

down one tone

Ave Maria

contrafactum of the chanson *Nous voyons que les hommes* (1554)
original note-values retained: transposed down one tone

Jacques Arcadelt
(c1505-1568)
arr. Patrick Russill

Cantus (G2)
Altus (C1)
Tenor (C3)

A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na,

5

Do - mi - nus te - cum, a - ve Ma - ri - a,

10

be - ne - di - cta tu, be - ne - di - cta tu in mu - li -

14

- e - ri - bus, et be - ne - di - ctus fru - ctus ven -

18

-tris tu - i, Je - sus. San - ctis - si - ma Ma - ri -

- tris tu - i, Je - sus. San - ctis - si - ma Ma - ri - -

-tris tu - i, Je - sus. San - ctis - si - ma Ma - ri - a,

22

a, o - ra pro no - bis, san - ctis - si - ma Ma -

- a, o - ra, o - ra pro no - bis, san - ctis - si - ma Ma -

o - ra pro no - bis, san - ctis - si - ma Ma -

26

ri - a, o - ra, o - ra pro no - bis, san - ctis - si - ma Ma -

ri - a, o - ra pro no - bis, san - ctis - si - ma Ma -

ri - a, o - ra pro no - bis, san - ctis - si - ma Ma -

30

ri - a, o - ra, o - ra pro no - bis. A - men.

ri - a, o - ra pro no - bis. A - men.

ri - a, o - ra pro no - bis. A - men.

In 1842 Pierre-Louis Dietsch published an arrangement of Arcadelt's three-part chanson *Nous voyons que les hommes* (from his *Tiers livre de chansons*, Paris, 1554) as a four-part *Ave Maria*, adapting the original Cantus and composing his own ATB parts. So this concoction, which quickly became celebrated as 'Arcadelt's *Ave Maria*', was in fact indebted only melodically to Arcadelt.

However, the contrafactum presented here utilises Arcadelt's elegant original. Rhythms are only occasionally altered to accommodate the Latin text. Conversely, 'sanctissima' replaces 'sancta' (bb. 25 and 29) to preserve Arcadelt's original notes. The pitches are unaltered, except for the addition of a minim c1 in the tenor on the third beat of bb. 14 and 19. The 'Amen' is editorial.

For further context see: Patrick Russill (2026): 'Renaissance 'classics' for SATB: rediscovered or invented in the 19th-century polyphonic revival?' at www.church-music.org.uk/lectures-papers.asp