, many larger collegiate, semi-professional, and professional choirs have performed *Path of Miracles* successfully. As mentioned above, adding voices to the texture provides vocal relief for the physical and vocal demands of singing this hour-long a cappella work. While most conductors will be programming this work for their preexisting ensemble, it is important to address the costs and benefits of performing *Path of Miracles* with smaller or larger forces.

The advantages of performing *Path of Miracles* with a larger ensemble are numerous and go beyond practical considerations of endurance. Craig Hella Johnson successfully performed and recorded *Path of Miracles* with 27 singers from his professional ensemble, Conspirare. Johnson says that using a larger ensemble "gives a little different color and texture. It beefs up the most intense moments. We didn't always sing with all twenty-seven [singers]. We pared it down at times. Sometimes we were just one on a part. So, it gave me some more color variety too, which I appreciated."[289] Performing *Path of Miracles* is mentally taxing as well as vocally taxing. Having multiple singers on each part allows for someone to cover in case of a mental mistake. Matthew Culloton, conductor of The Singers–Minnesota Choral Artists, says "if a singer just is kind of off, there's something to ground to…I felt like a confidence in numbers was just very helpful."[290]

Among the advantages of performing with a chamber ensemble of 17 voices are those of clarity and precision. As shown in Chapters Six-Nine, *Path of Miracles* contains many fast, rhythmic passages with complex interlocking cells. A smaller ensemble can achieve more clarity

[289] Craig Hella Johnson, interview by author, March 12, 2021, 10.
[290] Matthew Culloton, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 3.

than a larger group. Furthermore, intonation and flexibility are often improved when performing with one singer per part. A conductor considering performing *Path of Miracles* with their collegiate or advanced community ensemble is strongly encouraged to perform the work chorally with multiple voices per part. However, suppose a project-based professional ensemble is hired to perform the piece. In that case, conductors should strongly consider performing *Path of Miracles* with one voice per part, as the composer originally conceived.

Reorchestrating

Many conductors who perform *Path of Miracles* with an ensemble larger than one on a part may consider reorchestrating. For example, rather than the soprano 5s singing every soprano 5 part and nothing else, conductors may choose to add or reduce the number of voices singing particular sections. Matthew Culloton, Artistic Director of The Singers–Minnesota Choral Artists, said that he needed to do this with his 44-voice ensemble when they performed *Path of Miracles*. Rather than having some solo voices sing certain parts, Culloton says: "I tended to usually use the reorchestrating to thicken the texture just a little bit, just knowing that it's such a stamina issue."[291] Culloton's suggestion is helpful, and the practical reasons for helping to combat vocal fatigue is helpful.

With the University of Washington Chamber Singers, Geoffrey Boers had a similar approach to Culloton, although for slightly different reasons. While stamina was still a concern for Boers, it was less of an issue because he excerpted the third movement for performance. Nevertheless, Boers felt the need to reorchestrate the ensemble to help with balance: "It was more often adding voices to texture for balance purposes…And I think because balance is a real

[291] Matthew Culloton, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 3.

issue in this piece. It's not how certain people think about a piece being equally balanced, or should it be heavier on the bottom and smaller on the top…[balance is] not a static thing."[292] Indeed, the musical texture is constantly changing.

While adding voices to the texture is often useful, conductors may consider reducing the number of voices at certain moments, as Craig Hella Johnson did with Conspirare: "I think there are four or five times when I would just want a certain color in a certain place, and so I did a little shifting around of that. And that's more because I just know the voices, as any conductor would with his or her ensemble."[293] As Johnson says, each conductor knows the needs of their particular ensemble. Conductors should feel free to tastefully reorchestrate voices to make their performance as successful as possible. However, if performing with seventeen voices it is most convenient to have the voices always sing their assigned part.

Venue

When seeking a venue, acoustic must be the top priority for any ensemble performing this demanding piece. It is important to remember that Talbot composed the work with the intent that the pieces be performed in the churches and cathedrals that correspond with the movement titles. That expected resonance from a larger room is embedded in the composition. Many ensembles continue to find success performing this piece in churches or other sacred venues, but professional concert halls have also proven successful. It is important to note that while the piece has many aspects that transcend a single religious tradition, the Catholic nature of the subject matter should be respectfully considered and disclosed when choosing a venue.

[292] Geoffrey Boers, interview by author, April 2, 2021, 5.
[293] Craig Hella Johnson, interview by author, March 12, 2021, 11.

Whether choosing a sacred or secular venue, the space must support the singers with sufficient reverberation so that they can sing into the texture and sonorities of the piece. Too much reverberation, however, can muddy the texture, causing intonation and rhythmic clarity issues. This is especially true when the ensemble incorporates the movement suggested in the score. At several points of the piece, the ensemble will find themselves at a considerable distance from each other. Having the ability to sing into the sonorities at a distance without experiencing too much delay in the sound is essential to achieve the intonation and rhythmic precision that the piece requires.

Lighting

Utilizing professional lighting can enhance any production of *Path of Miracles.* The piece itself is about the transition from darkness to light, and there are many images of light used throughout. Whether the venue has a built-in lighting system or if an outside company can bring in lights, utilizing this feature can significantly enhance the storytelling and drama found in the piece. Finally, because of the visual and staging elements in *Path of Miracles,* finding a venue that can support the creative and tasteful movement by the choir (or audience members) is important to consider.

Movement

The incorporation of movement, even if minimal, is one of the performing elements that makes *Path of Miracles* exceptionally engaging for audience members. While movement will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Eleven, it is important to list the idea of movement here as a consideration for conductors. Regarding the ensemble movement, Talbot says: “I love that element of the piece. I just think that anything that we can do to make the classical concert-going

experience something that's just as thrilling as going to a movie or going to a pop concert or whatever, is good. The days when it was enough for us to expect a rather penitential experience, sit in a slightly uncomfortable seat in a drafty church and just stare fixedly forward while something static unfolded over however many hours, are kind of behind us."[294]

While Talbot's instructions for movement in the score are sparse, many ensembles have added to or substituted movement based on the needs of the ensemble and the limits of the performance venues. Joby Talbot is very amenable to conductors and ensembles taking liberties when it comes to their performances of *Path of Miracles.* No matter what movement an ensemble chooses, incorporating movement and staging takes time and careful planning. Conductors need to have a clear vision for what movement their ensemble will incorporate and include rehearsal time to practice these movements (which often take longer to work out than one assumes). Remaining patient and flexible is essential in this process.

Concert Attire

While many ensembles may choose to perform *Path of Miracles* in their traditional performance wear, other ensembles choose to perform this piece in more casual concert attire. Because of the nature of the pilgrimage, some ensembles choose to perform the work in costume as if the choir was hiking the Camino de Santiago, whereas others will perform wearing concert black. Choosing concert attire that supports the needs of the singers is required. It is important to consider the movement and staging aspects of performing this piece when it comes to footwear and clothing. The ensemble needs to be able to walk, often up and down stairs at various venues. For these reasons, conductors should consider performing in non-traditional concert attire.

[294] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 14-15.

Memorization

Memorizing *Path of Miracles* is an incredibly ambitious task. Talbot says, "I love the idea of the choir having memorized it, because that was always the plan with Tenebrae. And Nigel, every time I see him, he talks about how he still hopes that one day they'll be able to do it from memory."[295] The fact that Tenebrae has not memorized the work, despite the many performances they have given, shows how challenging a task that is. However, the Westminster Choir College performed a fully memorized and staged version of the work. Their conductor, Joe Miller, shared his strategies to helping the choir memorize *Path of Miracles.*

> First of all, we try to set a lot of manageable goals. I monitor how they're memorizing all the way through rather than saying, "learn the whole first movement." We had to take very, very small goals. And then we'd make them a little longer. And then I ask the singers to take three by five cards and make themselves cheat sheets...So, that's kind of the process that I use any time I do these large choral works.[296]

Westminster Choir College had an immediate need to memorize the work because of their fully-staged performance. However, memorizing is a risky undertaking, especially when an ensemble performs one on a part. There is no room for a memory slip. With over an hour of complex music, remaining mentally sharp throughout is hard to achieve. That single issue may be why Tenebrae has not chosen to memorize the work yet. The cost often outweighs the benefit.

Rehearsal Time

The number of rehearsals or total rehearsal hours is a challenging consideration for conductors. The need varies based on ensemble type, ability, and expectations. The expectations and needs of a professional project-based ensemble differ significantly from those of a collegiate ensemble. There is not a magic number of rehearsal hours needed to perform Path of Miracles

[295] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 13.
[296] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 9.

successfully. However, Table 10.1 provides information from three different ensemble types that have successfully presented the piece.

Table 10.1 Rehearsal Hours

Ensemble	Ensemble Type	Frequency of Rehearsals	Length of Rehearsals	Total Rehearsal Hours
Westminster Choir College	Advanced Collegiate Ensemble	3 times per week for 6 weeks	90 minutes	27
The Singers–MCA	Semi-professional	Once per week for 8 weeks	3 hours	24
Kristina Boerger collaboration with ODC Dance	Professional project-based ensemble	4 rehearsals	4 hours	16

Rehearsal Pacing

Because of the vocal demands of this piece, planning rehearsals to limit the wear on the singers is important for conductors to consider. Most conductors will find success spending shorter amounts of time rehearsing sections with very high or very low tessituras. Utilizing octave displacement can also be a tool to reduce the singers' vocal fatigue. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a prescription for this process. However, conductors need to be mindful of the vocal demands they are imposing on the singers.

Pasiputput

Many conductors have described the opening Pasiputput as the most challenging aspect of rehearsing *Path of Miracles.* While there is no one way to perform this opening page of music, this section provides some useful considerations to help ensembles find success. Ideally, a culture bearer would be hired to help teach this ritual of the Taiwanese Bunun tribe. Examples of a culture bearer would be a member of the Bunun tribe, a descendent of the Bunun people, or a

person who has embodied the culture of the Bunun people. For many ensembles, this may not be feasible. Therefore, secondary sources are useful to hear and learn the style of this music. There are several YouTube videos of the Bunun people performing the Pasiputput ritual, which provides a tutorial for conductors to understand the significance of this tradition. Whatever the ensemble chooses to do, it is essential to honor and respect this important ritual of the Bunun people. Conductors must take time researching this vocal tradition and ensembles must spend time to honor this vocal practice. Doing so will lead to better performances and pay the respect to the aboriginal Bunun Tribe from which this music was inspired.

Gabriel Crouch was willing to generously provide a detailed description on how Tenebrae performs the opening to *Path of Miracles:*

> We don't tend to rise in half-steps. We just sit in, try to find overtones within fourths and fifths, and we just sort of sit in there and then just kind of push a little. Just push, twist a little bit, breathe, go back down to the bottom of our voices, and then just kind of slide back into those fourths and fifths overtones, and then just push a little more and then breathe, go back down. So, it's constantly pushing, going back for air, pushing a little more. And everyone's doing this in a random way so that you hear these kinds of uncoordinated but thoughtful, gradual, rising to the pitch. It has nothing to do with half steps, really. … One of the singers who has perfect pitch will guide the upward progression [of the Pasiputput]. The crucial fact is that once someone has reached a B, they will then give a signal that they have reached a B and that everyone should coalesce around that pitch. Once we're absolutely there the tenors will slide up from that to the octave above it, and then that will show the Sopranos what their B is that they then have to pitch their inversion upon.[297]

This is a very useful description of Tenebrae's process, which is captured beautifully in their recording of the work. If there is no person in the ensemble with perfect pitch who can signal the arrival on a B-natural, a tuning fork may be used to help guide the glissando. It is important to note that it is possible to linger for quite a long time on this opening. Crouch says that the length of time can fluctuate wildly depending on the acoustic of the performance space, ranging from 2

[297] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 9-10.

minutes to as long as 9 minutes. More important than singing for a particular length of time is ensuring the signers are comfortable and confident.

Rhythmic Clarity

One of the essential elements for a successful *Path of Miracles* performance is performing the piece with rhythmic accuracy and clarity. As seen in the analysis chapters of this document, numerous, complicated, interlocking cells occur throughout the work. The ensemble must have a firm grasp of these cells for the piece to have the energy it needs to propel forward. The text underlay often proves challenging for ensembles, as Talbot enjoys creating rhythmic tension by setting the text in a way that goes against the natural poetic and agogic accents. Singers must spend extra time rehearsing these sections to ensure the rhythms maintain their integrity. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, smaller ensembles have an easier time achieving this clarity than larger ensembles. Therefore, most ensembles will need to spend extra rehearsal time stripping away melodic elements to focus on rhythmic precision. It is only when all the rhythms are seamlessly interlocking that the piece drives forward with excitement. Once the motor is running, the beautiful melodic and harmonic elements can be enjoyed.

Chapter 11.
Audience Engagement and Notable Performances of *Path of Miracles*

Audience Engagement

Johan Idema, the author of *Present! Rethinking Live Classical Music,* writes: "Who wants to sit still in a concert hall for two hours listening to music from decades, if not centuries, ago? Unfortunately, only very few still do. The latest research will even tell you that across the world there is a sharp – and in places, alarming – decline in the attendance for classical concerts."[298] The reasons for this decline are often disputed, yet the quality of the music and the dramatic excitement possible in a classical music concert are certainly not the culprits. Norman Lebrecht, a cultural commentator, and novelist, rejects some of the tired tropes of shrinking attention spans and expensive ticket prices as being the root cause of declining audiences for classical music. Instead, Lebrecht believes that it is the concert ritual that repels many audience members. Lebrecht writes: "The classical concert has stultified for half a century. It starts in mid-evening and last two hours…The concert hall is a gerontocracy with its decorum enforced more rigidly than in places of worship. Its exclusiveness is innate. The greying of the audience is an admitted fact of concert life. Small wonder that the concert hall atmosphere is about as lively as a cruise liner, and its intellectual magnetism as potent as a pension plan."[299] While Lebrecht's writing is colorful and perhaps a bit too critical of classical music, it rings with truth. As a result, many conductors and artistic directors are continually seeking to create meaningful concert programs

[298] Johan Idema, *Present! Rethinking Live Classical Music* (Muziek Centrum Nederland, 2012), 40.
[299] Norman Lebrecht, Foreword in *Present! Rethinking Live Classical Music* (Muziek Centrum Nederland, 2012), 32-34.

that engage performers and audiences alike. Idema's book is an invaluable resource for any conductor interested in ideas for creatively presenting concerts.

Joby Talbot agrees with the need for classical music concerts to evolve, saying: "The days when it was enough for us to expect a rather penitential experience, sit in a slightly uncomfortable seat in a drafty church and just stare fixedly forward while something static unfolded over however many hours, are kind of behind us."[300] This very desire to innovate the ways that classical music is presented led Talbot to include extended vocal techniques, dramatic storytelling, and suggestions for utilizing the concert space to create powerful visuals in *Path of Miracles*. Describing the opening Pasiputput and the dramatic use of the performance space in *Path of Miracles* Talbot says: "I thought, if I can [create] a grand theatrical gesture at the beginning of the piece, then hopefully, if it works, I've got the audience engaged and then we can *go* somewhere together. Because that's what I wanted to do. Any piece I would write would want to take people on a journey. But it's so specific with *Path of Miracles* because it's about a pilgrimage that we *really* want to take people on a journey."[301]

Choral Theater

For centuries, artists have added movement and storytelling to music, as seen in opera, theater, and ballet. Movement can create emotionally powerful performances that connect the audience to the music on a deeper level. In more recent years, some conductors have added movement to choral music, much of which was created without this intention. The addition of staging to the Bach passions and other historical oratorios has been praised by both critics and audiences for capturing the visceral and dramatic nature of those stories. The term "choral

[300] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 15.
[301] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 14.

theater" has emerged in recent years to describe the use of extra-musical elements in choral music concerts. For a detailed guide on choral theater and the state of the practice, Molly Getsinger's dissertation *Reinventing the Concert Experience: Investigating the Effect of Staging on the Performance of Choral Music* is a useful resource. Getsinger writes that a staged choral performance "can be described as: the inclusion of such things as blocking (varied positioning of actors on stage using gestures and movements), scenic background, props, costumes, and lighting."[302] Getsinger observes that the numerous ways in which movement and staging are used in choral music can be grouped into three categories:

> Added movement that manipulates spatial relationships between audience and performers; added movement with the intention of enhancing the narrative or drama of a piece; and movement or blocking for the singers that was intended by the composer…What ultimately distinguishes these forms from purely spatial blocking, is the added movement or staging is dramatic or narrative in its intent.[303]

Getsinger's astute observations align with the values of many conductors who attempt to engage audiences through storytelling, either weaving together numerous pieces to create a narrative concert experience or by enhancing the storytelling of a larger work, as is the case with *Path of Miracles.*

Joe Miller, Director of Choral Activities (DCA) at the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati and former DCA at Westminster Choir College, discusses the reasons he enjoys utilizing special elements in a concert:

> I'm very visual and I'm very inspired by space…I love being able to look at each space like a musical instrument and I like to utilize it in that way…If I can design music to be in that space, I've just used all these other elements that are at my disposal. And so, I like to do that because I feel like that's a really important part to innovating how we're

[302] Molly Getsinger, "Reinventing the Concert Experience: Investigating the Effect of Staging on the Performance of Choral Music" (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, 2020), 4.
[303] Getsinger, 5.

> reaching a modern audience. People don't have trouble concentrating. I think people have trouble being bored with what they know they're going to expect.[304]

The term "choral theater" can be off-putting for some conductors as if it is diluting the purity of choral music. Miller's description of utilizing space is a way to broaden the scope of the term, and perhaps make it more palatable to those wary of the practice. Developing terms and language to describe art is a challenge. Craig Hella Johnson, the Grammy award-winning conductor of Conspirare, encourages conductors not to get hung up on language: "All these words are just symbols, too. I think we all have to help each other come down off the stress pedestal. We're just making art."[305] It is important for conductors to continue to take artistic risks to create meaningful art. Nevertheless, many conductors fear that any extra-musical additions to the concert program could detract from the music.

Artistic Integrity

Many conductors may be wary of a term like choral theater or adding anything to the music that the composer did not intend. There are good reasons for these concerns. The primary concern is maintaining artistic integrity. The last thing a performer wants to do is create a kitschy performance that detracts from the music. The fear of this is not knowing where the metaphorical line is drawn between inspired storytelling that enhances the audience's understanding of the music and tasteless, patronizing distractions. This section aims to address this fear, offer some insights, and encourage other conductors to take artistic risks when it comes to creating concert programs that break the traditional rituals of classical music presentations.

[304] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 6.
[305] Craig Hella Johnson, interview by author, March 12, 2021, 12.

In conversation with various conductors, a common theme emerged when discussing extra-musical elements, like staging, to choral music: any addition to the music must arise because the music demands it, and not as a superficial layer tacked on the performance. Kristina Boerger, the Director of Choral Activities at Augsburg College, says:

> I think that if you're doing a piece of music that suggests organically from itself some extra musical element to enhance the audience's experience of that music, then it may be time to consider using that as a creative response to the piece. But as a marketing overlay onto a piece, it's going to steer you wrong all the time. And then, if you're going to do something like that, you have to make sure that whatever you add on comes from a place of as much excellence and artistic integrity as the original composition…I just think it must come organically.[306]

Boerger's convictions to keep the music at the center of the concert experience is wise, yet it still relies on each conductor's intuition to determine what, when, and how to succeed in doing so.

Eventually, conductors and artistic directors need to take risks and rely on their experience and sensibilities. Joe Miller directed a fully staged performance of *Path of Miracles,* and worried about how the audience would respond to their presentation. Responding to a question about how to avoid being kitschy, Miller says:

> Well, sometimes you don't know. Sometimes you make your best guess. Use your experience…*Path of Miracles* was that way. So, when we staged it, you asked, "what was the audience response?" Well, talk about terrifying…We got to the end of the first performance [and I wondered] "what's going to happen? Will there be an audience left behind me? What is the response?" Not that the audience response is everything, but if you're paying the bills, it has a lot to do with it. And the response was overwhelming and warm…But I didn't know. Until that moment when we put it in front of us, I had no idea. Doing things like this are a huge risk.[307]

Despite the risks, Miller was willing to venture forward because of his commitment to creating meaningful concert experiences for his ensembles and audiences.

[306] Kristina Boerger, interview by author, February 1, 2021, 10-11.
[307] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 6-7.

Perhaps no conductor alive today is as adept in creating meaningful concert experiences as Craig Hella Johnson. For Johnson, his artistic decisions are guided by his belief that each individual is meant to exist and create with freedom: "Our essence is freedom itself…I think…we are meant to be co-creators here as alive beings. That is what we're here to do. I think that freedom is going to guide each individual in different ways. One has to get in touch with one's own sense of that freedom and [develop a] sense of what that means to them."[308] Johnson's description requires each individual to evaluate what freedom means for themselves and then to work from there. Johnson continues: "What does that mean for me and what does that mean for you? I think if you do something that's in alignment with, to the best of your ability, what you can perceive as your authentic essence, then someone else might perceive something as kitschy or not. We can't be too worried about how others perceive and experience it. But for me, it's just knowing that I have to express from that essential place."[309] When a person creates with their central, guiding beliefs motivating their decisions, they can experience the freedom to take artistic risks. Johnson addresses the fears that conductors experience and encourages all people to act in their own freedom:

> We have such a tiny little time being these physical beings between birth and death and we're meant to create. And so, we should be busy and active creating. And, yeah, we stumble sometimes, we make mistakes. We fail at some of our efforts. And I've had so many things that didn't fulfill what the vision was, and they didn't succeed. But it's all part of that creative process moving forward.[310]

Many choral musicians may assume that artists like Craig Hella Johnson possess innate gifts that enable them to create interesting concert programs. While Johnson is undeniably gifted, too often

[308] Craig Hella Johnson, interview by author, March 12, 2021, 12.
[309] Ibid.
[310] Craig Hella Johnson, interview by author, March 12, 2021, 12-13.

observers only see the successful product and don't see the failures or hours of practice that led to the successes. Johnson's words should be encouraging to all conductors who are curious about adding another dimension to their concert programs.

Inclusivity

Adding extra-musical elements gives the potential for creating a more inclusive environment for a broader audience to enjoy, understand, and appreciate classical music. Classical music is often challenging and complex to listen to and requires a fair amount of knowledge to appreciate the nuances. Conductors often study a work for months if not years before performing it, and ensembles spend weeks to months preparing each concert. Therefore, no reasonable expectation can be placed on an audience member to appreciate the details of a performance after hearing it once. Johnson discusses the hierarchical nature of the traditional classical music concert experience and his desire to break down those barriers for audiences:

> I am a guy who loves listening to choirs standing in two rows…I just love hearing the music purely. But I realized that that's my purist way of listening. It's a pure pleasure for me that way, but for about ninety seven percent of the population, probably a lot more, 98 percent, 99 percent, that's not the case. You know, they are aided by some kind of supportive device that I could [provide to help them] with this experience. We don't have to always do it, but why wouldn't we want to occasionally offer that? Why wouldn't we want to engage in a way that would support someone's experience?[311]

Johnson's statement captures the heart of so many conductors who simply want to expand the audience of classical music. Not for monetary gain or for the ego-driven desire to have full concert halls, but to share the joy and beauty of the music that has inspired them.

[311] Craig Hella Johnson, interview by author, March 12, 2021, 13.

Notable Performances

The concepts of hierarchy and inclusivity parallel Joby Talbot's career. From playing in rock bands to writing operas, Talbot embodies the breaking down of the classical music hierarchies, which often categorize certain music as greater than or less. It is no wonder then that *Path of Miracles* contains elements of complex classical music yet is made accessible by tonal harmonies, a compelling story, and extra-musical material to help transport the audience on the journey. These extra-musical elements spring forth from the music and enhance the production, and conductors should feel the sense of freedom to utilize their artistic intuition in performing this work. This next section examines several notable performances of *Path of Miracles.* These examples fall into three categories: 1. Concert versions of the work where Talbot's stage direction was utilized and expanded upon, 2. Interdisciplinary productions that greatly alter the original compositional intent, and 3. Excerpted movements for concert performance. The purpose of showcasing these performances is to give conductors various examples to inspire their own presentations of *Path of Miracles.*

Concert Versions

Most ensembles will perform *Path of Miracles* in a concert version, as the piece was originally intended. However, even with the concert productions, Talbot's score includes some stage directions, which add a visual and corporal element to the piece. Below are three notable performances of ensembles performing *Path of Miracles* in this way.

Tenebrae

Tenebrae and Nigel Short premiered *Path of Miracles* in July of 2005. Since then, Tenebrae has performed this work many times and has presented the piece on tour worldwide.

When the piece was premiered at the City of London Festival, Ceri Sherlock directed the movement and staging for the choir. According to Gabriel Crouch, many of these aspects from the premiere performance have continued to be used. The descriptions of the Tenebrae performance are derived from an interview with Gabriel Crouch, which can be found in the appendix of this document.

In the "Roncesvalles" movement, Tenebrae begins the piece off stage, utilizing physical distance between the ensemble and the audience to help create "a sense of slowly unwrapping sound and light in the far distance…In a cathedral setting, we would be as far east as possible."[312] The decision to begin the piece in the far east part of the venue is a visual and metaphorical representation of Roncesvalles, the furthest east city on the *camino francés.* While the tenors and basses are singing the Pasiputput opening, the sopranos and altos gather in the rear of the space, out of sight from the audience. When the treble voices enter at measure 8 on the inverted e-minor triad, they shock the audience as the sound erupts from behind them. Doing so grabs the audience's attention, helping draw them into the dramatic nature of the pilgrimage. By measure 54, where the music becomes more metered, the ensemble is gathered at the front of the performing space. During the first movement, the bass soloist moves to a different location in the space to perform the passage "*O ajutor*," which begins in measure 454.

