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An overview of the choral music of Michael McGlynn with a conductor's preparatory guide to his Celtic Mass

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHORAL MUSIC OF MICHAEL MCGLYNN WITH A CONDUCTOR’S PREPARATORY GUIDE TO HIS CELTIC MASS

A Monograph

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

in

The School of Music

by

Karen Marrolli
B.M., Westminster Choir College
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December 2010
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ABSTRACT

Michael McGlynn, Irish composer and director of the choral group Anúna, is a fresh and engaging voice in the world of choral music. This paper delves into the sacred and secular works of Michael McGlynn to yield a clearer understanding of the style of this unique composer and the performance issues inherent in McGlynn’s Celtic Mass, an extended work for chorus, strings, harp, and percussion. Correspondence with the composer and examination of a representative cross section of his works revealed a number of influences, from Medieval music to the traditional music of McGlynn’s Irish homeland. McGlynn’s compositions range from chant settings dominated by drones and open sonorities to highly chromatic works. Rhythm is an important component of the composer’s works, and development occurs primarily through repetition. His Celtic Mass, a compilation of individual works in both Latin and Gaelic, was analyzed to create a guide for the conductor’s preparation of this work. The analysis highlights the structure, motivic development, use of fifths, and treatment of modes. Examination of these items showed a tendency toward tonic-dominant opposition, both altered and unaltered, as well as a predominance of development through repetition. In addition, McGlynn often employs modes, modal mixtures, or combinations of modes that create new scales. Overall it was found that McGlynn does not rely on one compositional voice or formula, but rather a number of techniques and styles. This tendency creates an interesting diversity in his music and should make his output of interest to the choral world.
Background Information: Early Study and Influences

Michael McGlynn was born on May 11, 1964, in Dublin, Ireland. He began his musical education at age 4 through the study of piano; however, he admits that he did not possess the facility required to master the instrument. Even though a career as a concert pianist did not seem to be in the young McGlynn’s future, he stuck with the pursuit until the end of his college years.\(^1\) McGlynn would eventually take up singing instead of piano and claims that he still takes lessons here and there with outstanding teachers available in the United Kingdom.\(^2\) Considering the unique sound that he has achieved with his choir Anúna, it is interesting to note that the composer began to form his vocal preferences early on. He says that he “was brought up to appreciate the untrained voice in all its forms,”\(^3\) foreshadowing the ideals that McGlynn would form concerning singers and choral sound.

He does not remember any particular musical experiences that stood out as significant to him at a young age, but rather “can remember various forms of music passing across my perception.”\(^4\) He cites Debussy as his first major musical influence but can also remember being touched in his youth by the sounds of the Beatles, particularly “Ticket to Ride,” and of David Bowie.\(^5\) His father’s side of the family was very musical, but McGlynn and some of his younger cousins are part of the first generation of the family to pursue music as a profession.\(^6\) His twin brother John is also a musician and is currently part of Anúna. John McGlynn had the following

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\(^1\) Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^4\) Ibid.
\(^5\) Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
\(^6\) Ibid.
to say about his brother’s musical development in the program notes of Anúna’s July 17, 2009 performance with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra:

Michael has always been an obsessive. As teenagers he would make me sit and listen to something that he’d dragged in from Freebird Records. Over and over he’d play it, stopping to enthuse over some bizarre change in mood or dynamic. John Foxx, Gary Numan, Renaissance, Clannad and Pentangle. There was weirder stuff but I think he realized how much I could take even then. If you have the right background and are of a “certain age” you’ll hear echoes of Sidney Sager’s incidental music for the utterly terrifying Children of the Stones and György Ligeti’s clouds of vocals from 2001: A Space Odyssey in Michael’s own compositions. It was from this melting pot that the inspiration for Anúna grew.7

A look at the music that has influenced McGlynn over the years, as well as music that he particularly enjoys, reveals some of the genesis of his uncommon style. McGlynn states that he was drawn to Ligeti’s vocal music due to its use of microtonal sounds.8 He also enjoys the work of David Sylvian and Bjork, both known for their unusual work in alternative music.9 As for choral music, McGlynn describes Herbert Howells as a composer who “creates a beautiful soundscape.”10 He also has a great interest in early music, and the effects of this can be heard in the rhythmic components and sounds of his own compositions. Gesualdo, Monteverdi, Du Fay, Machaut, and Hildegard of Bingen are all composers that McGlynn cites as musical influences.11 Interestingly enough, these musical influences and preferences have remained constant and have not changed over time.12

In 1976 McGlynn attended Coláiste na Rinne (Ring College) in Gaeltacht. During the year he spent at the Ring College he heard a great deal of traditional Irish songs, a genre to which

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8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
he had never been exposed. Even though both of his parents are Irish, his family did not have any particular connections with or affinity for Irish folk culture, so these were his first experiences with the traditional Irish sound that he says “formed the backbone of a lot of the material that I promptly went on to write.”"  

Once he left the Ring College and began to set the traditional music of his country he became more interested in it. He is, however, more attracted to the heritage of countries such as England or those of continental Europe and feels that his compositional style, as well as the style of Anúna, have developed out of what he says is a comparison between Irish music and music being composed outside of Ireland.  

One might surmise, given his musical upbringing and current achievements, that McGlynn always aspired to compose and perform. However, as evocative and compelling as McGlynn’s compositions have grown to be, he claims that he “never intended to make music my living.” The composer says that he had a much greater facility for English than music. “Before the age of nineteen,” McGlynn has written, “my main claim to musical fame was a very weak record in piano examinations and an ability, and irritating compulsion, to sing a harmony to anything.” From 1982-1985 he pursued his higher education in English, all the while also taking courses in music. In 1986 McGlynn began work toward a Bachelor of Music degree, at which point he decided to pursue music as a career. McGlynn writes the following of his experience at the University College of Dublin:

I wouldn’t change a thing if I could go back. My time there made me the musician I am today. The Music faculty of 1982 didn’t contain a bunch of trendy young composers, so I was allowed to put on a series of concerts myself. I had to organize, write and perform my own modest little efforts and they were received

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13 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
without ridicule, but also without debate or discussion. As a result I became completely self-sufficient right at the start of what has become my career.\footnote{Michael McGlynn, “Art and Mammon,” \textit{Pictures and Visions}, entry posted February 28, 2009, http://michaelmcglynn.wordpress.com/page/2/ (accessed October 10, 2009.)}

One experience during his time at University College Dublin that made a large impact on the composer was his time singing in the college chamber choir. This was the first time McGlynn had sung in a choir and it appears to have been a life changing experience that would have a profound impact on his compositional style as well as the formation of Anúna.\footnote{Michael McGlynn, “Anúna,” www.anuna.ie/our_story.html (accessed October 12, 2009.)} In July of 2009, McGlynn spoke with the Contemporary Music Center in Ireland and had this to say about the genesis of Anúna:

\begin{quote}
I actually thought that I was regenerating and changing Irish choral music, because I came from a non-classical background. I started singing at the age of 19. There I was, participating in performances of the most wonderful music ever written…. And all I could think in the back of my mind was two things: number one, why am I only getting this because I’m doing a degree? And number two, is there any way we can get people who are like me, who think music is something very important in their lives, to appreciate the beauty of this? And so Anúna developed from that idea. It developed from the need to reinterpret the choral canon.\footnote{Contemporary Music Center, Ireland, “An Interview with Michael McGlynn,” XML podcast, 9:24, http://www.cmc.ie/articles/article1820.html (accessed October 20, 2009.)}
\end{quote}

\textbf{Anúna and a New Choral Sound}

In 1987, after graduating from college, McGlynn formed the choir that would become Anúna. Originally called An Uaithane, the choir performed a varied mix of works, from medieval music to covers of the music of Clannad. McGlynn also programmed music by contemporary Irish composers.\footnote{Ibid.} The goal of An Uaithane was to reinvent Irish choral music rather than, as he felt had been the case during his college choral experience, to simply present
“reflections of the latest choral trend picked up from England or from seeing a foreign choir at a choral festival.”

McGlynn’s experience at the Ring College came into play in his work with An Uaithane, and he began to arrange Irish tunes for the choir and to set old Irish texts such as “Triar Laoch” [“Three Heroes”] and “Codail Begán” [“Sleep a Little”].

The eclectic mix that would personify McGlynn’s style was already present in this early work. “These pieces combined the harmonic flavor of modern music with the strong, melody driven power of traditional Irish singing. My fascination with medieval music and history added the ‘ancient’ color to these early pieces. However, it was the texts that drove everything forward for me as a writer.”

In 1991, An Uaithane officially became Anúna. The culture of the choir was changing over the years as the young composer and conductor continued to grow and clarify his own musical goals. Once a group of classically trained singers, Anúna was morphing into a choir of less trained, but still gifted, singers who could produce the earthy, raw tone that McGlynn was seeking. “This is the ‘Anúna’ sound – powerful and fragile, immediate and human. When I developed it, it was almost as a protest against the artificial nature of choral groups I had been part of, where singers appeared to sing for themselves, never as a genuine unit and never for the audience.”

Although the singers tended to view the group as a way to enhance their choral and solo careers, McGlynn had something else in mind. “Anúna wasn’t simply a choir, nor was it a vehicle for soloists. It was a cultural statement, something organic and growing…”

It was also in 1991 that his brother John officially joined the choir. John McGlynn shared his brother’s vision for Anúna and the presence of a like-minded individual within the ensemble was an

22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
important turning point for the composer.\textsuperscript{27} Two more important developments occurred in that year. One change was that McGlynn began to step away from the conductor role and acted more as an artistic director who ran the group but still sang from within the choir. The second change was his decision to perform only his own arrangements and original works with the group.\textsuperscript{28}

Anúna began to record in 1993 and has, over the years, produced a number of CDs of their work. It is through these recordings that Michael McGlynn has been able to showcase his craft, not only as a composer but also as the director of an unusual choral group. People began to stand up and take notice of this upstart ensemble, which McGlynn describes as having become “a ‘must see’ underground phenomenon.”\textsuperscript{29} It was at this point that composer Bill Whelan approached McGlynn about featuring Anúna in \textit{Riverdance}. Whelan was familiar with the unusual sound of Anúna and wanted the group to perform as part of a musical offering that was to become an Irish and international phenomenon.\textsuperscript{30} McGlynn has recently written about the \textit{Riverdance} in his blog and reminisced about not only the furor that it ultimately produced but also about the early stages of its production. “I remember having a conversation with [Whelan] in January of 1994 where he described his vision of the opening segment of the piece as a helicopter shot, with the choir on a raft in the middle of the Liffey – mad but brilliant.”\textsuperscript{31}

The show debuted in 1995 and became a cultural phenomenon; the recording of \textit{Riverdance} spent 18 weeks at number one in Ireland alone.\textsuperscript{32} McGlynn recalls the impact that the success of \textit{Riverdance} had on the group. “I remember walking through the streets that year listening to \textit{Riverdance} blaring out of every car stereo and shop in the city. We were overnight

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[28] Ibid.
\item[29] Ibid.
\item[30] Ibid.
\item[31] Ibid.
\item[32] Ibid.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
household names, which meant very little to me but the singers had a great time on the back of it."\(^{33}\) Fearing the commercialization of his group, McGlynn sang in only two performances of the production before pulling out; unfortunately, many of his singers left to tour with the show, billed as the “Riverdance Singers.”\(^{34}\)

There were many reasons for leaving the show, but the main one was that I had not been trained to participate in the music industry, nor had any business background. I had little interest in the financial gains, and huge interest in maintaining Anúna as a vibrant and developing group. More importantly, I am a composer, and I needed to use the instrument I had created to develop my craft. During the year and a half I was part of Riverdance I released three records of my own work, and I think that is why I survived the experience intact.\(^{35}\)

The three albums that were produced during the heyday of Riverdance were Invocation, Omnis, and Deep Dead Blue. Then, as McGlynn says, “There was a long period of time when I was very much left alone to repair the commercial ravages and concentrate on my own aspirations for the group. It is understandable that any idea could lose its way under the commercial pressures that Anúna was under. The one thing that saved it was the music.”\(^{36}\)

In 1997 Anúna recorded another CD, Behind the Closed Eye, which featured the Ulster Orchestra. This recording was the first one on which the choir was featured with an orchestral group. Subsequent recordings include Cynara (2001), Sensation (2006), and Sanctus (2009). Anúna has toured 23 countries and been featured on several television broadcasts, and the group’s earthy sound and unconventional, almost theatrical performances have been captured on such videos as the PBS special A Celtic Celebration and Anúna’s Celtic Origins. Graham Gurrin,


in his review of an Anúna concert given in London in 1997, described the visual element so common to the ensemble’s performances: “There were many highlights, such as Quis est Deus, during which the men sang a bass drone standing in a line before the altar, back-lit, the women walking slowly around the church, candles lighting their faces. The effect was extraordinary, both aurally and visually.”37 Another special project finished in 2008 was the DVD Invocations of Ireland. The footage for the DVD was filmed by Michael McGlynn himself. He notes that “It has been a wonderful experience to try to put images to my music, and the choir have patiently stood on mountains, in rivers, in rain and snow attempting to look composed and ethereal while avoiding ant flies and cows.”38

**Compositional Process and Commissions**

McGlynn’s interest in film has helped to clarify some of his compositional practices, and he states that he has a very visual approach to composition within which structure is paramount. “If it’s structurally wrong,” he says, “as far as I’m concerned, it doesn’t work- and that goes for literature as well.”39 In a blog partially devoted to his compositional process, he states that:

> The way I compose something is to sit at the piano and doodle, then leave it and do some office work or go out and do something completely unrelated. After a while the doodles form into clumps and ideas come together slowly. I can’t really hear any of the music I write. I can see the structure of it without hearing the sound, if that makes any sense. This has become easier for me to understand since I began working with video and film, as the music I write is very visual.40

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McGlynn approaches composition not as an inspirational gift, but rather as a professional task to be done, and he often comments on his confusion over people who do not approach it as such. “Composition is a job. That’s what it is. And I had to take it on as a job. That’s probably why I’ve been more successful than most of my peers at it, because I never treated it as avocation.”\textsuperscript{41} Comments that the composer has made regarding his work on a specific composition, a commission for the choral group Kantika Korala, reveal that McGlynn is more productive composing in the midst of the daily happenings of his own life, and it is clear that he would rather work amid the backdrop of the bustle of his own household than in the seclusion of some far-off cabin or retreat.\textsuperscript{42}

“Working on the composition is sporadic, as my home and my office [and my children] are constantly at war with each other, but I wouldn’t have it any other way at the moment. I have never found it easy to create in isolation of the realities of life, and often find that simple things spark off a thought that I carry with me for weeks and months before writing anything down.”\textsuperscript{43}

As a composer, McGlynn equates himself with anyone who performs a job that requires a specialized skill or craftsmanship. He is most interested in being able to “craft and fashion something completely from scratch which has good structure and has an impact on the audience and has some artistic integrity.”\textsuperscript{44}

Although he won numerous composition competitions in his 20s, McGlynn says that he has not won any composition awards since that time.\textsuperscript{45} His music has, however, been performed by such world-class choral groups as the Dale Warland Singers and Chanticleer, who commissioned the multi-composer work “And on Earth Peace: A Chanticleer Mass,” to which he

\textsuperscript{41} Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
contributed the Agnus Dei.\footnote{Contemporary Music Center, Ireland, “Michael McGlynn, http://www.cmc.ie/composers/composer.cfm?composerID=79 (accessed October 25, 2009.)} However, as far as actual praise and accolades, he says that he has been recognized as a composer exclusively through the work of Anúna, particularly in his home country of Ireland.\footnote{Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.}

Recently McGlynn has had the opportunity to compose music for orchestra and to restructure some of his smaller-scale works to be performed with a full orchestra. On July 17, 2009, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra along with Anúna performed the results of this venture at the National Concert Hall in Dublin.\footnote{Contemporary Music Center, Ireland, “An Interview with Michael McGlynn,” XML podcast, 9:24, http://www.cmc.ie/articles/article1820.html (accessed October 20, 2009.)} This was the first time Anúna performed with a full, non-restricted orchestra.\footnote{Ibid.} A number of the works written were actually for orchestra alone, and McGlynn says he wishes that he actually had more opportunities to write for instrumental ensembles.\footnote{Ibid.}

McGlynn’s music is garnering interest from third-party choral ensembles outside of Ireland, but it is regrettable that McGlynn feels that there is no place for his music in his home country. “Tonal and melodic music is deeply fashionable today,“ he has written, “but oddly not in Ireland. There is no place for an Irish Arvo Part, Eric Whitacre, Philip Glass, Steve Reich, John Adams- not even a quasi-John Tavener. Any composer whose musical voice falls into neither camp has nowhere to go except away from Ireland. Thank goodness for the internet.”\footnote{Michael McGlynn, “Art and Mammon,” Pictures and Visions, entry posted February 28, 2009, http://michaelmcglynn.wordpress.com/page/2/ (accessed October 10, 2009.)}

The internet has played a large role in transporting McGlynn’s compositions and his work with Anúna to countries beyond Ireland. Users of mp3 downloading sites such as iTunes and Amazon can explore the music of Anúna via computer in the comfort of their own home,
and social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook contain pages devoted to both Anúna and Michael McGlynn, bringing his music to a population that may otherwise not have experienced it. McGlynn has been able to express his thoughts about many subjects including but not limited to composition and choral music in his blog “Pictures and Visions,” which he updates regularly. Anúna has its own website, through which users can not only learn about the work and history of the group but can also peruse the sheet music of Michael McGlynn. Choir directors seeking to perform the works of this composer can conveniently search McGlynn’s works in an online catalog, view and/or hear online samples, and purchase scores online. The scores are subsequently delivered to the purchaser in .pdf format, and, when more than one copy is ordered, a pronunciation guide (both written and spoken) is provided, as well as a license to duplicate the score to create the number of copies purchased. The use of the web in the promotion of McGlynn’s music is an example of how the internet is becoming a tool for the marketing and sale of not only popular music but also the work of choral groups and composers in an increasingly digital age.

