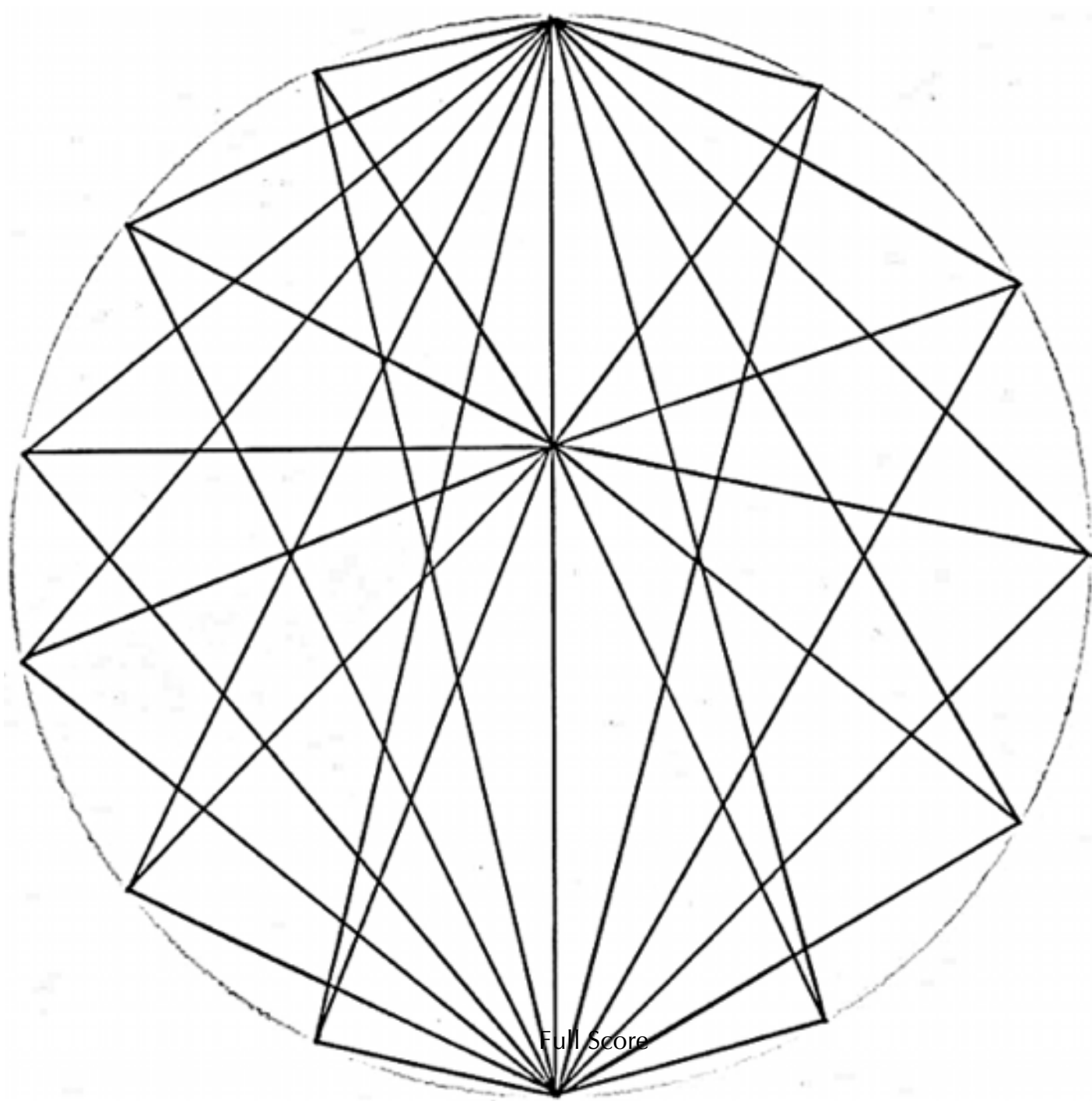


Robinson McClellan

# Nativity Kontaktion



Robinson McClellan

MANY PAGES ARE OMITTED  
IN THIS EXCERPTED SCORE.

# Nativity Kontakion

for  
Byzantine Chorus  
and  
Stringed Instruments

text by the St. Romanos the Melodist  
trans. Archimandrite Ephrem Lash

*Commissioned and Premiered by Nektarios Antoniou  
and Schola Cantorum for Hellenic Music*

Full Score

2008

## INSTRUMENTS

Exact instrumentation is flexible. This score is for a single line, which could be played on a plucked or keyboard instrument. It would also be possible to use four bowed strings: viols, violas, cellos, etc. (they may need amplification to be heard over the chorus).