For "Burgos," the altos move to four separate corners of the performing space during their tacet 86 measures at the beginning of the movement. When they enter at measure 87, the antiphonal melodies surround the audience once more and provide a visual and sonic representation of the text, which is describing the dismemberment of St. James; *His arm is in England, His jaw in Italy.* For the end of the second movement, the altos rejoin the choir.

[312] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 9.

Beginning in measure 290, the sopranos become tacet and stay silent for the remainder of "Burgos." This gives them time to move to the left and right sides of the performance space to begin the third movement.

"Leon" begins with the sopranos singing antiphonally on the repeated melodic pattern "Li soleus qui'en moi luist." By measure 74, the sopranos rejoin the choir at the front of the hall. At measure 79, when the choir sings "Jakobsland" on the beautifully warm E-flat-major triad, the choir walks together to form rows behind the audience. Crouch elaborates on this process:

> We just peel off from the center and walk right down the middle of the nave, right through the audience so that we're breathing on them and we basically get to wherever the back of the audience is. Whether that's the very back of the cathedral or whether it's 50 rows back, we get to the back of them and then we peel again into a two-row arc. And we just sing from there. Because we're in that sort of hypnosis of the journey, we walk trancelike through the audience to make that experience more visceral. But it's also respectful to the fact that we might be singing this in the Basilica of Saint Louis, or a great basilica space, where being at the front of the audience you experience one thing, being at the back room you experience quite another. It might actually just be really nice for those folks to hear some singing up close. So, we give them a good 10 minutes of the third movement singing right down their backs.[313]

The visual representation of the journey is powerful, but it is interesting to note Tenebrae's practical considerations for providing the audience with a more equitable sonic experience. At the end of the "Leon" movement, there is a logistical issue of the group returning to the front of the concert venue. Two voices sing an antiphonal plainchant (not included in the score) excerpted from the *Codex Calixtinus* to help this transition. This allows the choir to walk slowly up to the front of the hall. Tenebrae makes sure to pitch this chant to end on a G-sharp, which gives the ensemble the starting pitch for the final movement.

Tenebrae performs the fourth movement, "Santiago," as an ensemble with minimal staging. This is an intelligent, practical decision, since the music is incredibly fast and requires

[313] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 12-13.

the most rhythmic precision of the entire work. Removing any elements of space enables the ensemble to perform the music at their best. As the piece draws to a close, the ensemble slowly recesses out of the concert space while singing the repeated closing motive, taking as much time as needed to let the music fade into silence.

Conspirare

Conspirare followed a similar process to Tenebrae, however, they did not include any of the plainchants as interludes between the movements. Johnson had the tenors and basses begin the Pasiputput in darkness, singing in a circle at the front of the church. As with Tenebrae, the treble voices gather in the rear balcony. Johnson said: "The piece feels like it has a pretty clear instruction manual sort of implied. I just tried to tune in [to the implied movement]. I had a couple of colleagues on a production team, and I would just walk through the ideas with them."[314] Johnson's use of a production team and Tenebrae's use of Ceri Sherlock provides insight for conductors; it is important to enlist trusted collaborators. It is advantageous to utilize colleagues who have skills that may enhance the conductor's ideas. Too often, conductors become solitary figures trying to implement all aspects of the performance. While many ensembles may not have the budgetary luxuries of hiring a production team, finding people to collaborate on the non-musical elements can be highly beneficial. Not only does this free the conductor to focus on the musical elements, but often collaborators will have ideas that enhance the performance beyond what the conductor could have envisioned on their own.

[314] Craig Hella Johnson, interview by author, March 12, 2021, 9.

Johnson explains in more detail how Conspirare performed *Path of Miracles,* intending to make the performance feel natural and symbolic rather than a literal representation of the libretto's story:

> We did some lighting with this. We did process and recess…some things that would reflect and symbolize the movement of the walking on the Camino de Santiago that felt obvious and critical but tried to do that in ways that didn't feel overly literal. And there are times when you simply can't be moving, where the singing is so challenging you need to be planted and just stay put.[315]

As Johnson describes, each conductor must take the demands of the music into account when making decisions about movement and staging. Each of the moving elements should add to the experience and not detract from it. However, sometimes slight sacrifices in musical quality are worth making because the visual element makes the storytelling more compelling. There is no correct or incorrect to make these decisions, and conductors have the freedom to make their own choices.

In addition to the suggested movements in the score, Johnson utilized various choral formations throughout the piece:

> We worked consistently to try and make it just feel very organic. So, the whole thing just felt like you were in this other realm for an hour…We made a real effort to have [the movements] be only things that support...that suggest the spatial realms of what was happening more than necessarily anything literal…We recessed at the very end, of course…It was probably, when we performed it, a good five-minute recessional and they were way down the hall into the Sunday school rooms by the time we finally called it quits down front where I was.[316]

Johnson's descriptions provide some good options for ensembles to consider in conjunction with the Tenebrae performance. Especially with a larger ensemble (like Conspirare was compared to Tenebrae) it is not necessary to utilize extensive movements. Simple formation changes of the

[315] Craig Hella Johnson, interview by author, March 12, 2021, 9.
[316] Ibid.

ensemble alone can provide a visual and aural shift for the choir and the audience. Finally, Conspirare's extended recessional gives conductors agency to relish the moment; there is no need to rush to the end of the performance. Letting the music fade slowly over a long time can be very powerful.

The Singers–MCA

The Singers–Minnesota Choral Artists, has performed *Path of Miracles* twice, once in 2012 and again in 2018, but with two different conductors. Matthew Culloton, the Artistic Director of the ensemble, conducted the first performance and Matthew Olson, Director of Choral Activities at Carleton College, conducted the 2018 performance during Culloton's sabbatical. For both performances, the ensemble size was roughly 44 singers. It was important to both Culloton and Olson to keep the ensemble intact for this project rather than creating a smaller ensemble to perform the work with one voice per part.[317]

Both conductors utilized movements suggested by Talbot, and they both also made different choices about adding or substituting the suggested movements. Matthew Olson met with Talbot before performing the work and received approval for adjusting the suggested staging. Olson recalls: "He was very gracious in encouraging us to take some liberty based on the size of our ensemble, based on the performance venue and our rehearsal time."[318] The primary concern for Olson when making decisions about staging was "serving the piece and the composer and librettist's text first and foremost."[319] In addition to serving the text, Culloton made an important observation; when singing a challenging, hour-long a cappella work, the singers

[317] Matthew Culloton, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 4.
[318] Matthew Olson, interview by author, February 10, 2021, 6.
[319] Ibid.

need a chance to move to keep them from getting too anxious. Furthermore, by allowing the choir to walk out of sight from the audience when moving to various spaces in the performance venue, singers can let their arms and body relax.[320]

In contrast to the Tenebrae performances which utilize chant interludes between movements, Olson "really didn't want to interrupt the flow of the performance."[321] The desire to keep the music and storytelling fluid required both Olson and Culloton to visit the concert venues to time each movement. Olson recalls: "I essentially went to each venue numerous times with a stopwatch and timed out how long it took to walk the distances between each space for each element of staging to ensure that we weren't getting ourselves in a precarious situation of timing."[322] Each performance space is different, and The Singers had to rehearse these movements during their brief sound checks at each performance venue.

Both Culloton and Olson offered a brief informative lecture about *Path of Miracles* that began at the start of the concert, rather than as a pre-concert lecture. This is not a common practice for The Singers. Culloton recalls his reasoning to do this: "This was the first time that I made the pre-concert talk actually start at the concert time. I just thought that everybody in the room should hear what this piece is about. It was just so singularly different."[323] Interestingly, both Culloton and Olson studied with Kathy Romey and have connections to Helmuth Rilling and the Oregon Bach Festival. Both Rilling and Romey are known for presenting engaging lecture-concerts. In the Oregon Bach Festival's Discovery Series concerts, the ensemble is utilized to bring the lecture's content to life through demonstrations. However, despite both of

[320] Matthew Culloton, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 5.
[321] Matthew Olson, interview by author, February 10, 2021, 10.
[322] Matthew Olson, interview by author, February 10, 2021, 11.
[323] Matthew Culloton, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 9.

their ability to create these style lecture demonstrations, neither Culloton nor Olson chose to do so. Olson remembers why he made this decision:

> With Path of Miracles, I decided not to have the ensemble share any music, mainly because I knew our audience wasn't expecting it…unlike OBF's [Oregon Bach Festival] Discovery Series, they didn't go there thinking they were going to be educated beforehand. And so, I wanted to honor that fine line. I created something that was quite concise, and it was really a little bit of history on the Camino de Santiago, because many people in the audience had never heard of it.[324]

Olson brings up an interesting issue of consent when it comes to audience education. While many audience members may appreciate having the background information, not everyone wants this experience when attending a concert. Olson says that this is the reason "a lot of orchestras choose to advertise [pre-concert lectures] and do it beforehand, so that you kind of know what you're getting yourselves into. Or, the Minnesota Orchestra [for example] has an entirely separate concert series, Symphony in 60, which begins with insight into each piece. And that's well communicated to their audience base. I feel like, in academia or in educational circles, there is perhaps less pushback if we add educational components to performance. But with professional ensembles, I always try to think a bit more about that."[325] Olson's thoughts on the subject are useful for all conductors as they consider ways to engage and educate their audiences.

Interdisciplinary Performances

There are two examples of interdisciplinary performances that conductors should be aware of. In both performances, the ensembles and performers implemented visual elements that moved beyond the original intent of the piece. Talbot is aware of these performances and has voiced his approval for ensembles experimenting with *Path of Miracles* in this way. These two

[324] Matthew Olson, interview by author, February 10, 2021, 13.
[325] Matthew Olson, interview by author, February 10, 2021, 14.

examples provide opportunities for conductors to be inspired by collaborative interdisciplinary performances of *Path of Miracles.*

ODC/Dance Company

Figure 11.1 ODC/Dance Company performance of Path of Miracles
with Robert Geary and Volti in San Francisco

ODC/Dance Company is a San Francisco-based dance company that is "one of the first American companies to incorporate a post-modern sensibility (an appreciation for pedestrian movement) into a virtuosic contemporary dance technique and to commit major resources to interdisciplinary collaboration and musical commissions for the repertory."[326] KT Nelson, a dancer, choreographer, and one of the Artistic Directors for ODC/Dance Company, first heard *Path of Miracles* in 2015. Nelson was immediately struck by the beauty and drama of the music. Because of ODC's commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration and expanding the repertory for dance, Nelson was taken with the idea of collaborating with a professional choir and choreographing *Path of Miracles* for ODC. However, Nelson felt that it was an intimidating task.

[326] "About Us," ODC/Dance Company, accessed April 7, 2021, https://odc.dance/about-us.

Nelson says: "This is a great piece of music…There's something that really works in this piece of music, which is why it was also daunting [to choreograph it]."[327] Nelson continues:

> I was freaked out about the music. If I was going to choreograph it, I was like, oh my God, I don't know anything about religion. And I don't know if I could do anything with this music. It so much stands on its own. I mean, we could all stand and listen to it. But do you actually want to dance to this? If so, then what's the meaning? And so, [to find out if it could work] I decided to go on the Camino.[328]

Nelson's concerns about the religious content and the recognition that the music is self-sufficient demonstrates her artistic commitment to only choreographing music when she was sure she had something to add. Nelson says: "You don't want to damage what [Talbot] intended, you want to amplify what they intended or meet what they intended."[329] It wasn't until after she had completed the Camino de Santiago that she felt certain that she could capture the spirit of Talbot's composition while adding choreography.

The ODC/Dance Company production of *Path of Miracles* was first a collaboration with Robert Geary and Volti, but later was performed with a variety of vocal ensembles across the United States. Volti is a San Francisco-based professional ensemble "dedicated to the discovery, creation, and performance of new vocal music."[330] Geary, the conductor and Artistic Director of Volti, says: "I don't call Volti a choir anymore. I call it an ensemble. And more and more of the music that we do is one on a part."[331] Volti's ability to perform complicated repertoire as an independent chamber ensemble made this group an ideal choice for this collaboration. Because this partnership included live music with the dancers, it was important to have the ensemble perform one on a part. Kristina Boerger, the conductor of the second collaborating choir with

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[327] KT Nelson, interview by author, February 5, 2021, 9.
[328] KT Nelson, interview by author, February 5, 2021, 1.
[329] KT Nelson, interview by author, February 5, 2021, 13.
[330] "About Us," Volti, accessed on April 8, 2021, http://voltisf.org/aboutus/.
[331] Robert Geary, interview by author, January 31, 2021, 3.

ODC, says the need to perform one on a part was "necessitated, I would say, first by the creative vision of KT Nelson, because we were on stage, we were integrated with the movement all the time. It was not going to be a question of doing it chorally. It had to be one on a part.[332]

This production of *Path of Miracles* was designed to be performed in Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. Grace Cathedral is a magnificent Episcopal cathedral located on Nob Hill in San Francisco, boasting magnificent acoustics and inspiring architecture, making it an ideal venue for a performance of *Path of Miracles.* Geary says: "ODC and Grace kind of got into cahoots a little bit, because once a year Grace Cathedral puts [the pews] off to the sides. And so, the whole space of the church is open. And KT wanted to do the four movements of the piece in four different locations in Grace and have a small audience that could follow the journey. So, basically, mimic the journey."[333] With the pews moved, the opportunity to use the space in creative ways are numerous.

As Geary says, KT Nelson wanted to use the space to mimic the journey along the Camino de Santiago. To do so, Nelson describes how "each of the movements is performed in a different setting."[334] Nelson not only had the dancers and choir move around the performance space but had the audience move as well. Nelson elaborates:

> So, for instance, we put the first movement in Grace Cathedral up in the chorus section behind the altar. Then the next section was in a little alcove, really on a lot of the cement and everybody was around in a square. Then the third movement was all over, and the audience walked, and the chorus was in the main choral singing area. So, the sound is carried all the way through the cathedral. And then the last section we [performed] where usually the pews are, but we faced a different direction. They had a bunch of murals on the wall, and I used it as a plaza. And then at the end, we all walked out, including some of the audience, because we had picked them up to dance with them. … So, again, the audience went on a journey.[335]

[332] Kristina Boerger, interview by author, February 1, 2021, 6.
[333] Robert Geary, interview by author, January 31, 2021, 1.
[334] KT Nelson, interview by author, February 5, 2021, 12.
[335] KT Nelson, interview by author, February 5, 2021, 12.

While the choreography for the dancers was virtuosic, volunteers and dancers helped usher the audience around the performance space throughout the program. Even though Grace Cathedral is a very large space, the audience had to remain small to accommodate all the movement. Geary recalls: "I think it was like 175 people. It's sold out instantly the first year we did it…there were a lot of disappointed people."[336]

The choreography that KT Nelson designed was intended to reflect folk dance, representative of the people who make the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage. Rather than trying to tell the story of St. James, Nelson sought to capture the spirit of the journey. Nelson says:

> To some degree I use some of the imagery, but not a ton, and when I actually built the choreography, I kept thinking the most important thing was that the music *was* the Camino. That's how I saw it. So, I'm going to take all of you, the dancers and the audience, on a journey and the music is our path. It's a very abstract way of looking at it. But that was my choice.[337]

The decision to not be literal but remain abstract reflects the composition, which, though it has a narrative, is more a series of images and scenes than detailed script. To capture the conflicting nature of the pilgrims, Nelson used gestures that moved in opposing motion. Nelson describes in more detail:

> I actually made an arm phrase, where wherever the arm went, something went the opposite direction. And there was a reason for that. And I think it's a little bit like the daunting nature of taking the trip. It's like, do you want to go? No, I don't really want to go. So, the push and pull inside you.[338]

Throughout the piece, the dancers interact with the singers and audience members. At points, the dancers may gesture or dance around groups of singers, and at other points, dancers actually lift

[336] Robert Geary, interview by author, January 31, 2021, 7.
[337] KT Nelson, interview by author, February 5, 2021, 2.
[338] KT Nelson, interview by author, February 5, 2021, 3.

singers through the air as they sing. Even the conductor is included in the choreography, as the dancers occasionally pick up the music stand and walk around the room (see Figure 11.2).

Figure 11.2 Robert Geary conducts Path of Miracles at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco in collaboration between ODC/Dance Company and Volti.

Geary describes how the choreography affected the musical performance: “The choreography definitely compromised the perfectibility of the music. You know, you literally have people

moving quite quickly in spirals and singing a complex score. It was always a little dicey in a couple of places."[339] Nevertheless, Geary believes that the sacrifices in vocal production or tuning were worth the production's visual impact. Kristina Boerger agrees, and points out that, in this production, it is primarily a dance piece:

> This is a company that wanted to dance to live music, which I also adore…This wasn't "Hey, let's present this great choral piece, but just to keep folks interested, we'll have some people dancing." No. Now, KT and her collaborators made some really interesting decisions about how to have us doing other things other than singing from time to time that interacted with the dance. And that was terrific.[340]

Nelson's clear understanding of the music and of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela informed the choreography. The respect that Nelson paid to the process ensured that the artistic integrity of the music was maintained, while creating an incredible artistic experience for the performers and audience members alike. Geary recalls the audience response: "[They were] just blown away. I think it really transported people. I would say the audience was generally just overwhelmed."[341]

The performances by ODC/Dance Company are certainly the unique creation of Nelson and her collaborators. Nevertheless, many conductors can find inspiration for their own performances of *Path of Miracles* from ODC and Nelson. The possibility of incorporating movement, including audience movement, into choral productions without dancers is numerous and presents another avenue for creativity.

[339] Robert Geary, interview by author, January 31, 2021, 2.
[340] Kristina Boerger, interview by author, February 1, 2021, 11.
[341] Robert Geary, interview by author, January 31, 2021, 8.

Westminster Choir College

Figure 11.3 Westminster Choir Colleges Staged Production of Path of Miracles

In 2019, Joe Miller conducted the Westminster Choir College in a fully staged production of *Path of Miracles* at the Spoleto Festival USA, where Miller is one of the artistic administrators.[342] Describing the Spoleto Festival, Miller says:

> The festival is a multidimensional festival. It's probably one of the largest in the world, incorporating dance and theatre and opera, but producing our own productions of opera and staged choral [performances] is kind of a hallmark. And so, we're building and producing new things. And Path of Miracles was one of those new productions that we built and designed.[343]

Miller's desire to stage *Path of Miracles* stemmed from the pictorial nature of the composition, which is like a progression of cascading images throughout the four movements. Miller says: "In my head, it's a film. And that's really why I wanted to stage it, because when I hear it, I see it."[344]

[342] Anne Sears, "Westminster Choir Brings 'Path of Miracles' to Life," *News at Rider* (June 14, 2019), accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.rider.edu/about/news/2019/06/16/westminster-choir-brings-path-miracles-life.
[343] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 10-11.
[344] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 2.

Miller discloses that the piece was never meant to be staged, but he felt that the ensemble could successfully perform it because of the Spoleto Festival's performance space. Miller says: "The Gaillard Auditorium in Charleston is an amazing concert hall… If I wouldn't have had that acoustic, I never would have done it and it would have been too difficult. The acoustical environment for this, especially in a stage production, has to be live and it has to provide some sort of feedback for the choir so that they can hear and stay together and keep connected rhythmically on the stage.[345]

To make this staged production possible, Miller used an ensemble of 40 singers. Using a choral texture was essential to help make the piece work as singers moved extensively around the stage. Miller says: "in a large space, not being able to stand right next to each other in kind of a choral setting, having more singers helped to create sonority. So, feeling you knew where to sing into the harmonic spectrum helped a lot when you were spread apart."[346] Additionally, because of the need to memorize, utilizing more voices helped with the mental and vocal stamina required to perform *Path of Miracles.*

To successfully produce this concert, Miller engaged John La Bouchardière to collaborate as the director. Bouchardière is a renowned director and has worked with many international opera companies. However, his production titled *The Full Monteverdi* (a staged performance of Monteverdi's fourth book of madrigals) in collaboration with the ensemble *I Fagiolini* brought him international acclaim.[347] Miller had previously worked with Bouchardière on a staged production of John Adams' *El Niño* and knew that he could trust him to understand the choir's needs in staging such a demanding vocal work. Miller says: "I was looking for someone that

[345] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 10.
[346] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 4-5.
[347] John La Bouchardière, Biography, accessed April 8, 2021, https://www.johnlabouchardiere.com/biography.

understood choir. And John [La Bouchardière] was a chorister growing up and grew up in that tradition and understood it. I knew in my conversations with him that he got what they would need."[348] Beyond understanding the musical demands for the choir, Miller needed to trust the collaborating director to maintain a high level of artistic integrity for the production to be successful. Miller says that *Path of Miracles* is "a story that is not really a story. It's this journey with this series of scenes. Who can I trust to talk to about this that won't make it kitschy? Or that can find a way to actually tell this that it makes somewhat of a narrative?"[349] Miller's answer was John La Bouchardière, because "he thinks very deeply about what he's doing."[350]

One of the most noticeable staging choices was the decision to have the choir carry rocks throughout the performance, symbolic of the burdens that pilgrims carry with them on the Camino de Santiago. Miller says:

> They're carrying this burden. That's usually why a person is doing a pilgrimage…And after they get to Santiago de Compostela, they walk on to the ocean and sometimes they will leave their shoes or they'll leave their clothes…And so, the rocks were all the things that we're carrying. And John staged it in a way that we carried the rocks the whole time until we got to the end, and then we piled them up on the front of the stage. At the very end of the production, everyone leaves their shoes, and the shoes are also laying on it like we're at the shore, we're letting go.[351]

The symbolism between the rocks and the burdens of life are readily apparent to the audience, and creates a powerful experience for the singers. Miller says: "The piece is so personal. When you sing it, you just feel like it's you. And everyone around you knows that you feel it's you. I mean, once a choir does this together, they're changed. It's that kind of piece. And there was something about the rocks also, everyone became attached to it."[352] Each singer was responsible

[348] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 7.
[349] Ibid.
[350] Ibid.
[351] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 8.
[352] Ibid.

for developing a backstory of their rock, or their burden. When the singers finally set their rock down upon the arrival in Santiago, it added to the sense of joy in the music.

Figure 11.4 Leaving behind their shoes and their burdens
at the end of *Path of Miracles*

The decision to stage choral music can be met with resistance from those who think the practice to be gauche. However, performances like Westminster Choir College's *Path of Miracles* are beacons of success in this field. Miller acknowledges that some musical perfection was lost in the process, but maintains that the benefits of the emotional impact were more than worth the sacrifice:

> You could do it a lot better, absolutely, standing still. No doubt.…I want to bring more people into choral music. I want more people to understand it. And I thought if I can get them to understand the humanity... [for example] if you're singing the second movement about the pain and you can see an individual relating to someone else, and that's done in a more presentational kind of way, I thought it could be really impactful. And I think it was. Did we lose things? Yes, absolutely. But we also gained all of these other things.[353]

Miller highlights, once again, the importance of diversifying the way classical music concerts are presented. When prepared from a place of deep conviction and collaborating with trusted partners, concerts become more inclusive and impactful for audiences.

Excerpted Single Movements

Many conductors may choose to excerpt single movements of *Path of Miracles* to be included in more traditional concert programs made up of various other repertoire. When doing so, any movement could be excerpted depending on the ensemble's ability and the programming needs. "Leon" is by far the most accessible in terms of length and harmonic warmth. "Burgos" is perhaps the most austere of the movements, which is why no examples could be found to include in this document. This section will highlight three different examples of ensembles following this practice.

Solaris Vocal Ensemble

Giselle Wyers, Professor of Choral Music at the University of Washington, is also the conductor of the Solaris Vocal Ensemble. Solaris is a professional choir of 12 singers dedicated to performing new music. Wyers says: "the purpose of the ensemble is to work at the cutting edge of new music, that's not even choral necessarily, but new vocal music."[354] Solaris performed

[353] Joe Miller, interview by author, February 2, 2021, 11-12.
[354] Giselle Wyers, interview by author, April 8, 2021, 1.

"Roncesvalles" as part of a concert program titled *The Explorer's Edge.* Wyers describes the program: "The idea was that we would look at either texts that discussed exploration, or that we would create music that was at the edge of what we consider vocal ensemble music."[355] The program contained music ranging from Samuel Barber's "A Stopwatch and an Ordnance Map," to Meredith Monk's "Explorers/Junctures" from the opera *Atlas.*

Like many conductors, Wyers' choice to excerpt "Roncesvalles" rather than one of the other movements was a combination of practical and dramatic considerations. Wyers remembers: "I was able to create a map through the first movement that accommodated 12 solo voices and still cover almost everything that needed to be covered…But also, I chose 'Roncesvalles' due to the feeling of drama and excitement in the start, and the fact that a lot of the most essential elements of the piece occur in the first movement."[356] Some of the other challenges that the Solaris Vocal Ensemble experienced were related to the rhythmic intricacies and the text setting. Wyers advises conductors to pay careful attention to the rhythmic elements of the piece: "Rhythmic coordination is the key. And so, because of that, it's almost important to memorize certain pages to really be off-book. And there's other portions that you can just fly through them and they're not hard to put together at all."[357] The suggestion to memorize small portions is valid. Having the ability to have all eyes on the conductor for the trickiest sections ensures that the rhythmic and melodic cells align. Once the section is coordinated, the piece tends to run smoothly until the next transition.