Michael McGlynn is an intriguing voice in the world of choral music. As will be seen in this document, his work fuses elements of traditional Irish music, jazz, early music, and the music of other cultures to create a sound unlike that of other composers. While Irish heritage definitely has an influence on the compositional output of this composer, he does not see his music as nationalistic or even Celtic in nature, as many Irish musicians find the term “Celtic” controversial in its non-specificity to Irish music. Like other Irish composers, the Irish landscape and the traditional melodies and dance music of Ireland have provided inspiration for his compositions, but part of what makes Michael McGlynn such a compelling composer is the

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combination of these influences with what he calls a comparison between the music of Ireland and the music of other cultures. It is this combination that makes McGlynn’s music of interest to the choral world, fusing elements from various cultures and centuries to create something evocative and new.

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53 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marroli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
CHAPTER 2
EXPLORING THE STYLE OF MCGLYNN’S SACRED AND SECULAR WORKS

Overview

When attempting to establish an overall compositional style for McGlynn’s works, one might be tempted to primarily ascribe traits of traditional Irish music to his output. His Irish heritage, coupled with the emphasis on Celtic culture in the promotion of Anúna, could easily lead the casual observer to coin McGlynn’s compositions as “Celtic Music.” However, in speaking with the composer, one finds that McGlynn’s compositions are not as permeated with Irish influences as might be expected. McGlynn says that because Anúna’s singers are Irish people look to them to be a model of Irish music. However, the music of McGlynn and Anúna “would not be considered Irish in Ireland.” 54 As a composer McGlynn is influenced by color and traditional rhythms, but that influence is juxtaposed onto the use of medieval traits and sounds in the tradition of composers such as Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams, a product that the composer refers to as an “amalgamation of forms.” 55

McGlynn is not purely a product of his Irish homeland, but rather a well-rounded composer whose eclectic mix of influences, including jazz, medieval music, Irish traditional music, and the music of Britain and Continental Europe, has helped to create a sound that is unique to his work. While Irish heritage definitely has an influence on the compositional output of this composer, he does not see his music as nationalistic or even Celtic in nature, as many Irish musicians find the term “Celtic” controversial in its non-specificity to Irish music. 56 Like other Irish composers, the Irish landscape and the traditional melodies and dance music of

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54 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
55 Ibid.
Ireland have provided inspiration for his compositions, but part of what makes Michael McGlynn such a compelling composer is the combination of these influences with what he calls a comparison between the music of Ireland and the music of other cultures.\textsuperscript{57} The tendency toward a more ancient sound is also a hallmark of his style, and McGlynn’s interest in early and medieval music is clear. When discussing his arrangements of Irish chants, McGlynn tends to focus more on the idea of being “a conduit for something ancient”\textsuperscript{58} than on any sense of Irish loyalty. However, the combination of these aspects is what makes McGlynn’s works so affecting, as is the case with his stunning work “Cormacus Scripsit,” of which the composer says, “It’s just wonderful to be able to carry the voice of somebody from the 12\textsuperscript{th} century to today… It does have a profound effect on all audiences because it is an Irish voice calling through 800, 900 years. It’s wonderful.”\textsuperscript{59}

This chapter will illuminate McGlynn’s compositional style as observed in a cross section of his sacred and secular works and will also discuss the rehearsal and performance issues posed by these pieces. Many of the works chosen have a strong medieval flavor, which McGlynn asserts is not an Irish trait, but rather is more closely related to European medieval music.\textsuperscript{60} The works have been analyzed with regard to their rhythmic and melodic content, harmonic structure, and texture to show that McGlynn is not purely a reflection of his Irish heritage, but rather a unique product of multiple cultural influences, ancient music, and jazz and pop idioms.

**Rhythm and Meter**

Rhythm is an important factor in the music of Michael McGlynn. His tendency toward triple meters is one characteristic that connects his work with traditional Irish music, but these

\textsuperscript{57} Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
pieces are also full of syncopations and cross rhythms that make them more complicated than the typical Irish jig and reveal the influences of medieval music and jazz. The rhythm of the words is also an organizational factor and often tends to dictate the meter and rhythmic patterns of the music. McGlynn states that he was initially a student of English rather than music and consequently was often more attracted to the literary basis for many of his Gaelic works.\footnote{Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.} Because of this sensitivity toward the text one can see its supremacy in not only the rhythmic groupings but also the character that shines through these pieces.

One common thread among many of works studied is the use of meters such as 3/4, 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8. The composer says he actually finds it difficult to write in 4/4 and prefers the “springing rhythms” produced in triple meters.\footnote{Ibid.} This tendency is one connection that McGlynn’s music has with traditional Irish music and, among the cross section of works studied, is most often found in the secular Gaelic works.\footnote{Ibid.} The sacred works that were examined for this particular study, as will be discussed in a moment, are mostly based on chants whose texts dictate the metric flow of each piece; however, the practice of writing in triple rhythms does extend to McGlynn’s sacred works, as can be seen in examples such as “Codhlaim go Súan” from the \textit{Celtic Mass}, his 3/4 setting of “Codail a Linbh,” and “Armaque cum Scuto,” written in 6/8.

“Ceann Dubh Dílis,” a work scored for three part men’s chorus, is written in 6/8 but at certain points the choral parts are actually grouped in 3/4 while the percussion continues beating a steady rhythmic ostinato in 6/8 (Example 1). This use of cross rhythms coupled with the presence of a clear 6/8 in the surrounding measures creates a sense of rhythmic tension and syncopation.

\footnote{Ibid.}
A similar situation occurs in “Geantráí ,” the title of which is literally translated “joyful song” and is taken from the three types of music as described in Celtic folklore: geantráí, goltraí (lament), and suantráí (lullabye). The text describes the joy of dancing around with a baby and is appropriately set in 9/8 throughout, resembling an Irish slip jig; however, additional rhythmic interest is added by the presence of syncopated figures in the underlying voice parts (Example 2).

Example 2, “Geantráí ,” mm. 22-25
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“Christus Resurgens” is an arrangement of a 12th century chant. The text is appropriate for Easter Sunday and proclaims Christ risen from the dead. This sacred work is in 4/4, but the “alleluia” sections contain alternations between two and three note groupings, probably in service of the chant tune (Example 3). In McGlynn’s rhythmically charged setting of the chant, however, the effect is a syncopated, dancelike quality that should be brought out by the conductor.

Example 3, “Christus Resurgens,” mm. 37-41
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Another interesting aspect of “Christus Resurgens” that adds to the overall energy and urgency behind the work is the placement of the chant tune primarily within the confines of 4/4. While in most of the works studied the text actually dictates the rhythm of the music, “Christus” is the exception to the rule, consequently helping to create an exciting instability and rhythmic drive within the piece rather than an expected chant-like flow. Strong syllables within the text invariably end up on the weak beats of the bar, thus allowing for the conductor to highlight the syncopations created in the text placement by bringing out the text accents on unaccented beats.
(Example 4). This effect becomes even more pronounced when the flow of the text is pitted against the insistent rhythmic ostinato in the tenor drum.

Example 4, “Christus Resurgens,” mm. 15-24
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In most cases studied, however, the rhythm of the text is clearly reflected in its setting and the music is driven by the rhythm of the words as well as by their character. McGlynn often makes reference to the “percussive nature of the text” and how it helps to shape the rhythm, flow, and accent of the music. The aforementioned “Ceann Dubh Dílis” and “Geantraí” are both examples of this to some degree, but the concept can very clearly be demonstrated through one of his frequently performed works, “Dúlaman,” written for men’s voices. McGlynn’s rapid-fire setting of the Gaelic text accommodates the rhythm and stress of the words through frequent meter changes (Example 5). As affirmed by McGlynn, the percussive nature of this text and its clear delivery are the most important concerns for a performing ensemble.

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65 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
66 Ibid.
In “Rising of the Sun,” a work for mixed chorus and traditional Irish instruments, the chorus is relegated to the role of rhythmic ostinato, and here the percussive feel of the text is clearly of primary concern. In the beginning of the piece, McGlynn alternates the rhythmic pattern of the chorus and drum in 10/8 with the more dancelike character of the soprano solo line in 12/8 (Example 6).

Example 6, “The Rising of the Sun,” mm. 1-7
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The choir retains this role throughout the majority of the piece with some variation in the patterning and pitch level. The addition of the uilleann pipes (traditional Irish pipes) and violin in the latter portions of the piece helps to make this an extremely colorful work.

Text is also an important factor in rhythmic patterning in the majority of the sacred works studied. In contrast to the highly percussive and rhythmic pieces discussed to this point, “Miserere Miseris” is actually a flowing setting of a chant from the *Dublin Troper* of c. 1360. In this instance the text is not only more flowing in its character, the affect of the words requires a more penitent, subdued feel which is achieved in McGlynn’s setting.

*Have mercy on us who suffer, Fount of Mercy.*

*You were merciful enough to bear the Prince of Glory;*  
*Honor of our race, ark of the new covenant,*  
*and dawn of grace.*  
*Surely if you wish, O kind Lady,*  
*you can grant us peace and pardon.*

McGlynn changes meters frequently to accommodate the rhythmic flow of the words (Example 7). The piece is hypnotic in effect, seemingly free flowing with a clear sense of rhythmic patterning obscured by the constantly changing meter.

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Harmonic Structure

A study of the use of harmony in the music of Michael McGlynn shows two major influences: medieval music and jazz. Open fourths and fifths, often in parallel motion, are commonly found in both sacred and secular works and reveal an affinity for the music of medieval continental Europe. The tendency to associate archaic sounds with some kind of Celtic origin is natural, especially when the composer is Irish; however, the use of open sonorities and procedures reminiscent of organum is more correctly associated with medieval French
composers. In contrast, one also finds the use of close harmonies and seventh chords with added notes, displaying the influence of jazz and possibly of the colorful sonorities of composers such as Herbert Howells.

The writing of organum that involved moving voices separated by a fourth or fifth was prevalent during the early medieval period. The use of organum-like procedures is a hallmark of McGlynn’s style. One clear example of this practice can be seen in “Media Vita,” McGlynn’s setting of a 9th century chant attributed to the Irish monk Notker Balbulus. A portion of the responsory is as follows:

Example 8, “Media Vita,” original chant (excerpt)
Continued on following page.

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McGlynn presents the verse sections of the responsory as the monophonic chant; however, the “Sancte Deus” response is harmonized in parallel fifths and fourths over long notes in the basses (Example 9).
The pervasive use of open sonorities gives McGlynn’s music an austere, archaic quality that honors the ancient origins of the chants being set. Similar examples of this procedure can be found in “Christus Resurgens” and “Cormacus Scripsit.” In “Christus Resurgens,” the tenor lines proceed in parallel fourths over a bass drone (Example 10).

Example 10, “Christus Resurgens,” mm. 35-44
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In “Cormacus Scripsit,” the bass line alternates between long notes and chanting repeated pitches under parallel fifths in the tenor lines (Example 11).

Example 11, “Cormacus Scripsit,” mm.7-16
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The use of open sonorities is not reserved for McGlynn’s sacred works and chant settings, however. “Dúlaman” contains sections that feature running parallel fifths between two voices as well a sonorities created from stacked fifths. McGlynn ends measure 26 with successive parallel fifths in the tenors and basses (Example 12). This passage is followed by several open sonorities in measure 28 (Example 12). In measures 28-31, the tenor and baritone parts are in parallel fifths throughout, while the bass line frequently creates a dissonance with the tenor voice (Example 12). The result is a harmonic color that is simultaneously archaic in its openness and modern in its activeness.
At times McGlynn’s part writing closely resembles the fauxbourdon of Burgundian composers such as Du Fay, whom McGlynn cites as an influence on his own compositions. This practice is another clear link between McGlynn’s music and the historical music of continental Europe as opposed to his own country of Ireland. In “Miserere Miseris,” the A sections of the piece are permeated with strings of parallel first inversion chords punctuated by open fifths at the beginning and end of each phrase (Example 13). Although the chant tune is located in the soprano voice rather than the tenor voice as would have occurred in the fauxbourdon of Du Fay’s

Example 12, “Dúlaman,” mm. 26-32
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time, the effect is the same, and the piece recalls the sound of polyphonic works from the 15th century.

Ex. 13, “Miserere Miseris,” mm. 21-22
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Another example of this treatment can be found throughout “Ceann Dubh Dílis,” proving that this is a compositional thumbprint rather than a way to pay homage to the past in McGlynn’s sacred chant settings (Example 14).

Ex. 14, “Ceann Dubh Dílis,” mm. 48-52
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There is, however, another side to McGlynn’s harmonic language: an affinity for jazz harmonies such as 9th, 11th, and 13th chords. An excellent example of the composer’s use of close harmonies and jazz language is his setting of “Agnus Dei,” commissioned by Chanticleer for the composite work *And on Earth Peace: A Chanticleer Mass*. The work includes both Gaelic and Latin settings of the traditional Agnus Dei text. Passages like McGlynn’s setting of the text “miserere nobis” almost exclusively employ color chords and are a far cry from the neofauxbourdon of “Miserere Miseris.” (Example 15)

Example 15, “Agnus Dei,” mm. 36-38
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McGlynn manages to sustain harmonic tension throughout this exceptional work through the pervasive use of chromaticism and active chords. The final section of the piece, spun out skillfully over 22 bars using an economy of means, is essentially a very long C9 chord on the text “dona nobis pacem” (Example 16). A conflict of tonality is set up by the ascending bass line
motives, which ascend in C major before a partial descent in C minor, and harmonically the upper voices follow suit (Example 16). The result is an alternation between major and minor modes (Example 16).

Example 16, “Agnus Dei,” mm 56-60
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In the closing measures the extended concentration on C9 resolves to Ab Major 9, a tritone away from the work’s opening mode of D dorian (Example 17). In measures 76-79 McGlynn repeats the word “pacem” on the alternating chords Ab Major 9 and Bb minor 7 with a raised 9 (Example 17). The second chord may be considered a decoration of the Ab 9 chord. The combination of highly active chords, the conflict between major and minor mode in this section, and the implied conflict suggested by ending the work a tritone away from its modal starting point might all lead one to believe that McGlynn is ultimately painting a plea for peace in a world that desperately needs it. Upon consultation with the composer, it was learned that this was precisely his intent.  

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70 Michael McGlynn, email correspondence with Karen Marroli, March 27, 2010.
In “Geantráí,” McGlynn uses colorful sonorities to accompany the folk-like material in the soprano line (Example 18). The composer uses both open and jazz sonorities to harmonize the melody throughout the work, and adds tension to the end of each verse by employing seventh, ninth, and added note chords in the accompanying vocal lines (Example 18).

Example 17, “Agnus Dei,” mm. 76-79
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Example 18, “Geantráí,” mm. 47-48
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In “The Rising of the Sun,” McGlynn juxtaposes ancient and modern worlds through the alternation of open sonorities with jazz harmonies. Here alternates open fifths on C with both major and minor Bb7 chords. He adds harmonic tension by adding 9ths to both sonorities by measure 39 (Example 19).
McGlynn’s harmonic language pays homage to the past while keeping its eyes on the present. He effectively incorporates medieval sounds into music that sounds fresh and contemporary, and he juxtaposes them against more modern and colorful sounds that add richness and depth to his work.

Texture

The texture in McGlynn’s music most often tends to be homophonic or homorhythmic, and counterpoint was not a great factor among the works studied. There are numerous instances of melodies being sustained over drones in the accompanying voices. Clear examples of this technique have already been viewed in previous discussions of “Christus Resurgens” (Examples 5 and 11) but the composer uses this texture in various ways in many of his works. In measures 22-32 of “Media Vita,” bass voices accompany the chant with a drone on E♭ (Example 20).

Example 20, “Media Vita,” mm. 22-32
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“Geantrai” contains a similar gesture at its outset, with the first soprano carrying the melody line while the underlying voices sustain a repeated open fifth on E (Example 21).

![Example 21, “Geantrai,” mm. 7-11](image)

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The reiteration of the “hum” at the beginning of each bar adds a rhythmic impulse to the downbeats and supports the dancelike nature of the tune (Example 21). The conductor should place an accent on each of these to heighten the effect.

Later in the same piece, McGlynn uses the same effect but varies the texture by harmonizing the melody in the Soprano II and Alto parts while the men sustain an octave E (Example 22).

![Example 22, “Geantrai,” mm. 27-30](image)

© Warner Chappell Music Ltd. Reprinted by Permission. Continued on following page.
A similar effect is used in “Agnus Dei.” The opening of the piece consists of a solo tenor voice that sings the “Agnus Dei” text in Gaelic. Starting in measure 6 the theme is repeated and accompanied by held chords in the other choral voices (Example 23). The chords themselves vary from open sonorities with added ninths to more complex jazz harmonies. The principle of the sustained drone against a prominent melody remains in this instance but is made more vibrant by colorful and slowly evolving harmonies (Example 23).
McGlynn’s use of homophony, chants, and drones often looks to ancient music, recalling the organum of Leonin’s time. However, sometimes in his music ancient and modern attributes collide to create polyphonic textures. One piece of great interest is “Cormacus Scripsit,” primarily for its aleatoric section in measures 17-26 (Example 24). The passage contains repeated figures for the tenor and bass parts (to be sung separately by each singer), a free flowing chant for the alto section, and a notated solo line for a soprano soloist (Example 24). The effect is a stunning wash of unrelenting sound.

