Hildegard of Bingen: Alleluia, O virga mediatrix
(Alleluia, O mediating branch)  
(3:30)

GENRE: Gregorian chant
CHANT TYPE: Alleluia, from the Mass Proper
TEXT: In praise of the Virgin Mary (poet, Hildegard of Bingen)
OCCASION: For feasts of the Virgin Mary
PERFORMANCE: Responsorial (solo and chorus; sung chorus-verse-chorus)
STYLE: Opening melismatic, then neumatic

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR:
- Alternation between solo and chorus (responsorial).
- Monophonic texture (unaccompanied) and free rhythm (nonmetric).
- Text setting shifts between melismatic (many notes to a syllable) and neumatic (small groups of notes to a syllable).
- Conjunct movement with a few leaps.
- Range of 9 notes (just over an octave).
- Climaxes (highest range) on words “holy flesh,” “beautiful flower,” “chastity.”
- Repeat of opening Alleluia at close.

TEXT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>0:00</th>
<th>Alleluia.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0:45</td>
<td>O virga mediatrix</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sancta viscera tua mortem superaverunt, et venter tuos omnes creaturas illuminauit in pulchro flore de suavissima integritate clausi pudoris tui orto.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2:56</td>
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TRANSLATION

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<td>Your holy flesh has overcome death.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>And your womb has illuminated all creatures</td>
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<td>Through the beautiful flower of your tender purity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>That sprang from your chastity.</td>
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PERFORMANCE

Solo intonation, then choral response with long extension on last syllable (–ia); very melismatic.
Solo verse, with several melismas.
Higher range, neumatic text setting.
Melismatic at end.
Chorus: return to opening.

Opening of solo chant, with melismatic setting on Alleluia:

Higher range on “sancta viscera” (holy flesh), in neumatic setting: