

Bonus Listening Experience, Women, Music, Culture: An Introduction, 3rd Edition

“Magnificat” (1965)

Elisabeth Lutyens

Spotify Playlist for Chapter 13

Listening Focus

Like sonata or rondo form, dodecaphonic technique is a structural device. Listen for the opening soprano line, as it clearly sets forth the tone row used in this work. Also notice how Lutyens interrupts the row in order to highlight specific words in the text. While we will not attempt to follow the serial structure throughout the work, keep in mind that it is continually operating beneath the surface. As the listening guide progresses, frequent word painting is indicated.

Form at a Glance

Twelve-tone composition, opening with the following prime form, where T and E indicate pitches ten and eleven:

Soprano

My soul doth Magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced

Text (taken from the Gospel of Luke)

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior, for He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden

For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, for He that is mighty hath magnified me; and holy is His name, and His mercy is on them that fear Him throughout all generations

He hath showed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud, in the imagination of their hearts; He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek

He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.

He, remembering His mercy, hath helped His servant Israel, as He promised to our forefathers, Abraham and His seed forever.

Glory be to the Father, to the Son and the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

Timed Listening Guide

0:00 opening row heard in the soprano line

0:05 alto, tenor, and bass lines enter with the retrograde inversion of the original row, beginning at three different locations in the row

0:07 row interrupted to highlight the text “magnify;” row resumes

0:32 “savior” highlighted with chordal treatment; row resumes

1:24 “doth magnify” highlighted by women singing in octaves

1:38 “holy is his name” highlighted with pianissimo chordal treatment of the text

2:07 “He hath showed strength” highlighted by male voices

2:24 “scattered the proud” highlighted with rhythmic motion

3:15 “empty away” highlighted with rising solo bass line

4:25 “as it was in the beginning” highlighted with solo tenor line

4:53 final syllable of the “amen” moves to an F-major chord with an added B