

IMJS: Institute for Japanese Cultural Heritage Initiatives
in collaboration with the Columbia Music Performance Program

presented at the 15th Annual Concert *Glories of the Japanese Music Heritage XV*
Sunday March 8, 2020 at Miller Theatre, Columbia University

Hildegard von Bingen (1098?-1179) and Otomae (1086?-1169), deeply gifted singer-composers, were 12th-century contemporaries who never met. Indeed they were unaware even of each other's existence and even of each other's country on opposite sides of the earth. And though they never met, never could meet, as women, as artists, as believers, they had so much in common. They both had faith in the spiritual power of song.

GHOSTLIGHT Chorus founder and director, **Dr. Evelyn Troester DeGraf** comments:

“these two women meet in the 21st century for the first time and share each other's songs. It begins with Hildegard offering Otomae her music and Otomae offering Hildegard her words.

Otomae's Lyrics No. 26 in Ryōjin Hishō

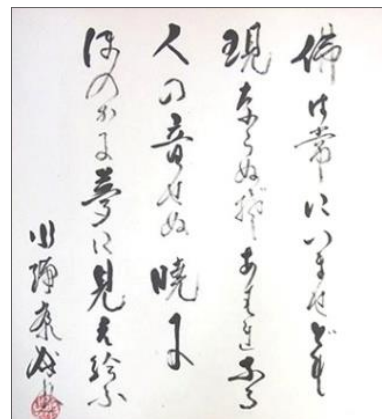
music by **Hildegard von Bingen**

voice: **Evelyn Troester DeGraf**

Vocalists from the **GHOSTLIGHT Chorus**

仏は常にいませども	<i>Hotoke wa tsune ni imase domo</i>
現ならぬぞあわれなる	<i>utsutsu naranu zo aware naru</i>
人の音せぬ暁に	<i>hito no oto senu akatsuki ni</i>
ほのかに夢に見えたまふ	<i>honoka ni yume ni mie tamau</i>

They say Lord Buddha's everywhere,
always with us, here and now,
yet sadly he'll not show himself
in real life flesh and bones.
Only in dawn's silent hours
when human sounds all cease
can we catch a glimpse of him
in early morning dreams.



Otomae's Lyrics No.26 in *Ryōjin Hishō*,
calligraphed by Yasunari Kawabata,
1968 Nobel Laureate in Literature

Otomae's Lyrics No. 177 in Ryōjin Hishō
music by Evelyn Troester DeGraf (2020)

Voice: **Evelyn Troester DeGraf**
Vocalists from the **GHOSTLIGHT Chorus**

極楽浄土のめでたさは	<i>Gokurakujōdo no medetasa wa</i>
一つも空なることぞなき	<i>hitotsu mo ada naru koto zo naki</i>
吹く風立つ波鳥もみな	<i>fuku kaze tatsu nami tori mo mina</i>
妙なる法をぞ唱ふなる	<i>taenaru nori o zo tonau naru</i>

Paradise is glorious.
There, all is in accord.
Its whispering breezes, rippling ponds,
and songs of sacred birds
sing in concert endlessly
the glories of Buddha's Word.

Japanese koto and vocal artist **Ayumi Shimonoto** "becomes" Otomae.

Otomae's Lyrics No. 566 in Ryōjin Hishō
music by **Ayumi Shimonoto** (2018)

lyrics by **Otomae**, who improvised on a well-known poem by 10th-century Emperor Murakami composed at the death of his mother.

voice: **Ayumi Shimonoto**

いつしかと	<i>Itsushika to</i>
君にと思ひし若菜をば	<i>kimi ni to omoishi wakana o ba</i>
法のためにぞ	<i>nori no tame ni zo</i>
今日は摘みつる	<i>kyō wa tsumitsuru</i>

I kept thinking that one of these days
I'd pick a bouquet of fresh greens to delight you.
But here I am having picked them instead
for the altar as prayers for your soul.

[Watch video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_70lQjOc8RU&t=4158s) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_70lQjOc8RU&t=4158s)