Example 24, “Cormacus Scripsit,” mm. 17-26
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McGlynn’s textures, while primarily homophonic, vary from austere to voluptuous when coupled with his sense of harmony and more modern techniques. The result is a body of work that contains both solid compositional thumbprints and fresh new musical vistas.

**Melodic Structure**

There has been much discourse regarding the proposed connections between Irish folk melodies and liturgical chant. In 1993, Ryan J. Wilson published his article “Assertions of Distinction: the Modal Debate in Irish Music,” in which he chronicles the work of those who attempted to show connections between chant and Irish melodic content, some of whom asserted that chant actually had an influence on the development of Irish folk music. 71 Other Irish musicians, such as Dr. James Culwick of Dublin, published writings that stated that Irish folk music is based on pentatonic scales and that these scales are not comprised of the same content

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as the diatonic modes. Whether or not Irish folk music grew out of Gregorian influences, traditional Irish music is modal in nature and therefore will always possess some similarities to chant. It is for this reason that McGlynn connects his modal writing, which is influenced by chant and medieval music, with Irish traditional music; however, his compositions and arrangements to do not reflect a traditional Irish style.

McGlynn’s arrangements and reconstructions of chant tunes obviously take their melodic content from the source material, so an examination of these works does not necessarily yield a window into the composer’s melodic style. However, other compositions show the influence of chant on McGlynn’s melodies. As was seen in Example 23, “Agnus Dei” begins with the a cappella tenor solo, the first phrase of which is completely intoned on a D as might happen in a chant. The mode of D dorian is used throughout the solo line, and the melodic content is very conjunct and stepwise. Even in some of McGlynn’s more rhythmic secular Gaelic works, such as “Ceann Dubh Dílis,” the melodies tend to be very stepwise. “Dúlaman,” while far from feeling the legato influences of chant in character, employs very stepwise motion and repeated notes and is also written in the dorian mode. However, it would not be correct to say that all of McGlynn’s material resembles Gregorian chant. The study of the Celtic Mass will show that he has written his share of more windingly chromatic melodies (“Ave Maria”) and even challenging, angular lines (“Kyrie.”) Still another movement from the Celtic Mass, “Codhlaím go Súan,” owes its inspiration to a melody by the French composer Faure. Even though McGlynn’s work bears the influence of chant he can clearly not be pinned into one pasture when it comes to his melodic writing.

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73 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
Of all the works observed, “Geantraí,” may have the most connections with traditional Irish music. The construction and phrasing of the melody resemble an Irish slip jig, or a jig written in 9/8. Like traditional Irish dance music, the melody is presented in two “strains” of equal length (Example 25). A common melodic form is A A’ B B’, but here McGlynn uses the form A A’ B C, a form commonly used in Irish reels (Example 25).

As can be seen from this example, the melody is mostly in E dorian but in the “C” portion McGlynn mixes modes by inserting the D# and G#, causing the final line of the tune to be in E major.

The overall melodic line present in the solo of “The Rising of the Sun” is very similar in structure and modal mixture. Over the course of the piece, the soloist sings 4 lines that follow the overall structure A A B C, with the “C” sections including a short extension at the end of each phrase. These lines are even more akin to traditional Irish music in that each one is divisible into two equal phrases. There is modal mixture in the overall piece, which progresses from C minor/C dorian to D dorian. The choir’s passages at the beginning of the work are in C minor.

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76 Ibid.
and alternate with the solo line that lies completely in C dorian (Example 7). Section “B” of the melody in measures 18-21 contains modal mixture in itself and employs cross relations between C dorian and C melodic minor (Example 26). These moments create great melodic interest in the work and require that the conductor procure a soloist who can not only learn to sing in Gaelic, but also do so with great attention to pitch accuracy and intonation.

Example 26, “The Rising of the Sun,” mm. 18-21
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While certain aspects of Irish traditional music are clearly a part of McGlynn’s melodic writing, his compositions are in no way a copy of familiar Irish folk tunes. Chant is also an influence on his writing, but it is not discernable in all of his works. He has a great diversity of style in his writing and his melodic content varies to suit the spirit of each piece.
Interpretive Issues

When selecting and preparing these works for performance it is important to keep certain issues in mind. First and foremost, one will want to select works that are appropriate for the skill level of the choir. Fortunately, McGlynn has written music of varying difficulties so there is truly something for everyone. Of the pieces studied, “Agnus Dei” is probably the most challenging due to its length and complex harmonies. The director will want to make sure the he/she has a tenor soloist that can handle the demands of this piece and a choir that can sing complex harmonies for a long period of time while maintaining good intonation. “Cormacus Scripsit” also presents some peculiar challenges, which shall be outlined later in this section. Conversely, “Media Vita” should be very accessible to many choirs. While the director will still need an agile tenor soloist for “Media Vita,” the choral parts are not at all difficult and the major concern in this work would probably be making sure that the running parallel fifths remain in tune. Among these and other works, however, there are additional concerns that one will want to keep in mind.

Perhaps first and foremost for many of these works is the Gaelic language. It is difficult for non-Gaelic speaking people to grasp, and works such as “Dúlaman” and “The Rising of the Sun” that require the soloist and/or choir to rattle off extended quick passages in Gaelic can prove challenging merely from a language standpoint. Fortunately, written and audio pronunciation guides and translations accompany the purchase of the works in Gaelic, so the conductor has a reference for this challenging language. It is best to start introducing the text in rhythm at a slow pace until the singers begin to get the feel of the words. Once they have mastered them at a slower pace, the conductor can gradually push the singers up to tempo.

Many of these works require percussion, and Anúna has even performed those without drum parts with percussion underpinnings (i.e., “Geantraí.”) McGlynn has listed specific
percussion instruments in many of these works but some merely list “drum” as the instrument, so the conductor will need to decide what sort of percussion sound he/she thinks is appropriate. One instrument worth considering is the bodhrán, an Irish drum played using a double beater. Anúna has performed “Media Vita,” for example, as a processional with a bodhrán player keeping time. Other traditional Irish instruments may prove difficult to procure and the conductor will need to plan for this. “Rising of the Sun” contains a part for ullieann pipes, a set of small bagpipes used in Ireland but not so common in the United States. Certain areas of the country may have more ullieann pipes than others, so depending on the location of the performance a substitution may be necessary. The instrument has a much wider array of notes available than the Scottish smallpipes, so the latter is not a suitable substitute. McGlynn includes a duplicate saxophone part with the purchase of the work, presumably due to this very problem. The saxophone does have the reedy quality of the pipes but does not sound very traditionally Irish; therefore, another substitution that has proved successful (and more authentic sounding) is the recorder.

Divisi is common in the men’s parts, as are low sonorities. The conductor will want to make sure that he/she has access to basses who are capable of singing low D’s and E’s. These divisi may also cause issues with tuning and balance, especially in works that require three way splits in the bass parts (such as “Christus Resurgens”), upon whom the upper parts rely for the foundation of sonorities. The choir will need to be trained to listen for all notes in the chord and to adjust accordingly.

Rhythm must be paramount when rehearsing these pieces. Counting must be precise and syncopations should be accented to support the character of the music. In works that present cross rhythms, the rhythm must be crisp and clear to achieve the full effect, preferably with an accent on each of the beats. It has been shown that the text of many works, particularly the ones
in Gaelic, is very percussive and therefore should influence the delivery of the rhythm and the words. In these cases a simple clear singing tone is best, with most of the energy being used in the delivery of the consonants. “Dúlaman” is an excellent example of this phenomenon, and when performing this piece one must have a soloist who can not only spit out the Gaelic quickly but can also do so with a simple tone that does not hamper rhythmic clarity. The choir will need to do the same and should focus on clear, centered pitch and rhythmic attack. In works written in 6/8, 9/8, and the like, performers will need to focus on the springing nature of these rhythmic groupings. Again, this is a situation in which the singers will need to use a simpler tone and focus more on the inherent attack and decay of the rhythmic groupings. McGlynn says that in his experience these groupings can actually be difficult for instrumentalists to play, so the conductor may need to think about shaping these groupings and how to impart these wishes to any instrumentalists involved.77

Some of the pieces actually present issues in pattern and decisions will need to be made regarding how to conduct these works. For example, “Miserere Miseris” has frequently changing and sometimes uncommon meters (such as 10/4). These time signatures are present to accommodate the chant, so the conductor will benefit from finding groupings of twos and threes as one would when conducting chant and organizing his/her pattern based on those groupings.

“Cormacus Scripsit” presents a different set of problems. How does one conduct the aleatoric section from measures 17-26 (Example 24)? Probably it is best that in this situation the conductor simply coordinate the disparate events that happen over the course of the page. He/she can indicate starting points for the tenor and bass groups and then let the individuals do their own thing. It is even possible (and sometimes recommended) to designate when each singer will

77 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
begin the assigned figure. The next event, the chant in the alto section, should be conducted in groupings of twos and threes. The final event, the soprano soloist, should not be conducted; rather, it is best at this point that the conductor merely indicates a starting point, allow the solo to occur, and then stop the ensemble when the asterisk in the score is reached.

Additional challenges occur in measures 23-37. Here the music is set up in individual cells that can best be described as “event groups” that all voice parts sing simultaneously (Example 27). The music is not barred; instead, the composer has indicated a slash at the beginning of each new musical event (Example 27). Here the conductor should only indicate downbeats at the slashes and train the singers to sing their individual parts independently. McGlynn handled the coordination of this challenging section in this way and says that the overall effect should be very fluid rather than a rigid reiteration of the written rhythmic patterns.

At measure 38, the music is barred as it is at the start of the piece and the conductor should return to beating a pattern (Example 27).

Example 27, “Cormacus Scripsit,” mm. 28-38
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While these works present their challenges, the music of Michael McGlynn is very rewarding and should continue to gain popularity among choral conductors. These well-constructed works are accessible to choirs of a wide variety of ages and skill levels and with proper preparation can be a highly successful addition to a group’s repertoire. Elements of both ancient and modern music give these works a unique voice in choral music and make them engaging and intriguing pieces for singers and conductors alike.
Overview

Michael McGlynn’s *Celtic Mass* was composed over a two-year period from 1990-1992. It was not written as a single work, nor was it originally called *Celtic Mass*. Separate movements of the mass have been recorded on Anúna’s various CDs (only the Gloria and Agnus Dei remain unreleased) but the mass has not, as of this writing, been recorded as a continuous entity. Even though the work is actually a compilation of individual pieces, the individual movements work very well as a whole. The *Celtic Mass* includes the expected Latin texts (Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus Dei) minus the Credo, but also contains Gaelic texts (“Codhlaím go Súan”) and settings of additional Latin texts (Pater Noster and Ave Maria.)

The *Celtic Mass* exhibits the musical characteristics previously discussed, but it also exhibits a variety of musical gestures in addition to those shown in Chapter Two. This diversity demonstrates that McGlynn’s compositional techniques are not static and predictable, but rather a varied language that makes the composer’s overall output of great interest. The influence of foreign music can be heard in such movements as the Kyrie, which the composer himself says resembles the style of Benjamin Britten, and the Pater Noster, which owes its inspiration to Bulgarian choral music. In addition, the melodic content of McGlynn’s setting of the Gaelic text “Codhlaím go Súan” is actually based on a Faure work, showing the influence of continental composition on the composer. Elements of Irish traditional music, particularly the organization

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79 In an email dated March 28, 2010, the composer stated that the compilation of the Mass was commissioned by Sara McInerney-O Malley; thus, it was originally called *The O Malley Mass*. Her name was later erased from the commission and the piece was renamed *Celtic Mass*. McGlynn felt that the association with Celtic culture would promote interest in the work.

80 Ibid.

81 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
of rhythms and meter, are evident in the Gloria and Incantations.\textsuperscript{82} The inclusion of Gaelic texts sets this work apart from a typical mass setting and infuses the work with tinges of Celtic spirituality as the texts are typical of Celtic fare due to their concentration on Christ in conjunction with nature.\textsuperscript{83} Finally, medieval influences can be heard in the intervallic content and cross rhythms used in the Gloria.

Rather than proceeding as a note-by-note analysis, this discussion of the mass examines the overall form of the work and highlights key compositional techniques used by the composer. The chapter should serve as a guide for further study of the Celtic Mass and give examples of the main issues that conductors will face when preparing this piece.

Kyrie

The Kyrie appears on Anúna’s Deep Dead Blue as well as their CD entitled Essential. The short movement is presented in two parts for soprano solo and mixed choir and is full of the colorful harmonies expected from McGlynn’s compositions.

\textbf{Text and Translation}\textsuperscript{84}

\begin{tabular}{ll}
Kyrie eleison & \textit{Lord, have mercy upon us.} \\
Christe eleison & \textit{Christ, have mercy upon us.}
\end{tabular}

One will immediately note that one difference between this setting and the expected setting of the Kyrie text is the omission of the final statement of “Kyrie eleison,” owing to the movement’s two-part musical structure.

\textsuperscript{82} Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
The angular melodic motive of the soprano solo (Example 28) paints the intent of the text, a plea for mercy, against the backdrop of the placid and predominantly wordless chorus of the first section of the movement. In this way the call for mercy and the response of peace are simultaneous.

Example 28, “Kyrie” from Celtic Mass, mm. 1-14
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This section is followed by a more active outcry in measures 16-19, which are intensified by the undulating chorus and rhythmic compression of the solo line (Example 29).


Overall Structure and Thematic Material

The Kyrie is composed in two sections to accommodate the two phrases of the Kyrie text present in this setting (Example 30). Both are comprised of the same melodic material in the solo soprano line but accompanied by slightly different choral accompaniments.

Example 30, “Kyrie” from Celtic Mass, overall form
Motivic Development

Motive x occurs at the start of each phrase of the solo line (Example 31). This motive is the only discernable repeated melodic material of the piece; the underlying choral parts act as accompaniment to the solo line and do not participate in the motivic development. Motive x is a collection of fifths that appears as an uncharacteristically disjunct melodic line (Example 31), which, as was shown in the discussion of text, helps to paint the urgency of the plea for God’s mercy.


Motive x is developed primarily through repetition. The melodic line of measures 6 and 7 is comprised of a reordering of the pitches of motive x; this reorganization makes the melody more compact (Example 29). Extensions of motive x in subsequent measures make use of the interval of a fifth, which is the structural basis for the motive (Examples 29 and 32).

Fifths as Structural Unifier

The melodic material itself is generated from motive x, which is comprised mostly of fifths. Each phrase of melodic material, after the initial statement of head motive x, prominently features the interval of a fifth sounded either by consecutive notes or filled in as a triadic outline (Example 32).

Example 32, “Kyrie” from *Celtic Mass*, melody only, mm. 9-14 © Warner Chappell Music Ltd. Reprinted by Permission.
Although the melody differs in character from those of McGlynn’s repertoire previously studied, the harmonic language is similar to that of jazz-tinged compositions like “Agnus Dei.” The choral accompaniment contains colorful harmonies and seventh chords formed by fourths and fifths between pairs of voices. For example, the sonority in measure one is formed by the fifth between the bass and alto and the fourth between the tenor and soprano. This sonority gives way to a Db7 chord formed by a fourth between the soprano and alto and a fifth between the tenor and bass (Example 33). The following two measures result from the same technique.

Example 33, “Kyrie” from *Celtic Mass*, melody only, mm. 1-4 © Warner Chappell Music Ltd. Reprinted by Permission.

In addition, as seen from the above example, there is an oscillation between G♭ and D♭ in the bass part. The alternation between these two pitches, separated by the interval of a fourth, occurs throughout the piece (Examples 28 and 29).

The overall harmonic form of the work is based on a large-scale movement from an altered dominant, in this case D♭, which is bV of the piece’s ultimate goal of G (Example 30).
The use of the interval of a fifth as a larger structural factor, as well as the tendency toward altering the dominant, will be seen in several movements throughout the *Celtic Mass*.

**Use of Modes**

The Kyrie is less obviously rooted in mode than many of McGlynn’s other works. The majority of the piece is in D♭ major; however, some tinges of Mixolydian are present. For example, D♭ is emphasized in measures 11-14 by C♭ rather than C (Example 28). Several other accidentals belonging to G major occur at the end of the first A section, foreshadowing the move to G at the close of the work (Example 28).

Measures 24 through 28 occur in G major. Only one note not belonging to the G major scale (E♯) is present in this section (Example 34). The presence of this note suggests a momentary mixture with Mixolydian, tying the close of A’ with the close of the first section.

**Interpreting Considerations**

The movement features difficult work for the soprano soloist, who is required to “float” a melodic line that is much more angular and disjunct than usually seen in McGlynn’s music. The beauty of this short choral gem, aside from its colorful sonorities, is a successfully legato presentation of this difficult melodic material, seemingly effortlessly achieved on Anúna’s recording. Any conductor planning a performance of this mass will want to procure an excellent soprano who is capable of creating a horizontal flow to this solo. It is best if the singer possesses a purer, simpler tone while still having the spin necessary to lend warmth to the line. Keeping these issues in mind, the conductor will want to ensure that a soloist who possesses these skills and qualities is secured for any performance of this work.
Blend and intonation are essential in this movement due to the close and colorful harmonies it presents. Attention to intonation becomes particularly important in the last two phrases of the movement beginning in measure 22 (Example 34), where the transition into the emphasis on G occurs and where notes with accidentals are most prevalent. Here the choir will need to pay special attention to whole steps versus half steps in their respective parts.