Wyers remembers the positive response to the excerpted performance of "Roncesvalles": "The audience liked it a lot and the singers loved it. One of our basses requested to record it in a

[355] Giselle Wyers, interview by author, April 8, 2021, 3.
[356] Ibid.
[357] Giselle Wyers, interview by author, April 8, 2021, 5-6.

separate session and had offered even to put up some funding to help with that."[358] The recording was never able to happen due to scheduling issues, but it is a testament to the enthusiasm the ensemble had for the piece.

University of Washington Chamber Singers

Geoffrey Boers, Director of Choral Activities at the University of Washington, conducted "Leon" in a concert performance in 2012 with his UW Chamber Singers. The reasons "Leon" was chosen over other movements were multifaceted. Boers says: "In terms of the challenge for a typical advanced collegiate ensemble like the Chamber Singers, 'Leon' gave us the highest ability to excerpt something and be successful. So, that was the big part. But the other part is that, also for young people, I think that text is accessible as well."[359] The challenges Boers is referring to are both the vocal and musicianship challenges. "Leon" includes fewer rhythmic intricacies than the other movements. Boers says: "Since we were only doing one movement, I wanted to help them feel like they were really a part of it and not have it be too dense for them. If they're only going to do one movement, to not just get the 'work' aspect of it, but the satisfaction of it."[360]

Even though "Leon" is more accessible than the other movements, it is far from an easy piece even for an advanced collegiate ensemble. Boers describes some of the challenges: "The divisi, the repetition, and the tessitura is extended for all voice parts. So, that puts an athletic demand, or physical demand on singers, particularly young singers. For the sopranos to hang out with the "Li soleus" motive for pages and pages and to keep coming back to it. And then have

[358] Giselle Wyers, interview by author, April 8, 2021, 5.
[359] Geoffrey Boers, interview by author, April 2, 2021, 1-2.
[360] Geoffrey Boers, interview by author, April 2, 2021, 2.

the basses wade through the work and trying to do these expansive chords in 'Jakobsland,"…to be projecting at that dynamic in that register. Those are very challenging things."[361] Despite these challenges, the result was a successful performance appreciated by the audience and the ensemble. Boers recalls: "Absolutely it was [effective]. Obviously, the entire pilgrimage is depicted in the entire *Path of Miracles* experience. But each part is like the whole. Because there's always these moments of arrival. There are always these moments of the unexpected."[362]

When Boers was asked if he had any advice for collegiate conductors who may want to program this piece, he responded with an answer that went beyond musical ability: "I do think a real understanding of what this piece is about [is essential]. I just think there are so many angles for students to be connected to this music. And to not take a typical repertoire kind of approach where we say, well, can they sing the parts? More importantly, are they able to embody the humanity of the piece?"[363]

Princeton University Glee Club

In 2016, Gabriel Crouch took the Princeton University Glee Club on a tour to Spain, and they performed the last movement, "Santiago," throughout their trip. Crouch echoes Miller's assessment of the student response to *Path of Miracles,* saying: "The piece is absolutely an astonishing piece like nothing else. The way that my students have responded to singing it is like no other piece I've done with them."[364] Crouch is adamant that more choirs should attempt to perform *Path of Miracles,* and to not let perfection be the enemy of the good:

> I've got a lovely video of me conducting that piece in Bilbao with my student choir. In the Carmina Burana section in the last movement [begins at m. 201] there's a wonderful

[361] Geoffrey Boers, interview by author, April 2, 2021, 3-4.
[362] Geoffrey Boers, interview by author, April 2, 2021, 1
[363] Geoffrey Boers, interview by author, April 2, 2021, 6.
[364] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 6-7.

> bit where the choir is just singing this ostinato "beate Jacobe" [m. 281]. Then the second soprano comes in after this smooth bed, and I give them the most enormous cue in completely the wrong place. And it's awesome, because my kids didn't come in. I treasure this video…I'm standing there and nothing happens. I get this big grin on my face and I give a huge thumbs up, and then they come in the next bar in exactly the right spot. God, it's such an awesome experience to do this piece with students.[365]

Of course, there are the practical considerations of having students who can sing the parts without causing vocal strain. However, excerpting a single movement reduces the amount of fatigue for younger voices. Furthermore, as Crouch says, the students respond beautifully to the challenge and are inspired by the music and the subject matter.

Closing Thoughts

As this chapter has shown, there are many ways to perform *Path of Miracles.* The hope is not to compare performances for their efficacy but rather to showcase the versatility of the piece and the creative liberties that numerous artists have taken when presenting *Path of Miracles.* Each conductor must find a format that works well for their ensemble's abilities. This chapter provides examples from which to draw inspiration.

[365] Gabriel Crouch, interview by author, February 16, 2021, 13.

Chapter 12.
Conclusion

Path of Miracles is an extraordinary musical achievement that is quickly cementing its place in the Western choral music canon, for good reason. The music is compelling, the libretto is original, and the use of extra-musical elements is inspiring. Throughout this document, the ways in which *Path of Miracles* is constructed have been illuminated. Included are many informative and useful pieces of information to help conductors in preparation for their own performances of *Path of Miracles*. Of particular use are the insights to the libretto and the resources (such as an IPA and translation guide) found in the appendix of this document. Furthermore, many conductors may not have access to Talbot, Dickinson, or any of the numerous artists who were graciously willing to share their insights to *Path of Miracles.* These insights are collected, organized, and presented in ways for conductors to develop a deeper understanding of this piece's creation and life since conception.

The inclusion of notable performances is sure to help conductors and directors to develop a more extensive palette of creativity when producing their own concerts of *Path of Miracles.* However, this author's hope is to encourage conductors to continue expanding how we present all choral concerts, not just productions of *Path of Miracles*. There is a deep need to engage our audiences – not to pander or merely entertain, but to provide opportunities for deeper understanding and appreciation of the choral art. This call to action is not a manifesto to end the classical music rituals that many people adore. Rather, it is the hope that conductors will find freedom to pursue avenues of expanded creativity to support excellent music performance. In doing so, the beauty and complexity of the choral art will become more accessible to new audience members, and aficionados will develop an even deeper appreciation for the repertoire.

Path of Miracles also provides an example for composers and commissioning organizations who want to create a body of repertoire that breaks the expectations of our ensembles and audiences. There are relatively few pieces in the choral repertoire that emulate journeys or tell compelling narratives as complete concert programs. The audience response to *Path of Miracles* is an indication that there is room in the repertoire for more broad-form narrative works. Talbot remains passionate about *Path of Miracles* and is grateful for its warm reception since it premiered in 2005. It is appropriate to give Talbot the final word on *Path of Miracles* as this document comes to its end:

> I mean, I really, really, really, really do love it. It's hard to say that without sounding insufferably arrogant and smug, and it's not that at all. It's like I really can't quite say how it came into being. And I try not to look at it too hard because it would be possibly not very helpful in regard to moving forward. You can't just luxuriate in the glory of your past achievements. You've got to try and move on to do something even better. But there are things that happen in *Path of Miracles* where I just don't know where they came from. I don't know how I did that. And I'm very glad I did. And the reason I'm really glad I did is because I just think it's a really lovely piece. And again, in the context of your dissertation, I don't know how useful it is to know this. But I write music because I love music. I love making music and being involved with people who make music, but mostly I write it because it's like a love letter to the world and people and humanity, and nature. And if you can create something, somehow, that has an innate beauty and integrity, when in the hands of amazing choirs like Tenebrae, Conspirare, or whoever, then…it's just a very, very, very good feeling.[366]

[366] Joby Talbot, interview by author, January 14, 2021, 16-17.

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APPENDIX A

Joby Talbot's Instrumental Compositions in Chronological Order

Appendix A Table 1. Joby Talbot's Instrumental Compositions in Chronological Order

Piece	Date	Premiere	Instrumentation	Length	Recordings
Prota	1993	N/A	Organ duet	20m	N/A
Nightfall	1994	Vanbrugh String Quartet at the Bury St Edmunds Festival	String Quartet	5m	N/A
Horus	1995	N/A	Perc trio	6m	N/A
Animisation	1995	N/A	1(pc)11(Eb cl.) 1/1110/db	13m	N/A
Compound Fracture	1995	N/A	Fl.pic.ssx+asx/perc/kbd/ vc.db	5m	N/A
Triplethink	1995	N/A	Tuba	4m	N/A
Flytrap	1998	N/A	Amplified string sextet	5m	N/A
6/11/1998	1998	N/A	Piano	3m	N/A
Falling	1998	Phillip Sheppard	Electric cello	6m	Black Box BBM1078
Dead Space	2001	N/A	pf.vn.vc.vibes.glock	11m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252
Incubator	2001	N/A	pf.vn.vc.vibes	4m 32s	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252
Blue Cell	2001	Commissioned by the Apollo Saxophone Quartet	Sax Quartet	5m	Black Box BBM1078
Minus 1500	2001	Commissioned by the London Sinfonietta	bsn.perc.str(1.1.1.1.1)[p rpf]	7m	Black Box BBM1078
Arc-Light	2001	N/A	Amplified ensemble (2 extra, bass, synths, drums)	4m	N/A
Utopia	2001	N/A	pf.vn.vc.vibes	4m 20s	Utopia Tom Kerstens' G Plus Ensemble

The Croydon Grand Prix	2001	N/A	pf.vn.vc.vibes	5m 4s	Utopia Tom Kerstens' G Plus Ensemble
Similarities Between Diverse Things	2002	Joby Talbot Ensemble, The Dying Swan Tour	pf.vib/vn.vc	8m	Black Box BBM1078
The Dying Swan Suite	2002	N/A	Piano, Violin, Cello	35m	N/A
Simon's Mobile	2002	N/A	pf.vln.vlc	2m	N/A
Louise & Garth's Wedding Piece	2002	N/A	Piano	2m 34s	N/A
Space Fish	2003	Instrumental at The Studio at the Union Chapel, March 20th, 2003	db.amplified string quartet	6m	N/A
Standing Wave	2003	Tom Kerstens, Guitar at Purcell Room, London on May 2, 2004	Guitar	15m	BGS Records, catalogue number BGS110
Cyanide	2003	N/A	pf.vn.vc.vibes	N/A	Utopia Tom Kerstens' G Plus Ensemble
Absence and Presence	2003	N/A	Piano	6m	N/A
Wavy Line	2003	N/A	12 saxophones (2 sop, 4 alto, 2 tenor, 2 baritone, 2 bass)	6m	N/A
US and Them	2003	Commissioned by the Hampstead Theatre	Pre-recorded tape	10m	N/A
Once Around The Sun (for solo piano)	2004	Co-commissioned by Classic FM and the PRS Foundation for New Music	pf	1h 13m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
January: A Yellow Disc Rising from the Sea	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM, included as part of the ballet "Chroma"	vib.vn.vc.pf	3m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
February: The Arctic Circle	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	vib.vn.vc.pf	6m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ

March: Seed Capsule	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	Piano	5m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
April: The First Day of Summer	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	Via.hp.pf	4m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
May: Cumul onimbus	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	vc.pf	6m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
June: Transit of Venus	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM, included as part of the ballet "Chroma"	2.1+ca.1+bcl.2+cbn4.3.2+btbn.12perchp.pfstr	3m 30s	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
July: Murmuration	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	Piano	3m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
August: Cloudpark	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM, included as part of the ballet "Chroma"	vib.vn.vc.pf	3m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
September: The Last Day of Summer	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	Piano	5m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
October: Cerberus	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	vib.perc.pf	3m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ

November: Eleven	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	violin	4m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
December: Polarisation	2004	Commissioned by Classic FM	vib.hp.vn.vc.pf	7m	Label: Sony BMG Catalogue Number: 82876695252 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh-8PGOgfQ
Theatre of Blood	2005	N/A	cl(sax), perc, pf(kbd), acn, vn,vc	1h 30m	N/A
Vanishing Point	2005	February 6, 2005 at Wigmore Hall, Corina Belcea, Laura Samuel and Nicola Benedetti (violins); Carole Presland and Alison Rhind (pianos)	Violin, Piano	8m	N/A
Motion Detector	2005	Maya Beiser	cello	N/A	Maya Beiser Almost Human Koch catalogue number KIC-CD-7686
Astro	2006	N/A	0+pic.0.1+cbcl.ssx+asx+tsx+barsx.0/2330/timp.perc/hp.pf.acn/str	3m	Aluminium, 2006
I'm Bound to Pack it Up	2006	N/A	1(pic).0.1+bcl.ssx.0/2220/perc/hp.pf+cel/str	4m	Aluminium, 2006
Hardest Button to Button	2007	Included as part of the ballet "Chroma"	2+pic.2+ca.2+bcl.ssx.asx.2+cbn/4331/timp.perc/hp.pf/str+amp	N/A	Aluminium
For Liz 14 Feb 2009	2009	N/A	Piano	3m 16s	N/A
Untitled piece for piano, percussion, and harmonium 1	2009	N/A	Piano, Percussion, Harmonium	2m 40s	N/A
Untitled piece for piano, percussion, and harmonium 2	2009	N/A	Piano, Percussion, Harmonium	3m 52s	N/A
For Liz 14 Feb 2010	2010	N/A	Piano	2m 53s	N/A
Crumplezone	2010	Arranged by Artem Vassiliev	Perc/gtr[bgtr]/str(1.1.1.1.0)	26m	N/A
Slow Waltz	2010	N/A	Piano	1m 54s	N/A

Nilas	2012	N/A	Piano	3m 7s	Outliers Vol. 1: Iceland, 2012
Genus Quartet	2013	Calder Quartet at LSO St Luke's	String Quartet	10m	N/A
Dusky Goose	2015	Eric Crees and London Symphonic Brass	3tpt.flg.hn.3tbn+btbn.tba.2perc	3m	N/A
Camille	2017	William Howard, Piano at Hoxton Hall, London	Piano	4m	N/A
Source: Data adapted from Joby Talbot's page on Wise Music *Classical*, accessed on February 13, 2021, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/catalogue/works/?search=%22Joby+Talbot%22&yearComposed=%5B0%2C2021%5D					

APPENDIX B

Roncesvalles Text, Translation, Sources, and IPA Transcription

Appendix B Table 1 Roncesvalles Text, Translation, Sources, and IPA Transcription

Text	Language	Poetic English Translation	Source	IPA Transcription
Herr Santiagu Grot Sanctiagu Eultreya esuseya Deius aia nos.	Latin	Holy St. James, Great St. James, God helps us now and evermore.	Codex Calixtinus (Dum pater familias)	[hɛr sɑntiɑgu gɾɔt sɑŋktiɑgu ɛultɾɛiɑ ɛsusɛiɑ dɛjus ɑjɑ nɔs]
κατ εκεινον δε τον καιρον επεβαλεν ηρωδης ο βασιλευς τας χειρας κακωσαι τινας των απο της εκκλησιας ανειλεν δε ιακωβον τον αδελφον ιωαννου μαχαιρα	Greek	Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.	Acts 12: 1-2 Greek translation of the King James Version	[kat ekenon de ton kairon epebalen xɛrodɛs ho basilejus tas kʰiras kakosai tinas ton apo tɛs ek:klɛsias anelen de jakobon ton adelpʰon iawanu makʰaira][367]
Eodem autore tempore misit Herodes rex manus ut adfligeret quosdam de ecclesia occidit autem Iacobum fratrem Iohannis gladio.	Latin	Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.	Acts 12: 1-2 Latin translation of the King James Version	[ɛɔdɛm ɑutɔɾɛ tɛmpɔɾɛ m isit ɛɾɔdɛs ɾɛks mɑnus ut ɑdflidʒɛɾɛtkwɔsdɑm dɛ ɛ kklɛsiɑ ɔttʃidit ɑutɛm jɑkɔbum fɾɑtɾɛm j ɔɑnnis glɑdiɔ]
En aquel mismo tiempo el rey Herodes echó mano a algunos de la iglesia para maltratarles. Y mató a espada a Jacobo, hermano de Juan.	Spanish	Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.	Acts 12: 1-2 Spanish translation of the King James Version	[ɛn akɛl mizmɔ tjɛmpɔ ɛl rɛj ɛɾɔðɛs ɛtʃɔ mɑnɔ a alɣunɔs dɛ la iɣlɛsja pɑɾa maltɾɑtɑɾlɛs i mɑtɔ a ɛspɑða a χɑkɔβɔ ɛrmɑnɔ dɛ χwan][368]

[367] J. Wells, "IPA transcription of Ancient Greek," UCL Department of Speech, Hearing, and Phonetic Sciences, accessed February 24, 2021, https://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/greek.htm. The phonetic guide for this passage in the *Path of Miracles* score is useful for those less comfortable with the International Phonetic Alphabet. However, this transcription presents a more accurate pronunciation of the Greek. Because of the nature of this pilgrimage, as well as the age of the biblical text, this transcription follows the ancient Greek pronunciation. It appears that Tenebrae also used the ancient Greek pronunciation. An example of the difference can be seen in the word επεβαλεν, which in modern Greek would be pronounced [epevalen] instead of [epebalen]. Furthermore, because this passage borrows two names from outside the Greek language (Herod and John) there are irregularities in the Greek phonetic rules. In these instances, the Tenebrae recording guided the phonetics.

[368] A Castilian Spanish dialect was used for all Spanish texts in the libretto. This accurately reflects the European Spanish roots of the pilgrimage of the Camino de Santiago.

Aldi hartan, Herodes erregea eliz elkarteko batzuei gogor erasotzen hasi zen. Santiago, Joanen anaia, ezpataz hilarazi zuen.	Basque	Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.	Acts 12: 1-2 Basque translation of the King James Version	[aldi hartan xerodes er:regea elis elkarteko batsuei gogor erasotsen hasi sen santiago ʒoanen anaia espatas hilarasi suen][369]
Ver ce temps-là, le roi Hérode se mit à persécuter quelques-un de membres de l'Église. Il fit mourir par l'épée Jacques, frère de Jean.	French	Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.	Acts 12: 1-2 French translation of the King James Version	[ve sə tɑ̃ la lə ɾwa eɾɔdə sə mi ta peɾsekyte kɛlkə zɛ̃ də mɑ̃bɾə də leglizə il fi muɾiɾ paɾ lepeə ʒakkə fɾɛɾə də jɑ̃]
Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John with the sword.	English		Acts 12: 1-2 King James Version	[naʊ ʌbaʊt ðæt taɪm hɛɾ əd ðə kɪŋ stɹɛtʃt fɔθ hɪz hændz tu vɛks sɜtən ʌv ðə tʃɜtʃ ænd hi kɪld dʒɛɪmz ðə bɹʌðəɾ ʌv dʒɑn wɪð ðə sɔd]
Um dieselbige Zeit legte der König Herodes die Hände an, etliche von der Gemeinde, sie zu peinigen. Er tötete aber Jakobus, den Bruder des Johannes, mit dem Schwert.	German	Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.	Acts 12: 1-2 German translation of the King James Version	[ʊm dizəlbɪgə tsaet lektə deʁ kønɪç hɛrodəs di: hɛndə a:n ɛtlɪçə fɔn deʁ gəmaendə zi tsu paenɪgən ɛɾ tøtətə abəʁ ja:kɔpu:s de:n bɾudəʁ dɛs johanəs mɪt de:m ʃveɾt]
Before this death the Apostle journeyed, preaching the word to unbelievers. Returning, unheeded, to die in Jerusalem – a truth beyond Gospel.[370]	English		Robert Dickinson	[bɪfɔə ðɪs dɛθ ði ʌpɑsəl dʒɜnɪd pɹɪtʃɪŋ ðə wɜd tu ʌnbɪlivəz ɹɪtɜnɪŋ ʌnhidə tu dɑɪ ɪn dʒəɾusələm ə tɹuθ bɪjɑnd gɑspəl]

[369] Basque Phonetics Guide, UCLA Phonetics archive, accessed February 24, 2021 http://archive.phonetics.ucla.edu/Language/EUS/eus_word-list_1983_01.html.

[370] Jacobus de Voragine, "The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints," translated by William Granger Ryan, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, 389. This section of poetry was written by Dickinson, inspired by the story of St. James as told in the *Legenda.* Dickinson confirmed this information in an email correspondence with the author on February 26, 2021.

Jacobus, filius Zebedaei, frate Johannis, Hic Spaniae et occidentalia loca praedicat,	Latin	James, son of Zebedee, brother of John, at that time preached in Spain and the Western places.	Breviarium apostolorum	[jɑkɔbus filius zɛbɛdaɪ frɑtɛ jɔɑnnis ik spɑniɛ ɛt ɔksidɛntɑliɑ lɔkɑ prɛdikɑt]
foy el o primeiro que preegou en Galizia	Galician	He was the first to preach in Galicia.	Miragres de Santiago	[foi el o pɾimeiɾo kue pɾegou̯ eŋ galidzia][371]
Herod rots on a borrowed throne, while the saint is translated to Heaven and Spain, the body taken at night from the tomb, the stone of the tomb becoming the boat that carries him back *ad extremis terrarum*, back to the land that denied him in life.	English	At the edge of the world	Robert Dickinson	[hɛɹəd ɹɑts ɑn ə bɔɹoʊd θɹoʊn hwɑɪl ðə sɛɪnt ɪz tɹænzlɛɪtəd tu hɛvən ænd spɛɪn ðə bɑdɪ tɛɪkən æt nɑɪt fɪʌm ðə tum ðə stoʊn ʌv ðə tum bɪkʌmɪŋ ðə boʊt ðæt kæɾɪz hɪm bæk ɑd ekstɾɛmis tɛɾːɾɑɾum bæk tu ðə lænd ðæt dɪnɑɪd hɪm ɪn lɑɪf]
Huius beatissimi apostoli sacra ossa ad Hispanias translata;	Latin	The sacred bones of the blessed apostle taken to Spain	Floro de Lyon	[ujus bɛɑtissimi ɑpɔstɔli sɑkɾɑ ɔssɑ ɑd ispɑniɑs tɾɑnslɑtɑ]
Et despois que o rrey Erodes mãdou matar en Iherusalem, trouxerõ o corpo del os diçipolos por mar a Galiza.	Galician	After King Herod killed him in Jerusalem, his disciples took the body by sea to Galicia.	Miragres de Santiago	[et depoi kue o re ɛrodes maŋdou̯ matar eŋ ierusalem, trou̯ʃeroŋ o kɔrpo del os ditsipolos poɾ mar a galidza][372]
From Jerusalem to Finisterre, from the heart of the world to the end of the land in a boat made of stone, without rudder or sail. Guided by grace to the Galician shore.	English		Robert Dickinson	[fɪʌm dʒəɹusələm tu fɪnɪstɛərə fɪʌm ðə hɑt ʌv ðə wɜld tu ði ɛnd ʌv ðə lænd ɪn ə boʊt mɛɪd ʌv stoʊn wɪðɑʊt ɹʌdəɾ ɔ sɛɪl gɑɪdəd bɑɪ gɹɛɪs tu ðə gəlɪʃɪən ʃɔə]
abandonnant à la Providence la soin de la sepulture,	French	Abandoning to Providence the care of the tomb	Robert Dickinson adapted this text from the *Legenda Aurea*[373]	[abɑ̃dɔnɑ̃ ta la pɾɔvidɑ̃sə la swɛ̃ də la sɛpyltyɾə]

[371] Andrew Casson, "Pronunciation guide for medieval Galician-Portuguese," *Cantigas de Santa Maria for Singers,* 2019, accessed February 24, 2021, http://www.cantigasdesantamaria.com/pronounce.html.

[372] Andrew Casson, "Pronunciation guide for medieval Galician-Portuguese," *Cantigas de Santa Maria for Singers,* 2019, accessed February 24, 2021, http://www.cantigasdesantamaria.com/pronounce.html.

[373] Jacobus de Voragine, "The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints," translated by William Granger Ryan, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, 391; Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 26, 5.

