

Richard Lambert

*O magnum mysterium*

PROMOTIONAL COPY  
for reading only

Christmas motet  
for unaccompanied mixed voices

**Text and translation**

O magnum mysterium,  
 et admirabile sacramentum,  
 ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,  
 jacentem in praesepe!  
 Beata Virgo, cujus viscera  
 meruerunt portare  
 Dominum Christum.  
 Alleluia!

O great mystery,  
 and wonderful sacrament,  
 that animals should see the new-born Lord,  
 lying in a manger!  
 Blessed is the Virgin whose womb  
 was worthy to bear  
 Christ the Lord.  
 Alleluia!

**About the work**

Composed in 2012, as the second of two Christmas motets, this short work for unaccompanied five-part choir is a setting of the responsorial chant from the Matins of Christmas.

Set in a simple ternary structure, the outer sections make use of the E Lydian mode, with semitonal chord clusters and hushed, motivic echoes to evoke an other-worldly ambience. The short central section (Beata Virgo...) is largely homophonic and rises to a fortissimo climax on the words 'Dominum Christum'.

The reprise of 'O magnum mysterium' is even quieter, initially, but concludes with an extended return of the first climax, this time to a single triumphant statement, with unresolved Lydian effect, of 'Alleluia'.

**Duration:** 2 minutes, 25 seconds

*Also available by Richard Lambert*

Hodie Christus natus est  
 motet for unaccompanied mixed voices (SSATB)

# O magnum mysterium

Words: Matin Responsory for Christmas Day

Music: RICHARD LAMBERT,  
Op. 46 No. 2

Lento espressivo ♩ = 52

*p* *mf*

SOPRANO I  
O mag - num mys - te - ri - um, mys - te - ri - um, et

*p*

SOPRANO II  
O mag - num mys - te - ri - um, et ad - mi - ra - bi - le

*p*

ALTO  
O mag - num mys - te - ri - um, mys - te - ri - um, mys - te - ri - um,

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*p*

TENOR  
O mag - num mys - te - ri - um, mys - te - ri - um,

*p*

BASS  
O mag - num mys - te - ri - um, mys - te - ri - um,

3

ad - mi - ra - bi - le sac - ra - men - tum,

sac - ra - men - tum,

sac - ra - men - tum, sac - ra -

*mp*

mys - te - ri - um, et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sac - ra -

*mf*

mys - te - ri - um, sac - ra -

6 *mp*

O mag-num mys-te - ri - um, mys - te - ri - um, ut

*mp*

O mag-num mys-te - ri - um, mys - te - ri - um,

men - tum, mag-num mys - te - ri - um, mys-te - ri - um,

*mp*

men - tum, mys - te - ri - um, mys-te - ri -

men - tum, mys - te - ri - um, mys-te - ri -

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10

a - ni - ma - li - a vi - de - rent Do-mi-num na - - tum,

mys - te - ri - um, vi - de - rent Do-mi-num na - - tum,

mys - te - ri - um, mys - te - ri - um,

-um, O mag - num mys -

-um, O mag - num mys -

13 *mp*

ja - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o!

*mp*

ja - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o!

*mp*

ja - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o!

8 -te - ri - um, ja - cen - tem, ja - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o!

-te - ri - um, ja - cen - tem, ja - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o!

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*più mosso* ♩ = 84

17 *mf*

Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vis - ce - ra

*mf*

Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vis - ce - ra

*mf*

Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vis - ce - ra

*mf*

Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vis - ce - ra

*mf*

Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vis - ce - ra

21 *mp*

me - ru - e - runt por - ta - - re Do - mi - num

me - ru - e - runt por - ta - - re Do - mi - num

me - ru - e - runt por - ta - - re Do - mi - num

me - ru - e - runt por - ta - - re Do - mi - num

me - ru - e - runt por - ta - - re Do - mi - num

25 *ff*

Chri - - - - stum

Chri - - - - stum

Chri - - - - stum

Chri - - - - stum

Chri - - - - stum