For a more percussive sound, use two or more (plucked) electric basses or guitars: tune basses an octave lower and use harmonics to play the notes given below (a single bass cannot play all of the rhythmic patterns).

### Accidentals

...apply for the whole bar but are often restated.

↑ +2/72 (33 cents) \*

↓ -2/72 \*

♯ +6/72 (100 cents or 1/2 step, as usual)

♭ -6/72

Accidentals are additive. For example:

↑↑ +8/72 (+6, +2)

↑♭ -4/72 (-6, +2)

↑↑ +4/72 (+2, +2)

### Tuning / Scordatura

Tuned to the given frequencies, the four bottom notes should be equally spaced, 14/72 apart. Tune the remaining notes (fifths, octaves, major tenths) to the bottom notes.

*These 15 notes are the only ones you will use in the piece.*

The image shows four staves of musical notation, each representing a different string or instrument. The first staff is labeled with a frequency of 146.6 Hz and a sharp sign above the staff. The second staff is labeled with 128.1 Hz and a double sharp sign above the staff. The third staff is labeled with 112.0 Hz and a double sharp sign above the staff. The fourth staff is labeled with 97.9 Hz. The notes are represented by dots on the staff lines, and the fret numbers are written below the staff. The fret numbers are: 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 2, 12, 2, 10, 4, 10, 4, 10, 14.

\* These special accidentals were created by Ezra Sims; the font used for all accidentals in this score is by Ted Mook.

## VOICES

This piece uses only SIMPLE DIATONIC SCALES, tuned in the traditional (slightly altered) Byzantine modes.

**Western singers will find the tuning intuitive.**

For example, a common version of the Major scale in this piece is:

14 10 6 12 14 10 6  
 Ni Pa Vu Ga Di Ke Zo Ni  
 Wh Wh Hf Wh Wh Wh Hf

**For correct tuning and rhythmic coordination, always listen the instruments.**

The four instruments are tuned in three different diatonic scales (1 and 4 share a single scale).

Unisons, octaves, fifths, thirds, etc. with notes in the instruments should be adjusted to be exactly in tune with them.

Below the neumes, numbers show what the instruments are doing:

- A number directly below a neume means the instrument plays a note at the same time: 1
- Sometimes, for extra clarification, an added martyria shows the exact scale degree of an instrument's note: 3<sup>γ</sup><sub>α</sub>. Without the martyria, the number does not show an exact pitch.
- Rhythmic patterns look like this: 3+2 ; repeated or abbreviated: 3+2...  
 Usually your first note in the section tunes to the first note in the pattern (see next page).

\* The font used for the neumes in this score is the Byzantine Music Font Package BYZANTINA, developed by Stefanos Souldatos and Father Ephraim, priest-monk at St. Anthony's Greek Orthodox Monastery in Arizona.

## Voicing

Each part is a character in the story:

**Tenor Chorus:** ison,\* the voice of **MARY** (except Verse 24.2 - end, the Cantor is Mary)

**Bass Chorus:** ison, the voice of the **MAGI** (Verses 4-5)

Soloists

**Cantor:** the **NARRATOR**

**Baritone Solo:** the voice of **JESUS** (Verses 8-9)

\* When basses sing the melody in Verses 4 and 5, tenors sing the ison.

# Nativity Kontakion

Verses 1-9, 22-24 (of 24)

St. Romanos the Melodist  
trans. Archimandrite Ephrem Lash

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## Prelude

Mode 2

**Cantor**

Byzantine Notation

Staff Notation

Instrument(s)

*sempre senza vibrato*

Today the Virgin gives birth to him who is a - bove all being,

And the earth offers a cave to him(,) whom no one can ap-proach.

And the earth offers a cave to him(,) whom no one can ap-proach.

\*Numbers show exact melodic intervals in 72s of the octave.

An - gels with shepherds give glo - ry,

An - gels with shepherds give glo - ry,

and magi journey with a star, for to us there has been born

and magi journey with a star, for to us there has been born

### Prelude: Refrain

Mode 4 Plagal

$\text{♩} = 70$  A lit - tle Child, God be - fore the

A lit - tle Child, God be - fore the

$\text{♩} = 70$   
*sempre senza vibrato*

ag - es, the ag - es.

ag - es, the ag - es.

Verse 1, Section 1  
Mode 4 Plagal

(Str. 130) 6/8

Bethlehem has op - ened Eden,

Bethlehem has op - ened Eden,

repeat to the word "cave"; at the soonest bar line after that, move to the next pattern

come, let us see, we have found de-light in secret

come, let us see, we have found de-light in secret

Verse 3.1  
Mode 4 Plagal

Tenors: melody  
Basses: ison

♩ = 130

*Instruments continue as before, but the voices now keep a steady pulse with them*

"High King, what have you

3+2...  
6 beats

3+2...

16

to do with beg - gars? Ma - ker of hea - ven,\_\_\_

3+2... 3+2...

14 14

to do with beg - gars? Ma - ker of hea - ven,\_\_\_

29

why have you come to those

3+2... 3+2...  
6 beats

32 fourth 14 6

why have you come to those

31



born\_\_\_\_\_ of earth? Did you love\_\_\_ a cave or take plea - sure

3+2... 3+2... 3+2...

6 12 14 16

born\_\_\_\_\_ of earth? Did you love\_\_\_ a cave or take plea - sure

33

## Verse 3.2

in\_\_\_ a man - ger? See, there is no place\_\_\_

3+2... 2+1... 6 beats 2+1...

10 6 14 16

in\_\_\_ a man - ger? See, there is no place\_\_\_

36

for your ser - vant in\_\_\_\_\_ the\_\_\_ inn,\_\_\_ I do not say a place,

2+1... 2+1... 2+1...

for your ser - vant in\_\_\_\_\_ the\_\_\_ inn,\_\_\_ I do not say a place,

39

not e - ven a\_\_ cave, for that too\_\_ be-longs\_\_ to\_\_ an - o - ther

2+1... 2+1... 3+2...

not e - ven a\_\_ cave, for that too\_\_ be-longs\_\_ to\_\_ an - o - ther

42

Verse 3.3

(πΑ = NH)

To Sa - ra, when she bore,

1+3... 6 beats 1+3... 1+3...

To Sa - ra, when she bore,

45

bore\_\_ a child,\_\_ a vast\_\_ land

1+3... 1+3... 1+3...

bore\_\_ a child,\_\_ a vast\_\_ land

48

<sup>NH</sup> <sup>PA</sup>  
 was gi - ven as her lot. To me not e - ven a fox-hole.

1+3... 1+3... 1+3...

was gi - ven as her lot. To me not e - ven a fox-hole.

51

<sup>NH</sup> <sup>PA</sup>  
 I used the ca - vern where wil - ling - ly you made your dwell - ing,

1+3... 1+3... 1+3...

I used the ca - vern where wil - ling - ly you made your dwell - ing,

54

Verse 3: Refrain

Mode 4 Plagal

Tenors  
(alone)