O ajutor omnium seculorum, O decus apostollorum, O lus clara galicianorum, O avocate peregrinorum, Jacobe, suplantatur viciorum Solve nostrum Cathenes delitorum E duc a salutum portum.	Latin	O judge of all the world, O glory of the apostles, O clear light of Galicia, O defender of pilgrims, James, destroyer of sins, deliver us from evil and lead us to safe harbour.	Codex Calixtinus, Book I, Chapter 8	[ɔ ɑjutɔɾ ɔmnium sɛkulɔɾum ɔ dɛkus ɑpɔstɔlloɾum ɔ lus klaɾɑ ɡalitʃianɔɾum ɔ ɑvɔkatɛ pɛɾɛɡɾinɔɾum jakɔbɛ suplantatuɾ vitʃiɔɾum sɔlvɛ nɔstɾum kɑtɛnɛs dɛlitɔɾum ɛ duk ɑ sɑlutum pɔɾtum]
O judge of all the world, O glory of the apostles, O clear light of Galicia, O defender of pilgrims, James, destroyer of sins, deliver us from evil and lead us to safe harbour.	English		Codex Calixtinus, Book I, Chapter 8.[374]	[oʊ dʒʌdʒ ʌv ɔl ðə wɜld oʊ ɡlɔɾɪ ʌv ði ʌpɑsəlz oʊ klɪə lɑɪt ʌv ɡəlɪʃiə oʊ dɪfɛndə ʌv pɪlɡɹɪmz dʒɛɪmz dɪstɹɔɪəɾ ʌv sɪnz dɪlɪvəɾ ʌs fɪʌm ivɪl ænd lid ʌs tu sɛɪf hɑbə]
At night on Lebredon by Iria Flavia the hermit Pelayo at prayer and alone saw in the heavens a ring of bright stars shining like beacons over the plain and as in Bethlehem the Magi were guided the hermit was led by this holy sign for this was the time given to Spain for St. James to be found after eight hundred years in Compostella, by the field of stars.	English		Robert Dickinson	[æt nɑɪt ɑn lebɹɛdon bɑɪ iɾiɑ flævɪə ðə hɜmɪt pɛɪlɛɪoʊ æt pɹɛə ænd ʌloʊn sɔ ɪn ðə hɛvənz ə ɹɪŋ ʌv bɾɑɪt stɑz ʃɑmɪŋ lɑɪk bikənz oʊvə ðə plɛɪn ænd æz ɪn bɛθlɪhɛm ðə mædʒɑɪ wɜ ɡɑɪdəd ðə hɜmɪt wəz lɛdbɑɪ ðɪs hoʊli sɑɪn fɔ ðɪs wəz ðə tɑɪm ɡɪvən tu spɛɪn fɔ sɛɪnt dʒɛɪmz tu bi fɑʊnd ɑftəɾ ɛɪt hʌndɹəd jɪəz ɪn kɑmpostɛla bɑɪ ðə fild ʌv stɑz]
Herr Santiagu Grot Sanctiagu Eultreya esuseya Deius aia nos.	Latin	Holy St. James, Great St. James, God helps us now and evermore.	Codex Calixtinus (Dum pater familias)	[hɛɾɾ sɑntiɑgu gɾɔt sɑŋktiɑgu ɛultɾɛiɑ ɛsusɛiɑ dɛjus ɑjɑ nɔs]
Source: All texts, translations, and sources were derived from the liner notes on the Tenebrae *Path of Miracles* CD published by Signum Records in 2005. Further information was gleaned through an interview with Robert Dickinson, who helped to clarify several elements. Additionally, the books *The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James* by Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn and *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela,* by William Melczer were invaluable resources to identify some missing attributions from the CD liner notes. IPA guides of the English, German, Latin, French, and Spanish were edited and adapted from transcriptions through PhoneticSoft https://ipanow.com/, accessed on February 24, 2021. The Greek, Basque, and Galician IPA transcriptions were completed by the author, utilizing sources cited directly in the table.				

[374] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 31.

Burgos Text, Translation, Sources, and IPA Transcription

Appendix B Table 2. Burgos Text, Translation, Sources, and IPA Transcription

Text	Language	Poetic English Translation	Source	IPA Transcription
Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal, The devil waits at the side of the road. We trust in words and remnants, prayers and bones. We know that the world is a lesson As the carved apostles in the Puerta Alta Dividing the damned and the saved are a lesson. We beat our hands against the walls of heaven. St. Julian of Cuenca, Santa Casilda, pray for us. Remember the pilgrim robbed in Pamplona, Cheated of silver the night his wife died;[375] Remember the son of the German pilgrim Hanged as a thief at the gates of the town, Hanged at the word of an innkeeper's daughter.[376] Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal, The devil waits at the side of the road. We trust in words and remnants, prayers and bones.	English		Robert Dickinson (Dickinson adapted pilgrim's accounts of miracles on the Camino de Santiago both from the Codex Calixtinus and accounts from throughout the pilgrimage's history)[377]	[ɪnkipəz tʃɪt ʌs ði ɪŋglɪʃ stil ðə dɛvɪl weɪts æt ðə sɑɪd ʌv ðə ɹoʊd wi tɹʌst ɪn wɜdz ænd ɹɛmnənts pɹɛɪəz ænd boʊnz wi noʊ ðæt ðə wɜld ɪz ə lɛsən æz ðə kɑvd ʌpɑsəlz ɪn ðə pwɛɾta alta dɪvɑɪdɪŋ ðə dæmd ænd ðə sɛɪvd ɑɾ ə lɛsən wi bit ɑʊə hændz ʌgɛnst ðə wɑlz ʌv hɛvən sɛɪnt ʤuljan ʌv kwɛŋka santa kasilda pɹɛɪ fɔɾ ʌs ɹɪmɛmbə ðə pɪlgɹɪm ɹɑbd ɪn pampləna tʃɪtəd ʌv sɪlvə ðə nɑɪt hɪz wɑɪf dɑɪd ɹɪmɛmbə ðə sʌn ʌv ðə ʤɜmən pɪlgɹɪm hæŋd æz ə θif æt ðə gɛɪts ʌv ðə tɑʊn hæŋd æt ðə wɜd ʌv ən ɪnkipəz dɔtə ɪnkipəz tʃɪt ʌs ði ɪŋglɪʃ stil ðə dɛvɪl weɪts æt ðə sɑɪd ʌv ðə ɹoʊd wi tɹʌst ɪn wɜdz ænd ɹɛmnənts pɹɛɪəz ænd boʊnz]
Santiago Peregrino:	Spanish	St. James Pilgrim		[santjagɔ pɛɾɛgɾinɔ]

[375] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 25-27. This story is inspired by the sixth miracle of St. James accounted in the second book of the Codex Calixtinus.

[376] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 3; Jacobus de Voragine, "The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints," translated by William Granger Ryan, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, 393.

[377] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 16, 2021, 8.

His arm is in England, his jaw in Italy, And yet he works wonders. The widower, the boy on the gallows – He did not fail them.	English		Robert Dickinson	[hɪz ɑm ɪz ɪn ɪŋgləɪnd hɪz dʒɔ ɪn ɪtəlɪ ænd jɛt hi wɜks wʌndəz ðə wɪdoʊə ðə bɔɪ ɑn ðə gælouz hi dɪd nɑt fɛɪl ðɛm]
One given a horse on the road by a stranger, One kept alive for twenty-six days, Unhurt on a gallows for twenty-six days.[378] His jaw is in Italy, yet he speaks. The widower robbed in Pamplona: Told by the Saint how the thief Fell from the roof of a house to his death.[379]	English		Robert Dickinson	[wʌn gɪvən ə hɔs ɑn ðə ɹoʊd bɑɪ ə stɪɛɪndʒə wʌn kɛpt ʌlɑɪv fɔ twɛntɪ sɪks dɛɪz ʌnhɜt ɑn ə gælouz fɔ twɛntɪ sɪks dɛɪz hɪz dʒɔ ɪz ɪn ɪtəlɪ jɛt hi spiks ðə wɪdoʊə ɹɑbd ɪn pamplɔna toʊld bɑɪ ðə sɛɪnt hɑʊ ðə θif fɛl fɪʌm ðə ɾuf ʌv ə hɑʊs tu hɪz dɛθ]
His arm is in England, yet the boy, The pilgrim's son they hanged in Toulouse Was borne on the gallows for twenty-six days And called to his father: Do not mourn, For all this time the Saint has been with me.[380]	English		Robert Dickinson	[hɪz ɑm ɪz ɪn ɪŋgləɪnd jɛt ðə bɔɪ ðə pɪlgɹɪmz sʌn ðɛɪ hæŋd ɪn tuluzə wəz bɔn ɑn ðə gælouz fɔ twɛntɪ sɪks dɛɪz ænd kɑld tu hɪz fɑðə du nɑt mɔn fɔɾ ɔl ðɪs tɑɪm ðə sɛɪnt hæz bin wɪð mi]
O beate Jacobe.	Latin	O blessed St. James	Codex Calixtinus	[ɔ bɛatɛ jɑkɔbɛ]
Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal. We are sick of body, worthy of hell.	English		Robert Dickinson	[ɪnkipəz ʧɪt ʌs ði ɪŋglɪʃ stil wi ɑ sɪk ʌv bɑdɪ wɜðɪ ʌv hɛl]
	English		Robert Dickinson	

[378] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 3. This story of the boy on the gallows is inspired by a miracle of St. James accounted in chapter 5 of the second book in the Codex Calixtinus. In the Codex Calixtinus, the length of time on the gallows is listed as 36 days.

[379] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 25-27. This story is inspired by the sixth miracle of St. James accounted in the second book of the Codex Calixtinus.

[380] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 24. Inspired by the fifth miracle of St. James.

The apostles in the Puerta Alta Have seen a thousand wonders; The stone floor is worn with tears, With ecstasies and lamentations. We beat our hands against the walls of heaven.				[ði ʌpɑsəlz ɪn ðə pwɛrta alta hæv sin ə θɑʊzənd wʌndəz ðə stoʊn flɔəɾ ɪz wɔn wɪð tɪəz wɪð ɛkstəsɪz ænd læməntɛɪʃənz wi bit ɑʊə hændz ʌgɛnst ðə wɑlz ʌv hɛvən]
Santiago Peregrino:	Spanish	St. James Pilgrim		[santjagɔ pɛrɛgrinɔ]
The devil waits in a turn in the wind In a closing door in an empty room. A voice at night, a waking dream.	English		Robert Dickinson	[ðə dɛvɪl wɛɪts ɪn ə tɜn ɪn ðə wɪnd ɪn ə kloʊzɪŋ dɔəɾ ɪn ən ɛmptɪ ɾum ə vɔɪs æt nɑɪt ə wɛɪkɪŋ dɹim]
Traveller, be wary of strangers, Sometimes the Saint takes the form of a pilgrim, Sometimes the devil the form of a saint. Pray to the Saints and the Virgen del Camino, To save you as she saved the man from Lyon Who was tricked on the road by the deceiver, Tricked by the devil in the form of St. James And who killed himself from fear of hell;[381]	English	Virgin of the road	Robert Dickinson	[tɹævələ bi wɛɾɪ ʌv stɹɛɪndʒəz sʌmtɑɪmz ðə sɛɪnt tɛɪks ðə fɔm ʌv ə pɪlgɹɪm sʌmtɑɪmz ðə dɛvɪl ðə fɔm ʌv ə sɛɪnt pɹɛɪ tu ðə sɛɪnts ænd ðə biɾχɛn dɛl kaminɔ tu sɛɪv ju æz ʃi sɛɪvd ðə mæn fɪʌm liõ hu wəz tɪɪkt ɑn ðə ɹoʊd bɑɪ ðə dɪsivə tɪɪkt bɑɪ ðə dɛvɪl ɪn ðə fɔm ʌv sɛɪnt dʒɛɪmz ænd hu kɪld hɪmsɛlf fɪʌm fiəɾ ʌv hɛl]
The devil cried out and claimed his soul. Weeping, his companions prayed. Saint and Virgin heard the prayer And turned his wound into a scar, From mercy they gave the dead man life.[382]	English		Robert Dickinson	[ðə dɛvɪl kɹɑɪd ɑʊt ænd klɛɪmd hɪz soʊl wipɪŋ hɪz kʌmpænjənz pɹɛɪd sɛɪnt ænd vɜdʒɪn hɜd ðə pɹɛə ænd tɜnd hɪz wund ɪntu ə skɑ fɪʌm mɜsɪ ðɛɪ gɛɪv ðə dɛd mæn lɑɪf]

[381] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 45-51. Inspired by the 17th chapter of the second book in the Codex Calixtinus.

[382] Ibid., 50.

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal, We are sick of body, worthy of hell. We beat our hands against the walls of heaven And are not heard. We pray for miracles and are given stories; Bread, and are given stones. We write our sins on parchment To cast upon his shrine In hope they will burn.[383]	English		Robert Dickinson	[ɪnkipəz tʃɪt ʌs ði ɪŋglɪʃ stil wi ɑ sɪk ʌv bɑdɪ wɜðɪ ʌv hɛl wi bit ɑʊə hændz ʌgɛnst ðə wɑlz ʌv hɛvən ænd ɑ nɑt hɜd wi pɹɛɪ fɔ mɪɾəkəlz ænd ɑ gɪvən stɔɾɪz bɹɛd ænd ɑ gɪvən stoʊnz wi ɹɑɪt ɑʊə sɪnz ɑn pɑtʃmənt tu kɑst ʌpɑn hɪz ʃɹɑɪn ɪn hoʊp ðɛɪ wɪl bɜn]
We pray to St. Julian of Cuenca, To St. Amaro the Pilgrim, To Santa Casilda, To San Millan and the Virgin of the Road. We pray to Santiago.	English		Robert Dickinson	[wi pɹɛɪ tu sɛɪnt dʒulɪən ʌv kwɛnka tu sɛɪnt ɑmɑɾɔ ðə pɪlgɹɪm tu sɑnta kɑsɪldɑ tu san mɪlan ænd ðə vɜdʒɪn ʌv ðə ɹoʊd wi pɹɛɪ tu sɑntjɑgɔ]
We know that the world is a lesson As the carved apostles in the Puerta Alta Dividing the damned and the saved are a lesson. We pray the watching saints will help us learn.	English		Robert Dickinson	[wi noʊ ðæt ðə wɜld ɪz ə lɛsən æz ðə kɑvd ʌpɑsəlz ɪn ðə pwɛɾta alta dɪvɑɪdɪŋ ðə dæmd ænd ðə sɛɪvd ɑɾ ə lɛsən wi pɹɛɪ ðə wɑtʃɪŋ sɛɪnts wɪl hɛlp ʌs lɜn]
Ora pro nobis, Jacobe,[384]	Latin	Pray for us, St. James,	Latin litany of the Saints for St. James	[ɔɾɑ pɾɔ nɔbis jɑkɔbɛ]
A finibus terrae ad te clamavi.	Latin	From the end of the Earth I cry to you.	Psalm 60, not 61 as attributed in the CD Liner Notes[385]	[ɑ finibus tɛɾɾɛ ɑd tɛ klɑmɑvi]
Source: All texts, translations, and sources were derived from the liner notes on the Tenebrae *Path of Miracles* CD published by Signum Records in 2005. Further information was gleaned through an interview with Robert Dickinson, who helped to clarify several elements. Additionally, the books *The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James* by Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn and *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela,* by William Melczer were invaluable resources to identify some missing attributions from the CD liner notes. IPA guides of the English, German, Latin, French, and Spanish were edited and adapted from transcriptions through PhoneticSoft https://ipanow.com/, accessed on February 25, 2021.				

[383] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 3; Jacobus de Voragine, "The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints," translated by William Granger Ryan, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, 392. This is inspired by the second chapter of the second book in the Codex Calixtinus, which accounts some of St. James' miracles.

[384] This text is included as part of a chant in the appendix of the Codex Calixtinus, see figure 1.

[385] Psalmi Chapter 60, verse 3, Vulgate.org, accessed on February 25, 2021, https://vulgate.org/ot/psalms_60.htm

Leon Text, Translation, Sources, and IPA Transcription

Appendix B Table 3 Leon Text, Translation, Sources, and IPA Transcription

Text	Language	Poetic English Translation	Source	IPA Transcription
Li soleus qui en moi luist est mes deduis, Et Dieus est mon conduis.	Medieval French	The sun that shines within me is my joy, and God is my guide.	Anonymous 13th Century French Ballade (some anthologies label the poem as Chanson Pieuse)[386]	[li səlœ kɥi ẽ mwɛ lɥi tɛ mɛ dədɥi e djø ɛ mõ kõdɥi][387]
We have walked In Jakobsland: Over river and sheep track, By hospice and hermit's cave.	English and German	Jakobsland is a term used by German pilgrims to describe the Galician region.[388]	Robert Dickinson	[wi hæv wɑkt ɪn ja:kɔpslant oʊvə ɹɪvəɾ ænd ʃɪp tɹæk bɑɪ hɑspɪs ænd hɜmɪts kɛɪv]
We sleep on the earth and dream of the road, We wake to the road and we walk. Wind from the hills Dry as the road, Sun overhead, Too bright for the eye.	English		Robert Dickinson	[wi slip ɑn ði ɜθ ænd dɹim ʌv ðə ɹoʊd wi wɛɪk tu ðə ɹoʊd ænd wi wɑk wɪnd fɹʌm ðə hɪlz dɹɑɪ æz ðə ɹoʊd sʌn oʊvəhɛd tu bɹɑɪt fɔ ði ɑɪ]
Li soleus qui en moi luist est mes deduis, Et Dieus est mon conduis.	Medieval French	The sun that shines within me is my joy, and God is my guide.	Anonymous 13th Century French Ballade (some anthologies label the poem as Chanson pieuse)	[li səlœ kɥi ẽ mwɛ lɥi tɛ mɛ dədɥi e djø ɛ mõ kõdɥi]
Rumours of grace on the road, Of wonders: The miracles of Villasirga, The Virgin in the apple tree. The Apostle on horseback – A journey of days in one night.[389]	English		Robert Dickinson[390]	[ɾumәz ʌv gɹɛɪs ɑn ðə ɹoʊd ʌv wʌndәz ðə mɪɾәkәlz ʌv biʎasiɾɣa ðə vɜdʒɪn ɪn ði æpәl tɹi ði ʌpɑsәl ɑn hɔsbæk ə dʒɜnɪ ʌv dɛɪz ɪn wʌn nɑɪt]

[386] Brian Woledge, "The Penguin Book of French Verse I: To the Fifteenth Century," Baltimore: Penguin Books,1958.

[387] John Austin and Lyn Schenbeck, "Spelling and Pronunciation of Old French," *The Choral Journal,* 37, no. 3 (1996): 33-35, accessed February 27, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23552208.

[388] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 16, 2021, 8.

[389] Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn, "The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James," New York: Italica Press, 20; Jacobus de Voragine, "The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints," translated by William Granger Ryan, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, 392-393. Dickinson adapts this miracle from chapter four of the second book in the Codex Calixtinus. The same miracle is recounted in the *Legenda* by Jacobus de Voragine.

[390] Robert Dickinson, interview by author, January 16, 2021, 8. Dickinson adapted pilgrim's accounts of miracles on the Camino de Santiago throughout the pilgrimage's history.

God knows we have walked In Jakobsland: Through the Gothic Fields, From Castrogeriz to Calzadilla, Calzadilla to Sahagun, Each day the same road, the same sun.	English, German, and Spanish	Jakobsland is a term used by German pilgrims to describe the Galician region.	Robert Dickinson	[gɑd noʊz wi hæv wɑkt ɪn jaːkɔpslant θɾu ðə gɑθɪk fildz fɪʌm kastrɔχɛriθ tu kalzaðiʎa kalzaðiʎa tu saaɣun itʃ dɛɪ ðə sɛɪm ɹoʊd ðə sɛɪm sʌn]
Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Dominum virtutem.	Latin	How admirable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts.	Psalm 84	[kwɑm dilɛktɑ tɑbɛrnɑkulɑ tuɑ dɔminum virtutɛm]
Here is a miracle. That we are here is a miracle. Here daylight gives an image of The heaven promised by His love.	English		Robert Dickinson	[hɪəɾ ɪz ə mɪɾəkəl ðæt wi ɑ hɪəɾ ɪz ə mɪɾəkəl hɪə dɛɪlɑɪt gɪvz ən ɪmədʒ ʌv ðə hɛvən pɹɑmɪst bɑɪ hɪz lʌv]
Beate, qui habitant in domo tua, Domine; In saecula saeculorum laudabant te.	Latin	Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will still be praising be.	Psalm 84	[bɛɑtɛ kwi ɑbitɑnt in dɔmɔ tuɑ dɔminɛ in sɛkulɑ sɛkulɔrum lɑudɑbɑnt tɛ]
We pause, as at the heart of a sun That dazzles and does not burn.	English		Robert Dickinson	[wi pɔz æz æt ðə hɑt ʌv ə sʌn ðæt dæzəlz ænd dʌz nɑt bɜn]

Source: All texts, translations, and sources were derived from the liner notes on the Tenebrae *Path of Miracles* CD published by Signum Records in 2005. Further information was gleaned through an interview with Robert Dickinson, who helped to clarify several elements. Additionally, the books *The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James* by Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn and *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela,* by William Melczer were invaluable resources to identify some missing attributions from the CD liner notes. IPA guides of the English, German, Latin, French, and Spanish were edited and adapted from transcriptions through PhoneticSoft https://ipanow.com/, accessed on February 25, 2021.

Santiago Text, Translation, Sources, and IPA Transcription

Appendix B Table 4. Santiago Text, Translation, Sources, and IPA Transcription

Text	Language	Poetic English Translation	Source	IPA Transcription
The road climbs through changing land. Northern rains fall On the deepening green of the slopes of the valley, Storms break the summer's heat; At Foncebadon a pass can be lost, In one night, to the snow.	English with Spanish locations		Robert Dickinson	[ðə ɹoʊd klaɪmz θɹu tʃɛɪndʒɪŋ lænd nəðən ɹɛɪnz faɫ ɑn ðə dipənɪŋ gɹin ʌv ðə sloʊps ʌv ðə vælɪ stɔmz bɹɛɪk ðə sʌməz hit æt fɔnθɛβaðɔn ə pɑs kæn bi lɑst ɪn wʌn naɪt tu ðə snoʊ]
The road climbs for days through the highlands of Bierzo, to the grassland and rocks of the Valcarce valley. White broom and scrub-oak, Laburnum and gorse Mark the bare hills Beside the road.	English with Spanish locations		Robert Dickinson	[ðə ɹoʊd klaɪmz fɔ dɛɪz θɹu ðə haɪləndz ʌv bjɛɾzɔ tu ðə gɹɑslænd ænd ɹɑks ʌv ðə vælkɑs vælɪ hwɑɪt bɹum ænd skɹʌb oʊk ləbɜnəm ænd gɔs mɑk ðə bɛə hɪlz bɪsɑɪd ðə ɹoʊd]
At O Cebreiro, mountains. The road follows the ridgetop By meadows of fern, by fields of rye.	English with Spanish locations		Robert Dickinson	[æt ɔ θɛβɹɛiɹɔ maʊntənz ðə ɹoʊd faloʊz ðə ɹɪdʒtɑp bɑɪ mɛdoʊz ʌv fɜn bɑɪ fildz ʌv ɹɑɪ]
By Fonfria del Camino, by Triacastela. Towns are shadows The road leaves behind. It moves over the slate hills Palas do Rei. Potomarin. The names are shadows.	English with Spanish locations		Robert Dickinson	[bɑɪ fɔŋfɹja dɛl kaminɔ bɑɪ tɹjakastɛla taʊnz ɑ ʃædoʊz ðə ɹoʊd livz bɪhaɪnd ɪt muvz oʊvə ðə slɛɪt hɪlz palas dɔ ɾɛi pɔtɔmaɹin ðə nɛɪmz ɑ ʃædoʊz]

Then, from the stream at Lavacolla To the foot of Monte de Gozo, A morning; From the foot of Monte de Gozo To the summit of Monte de Gozo The road climbs, Before the longed-for final descent To Santiago.	English with Spanish locations		Robert Dickinson	[ðɛn fɪʌm ðə stɪim æt laβakɔʎa tu ðə fʊt ʌv mɔntɛ dɛ gɔθɔ ə mɔnɪŋ fɪʌm ðə fʊt ʌv mɔntɛ dɛ gɔθɔ tu ðə sʌmɪt ʌv mɔntɛ dɛ gɔθɔ ðə ɹʊʊd klaɪmz bɪfɔə ðə laŋd fɔ faɪnəl dɪsɛnt tu santiago]
Herr Santiagu Grot Sanctiagu Eultreya esuseya Deius aia nos.	Latin	Holy St. James, Great St. James, God helps us now and evermore.	Dum pater familias (Codex Calixtinus)	[hɛɾɾ sɑntiɑgu gɾɔt sɑŋktiɑgu ɛultɾɛiɑ ɛsusɛiɑ dɛjus ɑjɑ nɔs]
Ver redit optatum Cum gaudio, Flore decoratum Purpureo; Aves edunt cantus Quam dulciter, Cantus est amoenus Totaliter.	Latin	Longed-for spring returns, with joy, adorned with shining flowers. The birds sing so sweetly, the woods burst into leaf, there is pleasant song on every side.	Carmina Burana	[vɛɾ ɾɛdit ɔptɑtum kum gɑudiɔ flɔɾɛ dɛkɔɾɑtum puɾpuɾɛɔ ɑvɛs ɛdunt kɑntus kwɑm dultʃitɛɾ kɑntus ɛst ɑmɛnus tɔtɑlitɛɾ]
Jacobo dat parium Omnis mundus gratis Ob cuius remedium Miles pietatis Cunctorum presidium Est ad vota satis.	Latin	The whole world freely gives thanks to James; through his sacrifice, he, the warrior of godliness, is a great defense to all through their prayers.	Dum pater familias (Codex Calixtinus)	[jɑkɔbɔ dɑt pɑɾium ɔmnis mundus gɾɑtis ɔb kujus ɾɛmɛdium milɛs piɛtatis kuŋktɔɾum pɾɛsidium ɛst ɑd vɔtɑ sɑtis]
O beate Jacobe Virtus nostra vere Nobis hostes remove Tuos ac tuere Ac devotos adibe Nos tibi placere	Latin	O blessed James, truly our strength, take our enemies from us and protect your people, and cause us, your faithful servants, to please you.	Dum pater familias (Codex Calixtinus)	[ɔ bɛɑtɛ jɑkɔbɛ viɾtus nɔstɾɑ vɛɾɛ nɔbis ɔstɛs ɾɛmɔvɛ tuɔs ɑk tuɛɾɛ ɑk dɛvɔtɔs ɑdibɛ nɔs tibi plɑtʃɛɾɛ]

Jacobo propicio Veniam speramus Et quas ex obsequio Merito debemus Patri tam eximio Dignes laudes demus.	Latin	James, let us hope for pardon through your favor, and let us give the worthy praise, which we rightfully owe to so excellent a father.	Dum pater familias (Codex Calixtinus)	[jɑkɔbɔ prɔpitʃiɔ vɛniɑm spɛrɑmus ɛt kwɑs ɛks ɔbsɛkwiɔ mɛritɔ dɛbɛmus pɑtri tɑm ɛgzimiɔ diɲɛs lɑudɛs dɛmus]
At the Western edge of the world We pray for our sins to fall from us As chains from the limbs of penitents.	English		Robert Dickinson	[æt ðə wɛstən ɛdʒ ʌv ðə wɜld wi pɹɛɪ fɔɾ ɑʊə sɪnz tu fɑl fɹʌm ʌs æz tʃɛɪnz fɹʌm ðə lɪmz ʌv pɛnɪtənts]
We have walked out of the lives we had And will return to nothing, if we live, Changed by the journey, face and soul alike.	English		Robert Dickinson	[wi hæv wɑkt ɑʊt ʌv ðə lɑɪvz wi hæd ænd wɪl ɹɪtɜn tu nʌθɪŋ ɪf wi lɪv tʃɛɪndʒd bɑɪ ðə dʒɜnɪ fɛɪs ænd soʊl ʌlɑɪk]
We have walked out of our lives To come to where the walls of heaven Are thin as a curtain, transparent as glass, Where the Apostle spoke the holy words, Where in death he returned, where God is close, Where saints and martyrs mark the road. Santiago, *primus ex apostolis,* Defender of pilgrims, warrior for truth, Take from our backs the burdens of this life,	English and Latin	First of the apostles	Robert Dickinson and Codex Calixtinus	[wi hæv wɑkt ɑʊt ʌv ɑʊə lɑɪvz tu kʌm tu hwɛə ðə wɑlz ʌv hɛvən ɑ θɪn æz ə kɜtən tɹɑnspæɾənt æz glɑs hwɛə ði ʌpɑsəl spoʊk ðə hoʊlɪ wɜdz hwɛəɾ ɪn dɛθ hi ɹɪtɜnd hwɛə gɑd ɪz kloʊs hwɛə sɛɪnts ænd mɑtəz mɑk ðə ɹoʊd sɑntiɑgɔ pɾimus ɛks ɑpɔstɔlis dɪfendəɾ ʌv pɪlgɹɪmz wɔɾɪə fɔ tɹuθ tɛɪk fɹʌm ɑʊə bæks ðə bɜdənz ʌv ðɪs lɑɪf]
What we have done, who we have been; Take them as fire takes the cloth They cast into the sea at Finisterre.	English		Robert Dickinson	[hwʌt wi hæv dʌn hu wi hæv bin tɛɪk ðɛm æz fɑɪə tɛɪks ðə klɑθ ðɛɪ kɑst ɪntu ðə si æt finistɛrrɛ]

Holy St James, great St. James God help us now and evermore.	English		English Translation of the Dum pater familias	[hoʊlɪ sɛɪnt dʒɛɪmz gɹɛɪt sɛɪnt dʒɛɪmz gɑd hɛlp ʌs nɑʊ ænd ɛvəmɔə]
Source: All texts, translations, and sources were derived from the liner notes on the Tenebrae *Path of Miracles* CD published by Signum Records in 2005. Further information was gleaned through an interview with Robert Dickinson, who helped to clarify several elements. Additionally, the books *The Miracles and Translatio of Saint James* by Thomas F. Coffey and Maryjane Dunn and *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela,* by William Melczer were invaluable resources to identify some missing attributions from the CD liner notes. IPA guides of the English, German, Latin, French, and Spanish were edited and adapted from transcriptions through PhoneticSoft https://ipanow.com/, accessed on February 26, 2021.				