The final harmonic progression features the use of a whole tone ascent in the solo soprano line and a primarily chromatic descent in the bass line (Example 34). At measure 23, as the second tenor takes over the melodic interest, the soprano and alto parts descend in alternating major and minor chords for two measures and continue with strictly minor chords for the next two measures (Example 34). The bass, tenor 1, and soprano solo lines hold long notes (reminiscent of the drone of other works) as the women’s choral parts descend. The overall effect is a colorful descent to the final chord of the piece, which is actually a stack of fifths. The sonority can be reordered to form the pitch sequence G-D-A-E-B, displaying another method by which the composer features the interval of a fifth in his works (Example 34).

Example 34, “Kyrie” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 22-28
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Cues on breathing and phrasing can be taken from McGlynn’s own recordings of the piece. Although it is not notated in the score, the choir should break at the end of measures 6 and 8, creating two bar phrases and highlighting each separate statement of “Kyrie.” The same concept should apply to the moving choral parts (soprano and alto) in measures 17 and 19 (Example 33), while the men’s parts sustain through the phrase. In measure 22 (Example 34), the conductor should take time at the breath mark to allow the music to breathe momentarily rather than making beat three of that measure an eighth note followed by an eighth rest.

The Kyrie is short but does present some challenges for both choir and soloist. Although its structure is simple and it is composed of limited materials, the result is an ethereal work that draws the listener in and sets the stage for the movements that are to follow.

**Gloria**

The Gloria of the *Celtic Mass* has never been recorded, but a midi recording of the movement is available with perusal of its sheet music on the Anúna website. The Gloria relates to traditional Irish music in its use of triple and dotted rhythms. However, as the composer points out, it is also full of the medieval influences discussed in the previous chapter, including drones, parallel open sonorities, and repeated motives. In addition, the planing of m7 chords later in the work suggests the influence of jazz.

**Text and Translation**

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedictimus te. Glory in the highest to God. And on earth peace to those of good will. We praise thee. We bless thee.

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85 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
86 Ibid.
Traditionally, the Gloria has been set in three sections that denote the three affects of the text: a jubilant opening section to praise God, a more pensive section on the text beginning with the text “Domine Deus, agnus Dei, filius patris, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis” to consider Christ’s suffering and the humility of our prayers, and an exuberant closing section at “Quoniam tu solus sanctus” as the text returns to the celebration of God’s glory. In his setting, Michael McGlynn follows the same formula with one small alteration: he begins the second section in the middle of the textual phrase. Therefore, the first text heard at measure 85 is “qui tollis peccata mundi” (“who takes away the sins of the world.”) Here, the tempo slows, the music becomes more lyrical, and the forces are temporarily reduced (Example 35). In addition, the key signature abruptly changes on the downbeat of the section. All of these are conventions that illustrate the act of asking for God’s mercy.
Example 35, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 85-95
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By the start of the recapitulation at measure 115, however, the music has returned to its dance-like character (Example 36).

Example 36, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 115-123
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At times, the text setting resembles that of a Missa Brevis as several lines of text are combined in several voice parts so that the lengthy text fits into a more compact overall musical structure. McGlynn uses a similar technique in measures 66-81. As the choir repeats the phrase “Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te,” soloists enter with subsequent lines of the text (Example 37).

Example 37, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 66-81
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As in the Kyrie, there is an alteration to the text of the Gloria. The phrase “Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens” comes before “Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe” in the regular Gloria text, but here they occur in reverse order (Example 37).

**Overall Structure and Thematic Materials**

The movement may be analyzed as a modified sonata form. Traditional sonata form begins with an exposition comprised of an A theme group in the tonic key and a B theme group, usually in the dominant. These two theme groups can be likened to opposing characters in a drama, their purpose being to present and heighten musical conflict to be resolved in the final act. The sense of opposition between these two “characters” in sonata form is typically achieved through a contrast in both key and character. A bridge occurs between these two theme groups to create a transition between the two. The B theme group typically ends in the dominant and is followed by the development section. It is in the development section that the sense of conflict is typically at its zenith, moving through key areas and developing the motives presented in the A and B theme groups through such techniques as transposition, fragmentation, augmentation, diminution, or textural alterations. The development ends with a retransition into the recapitulation. The recapitulation restates the A and B theme groups, both in the tonic key to resolve the conflict, and the piece ends with a coda or codetta.

In this Gloria setting, the three major sections of McGlynn’s Gloria correspond to the three large sections of the sonata form. The exposition occurs in measures 1-84 and is made up of A and B theme groups that create contrast within the section. The development follows in measures 85-114 and develops motives presented in the exposition. The recapitulation begins in measure 115 and reprises all of the motives of the A theme group. The movement closes with a coda in measures 143-147.
**Celtic Mass: Gloria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exposition</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Recapitulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-36</td>
<td>61-84</td>
<td>Motives x, y, and z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x, y, and z</td>
<td>planing m7 chords</td>
<td>Coda: 143-147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The A theme group is in 6/8 and asserts G as the note of structural importance. This is achieved through the presence of a drone on the pitch G and through the directional tendencies of the melodic material (Example 39).

Although the exposition contains three individual motives, these motives are presented and combined to suggest a unified theme group. Motive x, first seen in measure 5, contains the springing rhythms of 6/8 like traditional Irish music.

Example 38, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, overall form

The A theme group is in 6/8 and asserts G as the note of structural importance. This is achieved through the presence of a drone on the pitch G and through the directional tendencies of the melodic material (Example 39).

Although the exposition contains three individual motives, these motives are presented and combined to suggest a unified theme group. Motive x, first seen in measure 5, contains the springing rhythms of 6/8 like traditional Irish music.

Example 39, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 1-7

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Motive y begins in measure 13 and is characterized not only by its dotted quarter-eighth-quarter pattern but also by its harmonization in parallel 4ths and 5ths. As a result, the entrance of the full choir at measure 13 is, according to the composer, “much more medieval in concept.” Motive x continues in the bass solo underneath motive y in the upper voices (Example 40).

Example 40, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 13-19
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Motive z appears starting in measure 21. Its rhythm is also a dancelike line in 6/8; its melodic content features a mixture of both sharp and natural fourth scale degrees (Example 41). Motive z always appears as a motive group comprised of one part singing the rhythmic motive on a repeated pitch and a second part singing both rhythmic and melodic motivic material (Example 41).

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88 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
A bridge occurs in measures 37-60. At first glance this section does not function as a typical transition to another key area; however, it hints at the upcoming tonal opposition in other ways. The G drone in the organ pedal is briefly abandoned in favor of a dropping fifth sequence (Example 42).
Typically a sequence is a strong signal of the transition and arrival at an opposing key, but this one ultimately leads back to the G pedal (Example 43). The real conflict is the interplay between the women’s and men’s voices. As seen in the previous example, the men’s theme is firmly rooted in G, while the women’s responses spell a Dm7 chord. In addition, the organ part in measures 55-57 consists purely of an alternation between G and D, accompanied by the G pedal. The last three bars of the transition feature the G drone in the pedal against a collection of pitches, played on the manuals, which spell a Dm7 (Example 43).

Example 43, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 52-60
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The B theme group follows in 9/8 at measure 61. The return to a Dm7 chord at the beginning of each choral phrase places a structural emphasis on this sonority, suggesting a
dominant-tonic relationship with the A theme group center of G (Example 44). The continued presence of the drone helps to intensify the conflict between the two thematic characters.

Example 44, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 61-65
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The celebratory nature of the texts and the constant presence of G join theme groups A and B into an exposition, but the changes in meter and melodic content, as well as the presence of planing in theme group B, give the A and B theme groups their own individual characters. The structural emphasis of the Dm7 chord also adds to the traditional sense of conflict and opposition expected in sonata form.

A short development section begins in measure 85. While there is no extensive development of the themes from the exposition, the section does resemble traditional developments in its harmonic structure. While the B theme group of the Gloria favored Dm7 as
the dominant, the development begins with an emphasis on C#, a full tritone away from the pitch center of the exposition. This key change occurs abruptly on the downbeat of the development (Example 45).

Example 45, “Gloria” from Celtic Mass, mm. 85-95
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As in a traditional development, McGlynn’s development progresses through a number of modes in a short span of time, finally arriving at a mixture of C major and C natural minor (Example 46). Typically an extended dominant signals the end of the development section. McGlynn satisfies this expectation with the return to the drone in the organ and bass parts.

Example 46, “Gloria” from Celtic Mass, mm. 96-115
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Because of the modal mixture on C in these closing measures, the G pedal actually functions as a dominant rather than a return to the original mode. In addition, McGlynn’s use of the rhythmic portion of motive y in a mode other than the tonic qualifies measures 106-113 as a retransition, as would also be expected at the end of a traditional development section (Example 46).

The recapitulation begins in 115. It, as expected, centers on G and returns to the original brisk tempo (Example 47). There is no recapitulation of the B theme group as expected in sonata form. However, a conflict between the theme groups is still present. While the soprano 1, tenors, and basses sustain the G drone, the organ part recalls the transition portion of the exposition with its combination of the fifths sequence and repeated Dm7 chord (Example 48).
Example 47, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 115-123
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Example 48, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 139-142
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A short coda section on the text “Amen” closes the movement. Unlike a typical sonata form, a sense of tonal opposition is still clear, even in the final chords. Although not all chord members are present, the collection of pitches suggests a combination of G and Dm9 chords (Example 49).

Example 49, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 143-147
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**Motivic Development**

Repetition serves as the development of the motives of the Gloria. Rather than exploring possibilities for manipulation of the rhythmic and melodic materials present in the music, McGlynn typically develops the motives by juxtaposing one against another in the musical fabric. For example, both motives y and z are presented simulataneously with motive x. The first instance occurs at the entrance of motive y in measure 13 (Example 40). The women sing motive y against motive x in the bass solo while the tenors participate in the rhythmic portion of
motive y, although with altered melodic material. Another example occurs starting in measure 27 (Example 50), where motive x in the bass solo is pitted against motive z in the women’s voices.

Example 50, “Gloria” from Celtic Mass, mm. 27-33
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Development through restatement is not reserved for only the vocal motives. The organ motive in B theme group provides the melodic interest of the section and is developed purely by repetition (Example 37).

McGlynn also develops the motives by transposition. Starting in measure 13 (Example 40), the sopranos present motive y once starting on G and a second time starting on D. All of the surrounding voices remain centered on G, creating an implied tonic-dominant conflict. Consequently McGlynn develops the motive not only by altering the pitch level of a single voice part but also by altering its harmonic relationship to the other voices.
A similar situation occurs in measures 21-36. Motive z is first presented in the soprano parts starting on D. The motive is then repeated at the same pitch level (Example 41). The third and fourth statements of the motive occur not only juxtaposed against motive x in the bass solo but also at two simultaneous pitch levels: D in the altos and G in the sopranos with the first sopranos carrying the drone portion of the motive on G (Example 50).

In measure 139, McGlynn uses a similar technique for the final statement of motive z. While the sopranos sing the motive starting on G with the accompanying G drone, the altos sing the motive starting on D while the tenors provide the drone accompaniment on D (Example 48). It is important to note that all of these techniques exploit the tonic-dominant relationship between D and G, further adding to the expected sense of conflict within sonata form.

There is some use of fragmentation in the movement. In the bridge portion of the exposition, fragments of motive x in the men’s parts alternate with the women’s Dm7 chords (Example 42). Likewise, 107-110 develops motive y through a brief fragmentation and repetition at descending pitch levels (Example 46).

**Fifths as a Structural Unifier**

McGlynn continuously employs the interval of a fifth (and its inversion, the fourth) as an important structural device. The interval commonly occurs as the harmonic interval between voice parts. It also is found in the overarching structure of the work, highlighted in various ways to emphasize the tonic-dominant conflict within sonata form.

McGlynn’s voice leading commonly features parallel fourths and fifths between the voice parts. The first example of this can be seen in measures 13-20 between the sopranos and altos (Example 40). Another good example can be found in measure 37 (Example 51). Here
McGlynn’s choral writing resembles fauxbourdon in its use of parallel first inversion chords, also seen in other sacred and secular works by the composer. The prominence of the parallel fourths in this voicing adds to the medieval flavor of the music.

Example 51, “Gloria” from _Celtic Mass_, mm. 34-42
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Parallel fourths and fifths also appear in the voice leading of the choral parts of theme group B (Example 52). Although the chords formed are seventh chords, a look at the underlying motion of the voices reveals parallel fifths between the alto and soprano 1 and parallel fourths between the tenor and soprano 2 (Example 52).

In the recapitulation, added layers of fifths and fourths in the vocal parts add to the drama as the movement nears its close. In addition, a dominant-tonic movement can be felt as the highest voice moves from a drone on D (alto) to a drone in the sopranos on G (Example 53).
Example 52, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 61-64
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Example 53, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 132-138
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In several instances the colorful harmonies formed are the result of stacks of fourths and/or fifths. At the close of the bridge, the choral chord moves from an implied Dm7 to a more curious sonority which may be restacked in fifths to create the pitches C-G-D-A-E (Example 54.)
The same set of pitches makes up the content of the final “Amen” chords (Example 49), a stack of fifths rearranged to create the sounding sonority and suggesting G versus Dm9.

A large-scale movement from I to V and back to I is not uncommon within Western music, and this movement, especially in its relationship to sonata allegro form, adheres to this standard. However, the conflict between tonic and dominant is often present within the smaller subsections of the Gloria and is achieved though several different means, including transposition of voice parts and the simultaneous presence of G and D as two different structurally important notes.

The transposition of motive y in the soprano 1 part from a center of G to a center of D creates an inversion of motive y, and is the first instance of tonic vs. dominant opposition in the movement (Example 40). Because the soprano voice is the highest and most prominent, the movement from G to D implies a movement from tonic to dominant even while the overall mode is still grounded by the drone on G. A similar effect can be found in measures 132-138 (Example
This time the highest sounding voice moves from a D in the alto part to a G center in the soprano 1. Here McGlynn is not only using the fifth as the interval between voice parts but is also establishing a tonic versus dominant conflict.

Another example is found at the arrival of the B theme group in measure 61 (Example 44). The emphasis on Dm7 by its repetition at the start of each phrase is in direct conflict with the G drone still present in the organ pedal. This conflict is perpetuated with the entrance of the solo lines; the first solo phrase begins on D, affirming the Dm7 sonority, while the second begins on G, affirming the pedal tone (Example 37). In measures 77-84, the organ left hand initially plays a melodic pattern centered on G while the right hand plays a repeated Dm7 chord. This conflict is repeated in subsequent measures on various pitches: A versus Em7, and F versus C minor 7 (Example 37).

McGlynn also exploits the fifth relationships in the piece by altering the dominant at key points in the structure. Most often Dm7 is established as the dominant for this piece; however, the development starts with an emphasis on C#, a tritone away from G (Example 45). The use of a tritone as an altered dominant is a common thread through the mass and further illustrates the importance of the fifth as a structural device in McGlynn’s work.

**Use of Modes**

McGlynn uses a variety of modes throughout the Gloria, sometimes mixing them to create new scales. In addition, his choice of and juxtaposition of modes give further importance to the conflict between tonic and dominant in this work.

Motive x is comprised of both major and minor modes. The bottom half of the scale used to form motive x (G, A, B, C) is a G major scale, while the top half is a G natural minor scale
with the D missing (E♭, F, G). This mixture of modes creates a new sound and gives motive x its unique flavor.

Example 55, “Gloria” from Celtic Mass, mm. 8-12, bass solo  
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Motive y is written in harmonic minor. Because the motive is always written in parallel fourths or fifths, both G and D harmonic minor are present simultaneously, furthering the opposition between tonic and dominant modes (Example 56).

Example 56, “Gloria” from Celtic Mass, mm. 13-19, motive y  
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Motive z is a mix of dorian mode both with and without a leading tone, another instance in which modes on D and G are often present simultaneously (Example 57).

Example 57, “Gloria” from Celtic Mass, mm. 139-142, motive z  
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In theme group B, the planing of the choral parts creates a modal pattern that implies a dominant-tonic-dominant progression (Example 58).

Example 58, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 61-68
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At the start of the development section, McGlynn continues the pattern of tonic-dominant conflict by placing a sustained G#7 chord (V of C#) underneath of the melodic material in the right hand of the organ and in the soloists’ parts. An examination of the collection of pitches in measures 85-95 reveals C# mixolydian (Example 59).

The dominant-tonic relationship between the sustained organ chord and the melodic material ends after this point. The accompanying chords in the following measures are instead comprised of interlocking fifths pulled from the mode being explored (Example 45). The chord on the downbeat of 96 contains the notes A# and E (D5) and C# and G# (P5), all of which belong to F mixolydian. The A# of the chord, still held under the E major portion of the melody, provides a sense of conflict in this mode due to its tritone relationship to the tonic; however, this conflict quickly gives way to a new sonority on the downbeat of measure 102 (Example 45). This chord is made up of two fifths from E mixolydian: D and A (P5) and F# and C# (P5).

Throughout the Gloria, McGlynn uses modes in creative ways to enhance the inherent tonic-dominant opposition in sonata allegro form. While modes such as D dorian and C# mixolydian do not function as dominants, McGlynn examines and exploits the idea of the dominant-tonic relationship through the use of these altered V modal areas.
Interpretive Considerations

Many of the conducting issues inherent in this movement involve rhythm and attack. Overall, the conductor will want to concentrate on the rhythmic stress of the 6/8 meter and bring out its dancelike character. The choir should be encouraged to sing with a light, springy quality and to emphasize attack and decay on unstressed beats. For contrast, the B theme group (starting at measure 61) should have a more sostenuto feel, but the rhythmic precision and energy of the A theme group must always be present.