<sup>A</sup>  
 A lit - tle Child, God be - fore the ag - es


3+3+4 3+3+4 1 3+3+4 1 3+3+4 1 3+3+4 1

A lit - tle Child, God be - fore the ag - es

57  $\text{♩} = 70_2$

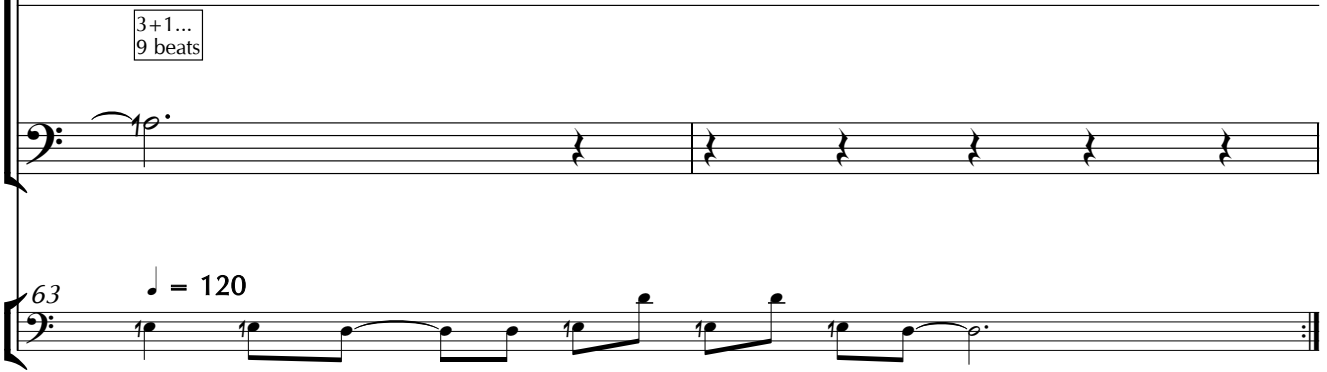
Verse 4.1  
Mode 1 Plagal

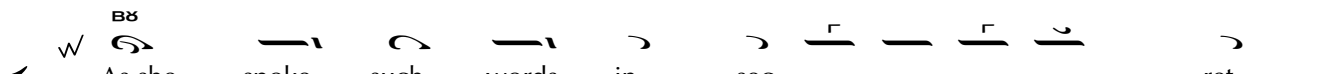
Cantor: melody  
\*\*Tenors: ison

(Str. 120) 


3+1...  
9 beats

63  $\text{♩} = 120$

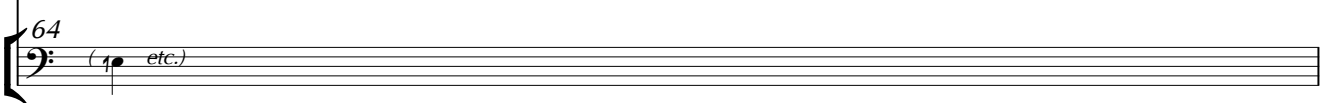


  
As she spoke such words in sec - - - ret

3+1...

  
As she spoke such words in sec - - - ret


64 (1 etc.)

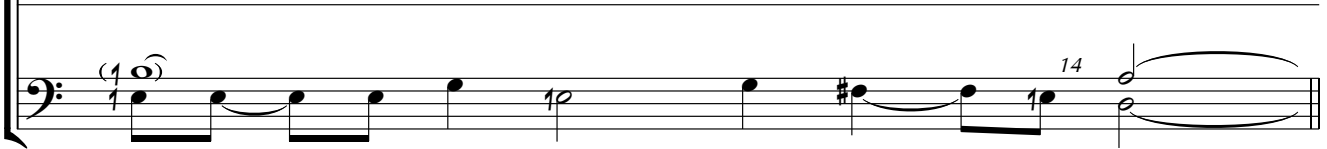



  
and en - trea - ted the one who knows what is hid-den,

  
and en - trea - ted the one who knows what is hid-den,



  
she heard the ma - gi seek - ing the babe..

  
she heard the ma - gi seek - ing the babe..



Verse 4.2

( πλ = ββ )      ββ      (w)

At once, the Mai - den

1+2...  
9 beats

16

At once, the Mai - den

64

cried \_\_\_\_\_ to them,      γ α

cried \_\_\_\_\_ to them,

10 6 12 14

65

Tenors: melody  
Basses: ison

♩ 120      KE↓

"Who \_\_\_\_\_ are

1+2...  
(9 beats)

14 10

"Who \_\_\_\_\_ are

66      ♩ = 120

Cantor  
(melody)

you?" They an - swered her,

1+2...

67

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Cantor's melody. It features a vocal line with lyrics "you?" "They an - swered her," and a piano accompaniment. The piano part starts at measure 67. There is a box labeled "1+2..." under the first measure of the vocal line. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *q*.

\*\*Basses: melody  
\*\*Tenors: ison

"And you, who are you, that you have

1+2...  
(9 beats)

68

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Bases and Tenors. It features a vocal line with lyrics "And you, who are you, that you have" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part starts at measure 68. There is a box labeled "1+2... (9 beats)" under the first measure of the vocal line. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *q*.

borne such a Child?

1+2... 1

18

69

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Bases and Tenors. It features a vocal line with lyrics "borne such a Child?" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part starts at measure 69. There is a box labeled "1+2..." and a circled "1" under the first measure of the vocal line. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *q*. A measure number "18" is written at the end of the piano line.

\* This piece omits the rest of Verse 4.

Verse 5.1  
Mode 1 Plagal

For Ba - lam laid be - fore us pre -

1+2...

18 24 4 14 10

For Ba - lam laid be - fore us pre -

70 (♩ = 120)

cise - ly the mean - ing of the words

1+2...

cise - ly the mean - ing of the words

71

he spoke in pro - - - - -

1+2...