APPENDIX C

Joby Talbot Interview Transcript

January 14, 2021

Richard: Well, let me just jump right in. I wanted to start with a broader question; I am curious of how you think of *Path of Miracles*. What genre would you place it in? Would you call it an oratorio, a madrigal-cycle or...?

Joby: It's a good question. I just had this same conundrum with a recent piece I wrote for the Britten Sinfonia Chorus, Britten Sinfonia and two soloists. It's not a religious piece. What is it? Is it a cantata? It is a bit long for cantata. Is it an oratorio? Again, oratorio has some sort of religious overtones, so, no. One of the reviews said it would be better to call it a "choral song symphony." Similarly, I conceived *Path of Miracles* symphonically with its four-movement structure and the way the material develops through it. So, you could call it a symphony of voices maybe? I just think of it as an hour long, a cappella choral work. It's more symphonic, I think, than operatic or oratorio-ic (whatever the adjective for oratorio is) because in no way does it have an aria-recitative structure. But it's not a sequence of songs either, is it? It is four stand-alone movements, and then material from the first movement comes back in the finale. So, yes, as I say, I conceived it symphonically. I was an orchestral player growing up. I was an oboist, and my first love was orchestral music. The great symphonies of the romantic, late romantic, and early modern period, those are the pieces that, if I were to be marooned on a desert island, I would take with me. But somehow, I've ended up writing choral music and ballets and operas. It was never my plan, but yes, I guess I'm always kind of thinking in terms of symphonic meaning in the way I develop material.

Richard: I definitely see that as I've studied the work. Academics love to place things into categories and to define pieces. But that I think a symphony for chorus, or a choral symphony is a great description of Path of Miracles.

Joby: It's a tricky one because everybody wants to compartmentalize things. And you can see why. I just had a conversation earlier on today. I've written a guitar concerto and that's going out soon. And the record label were saying: "oh, could we cut the movements up into smaller ident

chunks?" And they want to chop the first movement up into five different sections. I mean, it's ridiculous, but obviously I bow to their better judgment. The project manager said, it's all about having little sections of music that are very much of a piece emotionally so that they are attractive for the curators of streaming playlists. This is how they have to think now. So, a piece whose point is to take you on an amazing journey, is wildly imaginative and goes here, there, and everywhere, is the last thing that the whole streaming universe is equipped to deal with. When I was writing *Path of Miracles,* I was always trying to think outside the box...trying to think, what conventions can I break? How can I do something unclassifiable? I remember having a conversation with somebody at the time, saying: "I'd love it if, when you get into the record store (when they used to have record stores) you would find my cd's in one place and then also in another place and also another." That shows how naive I was, because, in reality, someone always make a call; and they decide it's going to live in *one* place. So it doesn't matter how unclassifiable something is, they'll always find a way to classify it.

Richard: Well, I want to get back to in a little bit, talking about the breadth of scope in your compositional output. But I'm curious, did composing for Tenebrae and Nigel Short play a part into conceiving *Path of Miracles*? Did it give you opportunities to compose in a way that a lesser ensemble might not have allowed?

Joby: So, they came to me with the idea pretty well formed. I'd written a piece for The King's Singers and I'd met Gabriel Crouch, who was involved in Tenebrae from the very beginning. He was the one who said to Nigel, you need to speak to Joby. Gabriel [Crouch] told me this about them. He said: "they're this new choir and Nigel [Short] has this idea," I don't even know if this is still the Tenebrae way, but he said that, aside from being young and passionate and kind of go-getting and completely incredible, the one specific thing he told me was that Nigel was taking singers who were very much from the classic English choral tradition and then sweetening and boosting that sound with baroque opera singers. Not big, warbly operatic voices, but Handelian operatic voices, buried inside the chorus. And then I went to hear them; they were recording some Taverner for a disc. And Gabriel sort of warned me, he said: "you're going to be blown away by the sound." And sure enough, I was just "oh my god, where do I sign? This is the most beautiful noise I've ever heard." But I didn't really know what I was doing. I hadn't written much for choir before.

And I although I did sing in choirs when I was a kid, it wasn't the major part of my musical education. It [choir] wasn't my "thing." As I say, orchestra was my thing, so I didn't know quite

how much I was asking of them. I'd written for The King's Singers (you know, Nigel is an ex-King's Singer as were quite a few of the others. Adrian Peacock was in the choir at that time, obviously Gabriel himself, Robin Tyson, and other singers who'd sung in The King's Singers)…so I assumed I could write the same way for Tenebrae. Of course my first question was, can they sing rhythmically? You know, the big English amateur-chorus tradition; they can do a lot of things which are great but singing in time is not one of them. I think you guys [Americans] are a little better than us. I mean, English orchestras as well have big problems with rhythm. So, that was my biggest question. When I was writing the first movement and all that…are we going to be able to hear the relationships between the different rhythmic cells? The answer is definitely "yes!" You have to just write what you want to write and what you want to hear. And then, if you're writing for a choir as good as Tenebrae, you have to assume that they'll somehow be able to do it. But I have to say, never before or since have I had such an absolutely consummately, perfect set of performances and a recording of a piece. I mean, it's every bit as good as I possibly could have imagined, which never happens.

Richard: And pretty remarkable for, like you said, just your second choral work, to have that experience. That's pretty fabulous.

Joby: I know, it was all downhill from there.

Richard: Well, I wouldn't say that! You talked about "rhythmic cells." What is your process when composing a movement of Path of Miracles, for example? Do you start with rhythmic cells or do you start with the big formal structure? Do you start with the text?

Joby: Well, the text and the formal structure were kind of part of the same process. The way that we put the text together was this: Gabriel was already in touch with an academic at King's College, London, called Jack Sage, who was an expert on medieval Spain, particularly to do with the Camino. And he basically just dug out lots of extant bits of codices and whatnot that have anything to do with the Camino that might have been in any way useful to us. And then I brought on board Robert Dickinson, the poet, and explained how I wanted his poetry to interweave with these old texts. I don't quite remember the order of events, like how much he'd [Dickinson] written before I started. But he gave me a ton of material. And there was a kind of mosaic creative process, where I was taking chunks of text and moving them around the piece, ordering things differently. I had the basic idea of the four movements, and that each movement would be named after a location on the Camino. The original idea for that was at the very start, when

Gabriel and Nigel were first speaking about it. The plan was that they were going to take the choir and do the Camino and perform concerts along the way. They were going to premiere one movement in Roncesvalles and then another one in Burgos and another in Leon. And then finally then do all four movements in Santiago. So, the premiere of the fourth movement would be part of the premiere of the whole thing. But that never happened. In the meantime, I kind of thought I'd just run with the original idea regardless. I went to northern Spain. I visited all these places, and each one had a very specific and different atmosphere about it. And if I could make the first movement somehow a sort of exposition, like a symphonic first movement, and then the second movement could become something of a kind of Dies Irae, you know, like it would be a very sort of angular scherzo in a symphony, and then the third movement could be, like, a sort of balm to that, a sort of Lux Aeterna in Leon. And then we have another more developmental final movement. So, that structure was really the first thing that became clear.

So, think about the first movement. After the Pasiputput comes the whole idea of the dissemination of the word. We hear the lines from the New Testament about the martyrdom of Saint James, first in Greek and then in Latin, and then we see it translated and disseminated. This is an idea I had when I was in Roncesvalles, listening to all the different languages coming my way, and the interaction between all the different pilgrims, and thinking about how the Camino must have felt in the Middle Ages. It was the only opportunity most people would have ever had to actually meet somebody from another village, let alone another country. This wonderful coming together of people and setting aside of prejudice. I wanted to celebrate that in the piece. So, we got all these translations of the relevant lines from the Bible, and I just sequenced them in a way that seemed to be kind of logical and musically satisfying. And then, in the context of the scale of this piece, by time I'd finished that section, I was 10 minutes, 15 minutes in. Because, structurally, it's a big boned piece. The individual elements are large. And I think that was decision number one. When I think I've got like an hour plus to try and create a single entity, there's no point in writing, like, 100 miniatures. You've got to think of something big.

Richard: So that's actually a good segue. Within each movement there are structural sections. Was it the text that was driving the various sections within the movements?

Joby: Yes. You have to forgive me I'm trying to cast my mind back. I didn't actually write the movements in sequence, by the way. I wrote Leon first and then Burgos and then Roncesvalles and then Santiago. I don't know why, but that's what I did. I was, at the time, just scoring my first full length feature movie.

Richard: And that was Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy?

Joby: Yes. And then a second one came along at the same time as well. And these was just, like, the three biggest single things I'd ever been asked to do, all landing at the same time. And also, my father was very ill. So, I was rushing up and down to the hospital and everything, and it was just incredibly intense. When I had a few days to work on *Path of Miracles*, I had to grab it and do it. And I have to say, there's nothing like a little bit of pressure to focus the mind. I had to make a lot of decisions on the hoof. I had to do a lot of prep to make sure that I wasn't going to lose my thread, because there was no time for writing big chunks of music that I then cut. I mean, I think of my writing process now, how much of the music that I write hits the cutting room floor these days; I don't think a single note of *Path of Miracles* hit the cutting room floor. Everything I wrote is in there.

But when I got to the Carmina Burana section in “Santiago,” I was looking back at what I had written so far and was thinking, what have I not yet given people? What surprise can I have up my sleeve? And I realized we hadn't, not since the first movement, had much really muscular, rhythmic, fast writing, and nothing at all in five [the meter]. These are the prosaic ways in which this music gets conceived. You would think it was like I was suddenly struck by some kind of heavenly inspiration. But no, it was simple practicality. And then I looked at the whole folder full of text I had. And I thought, what could be good for that [kind of music]? And of course, the joyousness of the Carmina Burana texts was the answer...even though they don't have very much to do with the pilgrimage.

Also, when I went to Spain and visited these places, I was trying to pinpoint certain events, certain things that happened to me. Certain moments. You know how, when something really kind of striking happens to you and you witness something amazing, whether it's the smell of a flower or some incredible architecture or just, you know, a meal, or a funny joke or whatever it is; there's a flavor to each one of those experiences. And I was trying to kind of isolate separate flavors that I could then apply to these different movements. And the big one for Santiago was, I was standing at the top of the stairs on the west-front, looking over the square. It was pouring with rain (as it always does in Santiago) and a party of French teenagers arrived that had obviously just finished the pilgrimage. And they piled all their backpacks into a huge, great big pyramid in the middle of the square, and then just started dancing around it. It all just unfolded. A few of them chucked their bags down and the others chucked theirs on top; they weren't

planning it. It was just this amazing spontaneous [event]. They all pulled down their hoods, the rain was coming down, and they were just ecstatically jumping around. Then the police arrived, and the police van did a quick circle around them to try and persuade them to calm down a bit. And I just imagined how it must feel for them after all their effort to finally arrive there. That combined with the experience of seeing the original west-front for the first time, with all the however many hundred carved heads of all the saints and everybody looking down on you when you stand at the door, and you suddenly realize that every one of those faces is smiling. There's just this incredibly welcoming, exciting, beautiful [atmosphere]. Yeah. So that's what I was trying to get.

Richard: It's kind of rare to have all those saints smiling. You think of the Cathedral of Notre Dame or...

Joby: Absolutely, they're usually pierced by arrows or being burnt alive or torn limb from limb by sea monsters.

Richard: I'm so glad you shared that anecdote. I remember reading something about that scene with the French pilgrims in a different interview. Since then, I've always associated that story with that dance-like section in the final movement.

Joby: Yeah.

Richard: But I don't think I've seen you admit to that being what the music was about.

Joby: No, I don't think I have. I mean that last movement is sort of the most complicated of the lot. And it is kind of, even now, weird to me how satisfying it is when you get to that final iteration of the material: "Herr Santiagu, Grott Santiagu." And again, I mean, you probably shouldn't admit to these things, I guess, if you're me. But I don't know if it was always my intention to revisit that music. I mean, I knew I was going to reach a climax. I seem to remember thinking, OK, well, now I'm working towards the climax. I kind of have some kind of idea what it is. But musically, what exactly is it then? Going back and looking at what I'd written, and then, of course! Of course, it's this moment from the first movement that needs to be reprised.

Richard It's one of my favorite moments in the piece.

Joby: Mine too. I still haven't done the Camino myself but I've talked to a lot of people who have. The whole idea of the Burgos movement is that, after your initial burst of energy at the beginning, you get to a point where the blisters are now really beginning to hurt, and you really are absolutely knackered, and you were wondering what on earth you were ever thinking of embarking on this. And then apparently the next step is that then you get into some kind of zone where it becomes more meditative and you kind of forget about those things and you just get into a rhythm and you go, which is what the third movement is all about. And then I think with the fourth movement, it's not that I was thinking specifically: "they have now reached their destination, hurray!" It's more like a sort of tumbling kind of cascade of images and things that I saw when I was there. And, hopefully, an overarching idea of the end of a journey and the beginning of a new journey with the with the epilogue to Finisterre.

Richard: That idea of tumbling images makes me curious. I've heard you say before that you love writing music that tells stories, which is why you've been drawn to film-music and ballet. This is an epic story that *Path of Miracles* is telling. And so, I'm curious: how much text painting actually plays a role when you're composing?

Joby: Quite a lot, I think. I mean, you have to. You're constantly asking yourself the question: why am I bothering to set this to music? Why isn't this text just spoken? This is the reason I've actually written, I think, so few songs. It's very rare for me to come across a poem that I feel needs to be set to music. If I like it enough to like it, usually it's because it works as a [spoken] poem. So, I'm always thinking I've got to bring something else to the party. I mean, it's no good just being prosaic. So, yes, if there's any opportunity to try and do some word painting, I'll take it. Also, I'm constantly thinking about the natural rhythm of the words and thinking about it in two ways: one is how best to deliver the text so that it's audible and you capture the rhythm and control of the beauty of the words, but also then thinking about how can you do the opposite? How can you go against the natural rhythm of the words to create a tension? Because, especially in choral music, something that might sound ridiculous if it was sung by a solo singer can make complete sense when it's in the context of a choral thing.

I suppose the main thing in writing a piece of this magnitude that's simply for singers, pretty much, is to try and build the accompaniment into the vocal writing so that we don't feel we're listening to an untethered solo passage. "The orchestra, unfortunately, got stuck on the freeway." So, building these rhythmic cells, these ostinati, out of words…finding little chunks of phrase that can be repeated or where they're rhythmically similar enough and you can apply repetitive

rhythmic patterns to them to just kind of give the piece a motor to speed it along, where appropriate, of course. But where it does happen, that's the way I was making it work.

Richard: Would you talk about your rhythmic motors? Many people unfairly attribute anything with repetitive rhythms as an example of minimalism. That being said, there are other elements of your music that some people might classify as minimalism or post-minimalism. Do you feel that those terms have a place when discussing your music?

Joby: I read something, some article the other day which described me as a neo-romantic. I don't even know what that is! And I remember having a conversation with somebody who came to it [*Path of Miracles*]…Tenebrae did *Path of Miracles* in Chicago a couple of years ago and Chicago Opera Theater were doing my opera, *Everest* the same week. And there's 15 years or something between those two pieces. But somebody who came and enjoyed both pieces, said they "never would have guessed that they were both by the same composer," which was a little dispiriting. I would hope that I have some kind of personal stamp on these things! Especially, because *Everest* has a ton of choral writing, it's not as complicated as the choral writing in *Path of Miracles*, but it's one of my maybe three big choral pieces. I don't know; *Path of Miracles* certainly has got those repetitive rhythmic things that you do find in the music of the great minimalist composers. At the time, I did listen to a lot of John Adams and Steve Reich, Phillip Glass, Michael Nyman, and previously I'd studied briefly with Louis Andriessen. I guess I was trying to use some of those techniques because they're there, because they exist, because they're available to us, because they function well, and then apply a level of emotion and a sort of emotional breadth of expression and sense of humanity to it. Since you mentioned it, it makes me think that, just as there's often a tension within the rhythm of the words, the rhythm of the words and the rhythm of the music also often share a tense kind of relationship. I'll do things like having half the choir singing in three, with the other half the choir in four. Having these cells or these phrase lengths that work against each other. It all creates tension. And, I guess, using very clinical, almost sterile, mathematical ostinati and then playing that against very expressive harmonies and great big, long, cantabile vocal lines, creates an interesting kind of push and pull, and a dynamic which generates energy which propels the piece forward.

Richard: Absolutely. When you describe those rhythmic cells with a sweeping melodic line, I'm reminded of John Adams, who you know, kind of broke from the original minimalists in that in that he broke from the strict processes that Reich, Riley and others were using and added some more "traditional" compositional elements like broad sweeping melodic lines.

Joby: Yeah, and more and more. I mean, you've eventually sort of left minimalism so far behind that, you wonder. The whole minimalist thing, I think was…I mean, I graduated from high school in 1989, so, it existed and it was a big thing whilst I was in school during the 80s. I think that was when it really spread from being this little niche thing to being a very important movement in music. But it was still quite hermetically sealed. Before John Adams came along, as you say, it was very much something that didn't really cross over into the wider classical music world. And I guess I was lucky to emerge at a point in time where that was not controversial and not forbidden somehow.

Richard I was just going to just going to ask. For many years if you were studying composition you were studying serialism, and if you weren't doing that you weren't a "serious composer." Did you feel liberation from that mindset when you were studying composition? Had people started to break that trend?

Joby: To an extent, I think. I think we were lagging a little bit behind you guys [Americans], as usual, and it wasn't *such* an OK thing to do. I was thinking of this the other day. My son is studying composition now at the Royal Academy of Music. He's 18 and he cannot even begin to fathom the fact that the orthodoxy was that thing. That the 12-tone serial, post-Boulez thing was the orthodoxy. I don't think there's an argument to say that that music doesn't deserve a hearing, doesn't deserve a place in the history of music. But the fact that it became the orthodoxy is just downright *weird*. And rather unfortunate, I think, that it *became* the orthodoxy at the exact moment when the dissemination of music through recordings became big, big, big business, and possible on a global scale. We're looking at record sales going from a few hundred subscribers in the 1920s to millions and millions and millions of people in the nineteen fifties. It's rather unfortunate that classical music decided, at that very moment, to basically decide that it was going to be the most impenetrable and hardest to understand music that has ever been written. So that was a bit of a bad call, I feel. And we're still kind of dealing with the fallout from that, I think. But anyway, by the time I went to university to earn a music degree at the University of London, and then I went and did a postgraduate composition masters at the Guildhall School of Music…I was lucky to study with some really great composers, particularly my main teacher, Brian Elias, who is still one of my very closest friends and the person I looked to for guidance more than anyone else; and he's a fully paid up, 12-tone serial composer. And he came to [the premiere of] *Path of Miracles* and he was very supportive of it. I'm not sure he quite understood what I was trying to do, but I reached a point right about the time I left the Guildhall, where I

suddenly thought, oh, you know what? I'm no longer writing for my teachers. I'm no longer writing for the other composers in the course to, you know, stroke their beards and say how clever you are. I'm actually now writing for, well…I suddenly thought maybe I'm writing for me. Maybe I want to write music that *I* want to listen to. And maybe, I'm not looking for anybody else's approbation. If I was sitting in the front row at the premier of *Path of Miracles* at St. Bartholomew the Great, what would I want to hear? That's kind of been my kind of touchstone ever since; just to try and write something that I feel that I would like to listen to.

Richard: Isn't that the artist's journey? As you know, you spend years studying and studying and then finding your own voice is an important step.

Joby: I always say to students: You go to college to learn. Do what they tell you to do. They say write a crab canon, write a crab canon. If they say to write them some piece of serialism, write some serialism. You're only going to learn. It doesn't mean that's your voice. And only when you finish with education, really, then it's time to take stock. You think: Well, everything I've learned, what I am I going to do with it? And I reached that point in about 1995. And I wrote *Path of Miracles* not that long afterwards. So, it took me, what, 10 years to get from the place where I started trying to write the music I actually wanted to hear, to writing *Path of Miracles.* That seems about right, I think. Ten years to actually do something good.

Richard: You're spoke about the American minimalists, but others have pointed out some connections between your music and the music of Arvo Pärt or Tavener or others that might be classified as the "spiritual minimalists" of Europe. Do you do you think that your music was influenced by that tradition or falls into that tradition?

Joby: Certainly I don't think most of my music does, no. I mean, whether *Path of Miracles* does or not, I could see it as an argument for saying it does. Most of the Arvo Pärt I knew was the instrumental music, particularly the early symphonies. And then Tavener… again, I mean, I remember hearing *The Protecting Veil* when it was done at the Proms for the first time. I'd been so blown away and I'd heard some of his choral music, but I didn't really know it very well. So, in no way was I copying (I know you're not suggesting this)…but I did have in my mind, you know, that amazing crunchy chord from the beginning of *Passio* when I was writing *Path of Miracles*. And I did go to a performance of Tavener's *Veil of the Temple* when it was done at the Proms just before I started writing *Path of Miracles.* Tavener's a composer I admired, I'd met him briefly, and we had the same publisher. Of course, I admired him hugely. But I had no real desire

to sit through nine hours of the *Veil of the Temple*. But when I was asked to do *Path of Miracles*, I saw they were doing it at the Proms in a sort of cut down version; It was only like three or four hours or something. So, I thought I would go and just try to learn, just see what Tavener did with these big forms. And I wasn't expecting to like it. I was faintly dreading it. And of course, I was just absolutely blown away. And the one thing I learned from that was about the bigness of the structure. That more than really any other genre, you can take your time letting ideas unfold, just to see how a thought can last for 20 minutes in the world of choral music without it overstaying its welcome.

Richard: And we see that in the way that you slowly develop your material in *Path of Miracles.* As I look at it, it seems like you are constantly playing with texture and layering of material. Is that true?