Intonation is a consideration when preparing this movement. The conductor will want to ensure that parallel open intervals are perfectly in tune. Such is the case starting in measure 13, where the soprano and alto parts move in parallel 4ths for four measures (Example 41). In measure 17, the soprano 1 doubles the alto line in octaves, thus forming parallel fifths with the soprano 2 line (Example 41). Care must be taken to promote good intonation so that these intervals ring within the choral texture. The planing of m7 chords that occurs in the B theme group (Example 58) will also require sensitivity to intonation, and in these spots the choir should adopt a more transparent, simple tone and sing to the center of the pitch so that the color of these chords can be clearly heard.

Special attention should be paid to notes with accidentals. Specifically, the choir must be aware of C versus C# and F versus F# when they occur in the score. These cross relations occur throughout the score but are key to the melodic material of motive z (Examples 41 and 50). Finding pitches at measure 61 could initially be a challenge and should be drilled, but it should be pointed out that the organ chord plays these pitches on the downbeat of the measure (Example 58).
There are a number of instances in this movement where the choir will need to bring out cross rhythms and syncopations in the music. Often these shifts to duple in one or two voice parts are pitted against another voice part that is still moving in triple rhythms. In these cases it is very important for the conductor to isolate the independent voice parts so that the singers can be precise in counting their own parts. These contrasting parts should then be rehearsed together so that the singers can get used to the feel of the rhythmic conflict and can bring out the sense of opposition by adding emphasis where needed. An excellent example of this phenomenon occurs in measure 29, where the women’s parts alternate duple and triple groupings (motive z) and the bass solo and drum are in a constant triple feel (motive x). In this case the first note of each two-note grouping in the women’s parts should be given a slight emphasis to reinforce the contrast between the y and z motives. The bass solo, likewise, should be trained to emphasize the first note in each three-note grouping (Example 60).

Example 60, “Gloria” from Celtic Mass, mm. 27-33
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A similar situation occurs in measure 135 (Example 61). Here, the bass solo is the only
voice moving in three-note groupings (motive x); all other voices are progressing in a duple feel
(motive z). The organ and drum are also in 6/8. Rehearsal will be required to achieve rhythmic
precision among the various elements and to ensure that the cross rhythms between voices and
instruments are brought out. Done well, the conflicting rhythmic patterns add life and vitality to
this music and add to its energetic, engaging quality.
At some points in the movement the cross rhythms occur in alternation with the regular 6/8 feel. This is the case in beginning in measure 46, where the word “Gloria” is repeated in alternation between the women’s and men’s parts (Example 62). The women’s statement is an interjection of the word in a 2+2+2 rhythmic pattern, while the men answer with a statement of motive x in a 3+3 pattern. Both women’s and men’s statements need absolute rhythmic clarity and an emphasis on strong beats. This is especially important in the women’s parts; McGlynn has indicated a tenuto stress over each note suggesting that he definitely wants to play up the contrast between the consecutive conflicting rhythms.

Example 62, “Gloria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 43-51
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Two sudden changes in tempo will require planning and practice on the part of the conductor. These changes occur at measure 85, where the development section begins (Example
45), and at measure 115, where the recapitulation begins (Example 47). In measure 85 the tempo abruptly drops to dotted quarter note equals 80, so some coordination with the organist will be required. At measure 115, the music returns to its initial tempo of dotted quarter note equals 100. There is a natural temptation to insert an accelerando over the course of measures 107-114 (Example 46); however, according to the composer’s markings, no tempo change is indicated until the recapitulation. The conductor will need to ensure not only that the tempo remains steady through the end of the development but also that s/he promptly hits the return to tempo I. The choir may need to rehearse this tempo change to secure the feel of the two speeds.

The conductor will also need to make sure that the closing “Amens” are well balanced (Example 49). There is a sudden 8 part homophonic texture in these last few measures and all notes should be heard equally. In the final two measures, one might consider a slight revoicing in which the soprano 1 section divides into two parts to sing the top two notes, all of the soprano 2 section sings the D, and all altos sing the A. This redistribution of notes will help with intonation and balance and ensure that the final chords are not too top heavy.

**Codhlaím go Súan**

The third movement, “Codhlaím go Súan,” was originally composed for a competition before taking its place in the *Celtic Mass*. In the context of the mass, it is placed in the role of a responsorial and features verse sections sung by a soprano soloist that alternate with a sung choral refrain. “Codhlaím go Súan” was conceived as a lullaby in a rocking 6/8, and the Irish text, written by the composer, speaks of sleeping softly within the heart of Christ. A recording of the work appears on Anúna’s 2004 CD release, *Christmas Songs.*
The text was written by the composer and is meant to reflect the cycle of birth, life, and death, all the while in the presence of Christ. The text setting is syllabic, allowing for a clear understanding of the beautiful verse being put forth. The lullaby feel of the music reflects the image of sleeping within the heart of Christ as described in the refrain text and also brings to mind connections with Gaelic folklore and the three strains of music described by the ancient Gaels: *geantráí* (joyful song), *goltráí* (lament), and *suantráí* (lullaby). Another connection between this text and Celtic culture is its reflection of how the early Irish church perceived the

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*Text and Translation*

Téann sé leis an ngaoth, tagann s'e ar na dtonnta.
Comhlionann sé mo ghui, nuair a ghlaochaim i ndoircheacht na hoiche:

Súan, súan, súan, codhlaim go súan, a Íosa;
Súan, súan, súan, codhlaim go sámh id' chroí.

Nochtar é sa tús san leanbh nua bheirthe,
Maireann sé sa chroich ar scaradh anam is coirp;
Súan, súan, súan, codhlaim go súan, a Íosa;
Súan, súan, súan, codhlaim go sámh id' chroí.

Do sharú níl ann ar throicaireacht nó grá,
ní féidir do chumhacht a thuiscint.
Is tusa mo mhuinteoir s'treoraí, codhlaim go suan id' chroí.

---

He comes with the wind, he goes on the waves.
He hears my prayer when I call him in the darkest moment of the night.

Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly, my Christ.
Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly in your heart.

Naked he stands at the dawn in the newborn child.
He is there at the end as the soul parts the body.

Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly, my Christ.
Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly in your heart.

There is no one so full of mercy and love,
there is no way to understand your goodness.
You are my teacher and guide, I sleep softly in your heart.

---

revelation of God. In the eyes of early Irish worship, God was present in all of nature. Phrases such as “He comes with the wind, he goes on the waves” echo these historic views on the omnipresence of God and his connections with nature. This tendency will be seen even more clearly in the text of the following movement, “Incantations.”

**Overall Form and Thematic Materials**

This lovely and highly accessible movement follows the format of a responsory, in which the leader sings a phrase answered by a congregational response. The A sections of the work, as well as one contrasting C section, are carried by the soloist, while the B sections are sung by the choir (Example 63).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>11-18</td>
<td>19-26</td>
<td>27-34</td>
<td>35-42</td>
<td>43-50</td>
<td>51-58</td>
<td>59-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 (intro)</td>
<td>4 + 4</td>
<td>4 + 4</td>
<td>4 + 4</td>
<td>4 + 4</td>
<td>4 + 4</td>
<td>4 + 4</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Harp, Solo | Harp, Solo, SA | Harp, Solo | Harp, Solo, SA | Harp, Solo, SATB | Harp, Solo, TB | Harp, SSATB, Violin | Harp, Solo SSATB, Violin |

6
8

mp——p——mp——p——mf——p

C dorian

---

*He comes with the wind, he goes on the waves.*

*He hears my prayer when I call him in the darkest moment of the night.*

Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly, my Christ.
Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly in your heart.

*Naked he stands at the dawn in the newborn child.*

*He is there at the end as the soul parts the body.*

Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly, my Christ.
Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly in your heart.

There is no one so full of mercy and love, there is no way to understand your goodness. You are my teacher and guide, I sleep softly in your heart.

Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly, my Christ.
Softly, softly, softly, I sleep softly in your heart.

---

Example 63, “Codhlaím go Súan” from *Celtic Mass*, overall form

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As seen in example 63, the overall form resembles that of a song. The A sections, scored for soloist and harp, are the verses of the song structure (Example 64).

Example 64, “Codhlaim go Súan” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 1-10
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The choir joins the soloist in response to each verse with B, a refrain (Example 65).

Example 65, “Codhlaim go Súan” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 11-18
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A bridge (section C) begins at measure 35 (Example 66). Here the full choir serves as accompaniment to the soloist’s contrasting melodic material.

Example 66, “Codhlaím go Súan” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 31-38
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Three statements of the refrain end the work (Example 67). McGlynn skillfully keeps the listener entranced during this repetition by gradually complicating the texture and adding more instruments and voices each time. After an austere setting with just the solo line, harp, and men’s drone on C, McGlynn adds a violin solo and women’s choir. A final choral statement of B (starting at measure 59), with solo violin and wordless soprano solo, bring the movement to a close (Example 67).

Example 67, “Codhlaím go Súan” from Celtic Mass, mm. 41-61
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Suan, suan, suan, codhlaim go suan, a lós, suan, suan,
Motivic Development

The melody moves in four bar phrases, with the second phrase being a modified version of the first. In this way McGlynn achieves both continuity and variety in the construction of the melody (Example 68). The second A section is a repeat of the first with some minor rhythmic changes to accommodate the text (Example 69).

Example 68, “Codhlaim go Súan” from Celtic Mass, mm. 1-10
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Example 69, “Codhlaim go Súan” from Celtic Mass, mm. 16-25
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The modal quality of these verse sections recalls Irish traditional music, but there is more than Celtic influence in this work. McGlynn says that the refrain is actually based on Faure’s “Après un rêve” and, as such, bears the influence of European continental music more so than that of the Irish musical canon. The following examples show Faure’s original melodic phrase and McGlynn’s subsequent adaptation of the material.

Example 70, “Après un rêve” by Gabriel Faure, mm. 1-4

Example 71, “Codhlaím go Súan” from Celtic Mass, mm. 11-15

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93 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marroli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
The melodic material of B remains the same for each repetition. McGlynn develops the final three statements of B through repetition and addition of forces (Example 67). The first statement, sung by the soloist, is accompanied by the harp and by the men’s drone on the pitch C. At 51 McGlynn places the melody in the soprano 1 and adds the violin and women’s voices as well as a tenor drone on the pitch G, and at 59 he adds the solo descant (Example 67).

C is another example of development through repetition. The melody is stated twice, the second statement being a literal repeat of the first with rhythmic alterations for the text (Example 72).

Example 72, “Codhlaím go Súan” from Celtic Mass, mm. 31-42
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Fifths as a Structural Unifier

Fifths and fourths form the foundations of harmonic and melodic structure in this movement. In addition, they are often present in the voice leading as well as the pitch interval between voice parts.

The bottom notes of the harp part are almost exclusively C, F, and G, forming the bass movement for the piece. The pervasive i-iv-V progression shows the composer’s reliance on fifths for harmonic structure (Example 73).

Example 73, “Codhlaim go Súan” from Celtic Mass, harp part mm. 6-15
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Even as the harp part becomes more active at the second statement of A, the bass movement in fifths is clear (Example 74).

Example 74, “Codhlaím go Súan” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 16-25
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At measure 34, the men enter on a drone on the pitch C. This bass note is sustained through section C and is strengthened by the harp part on the downbeat of each measure (Example 75).

Example 75, “Codhlaím go Súan” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 31-40
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The bass movement in fifths resumes with the return of B at measure 41 (Example 76). However, only C and G are present in the bass line and the men sustain a drone on the pitch C, suggesting that the movement in the bass line of the harp part is the fifth of the C minor chord rather than a harmonic change.

Example 76, “Codhlaim go Súan” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 41-50
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The final statement of B includes the original i-iv-V progression to conclude the piece (Example 77).
McGlynn’s melody employs fifths and fourths at various structural levels. Each phrase of section A begins with a perfect fourth, and the span of the majority of the melody is a fifth (Example 78). While the beginning of the second phrase of A leaves the confines of that span, the first two notes combined with the first two notes of the first phrase are a stack of fourths that spells the pitches G-C-F (Example 79).

McGlynn alters the source material for section B (Example 70) by presenting the first three notes in augmentation (Example 79). By stretching out the duration of these pitches, the composer emphasizes not only the fourth between G and C but also the fifth between G and D (Example 79).
In the harp part, McGlynn often writes accompanying melodic motives constructed in fifths and fourths. This tendency is clearly seen starting in measure 18 (Example 80), in which McGlynn almost exclusively uses perfect intervals to create the harp accompaniment. The harp part starting in measure 51 also prominently features fifths and fourths as its structural basis (Example 81).
The movement features pervasive use of fifths and fourths between voices as well as parallel voice leading. One example can be found in the harp at measure 11 (Example 82), in which the right hand exploits the interval of a fourth while the left hand is written in fifths.
In section C, the women’s parts are comprised of triads that move in parallel motion, highlighting the outer interval of a fifth (Example 83). In addition, the end of the section features sonorities created from pitches stacked in fifths that move in parallel motion.
In the final statements of section B, fifths are employed in multiple ways. In addition to the melodic and underlying harmonic use of the interval, the tenor and bass sustain a drone on G and G and the soprano and alto parts move in parallel fifths and fourths (Example 84). In addition, the final sonority of the work is an open fifth on the pitches C and G.
Use of Modes

The presence of the A natural (rather than A flat as suggested in the key signature) places the work in C dorian, connecting it with Irish traditional music (Example 85).

Example 85, “Codhlaím go Súan” from Celtic Mass, melody only, mm. 1-10
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C dorian is present throughout the work, and the pitch C is further established as the structurally important note through the use of drones. An example of this occurs in section C, which contrasts with sections A and B due to its mixture of C dorian with C mixolydian (Example 86).

Example 86, “Codhlaím go Súan” from Celtic Mass, mm. 36-40
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The modal mixture of dorian and mixolydian reappears at the final statement of B, in which the E natural (mixolydian) in the solo line conflicts with the E♭s (dorian) in the surrounding voices (Example 87).

Example 87, “Codhlaím go Súan” from Celtic Mass, mm. 62-66
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**Interpretive Considerations**

While “Codhlaím go Súan” is considered a part of the Celtic Mass, it is entirely appropriate to program this work independently. It is very lyrical and accessible and would be a great crowd pleaser as part of a performance of multiple works or as an anthem within a church service. The score calls for harp as the accompanying instrument but states that organ or piano
accompaniment is also acceptable, so procuring an instrument should not be any object when considering a performance of this piece.

As in the Kyrie, selection of a proper soloist is essential. The qualities required for the Kyrie soloist are the same as those needed for successful performance of this movement. If the work is being performed as a whole, obviously the same singer can be used throughout the work. If the movement is being performed independently, one will need to keep the same considerations of lightness of tone and good intonation in mind when selecting the soprano soloist for “Codhlaim go Súan,” and she will also need to have a facility with languages to be able to learn the Gaelic text.

Gaelic, in fact, can be considered a concern in itself. Fortunately in this work the tempo is slow, unlike some of McGlynn’s other works in which the singers need to spit out a large amount of Gaelic text very rapidly. Also, the majority of the text falls on the soloist, so the choir only needs to learn the pronunciation for the “súan, súan, súan,” refrain, which is mostly sung only by the sopranos and altos. This makes tackling the text infinitely easier from the standpoint of teaching the choir. The remainder of the text is the responsibility of the soloist, so the conductor need only focus on teaching a small amount of text to the choir. This is an attractive aspect if one is interested in programming a Gaelic work but is intimidated by the challenges of the language.

A listen to McGlynn’s recording of the work with Anúna shows that the first portion of the refrain should be sung without breaths or lifts between the three statements of “súan” (Example 82.) After the third “súan” the choir should breathe but with the feeling that the phrase will continue on. The overall energy of the line should not collapse or feel interrupted at this point. The same practice should apply each time this musical idea occurs. There are several
At certain points in the work the women’s parts are actually split three ways, so the conductor will need to create a three way split for the sake of balance (Example 86). The same formula can be used for the two closing refrains (Example 83), keeping in mind that the soprano
I statement of the melody must remain prominent in the choral texture. The composer labels each of the last three statements of the refrain as being piano, but with the addition of forces in each occurrence there will certainly be some increase in dynamic throughout the end of the work, as is the case on the Anúna recording (Example 67).

Overall the music of this movement is very accessible and does not pose very difficult problems for conductor or choir. The rhythmic issues present in some of McGlynn’s pieces are not at work here, and attention to tuning, selection of the soloist, and musical details will makes this a stellar moment in the performance of the mass as well as a welcome addition to any other concert performance.

**Alleluia: Incantations**

“Incantations” acts as the Alleluia of McGlynn’s mass. It, like the previous movement, is composed on an Irish text written by the composer and was written for a competition before being assimilated into the *Celtic Mass*. It is a very tightly and skillfully constructed work that showcases the interval of a fourth in its melodic materials as well as the triple rhythms that have come to be associated with traditional Irish tunes. “Incantations” can be heard on Anúna’s 1997 CD recording, *Cynara*.

**Text and Translation**\(^9^4\)

'S Tusa an dámh, 's Tusa an éan, 's Tusa an t-iasc, aililú.
'S Tusa an ghaoth, 's Tusa an fúacht, 's Tusa an mhuir, aililú.
'S Tusa an ghrian, 's Tusa an réal, 's Tusa an spéir, aililú.
Aililú mo Íosa, aillú mo chroí, aillú mo Thiarna, aillú mo Christ.

You are the stag, you are the bird,  
You are the fish, alleluia  
You are the wind, you are the cold,  
You are the sea, alleluia.  
You are the sun, you are the star,  
You are the sky, alleluia  
Alleluia my Jesus, alleluia my heart,  
ALLELUIA my Lord, alleluia my Christ.

This text even more obviously recalls the ideas of early Irish spirituality in its portrayal of Christ as being one with many things in nature. The very title of the work, “Incantations,” connects the movement with ancient Irish prayers. There appear to be a number of Celtic prayers that would have been chanted “in rhythmic verse with a strong beat, whose recitation might, perhaps, have been accompanied by the bodhrán...”  

While the bodhrán is not present in the score for “Incantations,” the text setting reflects the rhythmic quality described above and evokes the feeling of quickly chanted verse. Motive z, which is predominantly characterized by the quick reiteration of text on a single note, very clearly illustrates this concept (Example 89).

![Example 89, “Incantations” from Celtic Mass, motive z]

The setting of the text, as is typically the case in the Mass, is syllabic. This method of text setting, coupled with its quick tempo of dotted quarter note equals 130, further connects this work to the idea of rapid chanting of prayers and thus with its namesake (Example 90).

![Example 90, “Incantations” from Celtic Mass, mm. 1-6]

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Overall Structure and Thematic Materials

A close look at “Incantations” reveals that it is quite similar in structure to the Gloria and may be analyzed as a modified sonata form (Example 91). The exposition contains both A and B theme groups and introduces motives x, y, and z. A short development section manipulates two of the motives through fragmentation, and a recapitulation of both A and B theme groups closes the movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Structure and Thematic Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Exposition begins with a brief introduction in which motive x, a repeated eighth note motive, establishes G as the foundational note in the A theme group (Examples 90 and 92).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motive y occurs for the first time starting in measure 3 and consists predominantly of the interval of a fourth. (Example 92) The final measure of the motive brings in the element of cross rhythm that is so common to McGlynn’s work and which will be further developed in the following sections (Example 92).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Celtic Mass: Incantations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exposition</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Recapitulation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A theme group: 1-19</td>
<td>B theme group: 20-31</td>
<td>A: 50-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B theme: 58-74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
3 \text{ (intro) } \cdot 4 + 4 + 4 + 4 \\
3 \cdot 3 + 3 + 4 \\
4 + 4 + 4 + 1 \\
4 + 4 \\
3 + 3 + 3 + 4 \div 4
\]

**Motives x and y**

**Motive z**

**motive x (frag), motive y (aug)**

**Motive x**

**Motives x and z**

---

*You are the sun, you are the star, you are the sky, alleluia*

*You are the wind, you are the cold, you are the sea, alleluia*

*You are the stag, you are the bird, you are the fish, alleluia*

*You are the stag, You are the bird, You are the fish, alleluia.*

*Alleluia, My Jesus, alleluia my heart, alleluia my Lord, alleluia my Christ.*

*Alleluia, My Jesus, alleluia my heart, alleluia my Lord, alleluia my Christ.*

Example 91, “Incantations” from *Celtic Mass*, overall form
Example 92, “Incantations” from Celtic Mass, mm. 1-18
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The bridge occurs in measures 12-19 (Example 92). While this section does modulate to a new key area like a traditional bridge, motive y is transposed up a fourth, suggesting a center of C against the unrelenting G in the bass (motive x). In addition, the altos sing motive x on the pitch D (Example 92). This method is a creative means of establishing conflict without actually leaving the modal center.

Theme group B begins in measure 20 (Example 93).
Traditionally a sense of conflict is established in theme group B through a change in mode, but McGlynn’s version brings rhythmic, rather than modal, opposition. While motive x still centers on the pitch G, which is reinforced by a repeated movement to F natural and back to G, a new motive (motive z) consists of a stepwise pattern that spans a fourth and uses a cross rhythm that creates rhythmic conflict when alternated with motive x (Example 93).

The development begins in measure 32. In this section the pitch of motive x changes to D, the dominant of the original center of G (Example 94).

Example 94, “Incantations” from Celtic Mass, mm. 28-35
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McGlynn’s development also explores motivic and modal development. Motive x appears in the altos in fragmentation. Against this the sopranos, split into soprano 1 and 2, sing a fragment of motive y in augmentation and in canon with each other (Example 95). In measure 43, the space between entries shrinks to 1 beat, adding to the sense of rhythmic compression in this section. Additionally, the men sing an even further augmented version of the same fragment of motive y (Example 95). The varying levels of rhythmic speed in this section, coupled with
cross relations between F and F#, make this a short but very dramatic section that ultimately ends in a full measure of rest.

Example 95, “Incantations” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 36-49
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The recapitulation begins at measure 50 (Example 96). G has reemerged as the note of structural importance and is reinforced by motion to both F and A\textsuperscript{b} in the bass.

As expected, in the recapitulation motives of both the A and B theme groups appear in the tonic mode. Motives x and z appear simultaneously at measure 58, and motive y is added at measure 63 (Example 97).

A short closing gesture on motive x starts at measure 71 to end the piece (Example 98).

As in the Gloria, a strict rendering of sonata form is not present in “Incantations,” but the influence of the form can be felt in the overall structure and sense of contrast.
Motivic Development

“Incantations” is very tightly composed and generated from three melodic ideas that McGlynn very skillfully weaves into a solid musical work. The motives are developed through repetition, fragmentation, and combination with each other.

Aside from measure 37, in which a fragment of motive y is presented in canon (Example 95), motive x is most often seen in fragmentation. In measures 7-12 McGlynn uses a fragment of motive x and adds voices singing the motive on pitches other than G (Example 99).
In the development section the altos sing an even smaller fragment of motive x on the pitch D, employing both fragmentation and transposition (Example 100).

Motive y is also developed through transposition. At measure three “y” occurs in G major, then is transposed up a fourth at measure 12 (Example 101).
The development of motive x continues in the recapitulation (Example 102). The three men’s parts move in parallel fifths until the last beat of measure 55, at which point the first tenor sings a third above the second tenor. In addition, the rhythmic writing mixes the triple eighth note pattern of motive x with the 2+2+2 pattern of motive z.

Example 102, “Incantations” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 50-57
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In the recapitulation McGlynn simply restates the motives and places them simultaneously in opposing voice parts (Example 97). This method of motivic manipulation adds to the sense of conflict inherent in McGlynn’s sonata form.
**Fifths as a Structural Unifier**

McGlynn uses fifths and fourths as a means of constructing melody and creating harmonic structure. The interval of a fourth is the basis for motive y, which is not only constructed in fourths (Example 103) but is also developed through transposition up a fourth (Example 101).

Example 103, “Incantations” from *Celtic Mass*, motive y
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McGlynn establishes a tonic-dominant relationship between the exposition and development through motive x, which occurs on G in the lowest voice throughout the exposition (Example 92) and on D in the alto part throughout the development (Example 95). McGlynn typically uses held or repeated notes to establish a sense of modal center and his treatment of motive x is another example of this practice. In addition, in the bridge he establishes a conflict between G in the bass part and D in the alto parts (Example 104).

Example 104, “Incantations” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 13-18
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Parallel fifths are also present in the voice leading. An example of this can be found in the recapitulation, where the men sing motive $x$ predominantly in parallel fifths (Example 102). Parallel fifths are also found in the development in the bass divisi (Example 105). In addition, three of the four men’s harmonies in this section are constructed in fifths. The first chord is G-D-A, a stack of fifths. The second sonority is a Gm7 chord created by interlocking fifths, and the final chord can be respelled B-F-C-G (Example 105). This four-chord sequence is repeated throughout the development.

McGlynn sums up the importance of the fifth in the final chord of the movement, which is C-G-D-A, a stack of fifths (Example 98).

**Use of Modes**

McGlynn creates interest in “Incantations” by using various modes on the pitch G. In the A theme group, he uses a mixture of G major and G mixolydian, suggested by the use of both F#
and F natural in motive y (Example 106). This modal mixture is present throughout the movement and creates an unusual energy and sense of instability and forward motion within the work.

Example 106, “Incantations” from Celtic Mass, motive y
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In the bridge, the transposition of motive y leads to the presence of B♭ and absence of F♯, suggesting a shift to G natural minor mixed with G mixolydian (Example 107).

Example 107, “Incantations” from Celtic Mass, mm. 13-18
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In the B theme group McGlynn uses only motives x and z, leading to the absence of the F♯ in motive y. As a result, the pitches in this section suggest G mixolydian with no mixture present (Example 108).
In the development, while the altos sustain motive X on the pitch D, the men’s parts create modal opposition between G dorian in the bass parts and D major in the tenor parts (Example 109). The mixtures of modes is heightened in the soprano parts, which feature the cross relation between F♯ and F natural.
Because the recapitulation features all of the motives simultaneously, the pitch collection suggests a G chromatic scale. All of the pitches are present except for E natural (Example 110).

Example 110, “Incantations” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 58-64
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**Interpretive Considerations**

The Gaelic text is definitely a source of difficulty in this movement and the teaching of it will need to be approached slowly and methodically. Once pitches and rhythms of the piece have been learned, the conductor should have the choir chant the text slowly in rhythm on a single pitch so that the singers can become comfortable with its pronunciation. Once this is achieved, the choir can begin to sing the piece on text at a slow tempo that should, over the course of the rehearsal period, be increased to that of the performance.

As in most of McGlynn’s works, rhythm and counting will also be a rehearsal issue for this piece. The choir will need to feel the difference between duple and triple and bring out the emphasis of each beat grouping as it occurs in the music. This will become especially important
in the recapitulation when all three motives occur simultaneously, thus creating a feeling of two against three between voice parts (Example 97). In this case previous suggestions of isolating the competing rhythmic groupings and ensuring that the singers bring out the first note of each grouping still apply.

Intonation may be an issue due to the cross relations in the piece (F versus F# and B versus B♭) as well the parallel fifths that often occur in the men’s parts. The cross relations pose an even greater issue in measures 43-48, where the two soprano parts are in close canon with each other, creating multiple instances in which the two parts create the dissonance of a 2nd (Example 95). Dissonance is also present in the men’s parts in this section, and there is at least one 2nd present in the chords formed by the tenors and basses in almost every measure. Care should be taken to ensure that the choir perceives these tuning hazards and works to preserve the intonation of these sections.

“Incantations” is an excellent example of a tightly composed work generated from an economy of means. The movement shows just how skillful McGlynn is with form and motivic development not only through repetition but also through transposition, fragmentation, augmentation, and combination of multiple motives in a single fabric. Like “Codhlaím go Súan,” it also can be performed independently of the Celtic Mass and would make an excellent addition to any choral program.

Ave Maria

“Ave Maria” appears on Anúna’s CD release Behind the Closed Eye, which also features musicians from the Ulster Orchestra. It is scored for a soloist and string quartet and is the only portion of the Celtic Mass that not only requires the string quartet but also does not use the chorus. These are, however, not the only ways in which “Ave Maria” differs from the other
portions of the Mass. While the primary string motive follows McGlynn’s frequent practice of proceeding in successive first-inversion chords (revealing the influence of fauxbourdon) and alternates between duple and triple rhythms, the melodic content of this work is much more winding and chromatic than has been previously seen in his output.

Text and Translation

_Ave Maria gratia plena, Dominus tecum_  
_Benedicta tu in mulieribus,_  
_Et benedictus fructus ventris tui,_  
_Jesus._  
_Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,_  
_ora pro nobis peccatoribus_  
_nunc et in hora mortis nostrae._  
_Amen._

_Hail Mary, full of grace,_  
_The Lord is with you_  
_Blessed are you among women,_  
_And blessed is the fruit of your womb,_  
_Jesus._  
_Holy Mary, Mother of God_  
_Pray for us sinners_  
_Now and in the hour of our death._  
_Amen._

In this setting McGlynn divides the text into two sections, repeating the second section to create a third musical idea. The first section, which corresponds to the initial A section, addresses the holy nature of Mary. The second section of the text is set by the repeat of section A. Over the course of these lines, the speaker pleas for her intervention on our behalf. In the B section of the movement, McGlynn chooses to repeat the text “Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus nunc et in hora mortis nostrae,” and the music at this point reflects an increased intensity within the plea (Example 111). The chromaticism of the line, the increase in dynamic from piano to forte, and the rhythmic compression in the string parts (owing to the predominance of triplets rather than duplets in these measures) all paint a more desperate plea for Mary’s assistance (Example 111) before the soul quiets for the final “Amen.” This movement is one of McGlynn’s more dramatic instances of text painting.

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Overall Form and Thematic Materials

“Ave Maria” is composed in the form A A B, with the contrasting final section ending using the closing material from the A sections at a different pitch level. The A sections are actually comprised of two macro phrases, a and a’, which are phrased in patterns of 3+3=2 and
3+2, respectively (Example 112), providing an alternation between two and three in the phrase rhythms that will also be reflected by the rhythms within the melody.

**Example 112, “Ave Maria” from Celtic Mass, overall form**

Much of the musical development of the piece occurs through the repetition and slight variation of three motives. The first of these motives, motive x, generates much of the material for the string quartet. Like fauxbourdon, motive x begins and ends with an open fifth on C, while all of the intermediate musical materials consist of parallel first inversion chords (Example 113). It is also interesting to note that because motive x begins and ends on the same open fifth on C, statements of the motive can overlap and create a continuous motion (Example 114).
Motives y and z make up the majority of the soloist’s melodic content in the A sections. The resulting melody is much more winding and chromatic than has been previously been seen from the composer and proceeds over motive x in the strings (Example 114). A small closing gesture occurs in the strings to end the macro phrase (Example 114). The rhythmic alternation between duplets and triplets inherent in motives x and y is found in the string orchestra in this section. A quick motion from G to C in the cello coupled with the formation of a Gm7 chord on the last beat of measure 9 form a cadence-like figure that closes macro phrase “a.” (Example 114).

Example 114, “Ave Maria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 1-14
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Macro phrase “a" uses motive y and a figure that dwells on the opening minor third of motive z (Example 114). Another important figure appears in the cello in measure 11 (Example 114). This figure closes all three sections of the piece.

In the following section, McGlynn repeats all of the previous musical materials but creates variety with the addition of a violin 1 obligato (Example 115).

Example 115, “Ave Maria” from Celtic Mass, mm. 16-18 © Warner Chappell Music Ltd. Reprinted by Permission.
Section B begins in measure 28 and involves a great deal of triplets for the string quartet and a much more chant-like and syllabic line for the soloist (Example 116).

Example 116, “Ave Maria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 32-34

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A three-measure phrase on the word “Amen,” accompanied by the cello closing figure, concludes the movement (Example 117).

Example 117, “Ave Maria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 32-34
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**Motivic Development**

Repetition is the main means of motivic development in this movement. Motive x is repeated three times in the “a” portions of section A with one alteration: in the initial statement of motive x the final chord is a B\(^b\) chord in first inversion, while in statements two and three of the motive the final first inversion chord is B minor (Example 118).

Example 118, “Ave Maria” from *Celtic Mass*, strings mm. 1-6
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Motives y and z experience minor alterations, usually due to rhythmic changes in the text. An excellent example of this occurs in measures 19-21, in which motive z contains all of the same pitches as measures 6-8 but the rhythms are altered slightly (Example 119).

Example 119, “Ave Maria” from *Celtic Mass*, comparison of vocal mm. 6-8 and 19-21 © Warner Chappell Music Ltd. Reprinted by Permission.

The cello closing figure ties measures 32-34 to “a¹” through the use of the same material with one adjustment. Instead of beginning the phrase on E♭ as occurs in the previous two sections (Examples 114 and 116) he begins on D and transitions back to the starting pitch level (Example 117).

**Fifths as a Structural Unifier**

McGlynn exploits the fifth in this movement primarily through the use of parallel fourths in motive x (Example 113). The use of fauxbourdon-like voice leading is not reserved for motive
x, however. Parallel fourths between the violin parts are present in the closing sections of A (Example 120).

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Example 120, “Ave Maria” from Celtic Mass, strings mm. 11-14
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This voice leading is also used in section B, serving to unite the two sections of the piece (Example 121).

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Example 121, “Ave Maria” from Celtic Mass, strings mm. 29-31
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McGlynn’s closing sonority is, as is the case in other movements, built in fifths. The notes may be restacked as Eb-Bb-F-C-G (Example 122).
Use of Modes

“Ave Maria” is much more chromatic than McGlynn’s other works and largely features 12-note scales. For example, all of the notes of the C chromatic scale are present in the melodic motives of section A except the D natural, which is present in motive x in the cello (Example 123).

Example 122, “Ave Maria” from *Celtic Mass*, strings mm. 29-31
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Example 123, “Ave Maria” from *Celtic Mass*, strings mm. 1-8
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The main structural note in measures 29-31 is D (reinforced via repetition in the cello part), although examination of all of the notes of all parts in measures 29-30 reveals the presence of all twelve pitches of the D chromatic scale (Example 124). In measure 31, the soloist sings all of the notes of the ascending D dorian mode (Example 124).

Example 124, “Ave Maria” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 29-31
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Interpretive Considerations

This movement, like the two movements before it, could certainly be performed independently of the rest of the Celtic Mass if one wished to use it as an “Ave Maria” within the context of a worship service. The voice part of the soloist is not specified in the score, although McGlynn’s recording of the work with Anúna is done using a soprano soloist and this is most likely what it intended. It is also interesting to note that the singer chosen for this work has a much fuller, weightier tone than the soprano soloist in previous movements. The drama of the melodic line certainly lends itself to the use of a more colorful voice, and a conductor performing this work may want to consider using a different soloist (perhaps a mezzo soprano) for this movement.

