

celestial harmonies

o nobilissima viriditas:
the complete hildegard von bingen,
volume three
sinfonye
celestial harmonies 13129-2
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the artists

Sinfonye, founded in 1987 by Stevie Wishart, was conceived as an ensemble combining improvisatory skills derived from traditional music with performance practices recreated from historical research, with a particular interest in repertoires sung, inspired or composed by women.

Sinfonye has performed throughout Europe, North America, and Australia, and their recordings have been acclaimed for their innovative approach to the medieval repertory.

Writes Stevie Wishart: "We welcome this opportunity to record the complete works of Hildegard and to recreate the imaginative spirit of this remarkable composer. For Hildegard, it seems music was a way for mortals to experience something of heavenly, or spiritual ecstasy, and it is perhaps this desire which we can most clearly empathize with today. Hers is a creative spirit which soars high, as much in our time as in her own."

In the ongoing effort of recording Hildegard's complete works for the first time, this disk represents the third volume of what will continue for some time to come.

the project

O most noble greenness, you whose roots are in the sun and who shine in bright serenity in a wheel that no earthly eminence can comprehend

O NOBILISSIMA VIRIDITAS is the third volume of The Complete Hildegard von Bingen, following **SYMPHONY OF THE HARMONY OF CELESTIAL REVELATIONS (13127-2)** and **AURORA (13128-2)**, released in 1996 and 1999 respectively.

Hildegard von Bingen was born in 1098 as the tenth and last child of a noble family. In 1106 at age eight she was entrusted to Jutta of Sponheim's convent which was attached to the Benedictine monastery of Disibodenberg on the mountain of St. Disibod. After Jutta's death in 1136, Hildegard became abbess and she subsequently established her own convent on the Rupertsberg near Bingen in the late 1140s.

Although she had had visions since childhood, it was only after 1141, following a divine call, that she dedicated herself to document her visions in the book *Scivias*. During her mature life she produced a prolific and varied range of writings, including two more books of visions, and she continued to compose the music and the poetry of her songs.

At a time when few women were accorded respect, she lived to become a highly respected writer, poet, composer and visionary, much sought-after for her counsel by popes, regents and bishops.

Viriditas was to inspire some of Hildegard's most imaginative and passionate song poetry and music. Her lyrics are all in Latin and they abound with images from nature, using leaves, branches and flowers to communicate overlapping themes of energy, vigour, blooming, manhood, virginity and virtue.

This recording is a musical response to the concept of *viriditas*—songs celebrating the greenness so fundamental to Hildegard's music as the vigour or source of life.