Joby: Yes, that's true. It's definitely that sense of layering. When I write these days, I invariably use the computer at some point. Writing ballets, you know, I have to share everything with the choreographer...And in movies everyone is so used to hearing mockups of stuff now that you kind of *have* to do that. But when I was doing *Path of Miracles*, I didn't use the computer at all for Leon and Burgos. I wrote them just at the piano onto short score and then into long score. But, with the first moment, I wanted [to audition] those big rhythmic sections where it's all about these contrapuntal rhythms. I wanted to kind of just try them out on a very basic kind of crappy piano sound. Just program them into the computer and see how they felt. Then once you start along that path [with the computer], layering stuff becomes really easy to do. Maybe too easy. It's actually stopping yourself that's the hard thing once you get into that. So those motoric rhythmic cell sections, you know, there is a layering up of things, one on top of the other. It just is sort of thrilling, isn't it? It’s like a big machine with all these different cogs, all different sizes, all kind of working together. I mean, a piece like that for me growing up that I loved was the fast movement from Shostakovich's 10th Symphony, where he has the same tune playing at two or three different speeds simultaneously, and just suddenly you feel like you're being run over by combine harvester. Suddenly there's this massive machine bearing down on you. It's so amazing. It sounds like an infinite number of things coming at you at once, but actually it's just a few. Basically, if you can push the complexity of what you're doing to the limits of what's actually intelligible, then you are taking people to a very special place. But the step beyond that can lead to confusion, and, even worse, risk boring the audience, so you don’t want to go that far. But if you can take them just as far as is about knowable, then that's an exciting place to be.

Richard: This kind of comes back to what I was alluding to earlier. How much are you relying on your intuition to know when to break that cycle? When to break that process of development? Is that constantly at the forefront of your mind?

Joby: Yeah, I think so. I mean, obviously the big thing anyone who's ever tried to write music will know, the big problem, is the mismatch between how long the music takes to write and how long it takes to perform. You've been working on something for three months and you've poured everything into it; your life story and the life story of everybody you ever met. And then you then you play it back and it's only like two minutes long and it's completely unintelligible. So pacing is the hardest and most important thing to get right. I mean, I have written so many big pieces since doing *Path of Miracles*. I don't know whether it's related to the success of the piece or not. But I've been asked to write tons of long-form pieces: three-act ballets or two-act operas or a big, long pieces of orchestral music. Pacing and structure are the hardest things of all. And actually, the single hardest thing for me is even more basic: just fixing the tempo. Because when you're working on something, I always find that the more I work on a section, the faster my perception of the music becomes, because I'm basically getting tired of it, I guess. [For example], you've written a passage of music you're happy with and now you're focusing on the next bit. When you're reading back through it, you're not concerned with the section that's finished, so you rush through that, and focus on the new bit. But then you realize, it's started to become a different piece of music. You're now composing the next section to the wrong piece. You have to be constantly coming back to the actual speed of the piece, and by extension the rate of the unfolding of the musical argument, without that becoming unmoored. That is, I think, the single hardest thing. So that element is always at the forefront of my mind there for sure.

Richard: Changing tacks here a little bit. In *Path of Miracles*, you talked about how you and Robert Dickinson used all these different documents, including the Codex Calixtinus, for text inspiration and telling the story. I'm curious, did you use any direct musical quotes from any of those documents?

Joby: No musical quotes. No, I didn't even know that [it contained music]. I just knew those texts.

Richard: Yes, it's interesting because it's a 12th century document, but It included songs for the Pilgrims to sing along the way. Some of the first notated polyphony that we have is included in the Codex Calixtinus.

Joby: Well, I should have known that, but no. Jack gave the text to Robert first and then Robert sent me Jack's texts or the ones that he felt were appropriate and the load of his texts. Some of which were specifically written for a specific part of the piece and some of which wasn't. And then I kind of took it from there. When I asked Robert to be involved, I asked him whether he would be OK with me having some sort of creative control over how the text unfolded, and he was very good about it without losing ownership of it. He was really collegiate, and it was a really great experience collaborating with him on it. I didn't really hugely know what these texts were. I mean, maybe roughly, but not mostly specifically.

When Tenebrae did it for the first time, they did these bits of plainsong between the movements. But that was really to try and give the choir a break and allow them to get back in position for the next movement because it was so mobile. Some of those might have been taken from Codex Calixtinus, I don't know. But yeah, it was interesting to me how the plainsong functioned within the piece. I never intended there to be any music interpolated between the movements. But it was sort of surprising how successful that was when they did it that way.

Richard: That is a great segue to my next question, which is about the movement or staging in *Path of Miracles.* There's this broader trend going on in choral music, what some people are calling "choral theater," which is incorporating movement, maybe some set design, some staging. I know that the Westminster Choir College recently did a fully memorized staged version of *Path of Miracles*. I was just curious if you could describe your reaction to that trend and how it applies to *Path of Miracles*.

Joby: I didn't see that but I was in touch with the conductor [Dr. Joe Miller] and I hear it went very well. And I love the idea of the choir having memorized it, because that was always the plan with Tenebrae. And Nigel, every time I see him, he talks about how he still hopes that one day they'll be able to do it from memory. And then I believe somebody has been doing it with dance; I heard some friends of mine went to San Francisco and heard a choir do it there and there were dancers as well.

Richard: Yes, you're referring to the ODC Dance company.

Joby: What do I think about all that? Well, I mean, anything that can make it an exciting and valid experience is great. As I said, I used to sing in choirs when I was a kid. And then as an

oboist, I spent an awful lot of my life playing in scratch orchestras accompanying amateur choirs in various interminable oratorios. The number of hours I spent counting bars of rests in the *Messiah* or *The Creation* (you know they love all that here in England). As an oboist, you get a lot of work playing for those, and Bach etc. So, I have to say, it wouldn't necessarily be my idea of how to spend a Saturday night given the choice. And so, I was thinking about an hour long unaccompanied choral piece. If somebody said to me: “what are you doing Thursday? There’s this hour long unaccompanied choral piece…” Oh, I'd love to, but unfortunately... I'm gouging my eyes out. I was very much thinking, what would I *not* want to see? And I knew that what I really didn't want to see was a bunch of not wildly pleasant looking human beings shuffle out on stage, adjust their glasses and pick up the music and start singing "la la la la la," and then we have to sit there for an hour in concert lighting and nothing happening. I thought, well, I'll try and do the absolute opposite. And so, I had this idea. Well, that's where the idea of doing the Pasiputput at the beginning came from. Having no one on stage at the beginning and then the men coming out of the shadows, we don't even realize if the concert has started or not. We hear this noise. Is that music? What is that like a truck reversing? And they finally meet and convene in the center of the space and they're not looking at us. They're looking at each other and then when the high voices come in…when we did it originally in London, they [the sopranos and altos] were on a gallery above and step forward [when they joined the tenors and basses]. Nobody had any idea they were there. It scared the living bejesus out of everybody. I thought, yeah, if I can do something like that, like a grand theatrical gesture at the beginning of the piece, then hopefully, if it works, I've got the audience engaged and then we can *go* somewhere together. Because that's what I wanted to do. Any piece I would write would want to take people on a journey. But it's so specific with *Path of Miracles* because it's about a pilgrimage that we *really* want to take people on a journey.

Initially the idea was, as I say, to do it in these different locations in northern Spain on the Camino route itself. And then when we realized that City of London Festival were going to premiere it, they were then talking about moving to different locations in the City of London. There are these incredible performance spaces there, churches and guild halls and various things. Maybe some of it was going to be outdoors, and the audience was going to move around between venues. Finally, we came to the conclusion that it was just going to break the piece up so much that it would lose everything that it needed to be a single integrated experience. So, instead of the audience moving, it's the choir that move.

With that in mind, I then wrote quite specifically how I wanted them to move for Leon, and then for the other movements I just had rough suggestions for what happens at the beginning and what happens at the end. I love that element of the piece. I just think that anything that we can do to make the classical concert going experience something that's just as thrilling as going to a movie or going to a pop concert or whatever, is good. The days when it was enough for us to expect a rather penitential experience, sit in a slightly uncomfortable seat in a drafty church and just stare fixedly forward while something static unfolded over however many hours, are kind of behind us. We have to try to find exciting ways to get people to turn Netflix off and go out of the house and attend a concert. So, all power to those people who are thinking outside the box with these crazy new choirs coming in that can do anything and perform on their heads whilst being chased by a wolf or whatever. Good.

Richard: I do actually have one question that I hope you'll consider responding to. It is a rather sensitive topic...do you see any possible issues of cultural appropriation with the utilization of the Pasiputput inspired opening to *Path of Miracles*? Or perhaps, how have you addressed the issue of cultural appropriation in the opening to *Path of Miracles*?

Joby: The experience of first hearing a Bunun choir singing the Pasiputput ritual was one of the formative moments of my musical life. I had no idea the human voice could sound like that, nor did I realize that music could have such a profound, visceral effect on the listener. When I learned of the cultural significance of the music and the intention behind its traditional performance, I was even more moved. My decision to open Path of Miracles with my own stylized reaction to the original folk song was as much to do with the meaning of the ritual as it is to do with the sound of it. Path of Miracles is about the coming together of peoples with a common purpose. It's about a universal faith in the redemptive power of love and shared experience. The Pasiputput feels to me to be an especially pure and direct expression of that faith. I've always been entirely candid about where the idea for the opening glissando came from. Indeed, part of my reason for wanting to include it was to share my enthusiasm for the extraordinary and beautiful choral tradition of the aboriginal Taiwanese. I hope that their music has reached a wider audience as a result. I hope that people don't consider me guilty of cultural appropriation. My intention was never to steal, but to celebrate and revere.

Richard: It's been almost 16 years since *Path of Miracles* premiered, and it's really developed this life of its own. It's been performed by many ensembles across the world. It has a second recording from Conspirare with Craig Hella Johnson from Texas. Do you view it differently today than you did back then? Is there anything left that you feel needs to be said about it?

Joby: Well, I think it's the single the piece I'm most proud of. If somebody said: "show us one thing you've done that you're really proud of," it would be *Path of Miracles*. I've had huge success with other things that I also love. But there's something about this piece. Maybe because it was the first piece where I really felt I'd reached a place with my writing where I thought, I see now why I have devoted my entire life to this.

The piece personally means a lot to me because it was written at a very intense emotionally important part of my life. I had a young child, I lost my father, and my whole working life was sort of exploding out. It means a lot to me, but then conversely, and almost more gratifyingly, is the fact that, as you say, it now has a life of its own; how it's really nothing to do with me anymore. Stravinsky said when you finish a piece, you send it out into the world and it's no longer anything to do with you. It's like a balloon that flies off; you let go of the string and that's the end of that. And so it is. It's gone. So, when I hear ensembles do it (whether it's choirs like Tenebrae who I've heard do it so many times before or new choirs) I'm just an audience member now. My idea of sitting there trying to imagine how I would feel if I was sitting in the front row listening to it has come true, because now I am just sitting in the front row listening to it. And then the conductor will look at me expectantly and I'll be like, "oh, oh, oh, oh yeah. That was very good, mm maybe a little quieter there." You know, try and make it seem like it was worthwhile inviting me. But basically, I'm just listening like anybody else would at this stage. Of course I know it better than most other people. Although not necessarily better than everyone. I think there're some people who know it probably better than I do now.

I just…I mean, I really, really, really, really do love it. It's hard to say that without sounding, you know, insufferably arrogant and smug, and it's not that at all. It's like I, I really can't quite say how it came into being. And I try not to look at it too hard because it would be possibly not very helpful in regard to moving forward. You can't just luxuriate in the glory of your past achievements. You've got to try and move on to do something even better. But there are things that happen in *Path of Miracles* where I just don't know where they came from. I don't know how I did that. And I'm very glad I did. And the reason I'm really glad I did is because I just think it's

a really lovely piece. And again, I don't, in the context of your dissertation, I don't know how useful it is to know this. But I write music because I love music. I love making music and being involved with people who make music, but mostly I write it because it's like a love letter to the world and people and humanity and nature. And if you can create something, somehow, that has an innate beauty and integrity, when in the hands of amazing choirs like Tenebrae, Conspirare, or whoever, then…it's just a very, very, very good feeling.

APPENDIX D

Robert Dickinson Interview Transcript

January 26, 2021

Richard S Carrick: Well, thank you for taking the time to let me interview you. I think it's really going to provide great context to this dissertation. I was curious; have you done an interview with anybody else writing an academic document about *Path of Miracles?*

Robert Dickinson: I haven't done any interviews, but a few years ago I was contacted by an M.A. student at Trinity College, who was doing a dissertation on this same piece. And she just wanted some background information from me. And it was again, questions about what sources.

Richard S Carrick: The libretto is so brilliantly weaved together that, sometimes, you have to really question: "Where's this text from?"

Robert Dickinson: Yes. I mean, I'm looking at it. I haven't actually looked at the text for a few years, again. So, coming back to it after all this time and to look at it I think: "Well, where did I get that from?" The way I worked on it was to simply acquire a mass of material or a lot of material and sift through and find elements that I thought would work as a in a kind of narrative that way and piece them together, so there are things woven in from all different elements.

Richard S Carrick: I know that Joby Talbot approached you to ask you to be a part of this project. Can you tell me more about how that came to be?

Robert Dickinson: The first I heard of it was when I came home from work and found an answer-phone message from somebody from the poetry society saying a composer has been trying to contact me to collaborate on a piece. I called them back. Now, he'd had to contact me through the poetry society because he hadn't remembered my name or address, or he didn't have my contact details. I don't if he [Joby] told you the story of how he found a poem of mine?

Richard S Carrick: He did not tell me that, no.

Robert Dickinson: Back in late 90s, one of my poems won a prize in England; a national poetry prize that came third was published in one of those Sunday newspapers. He told me he'd seen this poem in his newspaper and liked it enough to sort of cut it out and keep it. He did eventually lose it. Originally the collaboration for *Path of Miracles* was supposed to be with another poet, but that fell through for other reasons. And he [Joby Talbot] thought, as a backup: "who was the person who wrote that poem that I liked that I read all those years ago which I no longer have a copy of?" Fortunately, the poetry society, which is an organization that arranges readings, and it organized the competition, was able to name that person. They had my contact details and they brought us together initially.

Richard S Carrick: That's pretty serendipitous how that all happened. I'm sure he nor anybody else could imagine anybody else doing the job, so, that's fabulous. So, you didn't have a relationship prior?

Robert Dickinson: No, it was out of the blue, and entirely as a result of this project.

Richard S Carrick: That's wonderful and a great story. Have you worked together at all since *Path of Miracles?*

Robert Dickinson: Afterwards, he said he would be happy to work cooperating again if something came up. And a few years after *Path of Miracles*, there was a faint suggestion for an opera commission, but that seemed to have fell by the wayside.

Richard S Carrick: Well, I would love to see another project in the works at some point. When he told you about the the idea for the project, how familiar were you with the Camino de Santiago? How comfortable are you with all the languages? Could you tell me about any reservations you might have had or excitement you might have had?

Robert Dickinson: I was excited. I knew a little about the pilgrimage because I had a very slight, non-academic, interest in medieval history. So, I was aware of it as an important event and as an important part, for a brief for a period of medieval life, and the importance of pilgrimages generally. And an abiding interest in the nature of religious belief. And so, I had these things already to bring to it and I had some languages; I can read French and Spanish reasonably well, and a bit of liturgical Latin that I have picked up en-route.

Richard S Carrick: Had you written poetry specifically for music before *Path of Miracles*?

Robert Dickinson: No, not at all, this was a first for me. So, when I talked to Joby about it, he was very helpful, and he told me what things he required. He already had a fairly strong idea of how the piece would be structured, and what the mood would be between the different pieces. He also gave me some fairly, what might strike you being more familiar with choral music and singing is, obvious advice: just avoid sibilants. You have to take a different tone, because writing for chorus you can't use irony in quite the same way that you might with a poem that is meant to be read as if it's being spoken by single voice. It meant a kind of chastening at the start. You had to think in a slightly different way when it comes to writing music.

Richard S Carrick: Joby was telling me a little bit about how you would go back and forth in the process; you would send him material and then he would assemble it, as he called it, like a mosaic of putting things together.

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: Can you tell me more about how that all happened? What was your perspective on all of that? Was that a fun collaboration to do that kind of thing?

Robert Dickinson: It was. I mean, it also was a source of anxiety because you're always concerned that you're going to produce something that he'll just say: "no that's not good enough" or "that's not what I wanted." But we had the initial discussion which set the tone for each of the movements. Joby may have told you about how he had actually seen some of the cathedrals along the route, which I hadn't at this stage, and so he wanted each movement to reflect the kind of emotional impact that these cathedrals had on him. And so, Roncesvalles was always going to be about the gathering together; the origin of it, as it were, of the story. And Burgos was dark and oppressive, he felt. And so that was supposed to be about some of the terrors and the fears of the road. And a piece that, I always subsequently thought of it almost like one of his kind of Mahlerian Scherzos. And Leon was going to be the more, almost sunlit, because of the nature of Leon Cathedral itself, which is much brighter. And, after that, we had a brief discussion; we did establish that we would have the biblical quotation to begin with [in Roncesvalles], so we have this quote from the gospel, which is then in different languages; that it was going to be a polyglot piece was established pretty early very early on.

Richard S Carrick: Joby told me that the scholar, Jack Sage, had sent you a bunch of material. How much material were given? Were you sent anything that didn't end up making it into the final libretto?

Robert Dickinson: It's a curious thing; I am sure I was sent some documents, but I can't remember the scope. I was certainly sent some, but I was also looking in other sources as well. I was going through *The Golden Legend*, for instance and also looking further afield. I was doing a lot of reading around medieval literature that wasn't specific to the pilgrimage. It becomes apparent later on, because I quote things from medieval texts that have nothing to do with the pilgrimage to Santiago, such as the French ballade that gets quoted in the Leon section.

Richard S Carrick: I would love to dive more into that.

Robert Dickinson: And that was included because it was a poem I came across… it's not a particularly obscure poem. It's in a couple of anthologies of medieval French poetry. It's a much-anthologized piece, in its way. And what happened with that was, I sent Joby a copy of this poem and a translation of it and said: "is this something that we could weave in?" And he chose a very small section of it because it seemed to fit the mood.

Richard S Carrick: And that is that and "Li soleus qui en moi luist est me deduis, Et Dieus est mon conduis?"

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: And this is obviously old French right?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, it's old French.

Richard S Carrick: And I know it is anonymous, but "ballade" is the form of the poem it comes from?

Robert Dickinson: Yes

Richard S Carrick: And you found that in your own reading of French poetry?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, just in an anthology of medieval verse. Something about the tone of it and the light, the references to the sun, I felt this at least chimes in with what we were talking about for Leon. What portion of this could be used? And, if I had sort of find justification using texts outside; Joby told us accounts of pilgrims arriving at Santiago and bursting into song. There is an account of the square outside the cathedral was being a cacophony of people singing in their own languages. And I figured this would be a song brought from outside, it was the same logic that led me to include an extract from the Carmina Burana in the last movement.

Richard S Carrick: Did you bring the Carmina Burana text to the table?

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: So, it wasn't just Jack Sage sending you resources, you were clearly doing lots of your own reading.

Robert Dickinson: Yes, I was reading around as well; partly to get a feel for it and partly to see if there's anything there I could use. And I felt I could justify it simply because the pilgrimage group were going to be people from all over the world, all over Europe at the time. And so, I felt like, with justice, it will be an appropriate reflection of the pilgrimage to have these extraneous these, outlandish, as it were, pieces in there as well.

Richard S Carrick: I guess that's a nice segue into the question about the languages, all of the languages that are that are found throughout the entire libretto. Particularly in the first movement, was there a specific reasoning for the order of the languages?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, the idea I had was that it would simply reflect the word the spreading out of the story, so you have the Greek Gospel, Latin Gospel, then you have the Spanish and Basque then in French, English, German.

Richard S Carrick: So, you were thinking of it as, from the first time that it was written in the Greek and then the church adopting Latin and then, maybe that since the pilgrimage starts in Spain, Spanish?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, it was that sort of idea. And also, it sets the tone for what's to come, because you get the mixture of languages. We both agreed to it early on, and it would be a mix of languages.

Richard S Carrick: Might this be a good time to walk through the libretto? I'm curious just to hear your impressions of it and I'm hopeful to glean little bits of information here and there. We already talked about in Roncesvalles the *Dum Pater Familias* text. How did you stumble upon that?

Robert Dickinson: It was among the documents that Jack Sage sent me. Also, I had read a couple of books about the pilgrimage and it's generally quoted; it was one of the recurring texts referred to in various other sources.

Richard S Carrick: All right, after we hear the biblical texts, we move to: "Herod rots on a borrowed throne." Can you tell me about tell me about this section of text?

Robert Dickinson: I looked at different ways of, because he [Joby Talbot] wanted a narrative element in this is to tell the story, as it were, of how it was James came to be in Santiago. After a few stabs at it, I came up with a style that approximated a kind of ballade without being in a ballade meter. It reads almost like a translation of a ballade.

Richard S Carrick: And this is the first of your own poetry in *Path of Miracles*?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, this is.

Richard S Carrick: As we keep going, I would love to hear more of any of the formal structure in your poetry.

Robert Dickinson: Generally, the form is quite loose because it's being written to be sung by voices and the music is going to provide the pulse and a lot of the meter. I did, at one point, ask if Joby wanted it really in any particular meter or form and he said: "just make it beautiful."

Richard S Carrick: No pressure! "Just make it beautiful." Well, I think you succeeded. Within your poetry, you use some Latin as well. For example, the "*ad extremis terrarum"* within that same stanza of poetry.

Robert Dickinson: Yes, again just to mix the languages and also, I felt it gave the line a good cadence.

Richard S Carrick: Is a lot of this movement is inspired by *The Golden Legend?*

Robert Dickinson: Yes. I've got a French translation of it, which I was consulting, but it is available in [many languages]. I think there are some old English translations out there somewhere, and the Latin text, if you want to go that route is available. But I was working from a slightly less academic French translation.

Richard S Carrick: A bit later there is the text: *"abandonnant à la Providence la soin de la sepulture."* Do you remember where that's from?

Robert Dickinson: That might actually be a bit of me adapting the French from *The Golden Legend.*

Richard S Carrick: So, your memory is that's your poetry as well, just an adaptation of the French?

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: So, you can see my struggle here, as I try to piece this all together!

Robert Dickinson: Yes, it's a real kind of macaronic text.

Richard S Carrick: Do you remember the origins of the next set of Latin text?

Robert Dickinson: I'm no longer sure, I'm sorry! I had a number of texts that I had in front of me continuously while I was working on this. I could look into it; I've still got notes and it might even have some old computer files for it.

Richard S Carrick: Is there anything you want to say about the first movement's text that we haven't talked about already?

Robert Dickinson: No, I think we've covered most of it.

Richard S Carrick: I think the Burgos text is so beautiful. Having researched the Codex Calixtinus, this text seems to really captures the perils of the of the journey. What inspired you for this text?

Robert Dickinson: Some of the Codex Calixtinus and I'd read numerous accounts and a couple of histories of the of the passage, and there were some stories that stood out and some I wanted to include. So, I wanted to bring them in. As we've discussed, with Joby, this was going to be the darker movement. This was going to be the one about the nightmares and fears of the road and it would express it with the darker more despairing side of medieval belief. I wanted to find a way that would bring different stories in, but without telling the stories in full; almost alluding to them. As if they are stories that the listeners should know already.

Richard S Carrick: Right, like there are these wisps of legends of the Camino.

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: Can you tell me more about what you mean by "the despairing side of medieval belief?"

Robert Dickinson: I think it was the sense of peril that I was trying to put across. It would have been felt far more immediately than we would feel it, I suspect. And not just physical peril, but moral peril and spiritual peril. The sense that the devil was present and omnipresent and close at hand.

Richard S Carrick: I hadn't, oddly, thought about that. I had read stories about bandits robbing pilgrims, horses dying at certain watering holes. So, you were reading a bunch of different texts; are all of the stories based off of something you read, or did you invent any yourself?

Robert Dickinson: The stories are all based on stories from the road, as it were.

Richard S Carrick: At the very end, we have a quotation from the Psalms. But is the rest of this movement all your poetry?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, this is the one movement that is mostly or almost entirely mine, apart from the quotation from Psalms and that and the *O beate Jacobe,* and the little fragments of Latin.

Richard S Carrick: Where are the Latin fragments from?

Robert Dickinson: That's from one of the Latin texts associated specifically with the pilgrimage. [They are like an] interjection, a kind of prayer, that's not quite completed.

Richard S Carrick: So, these interjections are perhaps representing religious people from the time, saying these constant prayers on the road as a way to keep them safe?

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: Would you like to say anything else about this movement?

Robert Dickinson: No, I think all I wanted was my intention with that was to create a text that would embody the darker side of it.

Richard S Carrick: Thank you for your insights here. It will be really helpful for many conductors going forward. That brings us to Leon, and we already talked about the French ballade that that opens it and comes back throughout. And then we have: “We have walked in Jakobsland.” This form is also loose here?

Robert Dickinson: It's quite loosened. I only wanted to suggest a kind of blissed-out exhaustion. My idea for this movement was that it would be the part where the worst of it is over, in a way.

Richard S Carrick: Have you walked the Camino before or since you wrote this?

Robert Dickinson: Since, I have walked part of it, but not until after the piece had actually been performed. It was partly to see a couple of performances performed by Tenebrae in places along the way.

Richard S Carrick: Did you have other experiences to draw from to express that “blissed out exhaustion,” or was it just something you imagined?

Robert Dickinson: It was something that I imagined. Also, I didn't just read medieval accounts of the pilgrimage, because I wasn't able to go there myself at the time. I was reading lots of other more recent accounts. And also reading and trying to imagine what it would have been like. There would be a point where, I felt, you would reach this state…And it also fit in with the original model that Leon would be an airier movement than the kind of dark and depressive Burgos.

Richard S Carrick: Can you tell me about “Jakobsland?” What is “Jakobsland?”

Robert Dickinson: Yes, it was the name given to the place by German pilgrims, and I thought it just sounded good.

Richard S Carrick: Referring to the Galicia region in general?

