

Guido of Arezzo, in the 11th century, wrote about the hexachord and his mnemonic for naming its notes, a poem "Ut queant laxis" from c.800 that he may have set to music himself. Each successive half-line of the poem begins on the next step of the hexachord, and the syllable there becomes the name of the step. Porta's riff on those notes, though written for keyboard, is clearly written in four voices which correspond nicely to SATB ranges. Thus we have chosen to add the text of that very hymn, to adapt this *ricercar* for choral performance.

Ut quéant làxis resonáre fíbris  
Míra gestórum fámuli tuórum,  
Sólve pollúti lábii reátum,  
Sáncte Joáannes.

So that they may sing with relaxed cords,  
Your servants, of your wondrous feats,  
Release the offense of a polluted lip,  
O holy John.

Núntius célso véniens Olýmpo,  
Te pátri mágnum fóre nascitúrum,  
Nómen, et vítae sériem geréndae  
Ordine prómit.

An angel, coming from high heaven,  
To your father, your great future birth,  
Name, and course of life  
He discloses in order.

Ille promíssi dúbius supérni,  
Pérdidit prómptae módulos loquélae:  
Sed reformásti génius perémpptae  
Organa vócis.

He, doubtful of the promise from above,  
Lost the ability to speak,  
But at your birth you recovered the lost  
Vocal organs.

Véntris obstrúso récubans cubíli  
Sénseras Régem thálamó manéntem:  
Hinc párens náti méritis utérque  
Abdita pándit.

Reclining trapped in the bed of the womb,  
You felt the King staying in inner chamber;  
Henceforth each parent of the worthy son  
Revealed what was hidden.

Sit décus Pátri, genitaéque Próli,  
Et tíbi cómpar utriúsque vírtus,  
Spíritus sémpet, Déus únus, ómni  
Témporis aévo. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, the begotten Son,  
And to you, the power equal to both,  
Spirit eternal, one God, at every  
Time for eternity. Amen.

### Ricercar quinto sopra ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la

Costanzo Porta  
(Italian; 1529–1601)

*So that they may sing with relaxed cords,*

S  
A  
T  
B

(Ut re mi fa sol la) Ut quéant là - xis re - so - ná - re fíbris

(Ut re mi fa sol la) ...fíbris Mí-

Source: *Costanzo Porta: Keyboard Compositions*, ed. Bernhard Billeter, A.I.M., 1977. Text from *Liber Usualis*, page 1504. Notation here is a tone higher than original with time values halved. Translation is by John Hetland. Prepared for the Renaissance Street Singers.

7 Sep 2012

*Your servants, of your wondrous feats,*

*Release the offense of a*

7 11

Mí-ra ge-stó-rum fá-mu-li tu-ó-rum, Sól - - ve pol -  
 -ra ge - - stórum fá-mu-li tu-ó-rum, Sól - ve pol -  
 (Ut re mi fa sol la) ...Sól - - ve pol - - -

*polluted lip,*

*O holy John.*

*An*

12 16

(Ut re mi fa sol la) ...Sán - cte Jo-án - - - nes. Nún-  
 -lú-ti lá - bi - is re-á-tum, Sán - cte Jo - - án - nes...  
 -lú-ti lá - - bi-is re-á - tum, Sán - cte Joán - - - nes. Nún-  
 -lú-ti lá - - bi-is re-á - tum, Sán - cte Jo-án - nes. Nún -

*angel, coming from high heaven,*

*To your father, your*

17 21

-ti - us céł - so vé - ni-ens 0-lým-po, Te pá - - tri mágnum  
 (Ut re mi fa sol la) ...0-lým-po, Te pá -  
 -ti-us céł - - so vé - - ni-ens 0 - lým-po... (Ut  
 - ti-us céł - so vé-ni - ens 0 - - lým - - - po, Te pá -

*great future birth,*

*Name, and course of life*

22 26

fó-re na-sci - - tú - rum, Nó-men, et ví - tae...

- tri\_má-gnum fó - re na - - - sci - tú-rum, Nó - men, et ví - - -

re mi fa sol la) ...Nó - - - - men, et ví - - -

- tri má - - - - gnum... (Ut re mi fa sol

*he discloses in*

27 31

(Ut re mi fa sol la) ...pró - -

- tae sé - ri-em ge - - - - rén - - - - dae Or - dine pró -

- tae sé - - ri-em ge-rén - - - - dae Or - di - ne pró -

la) ...sé - - riem ge-rén - - - - dae Or - dine

*order.*

*He, doubtful of the promise from above,*

32 36

- mit. Il - le pro-mís - si dú - bi - us su - pér - ni...