4 8

he spoke in pro - - - - -

72

\* B $\flat$  and C are only 4/72s apart; this clash is deliberate. There are similar clashes in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

Verse 8.1  
Mode 4 Plagal

Cantor

$\text{♩} = 60$   
 Jesus the Christ and truly our God \_\_\_\_\_ secretly touched his mother's mind\_\_\_\_

Jesus the Christ and truly our God \_\_\_\_\_ secretly touched his mother's mind\_\_\_\_

157  $\text{♩} = 60$

Verse 8.2

Baritone solo:

$\text{♩} = 60$   
 saying, "Bring in those I have brought by my word,

saying, "Bring in those I have brought by my word,

160  $\text{♩} = 60$



♩ = 60

for it is my word which shone on those who were seeking me.

163 ♩ = 60

♩ = 60

to the senses it is a star

165 ♩ = 60

♩ = 60

but to the mind a pow'r.

167 ♩ = 60

Verse 8.3

It accompanied the magi as my minister,

(Baritone solo)

14

♩ = 60

and still stands ful - filling its service and showing with its rays

20

171

the place where there has been born

6 14

173

### Verse 8: Refrain

Mode 4 Plagal

(Baritone solo)

70  $\text{♩} = 70$

a lit - tle Child, God be -

1+3+3 3 1+3+3 3 1+3+3 3

24 12 12

a lit - tle Child, God be -

174  $\text{♩} = 70$

3 3 3

fore the ag - - fore es.

1+3+3 3 1 3 3

18 10

fore the ag - - fore es.

175

3

### Verse 9.1

Mode 4 Plagal

(Baritone solo)

"Therefore now re - ceive, holy Lady— receive those who have re - ceived me,

2  $\text{♩}$  3  $\text{♩}$  2  $\text{♩}$  3  $\text{♩}$  2  $\text{♩}$

8 (wh. step)

"Therefore now re - ceive, holy Lady— receive those who have re - ceived me,

177

for I am in them as I am in your arms;

3 2

24

179

Detailed description: This system contains three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "for I am in them as I am in your arms;". Above the lyrics are slurs and accents. Below the lyrics are the numbers "3" and "2". The middle staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains notes for "am", "in", and "arms;" with a measure rest and a fermata. The number "24" is written above the staff. The bottom staff is another piano part in bass clef, starting at measure 179, with a fermata.

I did not leave you and yet I

3 2

24

180

Detailed description: This system contains three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "I did not leave you and yet I". Above the lyrics are slurs and accents. Below the lyrics are the numbers "3" and "2". The middle staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains notes for "I did", "not", and "leave you and yet I" with a measure rest and a fermata. The number "24" is written above the staff. The bottom staff is another piano part in bass clef, starting at measure 180, with a fermata.

came with them."

2 2

181

Detailed description: This system contains three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "came with them." Above the lyrics are slurs and accents. Below the lyrics are the numbers "2" and "2". The middle staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains notes for "came with them." with a measure rest and a fermata. The bottom staff is another piano part in bass clef, starting at measure 181, with a fermata.

Verse 9.2

Mode 2

Cantor

She opens the door and receives the company of the magi.

She opens the door and receives the company of the magi.

182

She opens the door— she, the un - op - ened gate

She opens the door— she, the un - op - ened gate

183

through which Christ a - lone has passed.

through which Christ a - lone has passed.

184

Verse 9.3

She opened the door, she from whom was born the door,

She opened the door, she from whom was born the door,

185

Verse 9: Refrain  
Mode 4 Plagal

(Cantor)

a lit - tle Child, God be -

a lit - tle Child, God be -

186

fore the a - - ges.

fore the a - - ges.

189

Verse 24: Final Refrain  
Mode 4 Plagal

(Cantor)

$\pi'$   
 a lit - tle Child,  $\nu'$

24  $\sharp$   $\sharp$   $\sharp$  42  
 a lit - tle Child,

260  $\text{♩} = 70$  (very free)

$\pi'$   
 a lit - tle Child,  $\nu'$   $\nu'$  a lit - tle Child.  $\nu'$

24  $\sharp$   $\sharp$   $\sharp$  30 18  $\sharp$   $\sharp$   $\sharp$   
 a lit - tle Child, a lit - tle Child.

261

God be - fore, God be - fore,

God be - fore, God be - fore,

263

God be - fore the a - ges, the

God be - fore the a - ges, the

265

a - ges, the a - ges."

a - ges, the a - ges."

267