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: The next section: “Rumors of grace on the road, /Of wonders; The miracles of Villasirga, / The Virgin in the apple tree.” You're referencing a lot of miracles. Were these all based off of texts you read as well?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, these are all actual stories, and they're the counterparts to the stories in Burgos, in that they're not told in full. But these are the happy stories, as it were. The stories of sightings of the virgin.

Richard S Carrick: Are any of these stories directly connected to the previous stories? Or were they just separate stories?

Robert Dickinson: No, they’re separate stories.

Richard S Carrick: Next, you quote Psalm 84 and then kind of alternate between your own poetry and the Psalm 84. I'm so curious about the last line in Leon: “We pause, as at the heart of a sun/ That dazzles and does not burn.” Was there anything specific that inspired this?

Robert Dickinson: That was meant to invoke the experience of being in the cathedral [of Leon] during the day. And Leon cathedral was notable because it had larger windows than others. I think it's the second largest in Europe for a cathedral, and [it’s known] to be a very bright place. It was written to evoke something that sense.

Richard Carrick: I can imagine entering that cathedral several hundred years ago, during the day, and you've been walking for hundreds of miles, maybe you are sunburned and weary. And here you arrive in this beautiful space, enjoying the light, and that would be this miracle. Is there anything else you’d like to say about the text in Leon?

Robert Dickinson: The only thing is that it was Joby’s decision to use the two lines of that French ballade as a refrain. The text I sent him was originally just the poem itself with the quotations from the Psalms. But I also sent him the poem [the French ballade] separately and said: “could this be used?” And he took the two lines and then wove them through.

Richard S Carrick: Alright, well we move on to Santiago. Having not done the Camino yourself at this point, were you reading more descriptions of pilgrims coming into Santiago?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, and I remember Joby's own account of when he went there and saw a group of pilgrims arrive in the square, put down their rucksacks, and start dancing for sheer joy of being there. That was that was a story I remembered it and it chimed with some of the medieval accounts of the pilgrims just gathering there and celebrating their arrival.

Richard S Carrick: You give descriptions of the actual locations in this movement. You speak of Bierzo and the Valcarce valley. Were you looking at maps and other sources?

Robert Dickinson: I was looking at maps, reading travelers accounts, and also looking at outside sources just to get some idea of what the terrain was like; what the plants are like, to some extent.

Richard S Carrick: It is very descriptive. You can feel the excitement building as they're getting closer to the end. Even the fact that it *is* descriptive shows that. Earlier, in that "blissed out exhaustion," one tends to not really noticing anything around. Now, realizing where they are, the pilgrims start taking in their surroundings as they near the end of their journey.

Robert Dickinson: Yes, absolutely. The thing I wanted to get at was a sense of building towards something and a sense of eagerness. As if they were ticking off the last place names on the route before they get there.

Richard S Carrick: So much of the language that you write is enjoyable to read to speak and to sing. I love the line: "The longed-for final descent To Santiago." While that's not exactly easy to say, it is enjoyable. Can you tell me about including lines that are not easy to speak or sing, but once you practice are enjoyable? Was that on your mind at all?

Robert Dickinson: I tried to keep in mind that they would have to be sung, and they'd have to be sung by multiple voices; that's a whole different quality to it. So, to some extent it did change the way I would write, normally. The verse for it, although it's not written in a strict meter, I did want that particular last line to run like that. Because I wanted to put off, as it were, for longer…it feels like a slightly longer line than the others, because I wanted to delay, as it were, the final appearance of "Santiago," at the end of the line.

Richard S Carrick: And it seems like you really set that up with a couple of lines before: "Then from the stream at Lavacolla/ To the foot of Monte de Gozo,/ A Morning;"

Robert Dickinson: That's the whole thing starting to slow down.

Richard S Carrick: It is clear here that the form of the poetry is changing, and you're providing that that pause. After that section, we have the Pilgrim's Hymn, and then the Carmina Burana text comes in. For the first time, after the Carmina Burana text, we have the rest of the Dum Pater Familias text: "Jacobo dat parium /Omnis mundus gratis, etc."

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: Did you and Joby collaborate on that idea or was that your idea?

Robert Dickinson: I think we decided we were always going to use that text somewhere, but it's actual place there was, I think, my idea.

Richard S Carrick: It helps with the arc the piece, because we've had this "pilgrim's hymn" idea, and now it's being fulfilled. I think it represents their journey coming to a conclusion.

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard Carrick: Then we get to the epilogue. "At the western edge of the world," we get back to your text. There is a very spiritual nature of this last of this last bit of your poetry. For example, "Where the walls of heaven are thin as a curtain, transparent as glass." I would just love to hear you pontificate on this.

Robert Dickinson: I'm not myself a religious believer, but I've tried to put myself in this position of how the belief felt for them. I was trying to put this as a kind of a communal expression of faith. I think that's how they would have seen the world. I've tried to put, as best I could, an expression of that.

Richard S Carrick: One of the things that I admire about this too is that the Camino de Santiago is traditionally a religious journey, but over the centuries it has transcended that. There are many non-religious people that walk the Camino.

Robert Dickinson: Yes.

Richard S Carrick: I think there's something about the text that is more universal. I'm sure all of us can remember moments where we've felt closer to God, or the goodness of humanity, or simply when everything seems right in the world. In the libretto, it is clear that you're in this holy place. You've experienced this journey and you're wrapping it up now with this epilogue going towards the coast.

Robert Dickinson: Yes, they have accomplished the main part of pilgrimage.

Richard S Carrick: And in the medieval era, Finisterre was considered to be the Western most part of the world.

Robert Dickinson: Yes, even the name itself...

Richard S Carrick: Joby sets the final line, "Holy St James, great St James, God help us now, and evermore" in this repeated manner. It continues and evaporates into nothing, as if the journey is continuing forever. Did you speak about that idea musically with him, or did he just take the text and run with it?

Robert Dickinson: I think it took the word and ran with it. He wanted to have a kind of coda at the end which would be slightly different in tone. And that was the text that I came up with. But that it would end in quite the way it did, that was that's entirely down to Joby.

Richard S Carrick: I forgot to ask, a few stanzas earlier you include the Latin: “primus ex apostolis.” Can you tell me about that?

Robert Dickinson: Yes, it was just a phrase that I’d seen associated with him [St James] and dropped it again, as much for the texture of this verse.

Richard S Carrick: Before we go, are there any grand impressions that you want to leave us with?

Robert Dickinson: I'll just say this working on this was one of the most extraordinary events I’ve been involved with. I remember when I first started work on a piece, I listened to the Tenebrae choir. I had no idea what they sounded like, so I listened to recordings of the choir and I listened to recordings of some of Joby’s music and tried to triangulate them. And even that didn’t prepare me for when I heard them at the first rehearsal. I went into London and a church called Saint Andrews by the Wardrobe in London, and it was just astonishing.

Richard S Carrick: How long did you work on this project?

Robert Dickinson: Something under a year. It was about a year, I think. I would email him things, he would email back once in a while, we would actually meet and talk. There was only one occasion where he phoned me to say he was setting a movement the words didn't quite fit the rhythm that he was setting it to. [He asked] “could I make a change?” I was able to just reverse a couple of word order little bit and it fit it.

Richard S Carrick: Joby mentioned that he doesn't think “a single note that he wrote hit the cutting room floor,” as he described it. Do you feel the same?

Robert Dickinson: There were ideas I suggested and at one point I had an idea that perhaps adding sections, rather than having these collective voices speaking throughout, have something individual voices at some point, for solos. That that didn't work so that that was rejected.

APPENDIX E

Gabriel Crouch Interview Transcript

February 16, 2021

Richard Carrick: Welcome, Gabriel! My first question is: How did you meet Joby Talbot?

Gabriel Crouch: So, I was actually in the King's Singers at the time, this would have been 2002-2003, and we were looking for a long list of composers to commission for a King's Singer's concert in the Royal Albert Hall, which marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Queen's Golden Jubilee, which was 2003. So, the King's Singers commissioned him in 2002 to write a piece which was called "The Wishing Tree." There is something interesting about this commission model, because we paired up eight composers and eight poets and said, get together and write something quizzical, penetrating, affirmative or even critical of contemporary life. Something which is a little snapshot of this 50th anniversary of the queen's coronation.

And this is what they [Joby Talbot] came up with. I absolutely love the piece, the group loved the piece, and even more importantly, Nigel Short (who had been my colleague up until 2001 when he left the King's Singers) was listening to the concert on the radio, and he phoned me up immediately to say: "Loved the concert, but I really loved the Joby Talbot piece." That's how I met him. I met him in the process of commissioning that piece. You know, we just met up for coffee and I said, this is the idea. Are you keen? At the time he wasn't really a choral composer, in fact he wasn't at all a choral composer. I think I knew him from a chamber suite that he'd written called *The Dying Swan*, which I really, really like.

Richard Carrick: That turned into the ballet *Fool's Paradise*, is that correct?

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, that's right. I'd spoken [with] the guy who was the director of the Proms Festival at the time, his name is Nick Kenyon. He and I had a conversation about Joby's music, and I knew the Divine Comedy, the rock band that he was in. I was, and I still am, really into the idea of seeing what non-choral composers do when given a choir to work with. I think exciting things happen. And I can remember having conversations with Joby about what a voice expects and needs. And I would say, well, obviously respect the parameters of the human voice, but don't get to hung up on it, actually. I think the success here will be in partly assimilating knowledge of the voice, but also laying quite demanding expectations on the voice as well.

Richard Carrick: You hear that in “The Wishing Tree.” I love that recording that you all made. But as is true for much of Talbot's music, it's hard to describe that piece.

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, I know. I also think that piece asks questions of six singers. You know, looking at that piece, listening to that piece, it really did feel like it had a kind of instrumental, almost symphonic quality to it. It was almost as if the one thing I would love to have had to bring to the party would have been a bunch more voices. I think that's why (It was a long time ago so I

can't swear to all these things) I can remember talking to Nigel about creating that sort of symphonic texture [for *Path of Miracles*]. About asking Joby to think of every voice as a separate instrument and to write a score, like a real vertically imposing score, even if it is only for 17 voices.

Richard Carrick: You talked about the symphonic nature. Joby has talked about his group Billiard Man, where he described creating five-minute symphonies for band. I feel like "The Wishing Tree" is similar, a five-minute symphony for choir. And then when we get to Path of Miracles, it's very symphonic as well: it has a four-movement structure, Joby refers to the second movement as a scherzo, and then the third is described as a Lux Aeterna, and then the fourth movement as being a recapitulatory, like the final movement of a symphony. It is almost Mahlerian in the way like it expands on all the ideas.

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah. I mean, the second movement, if it's a scherzo, it's a pretty bleak scherzo. I've heard Joby describe it as a Dies Irae as well. I get that too. But I think you can, you can lift and transplant all those ideas into a sort of into a chronology of an expedition, of a human endeavor, and the stages that you go through when you undertake something that's that massive. First euphoria and the feeling of optimism and then a sense of the burden of what you've taken on and the fact that you're less than halfway through it. Then gradually a sort of hypnotic quality; a sense that one foot will continue to follow the other and you'll barely even notice. Somehow you are being transported. Then at the end, with the finish line in sight, the essential need to party.

Richard Carrick: I'm a long-distance runner and have been for most of my life. Running marathons, there's something about miles 5 through 12 that feel just awful. Then Miles 12 through 22 kind of just happen (the final four miles are often brutal). But I also love the way that Talbot paces, especially the fourth movement, when, right after they climb the mountain, the "Pilgrim's Hymn" returns in D-major in a piano dynamic, before the party starts. And I just think that's brilliantly descriptive of the pilgrim journey. It takes a while to build back up to the party. You're exhausted and you need this moment of reflection and introspection before you burst into song.

Gabriel Crouch: I know, that's how I see it. I can remember describing it that way in the notes. That's how it's always felt to me. I think the fact that the D-major chord you speak of is a second inversion chord; it kind of levitates for a moment. It does, it just sort of sits motionless. In the context of so much going on, that is quite magical, isn't it?

Richard Carrick: Jumping back, the King's Singers had commissioned a bunch of different composers and poets, so was the initial idea with Path of Miracles to do something similar?

Gabriel Crouch: Yes, that's right. I felt that this story had four movements and that there were four staging posts. I think that we always had those four movements in mind, but we were going to have four composers and four writers. I'd been working a lot with the English writer Andrew Motion. He was actually the poet laureate at the time. A very, very fine English poet and really thoughtful writer. I really admired him. Amongst other things, he wrote a biography of the Lambert Family, which includes Constant Lambert, the composer. He's a not very well-known

Edwardian English composer. His name hasn't really reached this country. But it's a very interesting piece of writing. The biography was wonderful, and I really admired him for that. So, I approached that with enthusiasm and as a fan, and I can remember really clearly Andrew, quite belatedly, writing me a letter. He wrote so beautifully; his turn of phrase is so wonderful. And I remember him writing me this letter and explaining to me that he felt "fatally divorced from the subject matter." In other words, he didn't want to be involved in a project which had, at its heart, a kind of spiritual notion. Even though I was impressing on him the fact that we didn't want this to be an overtly Catholic piece. We wanted this to be a human piece. I remember that he said, "I feel fatally divorced on the subject matter," which was an incredibly nice way of saying he wasn't interested, and so we felt slightly on our own at that point. It was around that time when Joby started to flex his muscle a little bit, in a way that I was incredibly grateful for. I mean, he was basically saying, "Why are you faffing around trying to find other composers when I'm sitting here wanting to write the whole thing?" Then challenging us to trust him. So, I took that to Nigel and, I think I said, “yeah, I think we could go with this.” The mindset at this time is driven by fear of commissions that you've experienced in the past. I've been part of a lot of musical commissions and, honestly, the number of commissions that really turn out to be successful is well under 50 percent. Think about all of the commissioned music and how much of it is only heard once. Sometimes that's not the fault of the music at all. But, still, we felt like the law of averages meant that it would be safer for us to commission a sequence of pieces in the hope that one of them would turn out to be brilliant.

Richard Carrick: Was there fear that Talbot's only significant choral piece at that time was "The Wishing Tree?"

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, we were taking a risk, but at the same time, I have to say that Nigel and I and Joby were meeting a lot. We were talking a lot about this. I can remember getting to know Joby's general artistic world really well at the time. [I was] spending a lot of time at his house and just loving the way that he was talking about the project. Nigel as well, the three of us were just getting on really well. It really did feel like we were onto something. That Joby was onto something and that we should really trust him. He was incredibly passionate about the idea right from the very beginning. Especially so after I took him to watch a Tenebrae recording session. This was in the Temple Church and they were recording some Tavener. And I must say, they were bringing the walls down with their singing, it was amazing. I wasn't in the group at the time.

Richard Carrick: Joby recounted that story to me. I think he said, "where do I sign?"

Gabriel Crouch: Right! I've got to say, this was a composer who was really, really fired up by this idea. It did feel like some kind of magical alchemic process was happening. At the point where he went: "You know, why don't you just trust me to write the whole piece?" I have to admit, it did make a lot of sense. Nigel and I started to think, “well, what are we worrying about?” And that turned out, gosh, I don't know how the future's going to look back on this piece, but someone said that it's the first choral masterpiece of the 21st century. And I do see it that way. I feel incredibly proud to have been involved.

Richard Carrick: I feel that way, too. Do you remember who said that?

Gabriel Crouch: It's one of the early reviewers. You probably know the rather miserable story of how the piece was premiered; what happened to the premiere and why the piece got a bit lost in 2005?

Richard Carrick: I actually don't know that story.

Gabriel Crouch: Basically, our co-commissioners for the project were the City of London Festival, which now doesn't exist but at the time it was a very, very major classical music festival in London. And they put in a considerable amount of money into the commission alongside the late Barbara Pollock, who was the person who did more than anyone else to get Tenebrae off the ground. Barbara passed away a few years ago.

Richard Carrick: She's credited in the program notes.

Gabriel Crouch: She's a huge part of this, as well. So, yes, the City of London Festival. Again, those planning meetings had been really exciting as well. I can remember repeated meetings with Nigel, myself, and Kathryn McDowell (who was the director of the festival at the time, she now runs the London Symphony Orchestra). Really exciting stuff. They agreed to bring in Ceri Sherlock, who sort of choreographed those first performances. We had two performances in a day lined up and it was going to be in Saint Bart's, which is the only medieval church in London. A really atmospheric venue. These premiere concerts were going to be a huge deal [with] lots and lots of press. And then those, July the 7th was it, bombings? The bombings on the buses happened.

Richard Carrick: That's right.

Gabriel Crouch: This was an extraordinary time in London because the day before we'd just found out that the 2012 Olympics were coming to London. So, the night before, London was this huge party. Then at 9:00 a.m. the next morning all these bombs started going off on buses. I was on a bus at the time

Richard Carrick: That was the morning of the premiere?

Gabriel Crouch: I can't remember if it was the morning of or the morning before. But I know I was on a bus and I was heading to rehearsal. All of a sudden, the bus driver's like, "everybody off, everybody off the bus," and that was it. The concerts were cancelled, everything in London was cancelled for a few days, and then we had these rather muted rescheduled premieres for the piece. We still got full houses and they still went wonderfully well, but we just didn't get any press. And without any press, it's difficult to get a buzz.

Richard Carrick: Not to mention that, surely, there must have been a weird atmosphere in the city.

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, there was a there was a feeling of resilience. We were in the city of London, and that was where that's where these bombs went off and we were in a church. I might

be remembering this correctly...I think there might have been a decision taken that there wouldn't be applause. They were certainly quite thoughtful, solemn, muted occasions, but there was a lot resolve in the air as well.

Richard Carrick: You were talking about the difficulty to generate a buzz around the piece. I first heard the recording, I think, in 2009, just through word of mouth. Somebody told me about it, and I went and bought it. It seems like it was around that time that things started to take off with the peace. Did you feel that too, like it took about five years or so?

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, I paid close attention to how it was going down in America. I mean, I'm not a huge networker, any way by nature. I get fairly locked in on whatever it is I'm doing. But I was making a bit of an effort to spread the word in the States. Certainly, all my students knew it. I was teaching in Indiana at the time and I was teaching excerpts from it for my conducting classes. So, my students got to know the piece pretty well and fell in love with it. That certainly happened. I was aware of when the first American performances were happening. There was one in New York which I think Joby may have crossed the Atlantic to go to. I can also remember being contacted by somebody, I think in British Columbia, by a lady who has a choir in Vancouver. We had a really good, long conversation about the piece, and that was the first time someone reached out to me to talk in depth about the piece. And then, suddenly, in 2010, it seemed to go all over the country. Conspirare made their recording, and The Crossing performed it, and then good amateur choirs started to take it on and started to realize that student choirs can do this piece. You might need to hire Glenn Miller or someone like him to come take care of one or two parts. I have been moonlighting as a guest workshopper and rehearser [sic] for the Schola Cantorum at Yale, at the Institute of Sacred Music there, and they hired me to come and rehearse it with their choir, in 2016. That same year I decided I was going to take my choir, The Glee Club from Princeton, to Spain, so I taught them the last movement and we did that. And then Westminster [Choir College] did it the following year as well. I have a few ex-students who sing in a choir in Washington, D.C., and they did it. People aren't afraid of it anymore. They've worked out that it is actually approachable, and what a joy that is. What a joy. The piece is absolutely an astonishing piece like nothing else. The way that my students have responded to singing is like no other piece I've done with them.

Richard Carrick: I really do believe that history will look very favorably on it. I think it's going to be around for many, many years. I wanted to back up. Did you come up with the titles for the movements? Was that already established before working with Joby?

Gabriel Crouch: That it would be Roncesvalles, Burgos, Leon, and Santiago?

Richard Carrick: Yes.

Gabriel Crouch: I think so. I think we decided on the four staging posts and that we would ask for composers. You know, I can't say that I'm entirely reliable on this, but I think that the idea of looking at the pilgrimage route was Nigel's. I say that because Nigel has always really been into choral music and journeys. The idea of geographical locations and choral music. He's always been obsessed with the River Rhine, as well, and wanted to do a huge choral piece about the Rhine, about the languages that the River Rhine travels through. I know that. So, this is really in

his wheelhouse as a subject matter. So, I think the idea to do a piece about the pilgrimage route was probably Nigel's. But then from there on, I was the one doing the hard yards in the library, as it were. So, I suspect that it was my idea for the four movements. But it's not a particularly important idea in the grand scheme of things.

Richard Carrick: Could we move to talking about your hard work in the library? Joby told me about Jack Sage sending a bunch of material to Robert Dickinson. In speaking with Robert, it became clear that Robert was doing a lot of research himself. Could you elaborate on the creation of the libretto?

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah. Jack Sage was the loveliest man. What a gentleman he was. Jack, I knew from the King's Singers. He was a longstanding collaborator for the King singers. He was the authoritative voice that helped the group put together projects related to the Spanish renaissance. He particularly helped me, because I curated a King's Singers recording called Firewater in collaboration with a harpist called Andrew Lawrence King. Andrew and I did all the legwork for putting that together. But Jack Sage was the academic who provided the authoritative voice. You know, what are the appropriate musical bedfellows for this? What are the influences on this? A lot of the Spanish music, this is a kind of music called an ensalada, so it's literary a mixed salad. It contains all of these ingredients. And I can remember Jack was supplying all of these medieval musical ingredients and teaching me about them. And so, I already had this kind of position at Jack's feet, learning about medieval and early Renaissance Spanish music. And so, he was the obvious person to go to as a first port of call looking for the right source material for a project like this. I knew about the existence of the Codex Calixtinus, but the content, the application of it, none of that really was readily available on the internet. So, I needed Jack badly.

I would say that by the time Robert [Dickinson] came into the picture, (and it was Joby who found Robert, not me), I very quickly got the impression that Robert knew what he was doing. I mean, really knew the subject matter. And what he didn't know, he really knew how to research. So, I actually didn't I didn't interact with Robert at all, hardly. Joby was working really happily with him. He seemed to really know what he was doing. So, if Jack Sage and Robert were working together, that's great. I can't honestly remember whether I did an awful lot to put them together. But I did an awful lot of stuff with Jack early on and brought Jack's knowledge into Joby's world. But Joby then brought Robert in, and Robert was a very capable academic himself, as it struck me.

Richard Carrick: There's the "Pilgrims Hymn" text that's taken from the from the *Dum Pater Familias.* Joby mentioned that he didn't quote any of the music from the Codex Calixtinus directly in the score, but he did say that at the premiere Tenebrae performed plainsong between the movements. Was any of that taken from the Codex Calixtinus?

Gabriel Crouch: Oh yeah, all of it. And we always do that in Tenebrae. One of the things we always do is, between the third and fourth movements, (because by the end of the third movement we're always in some weird location as far as possible from the stage) we need some music to get us back to the stage. But everything we sang was from the Codex [Calixtinus]. It was from that part of the Codex, which is basically the kind of Pilgrim's handbook.

Richard Carrick: Maybe this would be a good time to talk about the movement [staging] aspects of *Path of Miracles,* and how Tenebrae has adapted them for various performance spaces. Is there a model you follow for staging? Or do you adapt it or constantly change it?

Gabriel Crouch: We have a model in Tenebrae that we like to adhere to. Basically, we begin the piece off stage and there's a significance to the distance between the audience and the singers; it's a sort of "rising sun" moment in a way. We try to create a sense of oriens, a sense of slowly unwrapping sound and light in the far distance. That's what the tenor and bass opening is about. And so, it will be off stage but we won't be behind the audience. We will be as far away from the audience as we possibly can, as far behind the stage as we can be. That's the normal way of thinking.

Richard Carrick: Do you attempt to quiet the audience down before you begin, or is it kind of an organic process?

Gabriel Crouch: You can normally manipulate that situation with lights. In a cathedral setting, we would be as far east as possible.

Richard Carrick: Representing Roncesvalles?

Gabriel Crouch: Exactly. So, we'll be in the furthest east corner of the building that we can possibly be, and that's where the sound will start from. And, hopefully, the upper voices (who are about to sing those inversions of Herr Santiago) they will be at the other end of the building. We'll all be unseeable, but hopefully in a spot where through a medium (the conductor) we can kind of coordinate. That all has to be reckoned with. So, we start with the tenors and bases as far east as possible, and Nigel is with us. One of the singers who has perfect pitch will guide the upward progression [of the Pasiputput]. The crucial fact is that once someone has reached a B, they will then give a signal that they have reached a B and that everyone should coalesce around that pitch. Once we're absolutely there (when I'm singing, it's my job but there's always someone who can do it) the tenors will slide up from that to the to the octave above it, and then that will show the Sopranos what their B is that they then have to pitch their inversion upon.

Richard Carrick: Very cool.

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, it is. It's I mean it is a very, very arresting opening to the piece.

Richard Carrick: Talk about grabbing an audience's attention. So, just to clarify, when a bass with perfect pitch reaches the ninth above where you started, they stop and give a visual cue saying "We're there." That takes the pressure off of the conductor from having to count half-steps or anything.

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, none of that. We don't tend to rise in half-steps. We just sit in, try to find overtones within fourths and fifths, and we just sort of sit in there and then just kind of push a little. Just push, twist a little bit, breathe, go back down to the bottom of our voices, and then just kind of slide back into those overtones, those fourths and fifths overtones, and then just push a

little more and then breathe, go back down. So, it's constantly pushing, going back for air, pushing a little more. And everyone's doing this in a random way so that you hear these kinds of uncoordinated but thoughtful, gradual, rising to the pitch. It has nothing to do with half steps, really.