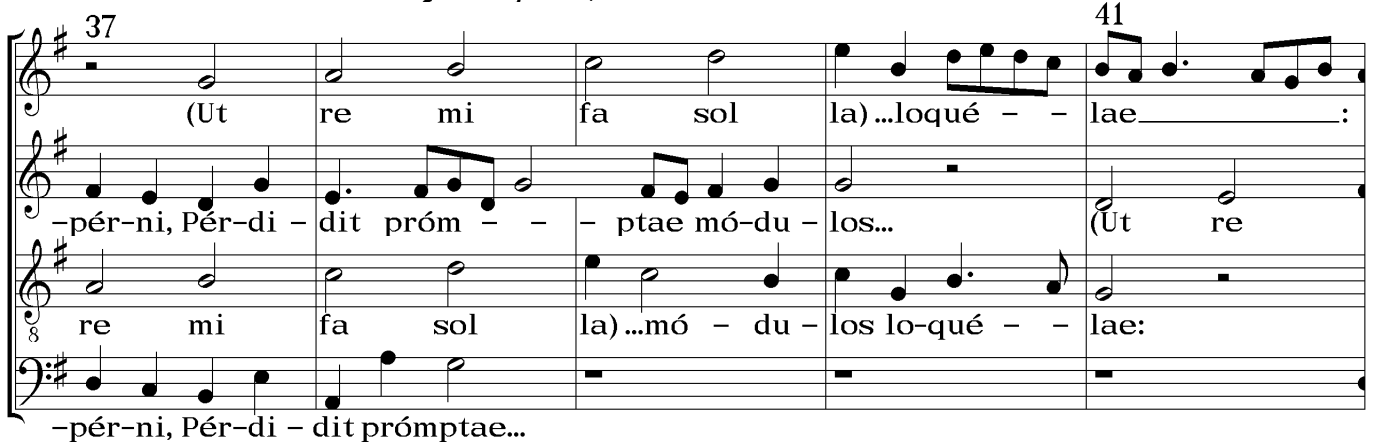
- mit. Il - - le pro - - mís - si dú - - bi - us su -

- - - - mit. Il - le promís - si... (Ut

pró - mit... (Ut re mi fa sol la) ...su -

*Lost the ability to speak,*

37 41



(Ut re mi fa sol la)...loqué - - lae:

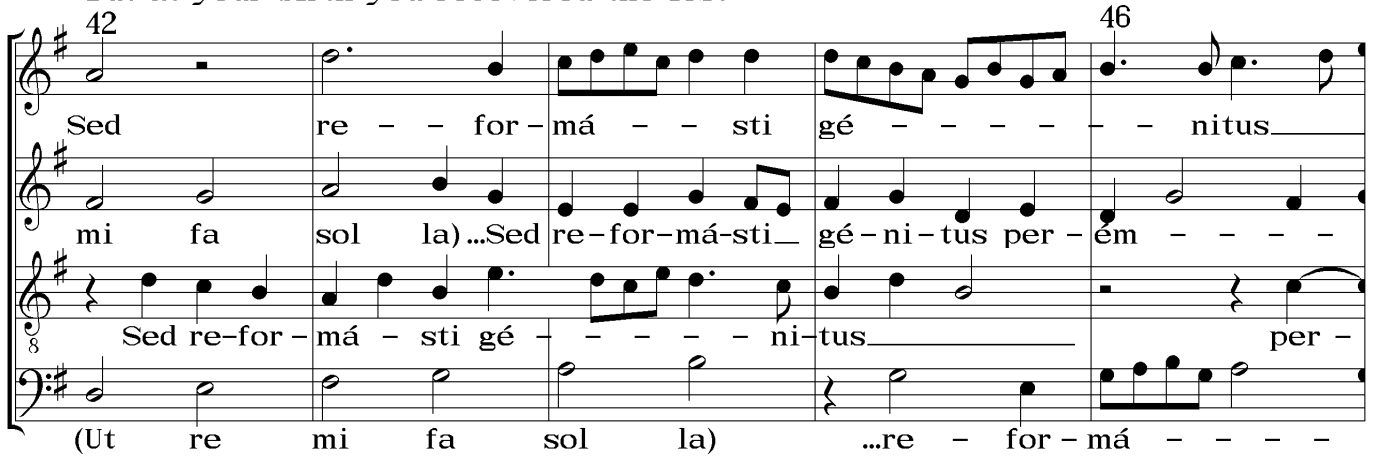
-pér-ni, Pér-di - dit próm - - ptae mó-du - los... (Ut re

re mi fa sol la)...mó - du - los lo-qué - - lae:

-pér-ni, Pér-di - dit prómptae...

