This chapter introduces the musical dimensions of Hildegard’s visionary experiences and the works that emerged from them. Hildegard herself claimed that music—the heavenly symphonia—was an integral part of “what she saw and heard.”\(^1\) By any standards, medieval or modern, the anchoress-turned-abbess composed a remarkable body of songs, many of whose texts are embedded within her visionary treatises and other works, in addition to their melodic settings in surviving manuscripts. From the song texts in the final vision of Scivias to the collected works notated in the Riesen Kodex, Hildegard’s songs cannot be separated from her oeuvre as a whole or from the Benedictine and other ecclesiastical circles in which she moved.

We begin with two overviews to provide a framework for discussing Hildegard’s music. The first is a critical overview of scholarship concerning Hildegard’s collection of liturgical songs, the Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum, and her music drama Ordo uirtutum, including a summary of the manuscripts. The second discusses the chronology of the works themselves and describes their possible layers of development. We then offer analytical case studies of what seem to be Hildegard’s earliest musical compositions: the Scivias songs, represented by the song (Nam) O vos angeli, and the Ordo.

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\(^1\) Hildegard consistently described her visions in audio-visual terms, repeatedly using the construction uidi et audiui, e.g. Letter 1 in Epistolarium, I, pp. 4–5, ll. 38–39: “quia magnos labores habeo in hac uisione, quatenus dicam quod uidi et audiui,” and the opening of her final vision in Scivias 3.13, p. 614, l. 27: “Deinde uidi lucissimum aerem, in quo audiui.” The authors are grateful to Jane Flynn for her assistance with this chapter.
notes, and bibliographies. *Hildegard von Bingen: Internationale Wissenschaftliche Bibliographie* has only minimal coverage of music. Detailed current bibliographies accompany the critical editions of the song texts and of the text of the *Ordo*, as well as the study *Hildegard von Bingen: Der Klang des Himmels.*

The sources for the *Symphonia* and the *Ordo* differ to a degree. Although at least four 12th- or early 13th-century neumed versions of the *Symphonia* existed, three of which certainly contained the *Ordo*, only two survive: the Riesenkodex, which contains both the *Symphonia* and the *Ordo*; and the fragmentary Dendermonde codex (hereafter Dendermonde), which contains 57 songs but lacks the *Ordo* and the remaining songs (more on these sources below). The two other collections known to have contained the songs and the drama are Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 721 (lost c.1800), and the manuscript from which Johannes Trithemius, abbot of Sponheim, had a fully neumed copy of the *Ordo* produced in the 15th century, London, British Library. Add. Ms. 15102. Several stray copies of songs are found elsewhere, mostly unnotated. The textual tradition of Hildegard’s music also includes her first theological treatise, *Scivias*; Hildegard incorporated a group of song texts (which we call the *Scivias* songs) and a version of the drama into the final vision of its third and last book. In addition, a liturgical miscellany found in the Riesenkodex contains 30 of her song texts. These texts comprise a textual authority independent from the songs as notated in the two music fascicles of the manuscript.

Hildegard's complete musical works were first edited by Pudentiana Barth, Immaculata Ritscher, and Joseph Schmidt-Görg. The editors transcribed the *Symphonia* and *Ordo* into square chant notation with classicized spellings, following Dendermonde for its 57 songs, then copying the remainder from the Riesenkodex. Like those who followed them, they depended on the edition and German translation of the *Ordo* by Maura

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2 Ed. Werner Lauter (Mainz, 1998).