I don't know how long the opening Pasiputput is on the recording, but I can tell you that, in in my original cut of it, it was more than twice as long. So, Nigel cut it down and down and down (and he was absolutely right to do so). Perhaps it's four minutes now? It is still quite long. I think it might have been nine minutes in its original. That's how slowly the pitch raised.

Richard Carrick: Do you [Tenebrae] extend it to be that long in live performance?

Gabriel Crouch: I don't know. I mean, we're not conscious of the time at all, to be honest. I suspect it can vary wildly depending on the acoustic. It's so important; how comfortable are we in the spot that we're in? If the building is helping us to create those overtones, then we can just revel in them and sit in them for a little bit longer. But if the building is not giving any help, it does become quite painful and there's a bit of anxiety. And when there's anxiety in in the room, the urge to get to that B quickly so that we can find some safety is probably a bit stronger. So, I don't know for sure, but I would imagine that the time it takes varies quite significantly from venue to venue.

Richard Carrick: Say you didn't have anybody in your choir with perfect pitch, would you recommend using a tuning fork just to keep checking in [on the pitch]?

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, but it would be very, very hard to hear if you're standing in the middle of that. There's so much metal in the sound. Sometimes it's just deafening to be part of it because the overtone series is just exploding your ears. So, I don't know how I would hear a tuning fork. That's a question you should ask Nigel. Nigel's pitch is very, very good, but I don't think he would claim to have perfect pitch. Perhaps he's been in a performance where there was someone without it? It's hard to imagine. I mean, normally when I'm singing in Tenebrae about a quarter of the choir has perfect pitch. That's even true in my non music-major undergraduate choirs; a whole bunch of them have perfect pitch.

Richard Carrick: Did you bring anybody in that was an expert in Pasiputput, from the Bunun tribe? Or did you rely on recordings?

Gabriel Crouch: Obviously, if this piece had been written and premiered in 2020, we definitely would have done, honestly. I don't think people were thinking with so much...Back in those days, that kind of cultural vampirism (as it would be seen now as because it is) was seen as virtuous…to explore another mode of singing. I certainly didn't put the thought in to continue to honor the tradition in the way that I absolutely would now. So, no. I think it's probably worth saying that Joby makes the conscious link [to the Bunun people]. He got the idea from hearing the Pasiputput. We now call it the Pasiputput because we love it. We love the connection. I think it's probably dangerous to think of this as a rendering of a Pasiputput, in that sense. I don't know how Joby would want to characterize it. Those questions of honoring, in terms of tradition, I think it would hit me in a different way now. And maybe that's a stone that should be turned over

again by future choirs doing it. This is a very, very important part of our art making now, so let's not shy away from it.

Richard Carrick: So, we were talking about the staging. Where we left off, you were talking about how you started in the far east corner of the church and the Sopranos and altos as far away as possible from the tenors and basses. Could you continue to describe the movement throughout the piece?

Gabriel Crouch: The idea is that over that opening eight minutes, or whatever it is, as these antiphonal groups of musicians gradually come together. For the start of the B-Section, I guess we can it: "Eodem autore tempore misit Herodes..." [m. 54 in Roncesvalles] So, the idea is that by the time we get to the end of that section, we're all together. And once the music becomes more systematically metered, we are a choir. Because that's the first time there really is a beat. Albeit an asymmetrical beat, but there is a kind of 7/4 at that point, isn't there?

Richard Carrick: So, you stay as a choir throughout the rest of that movement?

Gabriel Crouch: We do, but various singers disappear. The first big bass solo is in the first movement, isn't it?

Richard Carrick: Yes, "O ajutor omnium" [m. 454]

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, so he's wandered off by that point (that's normally Adrian Peacock) and he would have slipped away from the choir line up by that point, and he'll sing that somewhere else.

For the beginning of the second movement, the Alto's basically disappear. "His army is in England, is his jaw in Italy, his wooden leg somewhere in Winnipeg, and his heart in San Francisco. They're basically dispersed to four separate corners.

Richard Carrick: They're physically representing the dismemberment of St. James, correct?

Gabriel Crouch: Correct, exactly. So that all happens in a sort of splintered way. Then we come back together for the end of the second movement. Then in the third movement the Sopranos disappear to as far north and south, as far left and right as possible, to sing "Li soleus qui'en moi luist," They go off left and right and then they come back and then we all go for "God knows we have walked in Jakobsland" [m.m. 74-79 in Leon]. Once we get to Jakobsland, we go.

Richard Carrick: Sorry, let me make sure that I have that correctly. So, at the beginning of Leon, you have the sopranos in two separate sections of the church creating this antiphonal atmosphere and then and the rest of the choir is center stage?

Gabriel Crouch: That's right.

Richard Carrick: And then when you get to measure 79, "We have walked in Jakobsland" you move?

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, in that slow three we just peel off from the center and walk right down the middle of the nave, right through the audience so that we're breathing on them and we basically get to wherever the back of the audience is. Whether that's the very back of the cathedral or whether it's 50 rows back, we get to the back of them and then we peel again into a two-row arc. And we just sing from there. Because we're in that sort of hypnosis of the journey, so we walk trancelike through the audience to make that experience more visceral. But it's also respectful to the fact that we might be singing this in the Basilica of Saint Louis, or a great basilica space, where being at the front of the audience you experience one thing, being at the back room you experience quite another. It might actually just be really nice for those folks to hear some singing up close. So, we give them a good 10 minutes of the third movement singing right down their backs.

Richard Carrick: And when the tenors, bases, and Alto's process to the back, do the Sopranos then just filter on the side to complete the arc on either side?

Gabriel Crouch: I think we do it in two rows. Basically, the Sopranos, who in Tenebrae they tend to occupy the front, go first and then they peel off into a row. Then the tenors and basses walk through the middle of them, pass them, and then peel off behind them. So, Nigel's facing away from the stage, we're facing towards the stage, and we finish the movement like that. And then once we get to the end, "et Dieus est mon conduis" [m.m. 181-184 in "Leon"], we get to the end of that hanging suspended chord at the end. Then one of the countertenors will launch into plainchant [from the Codex Calixtinus]. That would normally be done antiphonally, so two voices, one answering the other, as we slowly walk back to position. And then it finishes, which will be the G-sharp that we need for "The road climbs through changing land..." [m. 1 of "Santiago"]. So, we're in position and we're in pitch for the for the last movement. You know, for what it's worth, this is a good hour and 10 minutes of singing. At no point will there be any regrouping; we won't pause for another pitch. We will trust ourselves to get through the whole piece on the same note. Which, for a small professional choir, should be perfectly manageable.

Actually, the opening of the fourth movement is very, very hard. The ostinato: "laudabant te laudabante laudabante..." [begins m. 49 in "Santiago"], you know, the bases are now "By Fonfria del Camino," [m. 56] where it's sort of F-sharp minor/D-major kind of feeling, which is pretty jarring considering where we've just been, C#-major. So, there are lots and lots of traps in the last movement. I've got a lovely video of me conducting that piece in Bilbao with my student choir. In the Carmina Burana section in the last movement [begins at m. 201] there's a wonderful bit where the choir is just singing this ostinato "beate Jacobe" [m. 281]. Then the second soprano comes in after this smooth bed and I give them the most enormous cue in completely the wrong place. And it's awesome, because my kids didn't come in. I treasure this video, because I'm like the complete plunker [sic] that I am. I'm standing there and nothing happens. I get this big grin on my face and I give him a huge thumbs up, and then they come in the next bar in exactly the right spot. God, it's such an awesome experience to do this piece with students.

Richard Carrick: Do you do mind if I use that excerpt just to encourage other conductors?

Gabriel Crouch: God, of course!

Richard Carrick: Because if somebody that knows this piece as well as you can make a mistake like that…I want to encourage conductors to try this with their advanced student choirs.

Gabriel Crouch: Of course, you can! I don't know whether this is true, but I've probably sung this piece more than any human being on Earth. Maybe Adrian [Peacock] has done it more than me, but Tenebrae membership turns over. And so, there are no Tenebrae singers from 2005 who are still Tenebrae regulars, apart from me when I'm in England and Adrian Peacock, maybe Joe Forbes. I'm probably the person who's done this piece more than anybody else. I have never seen Nigel ever go wrong. And when he's conducting [for example] in the fourth movement, when the basis sing "totaliter" [measure 287] which I think the meter is five or six. When the tenors and basses sing "herr" at different points in the bar [measure 316]

Richard Carrick: Six/four is the beat pattern here.

Gabriel Crouch: Right. But they [the tenors and basses] come in every five beats. Nigel cues those "Herrs" individually, and I have never (they are terrifying, I mean they're really frightening) I've never, ever seen him go wrong there. I mean, ever. And he's never looking at the music. It's one of those things. Gosh, I have to say, Nigel conduct's the crap out of this piece. To sing it in front of him, with the degree to which he knows it, it's an amazing experience.

Richard Carrick: I can imagine! Yeah, Joby is always doing this: One part of the choir is in five the other part is in six or one part is in five and the other part's in four. And then he messes with the text underlay, so one part is following the natural rhythm of the text and the other part is completely working against the current. It's just creating all of this wonderful tension, but it's incredibly hard to sing and get in your head as a conductor.

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah, I mean, for what it's worth, I don't know where my score is, but I did a sort of metric analysis project with the piece as well. I think this piece lends itself to metric analysis in quite wonderful ways. And I really did that for the benefit students. But, you know, I think that's quite an interesting position to take on the piece; what he does with meter. Kind of relative to the way that someone like Aaron Copeland talks about how asymmetric or syncopated music should be metered. Copeland's ideas about, basically everything should be 4/4, but you just write in the syncopations because conductors can't be trusted to do anything other than [4/4]. I think looking at all of the decisions that have to be made in terms of how to bar this, based upon implied meter, prevailing meter, written meter, I think that's always interesting work.

Richard Carrick: Before I let you go, is there anything else you want to say about the piece that we haven't talked about?

Gabriel Crouch: One thing. Are you addressing the tessitura challenges of the peace in a significant way? Like how important it is to have to have a pretty superhuman subterranean low bass?

Richard Carrick: Yes, I'll be discussing some of those challenges in a section on conductor's considerations.

Gabriel Crouch: Did Toby talk to you about any controversy or tension that happened in rehearsal over the over the low notes?

Richard Carrick: No!

Gabriel Crouch: There were some quite tense moments in early rehearsals over what this piece asks of the low basses. If you look down at the bottom of the score, the passages where they have sing bottom Ds fortissimo. I want to be clear. British professional singers are cynical and often horrendously underpaid, and rarely do they get swept up in the music that they do. And this piece was an extraordinary exception to that. I've never had an experience, outside of the King's Singers, I've never had an experience as a professional singer in Britain where I was part of a group that was so swept up in something that we were doing; to be in a group where everyone recognizes the significance of what they're involved with. That can supplant, that can overcome everything else that's going on in a professional senior's life, such as: "Shit, I've got 30 minutes to get to my next session or, I'm not earning enough money this week to put food on the table. The margins are very, very slim considering how skilled these people are. So, I want to say this in the context that, universally, we were absolutely swept up and completely in love with this piece. It was an experience like no other I will ever have a professional singer. But I will say that it's kind of, in a way, proof that Joby succeeded in pushing voices to the limit of what they ought to be doing, that there were some passions excited about the very low, very loud, low bass parts. Because you've got to get it right. Push us to our limits because we feel like we're up to the job. But at the same time, make it possible for us to succeed. That line is very, very, very narrow. And so, I can remember a rehearsal where there were some blunt words exchanged between the low bass contingent and the composer. Because of the spirit of the rehearsal, it was not a problem. It really felt like it was part of the creative process, but it was passion. It wasn't anger or protest, but it was passion.

Richard Carrick: I'm sure wanting to do the best job possible for all parties involved. I'm curious, as a relatively inexperienced composer for voices, how did Joby handle that situation?

Gabriel Crouch: Really, really well. Just really well. Incredibly respectfully, and with a straight back and an open heart, like, "tell me what the issue is. OK, if this isn't quite going to work, what is going to work?" Not just engaging with the conductor or with me, but with the singers as individuals. It was really clear that he was developing relationships with every singer. It ended up being a really strengthening moment in the creative process. But for a fleeting second it was quite heart stopping as well.

Richard Carrick: Where edits made to the score or did it end up working out?

Gabriel Crouch: There were lots of edits made to me to the score in those early stages. It wasn't just here. There were several passages that were changed after the first edition. Some of those changes made it into the second edition, and I think some of them didn't. That was really Nigel and Joby who did that. Nigel found a really good way to work with Joby that they were both very happy with. They have a very good working relationship, those two. A wonderful amount of mutual respect. So, again, that's something that you should talk to Nigel about.

Richard Carrick: I will.

Gabriel Crouch: I'll tell you just one other little anecdote about it. Joby sent the material in batches. So, he finished the first movement and sent it to us, and I can remember going to Nigel's apartment in London and we played through bits of it on the piano and we were like: "Oh this is awesome, I love this, this is great!" Joby sent through the second movement, and I do remember that Nigel's first reaction to it was: "Oh, God." [in a cringy tone]. That second movement, it nags. Deliberately, it hurts. It is the musical manifestation of blisters. And we sat with those nagging chords, and you play them on the piano, and it is a bit like, "What on earth are we going to do? What are we going to make of this?" We were quite worried about it, both of us. And then you put it in human voices, and you attach words to it, and it immediately makes sense, a huge amount of sense.

Richard Carrick: What a cool process. Joby spoke to me about how this was...He says that, still to this day, if there's only one piece to represent his output, this would be the one he would choose. And he also said that, never before or since, has he had such an amazing collaboration. From writing to recording, the whole gamut of the experience hasn't been matched.

Gabriel Crouch: And I don't know how it could be, from my point of view. I had just left the King's Singers and I was looking for the thing that was going to swallow up the rest of my life, basically. I knew eventually that I wanted to be a conductor, but I was so swept up in what Nigel was doing with Tenebrae. They'd made two recordings already by the time I left the King's Singers, and I was just so bowled over by what he was doing. By the way that he was bringing this detail, this intimacy, but also this extraordinary power to a chamber choir. I really wanted to be part of it. And Nigel and I, we worked together all those years in the King's Singers and really built up a rapport and a respect. So, it really felt like it was part of the launching of the sound and the brand of Tenebrae. Like, what is the point of Tenebrae? What does Tenebrae exist for? Nigel was very clear that this wasn't the Monteverdi Choir, and it wasn't the Sixteen. He wanted to make a deep footprint in repertoire that felt apart from other groups. And also, to have a kind of performing ethos that was apart from other groups as well. As I said, Nigel had this obsession with journeys, with geographical location, space, and choral music. It was a real preoccupation of space. And so, hitting on this idea and finding all of this fruitful material, getting on board with this composer who was so obviously juiced by the idea and who was that at that stage in his career where he was ready to write the big piece. And Tenebrae was ready to perform the big piece. And we were all the right age as well. I mean, I think Joby and I were a similar age, early 30s. Nigel was a little bit older, so we all had that kind of endless energy for it and belief in it. I totally believe Joby when he says that because I can't imagine if I was involved in another commission project like this that I would be able to get so swept up by it, because life is different now. And I'm Sure Nigel would say the same thing, and I'm sure Joby would say the same thing.

Richard Carrick: Absolutely.

Gabriel Crouch: I mean, this piece was part of Joby's musical evolution. It didn't actually initially do that much to establish him. I think, in a way, *Alice in Wonderland* [sic] did a lot more to really establish him. And of course, the film…

Richard Carrick: Hitchhiker's Guide?

Gabriel Crouch: Yes, Hitchhikers.

Richard Carrick: He does say, though, \he thinks it might be because of *Path of Miracles* that he got asked to do other long-form pieces.

Gabriel Crouch: Oh, that's cool. Well, I was going to say that in terms of confidence, in terms of his belief in his sound and in his ability to trust himself with large scale architecture, it must have done amazing things for him in that sense.

Richard Carrick: He said that he was in such an interesting place in his life, you know, with his father passing away and doing lots of other big projects. He said that, as he put it, almost no notes that he wrote "hit the cutting room floor." And when he thinks about how much music he writes now that never makes it into the final products, he can't believe how everything he wrote was used.

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah. And he had a little baby. His partner at the time was a magnificent sculptor, gosh, I really admired her work too. It's just wonderful. Look at the album cover to Dying Swan, that's her work. It's amazing. They went out to Spain as a as a young family with a baby.

Richard Carrick: That's right and got in a car accident also.

Gabriel Crouch: Yeah. Amazing. It is all so much value added to this project because of the passion of the creative force. Because of Joby's passion for it and Nigel's energy for it. It's a bit weird, here you are talking to me after all this time. My role in this project is a bit tenuous. Essentially all I did was talk to Nigel a lot and talk to Joby a lot.

Richard Carrick: You were like the showrunner of the piece, though. You know, the person that makes it all happen.

Gabriel Crouch: In a way, yeah, I know. But that's not, I mean, I don't have any skills in that. I've never done it before or since. It's not what I do and it's not what I want to do. I just wanted to do it for this piece.

Richard Carrick: Well, thank you, and thank you for your beautiful recording that you produced.

Gabriel Crouch: I did produce the recording, yes. I came out to sing in a few bits. I think I sang on the opening because we need extra bodies, but basically, I produced the recording. Adrian Peacock was the producer of choice for Tenebrae. But, if you've got Adrian Peacock in the booth and you're recording *Path of Miracles*, you're doing something wrong. Adrian needs to be singing. I don't need to be singing this piece. That's why I was in the booth for this piece.

Richard Carrick: Well, I'm Blown away by the diversity of your skills. And thank you for the generosity of your time here today. You're incredibly humble. I just want to say, I really believe that the work that you all did helped create one of the most impactful pieces of choral music of this century. And I think it will keep that status, even though it was created only five years into [this century].

Gabriel Crouch: That's very cool that you say that and I'm really glad you think so. I've quietly always thought that, and I'm really glad that the world seems to think it now as well. It's great.

APPENDIX F

Dickinson's Drafts of the Libretto

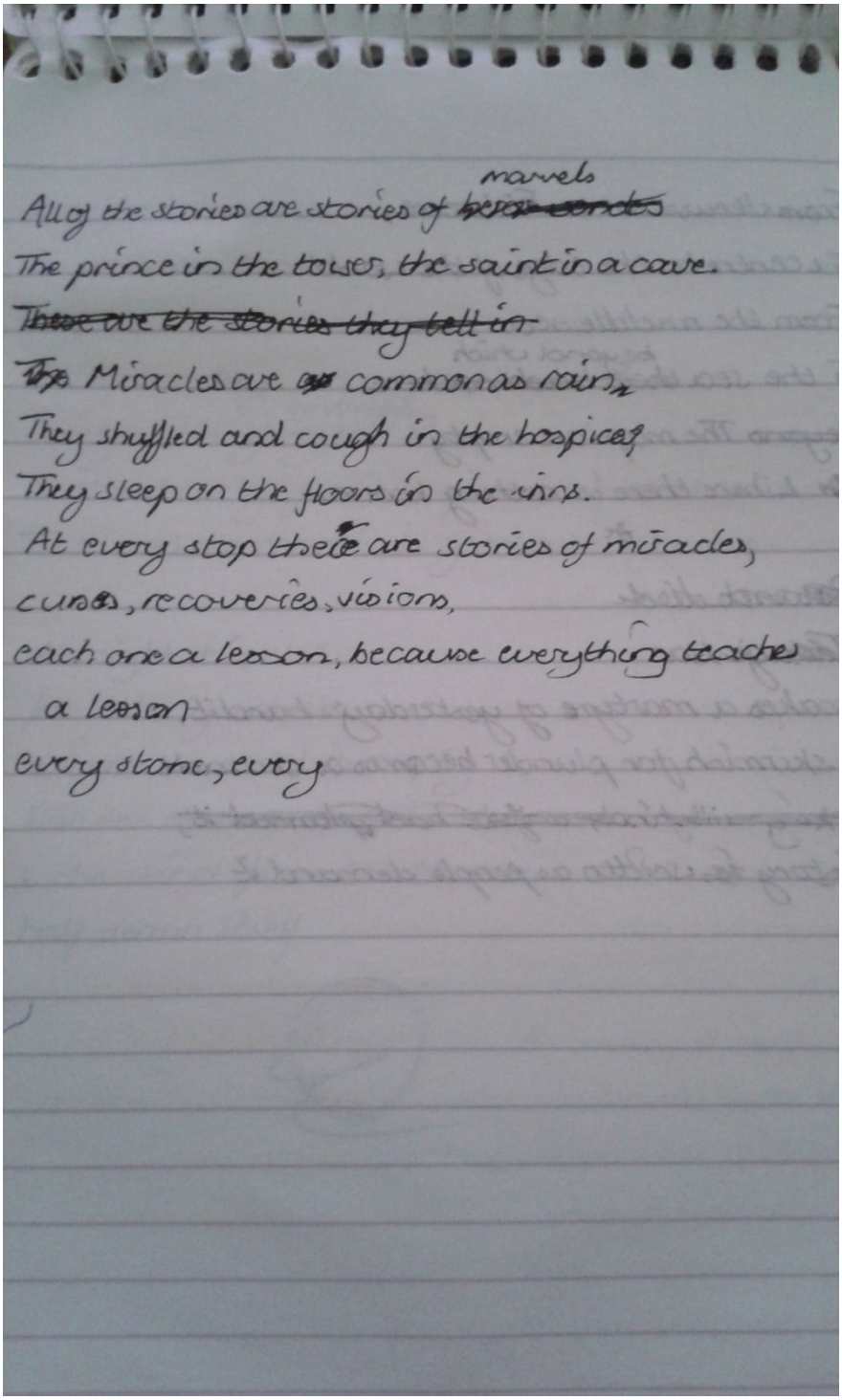

Figure 12.1 Libretto Draft Image 1

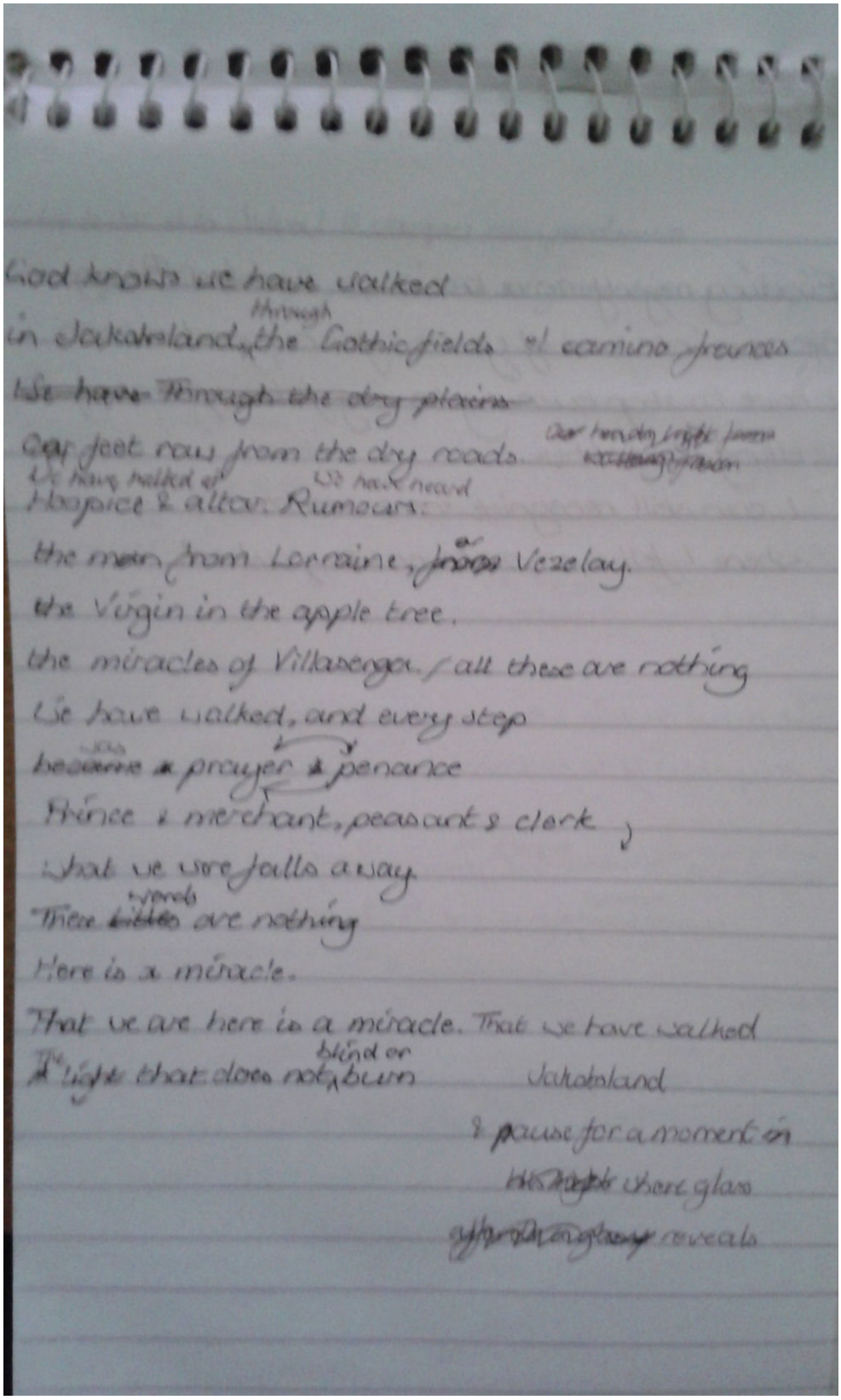

Figure F.2 Libretto Draft Image 2