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23 - 10 - 2012

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Meridian is proud to announce the release of Hanne Tofte Jespersen's music to the Celtic female saint and mystic Melangell's magical tale, recorded by the composer's Scandinavian ensemble Music for the Mysteries.

The Danish composer came across Melangell's fascinating story in Wales in 2007 when author Mike Harris showed his adaptation of the tale to her. Legend as well as history have it that a woman of considerable insight and spiritual power came to settle as a hermit in a remote valley in North Wales around 500 AD and later became a local saint. The author lets Melangell, the *Honey Angel*, speak across the ages:

*Who knows where I come from? Who am I or what I am?
I am the wild woman older than time.
I came over the mist cloaked waters in fulfillment of some ancient wish.*

Hanne Tofte Jespersen's one hour composition is scored for 5 singers, violin, double bass, piano, percussion and with recital integrated in the music. It unfolds the tale in fourteen movements based on motifs and themes which had emerged to her during visualisations and meditations on the script. The result is:

"Original and visionary music which made up a perfect universe"

The Daily Paper, 22 Aug 2011

"VERY exciting! The music holds both medieval, renaissance, folk music and the modern - and at no point does it turn commonplace..."

Castle organist Sven-Ingvart Mikkelsen after performance
in Frederiksborg Castle Church 4 Sep 2011

"She makes use of individual singers both as soloists and in solochoral parts in a most refined way, letting them appear with simple clarity, but at the same time in very refined coherence with the text."

Bent-Erik Rasmussen, general secretary of Franz Schubert Society of Denmark, Sep 2011

The music was nominated to The Danish Arts Foundation's award for female composers 2011. It is now recorded by ensemble Music of Mysteries which the composer formed in 2007. Her creative work with the script in 2009-11 as well as the author's account for it is found in the illustrated accompanying booklet together with the text set to music. The Testimony of Melangell features Swedish contraalto Agnethe Christensen singing Melangell, Welsh actor Lauralee Nicole performing the integrated recitals of the story, Danish opera singer Teit Kanstrup as Prince of Brochwell and other bass baritone solos, Norwegian soprano Bente Vist and Danish tenor Christian Berg as vocal soloists, and four Danish instrumentalists: Kuno Kjærbye on violin, Ida Bach Jensen on double bass, Anders Hvidberg-Hansen on percussion, and Hanne Tofte Jespersen on piano and as alto singer.