One issue to which the conductor will need to attend in this movement is the shaping of the instrumental lines. Motive x poses an interesting question of phrasing in that it by nature overlaps itself (Example 114). Should the open fifths on C sound like the beginning or the end of the phrase? It will be up to the conductor to decide how s/he would like the string players to approach this issue. Also, in general there are no bowings marked in the score, so it will be up to the conductor to decide how the phrasing of the string parts should proceed.

Measure 28 poses several issues, namely the fermata on beat 2 and the subsequent entrance of the soloist (Example 111). Should the soloist enter directly on the cutoff of the fermata or pause for dramatic effect? In McGlynn’s recording, there is a moment of hovering silence before the soloist launches into the B section, and the conductor will most likely want to allow the soloist to enter on her own, leaving the baton tip up upon the cutoff of the fermata and poised for the downbeat of measure 29. A similar situation occurs at the end of measure 31 (Example 111); in this case the conductor will want to cut off the string quartet as written and
allow the soloist to hold the D on her own. On McGlynn’s recording, there is a moment of silence between the conclusion of the soloist’s held note and the beginning of measure 32, so the conductor will most likely want to pause before the final three measures of the piece.

Sanctus

“I remember visiting Europe for the first time in my mid teens and walking through gigantic cathedrals, listening to the choir practicing somewhere away in the distance. The air positively hummed with energy. Generations of people had given these buildings an overpowering sense of the ancient and intangible. That is what I tried to capture with ‘Sanctus.””

These words by Michael McGlynn very aptly describe the effect of “Sanctus,” which appears on the CDs Anúna and Anúna: Celtic Origins. This ethereal and otherworldly movement captures the essence of the text and gives the listener the sense of coming into contact with something that is both ancient and without the confines of time. It is scored for three soprano soloists, mixed choir, and harp. The score also indicates that the conductor may choose to begin and end the piece with three strikes of a finger symbol, which McGlynn does on his recorded version.

Text and Translation

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth
Pleni sunt caeli et terra Gloria tua
Osanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini
Osanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy
Lord God Sabaoth
Heaven and earth are full of your glory
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The character of the musical setting captures the mystical nature of the text. McGlynn sets the “Sanctus” portion of the text twice to create the first two sections of the piece. This portion of the text is first sung by the soprano soloists in section A (Examples 127-129) and then carried by the tenor soloist in section B (Example 130). The “Benedictus” is confined to the repeat of A and this text occurs only in the choir soprano/alto statements of motive z (Example 125).

Example 125, “Sanctus” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 51-57
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**Overall Form and Thematic Materials**

The movement is in A B A’ form, created by the sections of the text (Example 126).
Example 126, “Sanctus” from *Celtic Mass*, overall form

The Sanctus uses three distinct motives as the building blocks for its melodic material. Starting in measure 2, the soprano 1 and 2 soloists sing motive x in canon while the third soprano voice answers with melodic material that seems as though it could be finishing the thought set up by motive x (Example 127).
Measures 17-21 feature a three voice canon on motive y, which is again finished by an answering phrase sung in unison, first only by sopranos 1 and two and finally joined by the third soprano (Example 128).

Example 128, “Sanctus” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 15-21
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The third motive, motive z, is sung by all three soloists in unison and repeated three times to conclude section A (Example 129).

Example 129, “Sanctus” from *Celtic Mass*, women’s parts, mm. 22-35
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The middle section of the work is comprised only of the drone and a solo tenor who sings a chant-like melodic line. The section is meant to be very free, and the tenor soloist will need to dictate the ebb and flow of the line (Example 130).
Measure 51 marks the beginning of A’, which features the drone in the men’s voices, a canon on motive x between the three soprano solos, and the choir sopranos and altos singing motive z in unison (Example 131). This is another example of how McGlynn takes various elements and combines them to create the choral texture.

Example 131, “Sanctus” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 51-57
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Motivic Development

As in previous movements, repetition is a primary means of motivic development. An example of this is the threefold repetition of motive z by the soprano soloists (Example 129). However, in this movement McGlynn adds interest to the repetition by making extensive use of canon. (Examples 127, 128, and 132).

At the end of the movement McGlynn not only combines the motives but also presents them in canon. Beginning in measure 58, the choir sopranos and altos repeat a fragment of motive z as the soloist canon temporarily trails off. The entrance of the soprano I solo is delayed by one bar to start in measure 63 and renews the canon for one more cycle before fading off into unison C’s decorated by the chromatic grace note D♭. The movement fades into the distance with the open fifth drone on F (Example 132).

Example 132, “Sanctus” from Celtic Mass, mm. 58-71
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Fifths as a Structural Unifier

This movement is permeated by drones on F and C. Often this drone is presented as a bass divisi (Example 132). In section B, all of the voice parts sustain a drone on these pitches under the tenor solo line (Example 130).

Opposition between F and C is also present in this movement. The opening five bars feel as though they are in C minor due to the melodic lines and the drone on C (Example 133). In measure 6 the appearance of D♭ in the third soprano foreshadows the emphasis on F minor established by the drone on F and C in measure 9 (Example 133). This establishes not only a v-i relationship between the first and second phrases but also a conflict between c minor and f minor in the melodic lines.
Example 133, “Sanctus” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 1-14
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This conflict is compounded in the final section of the piece, in which motives x (suggesting C minor) is combined with motive z, clearly rooted in f minor, and with the bass drone on F and C (Example 134).

Example 134, “Sanctus” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 51-57
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Use of Modes

Despite the conflict between F and C, the drone throughout the work establishes F as the note of structural importance. Throughout the movement a mixture of F minor and F dorian is suggested by the use of both D natural and D♭ (Example 133).
Interpretive Considerations

This movement contains a number of performance issues that will need to be tackled by the conductor. The presence of the harp, with its swirls of glissandi, is atmospheric and adds a sense of mystery and color to the “Sanctus.” The notated figure (Figure A) is meant to be an approximation of rhythms and pitches and should be played very freely, as is creating a cloud of incense around the vocal lines (Example 129). In addition to understanding the approximate nature of the harp figure and deciding on the use of the finger cymbal at the opening and close of the movement, there are unusual aspects to the performance of this work. The sustained drone on “Oh” that begins in measure 9 (Example 133) is actually described in the score as “a form of harmonic singing. Form the mouth into an ‘oh’ shape, lifting the soft palate. Without moving the mouth shape, move the tongue slowly into the shape ‘ee’ (as ‘she’), sending the sound through the nose. The lower the voice, the stronger the sound.” McGlynn’s instructions, along with Anúna’s recordings of the work, should serve as good resources for the conductor to guide the men of the choir into making this sound. As is always the case with sustained pitches, there is a danger of pitch fluctuation with these drones and it is important that the choir concentrate a great deal on listening and intonation.

The tenor solo in section B should flow freely, like chant. To reinforce this fact, no barlines are indicated in the solo tenor line (Example 130). The choral voices are metered and sustain throughout this section on a drone. The conductor will most likely want to give slashes to indicate the downbeats of each measure, which would be most beneficial for the harpist who will need to count bars of rest. In any case, a clear cue for the harp entrance at measure 51 will be necessary, as will a clear indication for cessation of the harp’s Figure A by the time section B begins (Example 130).

Another interesting issue raised by this movement is the placement of the three soprano soloists. In the score McGlynn indicates that it is desirable for there to be some distance between these soloists, so the conductor will want to be as creative as possible and effectively use the space available when placing them. When selecting the soloists, the conductor will want to pursue a lighter, more shimmery quality along the lines of the soloist in the Kyrie and “Codhlaim go Súan.”

The melody of the soprano solo lines, although not unmeasured like the tenor solo, still bears the influence of chant and should have the same mystical character and legato flow. This piece has the feeling of continuousness throughout time, as if it has no beginning or end and simply comes across the listener’s consciousness for a few minutes before fading back into time and space. As such, the drone should feel, as much as possible, as if it is fading in from the distance and then out again at the conclusion of the movement. In all decisions the conductor should keep in mind the composer’s vision that the piece feel as if it is coming from somewhere in the distance, from the treatment of the drone to the placement of the soloists and character of their performance.

**Pater Noster**

The “Pater Noster” of McGlynn’s Mass is very much influenced by Bulgarian Chant.\(^{100}\) This influence can be heard very clearly in this movement as both soprano and tenor soloists engage in some very florid, chant-like singing, while the choral parts form many colorful clusters and jazz harmonies. These two influences collide to form a short but haunting setting of the “Pater Noster” text, which can be heard on the CD *Anúna*.

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\(^{100}\) Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.
Text and Translation  

Pater Noster, quie es in coelis,  
Sanctificetur nomen tuum  
Ad veniat regnum tuum  
Fiat voluntas tua  
Sicut in caelo et in terra  

Panem nostram quotidiamem da  
nobis hodie, et dimitte nobis  
debita nostra sicut et nos  
dimittimus debitoribus nostris.  
Et nenos in duca in tentationem,  
Sed libera nos amalo. Amen.  

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
as earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass  
against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. Amen.  

McGlynn sets the text in three sections. The first of these addresses God and declares his holiness and the supremacy of his will. The text setting overall is very syllabic. Even in the more chant oriented solo lines, McGlynn chooses a more recitative style, setting one note per syllable and giving the effect of a prayer that is being intoned (Example 135).

Example 135, “Pater Noster” from Celtic Mass, mm. 4-10  
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The second section moves into the desires of the petitioner. Here the tenor chant tune is much more active and ornamented than in the soprano solo of section A, and the accompanying choral rhythm is more active, lending forward motion to the phrases and reflecting the urgency of the plea (Example 136).
In the final section, McGlynn chooses to repeat the last phrase of the text, “Et nenos in duca in tentationem, sed libera nos amalo” (“and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”) before setting the final “Amen” (Example 137).
Overall the composer’s treatment of the Pater Noster reflects the nature of the text: an important prayer whose text should be clear and understood rather than obscured by any sense of ostentation.

**Overall Form and Thematic Materials**

“Pater Noster” is written in a three-part A B A form (Example 138). The sections are distinguished from each other by the presence of a pedal note that establishes centricity. In A, the C pedal serves to establish a centricity for the section (rather than using traditional harmonic relationships to establish tonality). The Gb pedal in the B section suggests a shift to a Gb center, while the return to the C pedal in A’ rounds out the work.

![Celtic Mass: Pater Noster](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-11</td>
<td>12-19</td>
<td>20-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4, 5-6, 7-11</td>
<td>12-13, 14-16, 17-19</td>
<td>20-24 Gb, 24 Gb, 26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C pedal</th>
<th>gb pedal</th>
<th>C pedal</th>
<th>Ab9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>bV7</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, as earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Example 138, “Pater Noster” from *Celtic Mass*, overall form

The A sections are distinguished by a C pedal and homorhythmic writing for the choir (Example 139).
Whenever the solo lines are present, the choir immediately takes a more subsidiary role within the texture. The arrival of the soprano solo in measure 8 results in longer note values for the chorus as well as a sustained “oo”, causing the choral voices to fade into the background in favor of the more highly active solo line (Example 135).

In the B section, the drone moves from C to G♭ and the challenging tenor solo provides the melodic interest. The choral role in this section is reduced to accompaniment as the tenor takes center stage with a very florid and chant-like lines that evokes an otherworldly, ethnic feel (Example 140). McGlynn was influenced by Bulgarian Chant in the writing of this work, and there is most certainly a more Eastern affect to the melodic writing of this section.  

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Example 139, “Pater Noster” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 1-3
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102 Michael McGlynn, email interview by Karen Marrolli, October 4, 2009, computer audio recording.

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The final section is a repeat of the second macro phrase of A, and the movement closes very mysteriously on an $A^b$ augmented chord with an added $b^7$ and $9$. A movement to the bass note $A^b$ signals the end of each macro phrase in the A sections, but this is the only instance in
which this unstable sonority is present, and as a result there is no sense of finality or resolution at the end of the movement, but rather a sense that we are still waiting for God’s grace (Example 141).

Motivic Development

In this movement McGlynn does not create and develop melodic motives. Instead, he repeats a succession of color chords throughout the A sections (Example 142).

Example 142, “Pater Noster” from Celtic Mass, mm. 8-11
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In the opening bars McGlynn draws out this harmonic motive due to the syllabic text setting for the choir (Example 138), whereas in the above example the soprano carries the text while the choir provides a chordal accompaniment. At measure 20, McGlynn repeats the second statement of A but alters the last measure by changing the final sonority (Example 141).

**Fifths as a Structural Unifier**

In this movement, the fifth plays an important role not only in the structure of chords but also in the overall harmonic structure. All of the chords in this piece are comprised either of interlocking fifths or in stacks of fifths. For example, all of the sonorities in the chordal motive are seventh or ninth chords and therefore are constructed from interlocking fifths (Example 143).
The middle section of the piece features not only interlocking fifths but also stacks of fifths and tritones. In measure 14, the choral sonority is formed from the pitches Gb-Db-Ab-E(TT)-Bb(TT), while the following chord is created from the pitches Ab-Eb (P5) and C-Gb (TT) (Example 144).

![Chromatic Diagram](image)

Example 144, “Pater Noster” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 14-15
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The final choral chord is made up of interlocking fifths and tritones: Ab-E (TT), C-Gb (TT), E-B (P5) (Example 145).

![Chromatic Diagram](image)

Example 145, “Pater Noster” from *Celtic Mass*, final chord (choir)
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The combination of fifths and tritones is carried over into the overall harmonic scheme of the piece. The basses sing a C pedal throughout the majority of section A while the other choral voices change sonorities on top (Example 136). In section B, G\textsubscript{b} is the pedal note (Example 140). A brief shift to a G pedal precedes the return to the C pedal at measure 20 (Example 137). This is another instance in which we see an altered tonic-dominant-tonic relationship over the course of a piece, in this case i→\textsuperscript{b}V7-V7-i.

**Use of Modes**

The presence of the C pedal combined with the collection of pitches in the majority of the A section suggests a modal center of C dorian (Example 139). Measures 5 and 6, however, contain elements of C minor, C major (E\textsubscript{b} versus E) and G\textsubscript{b}, furthering the structural importance of the tritone (Example 146).

![Example 146, “Pater Noster” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 4-7](Image)

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The middle section of the piece contains the G\textsubscript{b} pedal but uses an odd mixture of pitches that creates the exotic feel of this passage. Many of the notes used in measures 12-16
suggest a mixture of $G^b$ and $G^b$ mixolydian; however, the presence of the C natural creates a conflict with these modes (Example 147).
The B section overall uses all twelve pitches of the chromatic scale. Measure 17 includes B\textsuperscript{bb} (A) that seems merely ornamental, but in the following measure the bass pedal shifts to G, and A and D appear in the upper voice parts (Example 148).

Example 148, “Pater Noster” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 16-19
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Interpretive Considerations

Intonation is of primary concern in this movement due to all of the close harmonies and pedal tones. Pitches often wander over the course of repeated notes, and the bass section will especially need to be aware of this tendency and not allow the intonation of pedal notes to sag. Soloists chosen for the chant lines will need to possess a lighter, more agile tone in order to maintain good intonation and to handle the florid turns and chromatic grace notes in these sections. The chords and clusters will need to be perfectly balanced among the voice parts. This may be especially difficult in places where a great deal of divisi is present, such as in measure 4 where the sopranos are divided three ways. It is advisable to revoice this so that the alto 1 section is singing the third soprano A, achieving a four way split in the women’s parts. Overall the choir will need to be very attentive to listening making sure that all notes of the clusters can be heard equally.

The conductor will need to have a clear sense of phrase direction, especially for sections in which the harmonies are very static, and will need to train the choir on phrasing and arrival points. Sensitivity to the inflection of the text should help in this matter. The choir should be instructed to sing as if intoning a chant and should phrase the musical line toward important syllables. There should always be a sense of forward motion to the phrase and the choir should never feel as if it is simply moving from chord to chord without a destination in mind.

In addition, there is a marking for the music to slow slightly for the duration of the B section. A new tempo is not specified, so it will be up to the conductor to decide at exactly what tempo s/he would like the section to proceed without departing too far from the initial tempo. In measure 21, tempo I returns with the entrance of the soprano solo, so the conductor will need to coordinate this tempo change with the soloist (Example 137).
Because of the nature of the composition of the Celtic Mass, most of the movements seem appropriate for independent performance, and “Pater Noster” is no exception. This piece could work very well by itself as an addition to a concert program or as a choral rendering of the Lord’s Prayer in a worship service.

Agnus Dei

The final movement of the Celtic Mass, this is the only section of the work besides the “Gloria” that is not available on a commercial recording. It is composed for mixed chorus, mezzo-soprano soloist, violin, and organ and its three-part structure reflects the traditional three statements of the Agnus Dei text. While all three sections are based on the same structural material, variations in scoring create contrast and interest in this brief movement.

Text and Translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.</td>
<td>Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.</td>
<td>Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.</td>
<td>Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Agnus Dei text is set in a very syllabic style that makes the words clearly understandable, and the text stress flows very well with the melodic line. As was the case in previous movements of the Celtic Mass, the divisions of the text create the various sections of the work. In this case, the repetitive nature of the text also informs the element of repetition in

---

the musical structure. However, McGlynn does not literally repeat the melody three times, but rather uses the repeated melodic material as a basis for variation in forces, dynamics, and modal center.

