O Virgo virginum
Pierre de Manchicourt (c.1510–1564)

Attaingnant, *Liber septimus XXIII trium, quatuor, quinque, sex ve vocum modulos* [Paris, 1534] (RISM 1534/9)
O Virgo virginum

Manchicourt

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam, 

 Qui a nec primam simulam.
O Virgo virginum

33

mi - lem vi - sa est,

vi - sa est,

sa est,

vi - sa

vi - sa est,

39

sa, vi - sa est,

nec ha - be -

vi - sa est,

nec ha - be -

nec primam si - mi - lem vi - sa es,

vi - sa est,

nec ha - be -
† Bassus, m.50.2: a tone higher in the source (presumed erroneous)
O Virgo virginum

O Virgo virginum
Manchicourt
O Virgo virginum

- mi-ni, quid me ad - mi-ra-

ad - mi-ra - mi - ni, quid me ad -

mi - ra - mi - ni, ad - mi - ra - mi - ni,

75

quid me ad - mi - ra -

- - - - mi - ni? ad mi - ra mi - ni?

mi - ra - mi - ni? ad mi - ra mi - ni?

quid me ad mi - ni, ad mi - ra mi -
O Virgo virginum

Manchicourt
O Virgo virginum

Manchicourt

111
O Virgo virginum,
quómodo fiet istud?
Quia nec primam sìmilem visa est,
nec habère sequéntem.
Filiae Jerúselám,
quid me admirámíni?
Divínum est mústérium hoc quod cérnítis.

(Antiphon for the Feast of the Expectation of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

O Virgin of virgins,
how shall this be?
For neither before thee was there any like thee,
nor shall there be after.
Daughters of Jerusalem,
why marvel ye at me?
The thing that ye behold is a divine mystery.

Pierre de Manchicourt, a contemporary of Nicolas Gombert and Jacobus Clemens non Papa, was active in both Burgundy and Spain during the reigns of Charles V and Phillip II, culminating in his appointment by the latter as maestro de capilla flamenca in Madrid in 1559. The fact that Attaingnant, publisher of the French Royal Court, devoted his fourteenth and final volume of motets in 1539 entirely to Manchicourt’s work (an honour he bestowed on no other, and emulated by Flemish publishers Susato and Phalèse in 1545 and 1554 respectively) bears testament to the composer’s reputation in his day. Manchicourt’s highly polyphonic style of composition lost favour around the time of his death, as the liturgical reforms of the Council of Trent took hold — marking the transition from the High Renaissance to the less florid Late-Renaissance style of Victoria and Palestrina.

**Editorial Notes:**

This antiphon is among the composer’s earliest published works: it appears in Attaingnant’s seventh book of motets, published in 1534, which includes settings of the Great ‘O’ Antiphons for the last seven days of Advent. Of the three settings by Manchicourt in this publication, two are additional to the usual seven antiphons, including this one for the Feast of the Expectation on 18 December. Manchicourt uses the plainchant as a cantus firmus in canon between two parts, with the other four parts freely composed around them in imitative counterpoint that builds on motifs from each phrase of the chant.

This edition is set at original pitch. Editorial accidentals are indicated above the note. Original note values are retained: thus, consistent with 16th-century convention, the C mesuration sign and its modern-equivalent C time signature signify a semibreve tactus. Bar lines are added only to aid reading and direction: ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ beats implied by their position should never take precedence over phrasing or word stress. Ligatures and coloration in the source are acknowledged with overarching square brackets and open ‘corner’ brackets respectively. Word underlay reflects editorial judgment and is freely adjusted: editorial re-iteration of text not explicit in the source is indicated in italic.