Until recently, few musicologists took Hildegard von Bingen into account when they presented surveys of medieval music, largely because she had been forgotten. But even after her work came to light, she has remained difficult to incorporate into surveys in part because she seems so anomalous with respect to her gender, her contributions to so many disparate areas of cultural activity, her idiosyncratic takes on theology, and her musical style.

In your essay, situate Hildegard into her historical context, discussing at least:
• her own accounts of her creativity and career;
• her relationships with contemporaries (directly or through correspondence);
• her ways of drawing on and channeling various influences or traditions.

Then analyze her “O viridissima virga” (score attached). How does she shape this piece with respect to melodic contour, pitch center, use of vocal range, settings of syllables, expressivity?

O viridissima virga, ave,
que in ventoso flabro sciscitationis
sanctorum prodisti.

Cum venit tempus
quod tu floruiasti in ramis tuis,
ave, ave fuit tibi,
aulia calor solis in te sudavit
sicut odor balsami.

Nam in te fluruit pulcher flos
qui odorem dedit
omnibus aromatibus
que arida erant.

Et illa apparuerunt omnia
in viriditate plena.

Unde celi dederunt rorem super gramen
et omnis terra leta facta est,
quoniam viscera ipsius frumentum protulerunt
et quoniam volucres celi
nidos in ipsa havuerunt.

Deinde factura est esca hominibus
et gaudium magnum epulantium.
Unde, o suavis Virgo,
in te non deficit ullam gaudium.

Hec omina Eva contempsit.

Nunc autem laus sit Altissimo.
nelectione pre prudent qui eum hominibus

nosterem

quem mag

mun deq

uis qui sec

ius ampliar

inc onc

natur anis

na dent re

nimentum

nunti in manus

nuit in tibi quae

color solidi uite sustant fient odor balsamii.
Nam inter florent pulcher flore quod omne desit

et omnia omnia quod arida erant.

Est illa apparentur omnia inveniisse

ple na. 

Unde est delectus estrem superno

sitem trium praeceptrum et quod no

lucer et nudos impla habere sunt.

Unde facta est eoa hominibus et gaudium magnum

ne epulantum unde obstine nunc in

et non deficit illum gaudium. Hic

omnium est contemplationem autem laudis

in alium fenos de salutaria.

O pulcherrima et dulcisima quae

erat de ante omnia sursum in

lorum sum potvis tur ac filium et

te lactarius est. 

Veneri enim

dum habuit eam omnium celebritas

tibi nutricum qua nunc siti o

Veneri tua gaudeamus habentis

supra et vos caelestes et invenirem

tur et in factum eum omnium gaudium

omne ecclesia ingaudioso murmure ac in

add: omnis.
O viridissima virga
Song, R 474-474a
Composed by Hildegard of Bingen
Transcribed by Beverly R. Lomer

O vi-ri-dis-si-ma vir-ga
a-ve que in ven-to-so fla-bro sci-sci-ta-ti-o-nis
san-to-rum pro-dis-ti

Cum ve-nit tem-pus quod tu flo-ru-is-ti in ra-mis tu-is
a-ve a-ve fuit ti-bi qui-a ca-lor sol-is in te su-da-vit
si-cut o-dor bal-sa-mi

Nam in te flo-ru-it

pul-cher flos qui o-do-rem de-dit
om-ni-bus a-ro-ma-ti-bus que a-ri-da e-rant

Et il-la ap-pa-ru-e-runt om-ni-a
in viriditate plena

Unde celebrent rorem super gramen

et omnis terrae facta est quo-niam viscera ipsius frumentum

pro-tule-runt et quo-niam volucres celebni-dos in

ipsa habuerunt

Deinde facta est esca hominibus

et gaudium magnum e pullantium

unde o suavis virgo in te non deficit

ullum gaudium

Hec omnia Eva contempsit

Nunc autem laus sit Altissimo

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2. Kate Doyle: Nineteenth-Century Listening Practices (Brittan)

Consider the attached musical example and recording from Berlioz’s *Le Retour à la vie* (the sequel to the *Symphonie fantastique*). Is this music? What kind of listening is suggested by such a piece? What kind of instrumental innovations render it possible? Imagine that you are using it as the springboard for a graduate-level lecture on nineteenth-century listening practices and auditory cultures. Outline a teaching plan in which you do the following, in any order:

- situate the piece historically
- discuss the influences (philosophical, scientific, organological, technological) that produced it
- outline the ways in which it highlights shifts in listening practices, priorities, and philosophies
- survey recent literature that might allow students to situate or explore questions raised by the piece, taking care to underscore key concepts
- use the piece to introduce the idea—and contemplate the value—of ‘sound studies’ as an extension/revision of our shared musicological project
3. Kate Doyle: Rameau, *Pygmalion* (Cowart)

Discuss Rameau’s *Pygmalion* in terms of eighteenth-century musical aesthetics and the composer’s own views on music and the arts. Trace its aesthetic, along with its musical content, back to the first operatic staging of Pygmalion and his statue in La Motte/La Barre’s *Le Triomphe des arts* of 1700, and show how both represent a break from earlier, seventeenth-century ideals. Can you interpret Rameau’s and La Barre’s settings, and perhaps other eighteenth-century iterations of the theme, as manifestos of a new kind of music and art? Finally, discuss the moment of the statue’s awakening as the musical and dramatic climax of this work, and say why this moment might have had special meaning for Rameau.
4. Kate Doyle: Downtown Experimental Music (Walser)

Building on the issues raised by Christian Wolff’s article about the various strategies he pursued as a composer and performer of experimental music and the results he achieved (or didn’t), along with George Lewis’s book and one other source (from your bibliography) of your choosing, discuss and compare the strategies and tactics that have guided and impelled people who have made what is called experimental music. To what extent IS there such a thing as experimental music, and to what extent does the label corral very different projects (and if so, for what reasons is it used?)?