Interestingly enough, the final statement of the text “dona nobis pacem” is a moment of clear harmonic conflict in the movement (Example 149). The music comes to rest on an Am7 chord in measure 21, which would be understood as an altered dominant to D in McGlynn’s style. From measure 21 to the end the soloist holds a pedal E over the final choral chords, which, after a few initial clusters, seem to be formed from an opposition between E in the tenor and bass, whose parts are essentially a decorated open fifth on E, and D in the women’s parts, who alternate D major and minor chords (Example 149). The repeated move to C in the tenor forms a Dm7 chord with the women, further solidifying the sense of opposition with the octave Es formed by the soloist and bass section (Example 149). If the destination is peace, clearly we have not arrived by the end of the Agnus Dei.

Example 149, “Agnus Dei” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 21-23
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Overall Form and Thematic Materials

The form consists of three statements of section A, with the second two being variations of the first. Each section corresponds to a section of the text (Example 150).

Celtic Mass: Agnus Dei

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A_1</th>
<th>A_2</th>
<th>A_3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>11-16</td>
<td>17-23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1-4 (intro), 5-8 mm 2, 8 mm 3-10

Solo, Violin, Organ
S/A (last measure)

Solo, Organ.
SATB chorus accompanies

SATB sing soloist’s melody, Solo sings new material (descant).
Violin, Organ

Example 150, “Agnus Dei” from Celtic Mass, overall form

Section A_1 features the soloist accompanied by the organ. The women of the choir enter merely as punctuation at the end of the section (Example 151).

Example 151, “Agnus Dei” from Celtic Mass, mm. 1-10
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In A₂, the choir remains in an accompanimental role as the soloist repeats the text (Example 152).
In A₃, the choir takes over the “Agnus Dei” theme while the soloist sings a descant comprised of new melodic material. There is also a sudden change of mode and dynamic in this section for added contrast (Example 153).
**Motivic Development**

As shown in the previous examples, the melodic material is developed by sectional repetition. McGlynn states the melody three times in service of the three statements of the Agnus Dei text; however, he varies the sections through changes in texture, instrumentation, dynamics, and pitch level (Examples 151-153).

**Fifths as a Structural Unifier**

Fourths, being the inversion of the fifth, create the underlying harmonic structure of the sections. In each statement of A, the organ pedal notes employ a short D2 sequence that ascends by fourth and descends by fifth (Example 154).

![Example 154, “Agnus Dei” from Celtic Mass, organ, mm. 5-10](image)

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As shown in the previous example, there is a slight disruption in the pattern in measures 8-9 as the pedal descends by a sixth and up a fourth, but this is only the case in A1. In subsequent statements the sequence lasts only four bars and the singers complete the phrase (Example 155).

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Example 155, “Agnus Dei” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 11-16
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There is also minor use of parallel fourths in the voice leading. In measures 11 and 12, parallel fourths appear in the women’s three-way split (Example 151).
Use of Modes

The mezzo-soprano melody in the first two A sections favors a center of E♭; however, this key center is obscured by the organ accompaniment and its preponderance of color chords and accidentals (Example 157). The organ accompaniment begins on an E♭7 chord in third inversion (Example 157). There is never a clear cadence in the key of E♭; the closest approximation of a cadence is a movement from B♭m7 to E♭m7 in measures 6 and 7 but the presence of the minor form of v in addition to the arrival on i7 destroys any real sense of cadential feel (Example 157). However, over the course of the work there have been many instances of altered dominants that obscured the harmonic structure, so it is not out of the question to surmise that McGlynn is playing with traditional harmonic structures in order to eliminate any obvious tonal references. The section ends on an Fm7 chord, further obscuring the modality of the movement (Example 157).
A2 repeats the melodic and harmonic ideas from the first but ends on an A♭m7 chord with an added 6 (rather than Fm7), enharmonically setting the choir up for their subsequent entrance on G#. The entrance on G#, as opposed to G, signals an abrupt change in mode at measure 17; consequently, the entire last section is shifted up a semitone to a center of E (Example 158).
The choral parts in $A_3$ are a harmonized version of the melody that the mezzo-soprano soloist has sung for the previous two sections. The organ part is, for the most part, simply shifted up a half step to E, and a violin obbligato and a descant for the mezzo-soprano are added. (Example 159).

**Example 159, “Agnus Dei” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 18-20 © Warner Chappell Music Ltd. Reprinted by Permission.**

**Interpretive Considerations**

This movement, like the “Ave Maria,” calls for a more expressive, colorful solo voice. McGlynn asks for a mezzo-soprano here, and it is probably best that this soloist be used for both movements. The soloist selected should be able to effectively and expressively spin out the melodious and legato solo line as well as somewhat simplify her tone to deliver the quietly plaintive, repeated pitch setting of “miserere nobis.”
Although the work for the choir is limited in this movement, intonation and balance will still be of primary concern. This is especially true at points such as the women’s chorus accompaniment starting in measure 11 (Example 160). Here the women are move from singing parallel chords in a three-way divisi to seventh chords in a four-way divisi. The conductor will need to ensure that these chords are balanced and in tune, and the choir will need to sing with a simple tone and to the center of the pitch (Example 160).

Example 160, “Agnus Dei” from *Celtic Mass*, mm. 11-13
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The same three-way divisi should be used in the final measures of the piece (Example 149), and the conductor should be sure that parts are balanced and every voice can be heard equally, not only to preserve the integrity and color of the sonorities but also to reinforce the conflict set up between the two tonalities. The choir should adopt the same shimmering, simple tone as previously suggested.
Conclusion

The individual movements of the *Celtic Mass* offer a great deal of options for performance and practical use. Because it was not initially devised as a single work, the movements have their own individual character and voice, and many of them would work well as individual pieces on a choral program. Of the components of the Ordinary present in the *Celtic Mass*, even the Kyrie and Sanctus have been recorded as separate works. A conductor interested in this collection may choose to perform a selected movement or perform the work as a whole, both with good results.

If a conductor performs the whole *Celtic Mass*, s/he will want to give thought to the contracting of musicians and how rehearsals should be arranged. Different movements have different instrumental requirements, so the conductor will want to arrange the rehearsals leading up to the dress in such a way that instrumentalists are being used most effectively and not waiting in rehearsal until they are required. This will most obviously affect the Ave Maria, which is the only movement to call for a full string quartet, and the Gloria, which is the only movement to call for the drum.

In general, rehearsals of this piece will require great attention to rhythmic precision and intonation. Colorful sonorities and jazz harmonies occur quite frequently and will require a more intense type of listening on the part of the choir for proper tuning and balance. McGlynn’s love for cross rhythms comes through in movements like the Gloria and “Incantations,” and the singers will need to be secure in delivering these. Some facility with Gaelic will also be required and will be an added challenge when teaching this piece. Overall, however, choirs will enjoy not only the challenges present in this work but also the fresh perspective that McGlynn’s composition brings. The combination of Latin and Gaelic texts, as well as the influence of
various musical genres and cultures, brings an aura of diversity to this work that modern audiences will find unique, engaging, and refreshing.

Throughout all of McGlynn’s work, while there are a good amount of compositional thumbprints and overarching characteristics, there also is a great deal of variety. This is an incredibly refreshing aspect to McGlynn’s choral writing. Various constant influences are present in his music and give his canon a sense of identity; however, he does not simply reconstruct successful pieces over and over again in an attempt to rest on his laurels. His body of work displays a great range of techniques and musical ideas and continues to develop and mature. Further study of some of his more recently recorded works, such as “O Maria” and the brilliant work “Victimae” (both released on the 2009 Anúna CD Sanctus) would reveal how his musical influences factor into his compositional efforts in ever-evolving ways. This continuous growth bodes well for the longevity of this composer as he takes his place among the important composers of our time.
REFERENCES


Email correspondence with the composer. Computer Audio Recording. October 4, 2009


APPENDIX A
LETTER OF PERMISSION

CERTIFICATE

Re:
Ceann Dubh Dílis
Dúlamán
Geantraí
Media Vita
Christus Resurgens
Miserere Miseric
Cormacus Scripsit
The Rising of the Sun
Agnus Dei (from “And On Earth Peace”: A Chanticleer Mass)
Celtic Mass

30/03/2010

This is to certify that Karen Marrolli has been issued permission to reprint, in their entirety, the following scores in her Doctoral Thesis. as indicated above written and/or arranged by Michael McGlynn.

To confirm the propriety of this certificate contact info@anuna.ie

Michael McGlynn
Anúna Teoranta

Cert. 3242

Contact Anúna, PO Box 4468, Churchtown, Dublin 14, Ireland
or info@anuna.ie to confirm the authenticity. You may also call +353 1 2835533

Please note that this Certificate does not allow the purchaser to lend or hire this permission to any third party, nor does it allow for the recording in any medium of the pieces listed above without the authority of the copyright holder.
APPENDIX B
CELTIC MASS

Kyrie
Michael McGlynn

Slow \( \text{mp} \)

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

© 1991 Warner Chappell
Gloria

Michael McGlynn

Always With Energy

1991 Warner Chappell U.K.
188
Responsorial: Codhlaím go Suan id' Chroí

Michael McGlynn

Not Too Slow.

Solo

Harp

This piece can also be accompanied by piano or organ.

Solo

Harp

Solo

Sop.

Alto

Harp

Suan, suan, suan, codh-laim go suan, a l-o-sa, suan, suan,
Téann sé leis an ngàith, tagann s’e ar na dtéempta.
Comhíonann sé mo ghual, nuair a ghlaochoim i ndoícheacht na hoíche:
Nochtar é sa tús san leanbh nua bheirthe,
Maireann sé sa chloch ar scaradh aman is coirp;
Suan, suan, suan, codhlaim go siúin, a lósa;
Suan, suan, suan, codhlaim go sámh id’ choiri.
Do shará nil ann ar thriúneacht nó grá, ní féidir do chumhacht a thuiscint.
Is tusa mo mhuinteoir s’b’rórai, codhlaim go suan id’ choiri.

He comes with the wind, he goes on the waves.
He hears my prayer, when I call him in the darkest moment of the night.
I sleep softly in your heart my Christ.
Naked he stands at the dawn in the new-born child
He is there at the end as the soul parts from the body.
There is no one so full of mercy and love, there is no way to understand your goodness.
You are my teacher and guide, I sleep softly in your heart.
Alleluia: Incantations

Michael McGlynn

Fast $\downarrow = 130$

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bass

All-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú

$\text{Tu-sa an dámh, Tu-sa an éan, Tu-sa an tliasc,}$

$\text{mp}$

All-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú

$\text{Tu-sa an dámh, Tu-sa an éan, Tu-sa an tliasc,}$

$\text{mp}$

All-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú

$\text{p}$

All-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú

$\text{p}$

All-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú

$\text{pp}$

All-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú, all-i-lú

$\text{pp}$

196
S1
all i lú mo Thiar na, all i lú mo Christ.
S2
all i lú mo Thiar na, all i lú mo Christ.
A1
all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú.
A2
all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú.
T
an tasc, Tu-sa an Christ.
B
an tasc, Tu-sa an Christ.

T
all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú.
B
all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú.

S1
all i lú mo chriol, All i-
S2
all i lú mo chriol, all i lú, all i lú.
A1
all i lú mo Thiar na, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, Tu-sa an ghaoth, Tu-sa an fuacht,
A2
all i lú mo Thiar na, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, Tu-sa an ghaoth, Tu-sa an fuacht,
T
all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú.
B
all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú, all i lú.
‘S Tusa an dámh, ‘s Tusa an éan, ‘s Tusa an t-iasc, ailllú.
‘S Tusa an ghaoth, ‘s Tusa an fuacht, ‘s Tusa an mhuir, ailllú.
‘S Tusa an ghria, ‘s Tusa an réalt, ‘s Tusa an spéir, ailllú.
Ailllú mo Íosa, ailllú mo chroí, ailllú mo Thiarra, ailllú mo Chriost.

You are the stag, You are the bird, You are the fish, alleluia
You are the wind, You are the cold, You are the sea, alleluia
You are the sun, You are the star, You are the sky, alleluia
Alleluia my Jesus, alleluia my heart, alleluia my Lord, alleluia my Christ.
Sanctus

Slowly, from a Distance ∫ = 50

Michael McGlynn

*Soprano I

Soprano II

Soprano III

Soprano/Alto

Tenor/Bass

"Oh*" indicates a form of harmonic singing. Form the mouth into an "oh" shape, lifting the soft palate. Without moving the mouth-shape, move the tongue slowly into the shape "ee" (as "she"), sending the sound through the nose. The lower the voice the stronger the sound.

S. I, II & III are all solo soprano parts. The three soloists should be placed throughout the venue. Harp is optional.

Soprano II and III may be situated in various parts of the venue. This piece may be prefigured by a finger cymbal gently struck three times or more just as the drone starts, and ended with a similar cymbal figure as the piece ends.

205
The note values and glissandi as indicated on the harp part are only a rough guide.
The first note of Figure A must coincide with the word "Osanna" - at the end of Figure A the glissandi should diminuendo.
Pater Noster

Michael McGlynn

With Movement but Always Gentle \( \frac{4}{4} = 65 \)
S. Solo

Fi - at vol - un - tas tu - a si - cut in cae - lo et in te-

S.

tu - a tu - a pp

A.

tu - a tu - a pp

T.

tu - a tu - a pp

B.

tu - a tu - a pp

---

A Little Slower

S. Solo

ra

S.

Pa - nem nos - tram qua - ti - di - a - nem

A.

Pa - nem nos - tram qua - ti - di - a - nem

T.

qua - ti - di - a - nem

T. Solo

Pa - nem nos - tram qua - ti - di - a - nem

B.  

Pa - nem nos - tram qua - ti - di - a - nem
da nobis hodie

S.

A.

T.

T. Solo

B.

Ah

Ah

Ah

Ah

strata si-cut et nos di-mi-timus de-bi-to-nis buenos-tris et ne-nos in du-ca in ten-ta-tio-nem
## APPENDIX C
### CHORAL WORKS LIST

<table>
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<th>Title</th>
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<td>Salve Rex Glorae</td>
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<td>Heia Viri</td>
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1999 The Coventry Carol

1999 I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls

1999 When the War is Over

1999 An Oiche

1999 Tenebrae III

2000 The White Rose

2000 My Lagan Love

2001 Cloch na Rón

2001 The Wild Song

2002 O Ignis Spiritus

2002 Summer Song

2003 The Lark in the Clear Air

2003 Sliabh Geal gCua

2003 Silver River

2003 Carolan's Farwell to Music

2003 Geminiani's Adagio

2003 Geminiani's Allegro

2003 I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls

2003 The Meeting of the Waters

2003 The Road of Passage

2004 Missa Brevis

2004 The Poet Sleeps

2004 Lauda Anima Mea

2004 Cúnnla

2005 Fionnghuala

2005 Lux Aeterna

2005 Tenebrae IV

2005 Maid in the Moor

2006 O Maria

2006 Brezaireola

2006 Toraiocht

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<td>Three Songs by Thomas Moore</td>
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APPENDIX D
DISCOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

1993 - ANÚNA (re-recorded 2005)
1994 - Invocation (re-recorded 2002)
1995 - Omnis (Irish edition)
1996 - Omnis (entirely re-recorded international version of the 1995 release)
1996 - Deep Dead Blue (remaster 2004)
1997 - Behind the Closed Eye (remaster 2003)
2000 - Cynara
2002 - Winter Songs [released as Christmas Songs on Koch Records in 2004]
2003 - Essential Anúna (UK only release on Universal Records)
2005 - The Best of Anúna (Irish Edition)
2005 - Essential Anúna (US only on Koch Records)
2006 - Sensation
2007 - Celtic Origins [CD and DVD]
2008 - Christmas Memories [CD and DVD]
2009 - Invocations of Ireland [DVD]
2009 – Sanctus
2010- The Best of Anúna (International Edition)

Karen Marrolli is the Director of Choral Ministries at United Church of Santa Fe in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She earned both her Bachelor of Music degree in music theory and composition (1997) and her Master of Music degree in sacred music and choral conducting (2000) from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. Prior to pursuing doctoral studies at Louisiana State University, Karen was Director of Chorus and Orchestra at James Island Charter High School from 2004-2007 and Conductor of the College of Charleston University Chorus from 2004-2005. While in Charleston, she also served as Assistant Conductor of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra Chorus, under the direction of Dr. Robert Taylor, and in the spring of 2007 she prepared the women of the chorus for a performance of Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra. Karen has a special interest in directing church choirs and has served as the Assistant Conductor of the Grace Episcopal Church Choir in Charleston and the Music Director of Ingleside Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

In 2001, Karen founded Lux Aeterna, a chamber choir based in Charleston, South Carolina. Lux Aeterna was formed to provide choral music for educational programming on important social issues, and their major project was an annual candlelight concert in honor of Child Abuse Awareness Month. These concerts interspersed choral music with poetry and prose written by survivors of abuse and were meant to not only raise awareness of the issue but also to provide a source of healing for survivors. Lux Aeterna also sang for candlelight vigils in recognition of World AIDS Day and the second anniversary of the September 11 attacks. In June of 2007, Lux Aeterna was featured on the Festival of Churches series of Piccolo Spoleto, an annual arts festival that takes place in the city of Charleston.
Karen is also active as a choral composer and especially enjoys writing anthems for church choirs. Her pieces are published through Morningstar Music and Colla Voce Music. Karen’s compositions have been performed by the College of Charleston Concert Choir, the Taylor Festival Choir, the St. Gregory Choir of Grace Episcopal Church, and the Grace Episcopal Church Compline Choir.