*But at your birth you recovered the lost*

42 46



Sed re - - for - má - - sti gé - - - - - nitus...

mi fa sol la)...Sed re-for-má-sti... gé - ni - tus per - ém - - - -

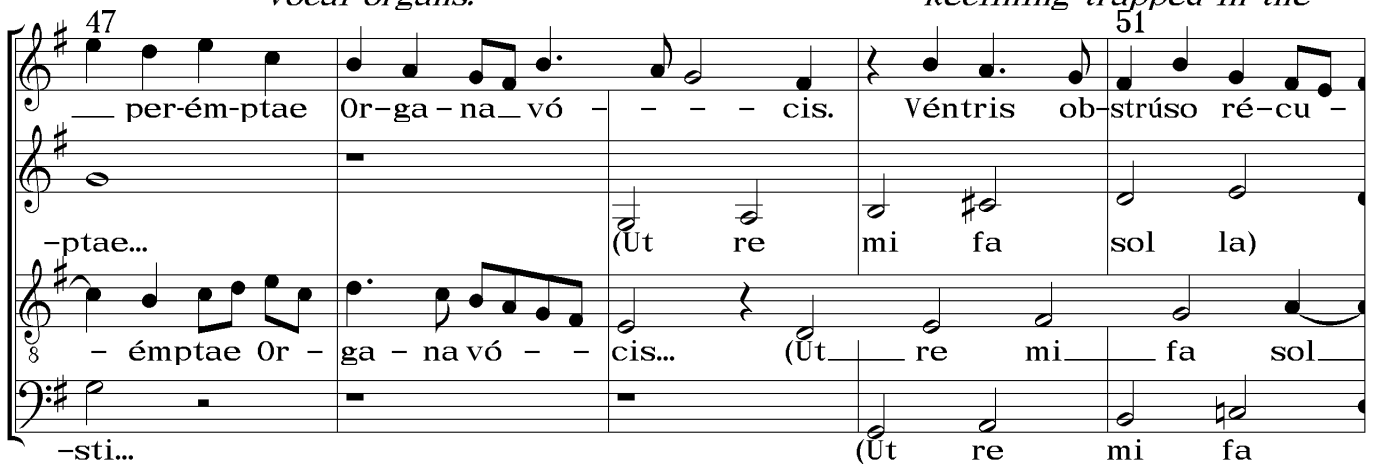
Sed re-for - má - sti gé - - - - - ni-tus... per -

(Ut re mi fa sol la) ...re - for - má - - - -

*vocal organs.*

*Reclining trapped in the*

47 51



- per-ém-ptae Or-ga - na - vó - - - - cis. Véntris ob-strúso ré-cu -

-ptae... (Ut re mi fa sol la)

- émptae Or - ga - na vó - - cis... (Ut re mi fa sol)

-sti... (Ut re mi fa

*bed of the womb, You felt the King staying in inner chamber;*

52 56

-bans cu-bí - li Sénse-ras Ré - - - gem... (La sol fa mi re ut)...Hinc la) ...ré-cu - bans cubí - li Sén - - se-ras Ré - gem thá - sol la) ...Sén - - se-ras Ré - gem thá - - lamo ma -

*Henceforth each parent of the worthy son Revealed what was hidden.*

57 60

re ut) ...mé - - ritis u - tér-que Ab-di-ta pán - - pá-rens ná - ti méri-tis utér - que Ab - - di - ta pán - - - - lamo ma - nén-tem... méri-tis u - tér-que Ab - di-ta pán - - nén-tem:Hinc pá - rens ná - ti méri-tis u - tér-que Ab - di - ta pán -

*Glory be to the Father, the begotten Son,*

61 64

-dit. Sit dé - cus Pá - - - - tri... -dit...(Ut re mi fa sol la) ...ge-ni-taéque Pró - dit. Sit décus Pá - - - - tri, ge - ni - - taé-que -dit... (Ut re mi fa sol la) ...geni -

*And to you, the power equal to both,*

65 68

Et tibi com-par u-tri-  
-li, Et tibi com-par  
Pró-li... (Ut re mi fa sol la) ...u-tri-  
-taéque Pró - li... u - tri -

*Spirit eternal, one God, at every*

69 72

...úsque... (Ut re mi fa sol la) ...Dé -  
u-tri-ús - que - vír - tus, Spí - ri - tus sémpér,  
-ús - que - vír - tus, Spí - ri - tus sémpér -

*Time for eternity.*

73 76

- us - ú - nus, óm-ni Tém - po-ris aé - -  
Dé - us ú - nus, óm - ni Tém - po-ris  
- - per, Dé-us ú - nus, óm - ni Tém - -  
- per, Dé-us ú - nus, óm - ni Tém -

