

Orff: Carmina Burana

Preparation and pronunciation FAQ

1. Latin pronunciation

- just as Carl Orff himself we pronounce the Latin text in the traditional German way:
- c before a, o, u → [k]
- c before e, i, y → [ts]
- s always unvoiced
- michi → [ch]

2. Middle High German pronunciation

- ie → [iə] diphthong, similar to British English “near” (swaz hie gat, din liebe)
- uo → [ʊə] diphthong, similar to Austrian-Bavarian “guat”, “bruada” (gruonet, tuot, genuot)
- ou → [aʊ] diphthong, similar to English “how” (frouwe, schouwen)
- iu → [y:], like modern German “ü” (lat mich iu, diu chünegin)
- oe → [ø:] like modern German “ö”, similar to American English “girl” or “sir”, but closed (roete, noete)
- h before vowel → [h]
- h before consonant or at the end → [x] like modern German “ch” in “ich” (nah mime gesellen, seht mich an, ih mih)
- ch at the beginning → [kx] (chünegin, chum)
- ch in the middle or at the end → [x]
- z → [s], unvoiced s
- w → [w] like English “w” in “water” (swaz hie gat umbe, gip die varwe mir)

3. Music

- all staccato notes → half of their actual length: a staccato minim becomes a crotchet, a staccato crotchet becomes a quaver etc.
- final consonants on the subsequent rest, unless staccato or otherwise indicated
- Orff’s metronome marks are binding
- the little comma which Orff often writes into the stave between two phrases doesn’t stop the beat, it just takes approximately a quaver off the previous note.

4. Specific remarks

1. O Fortuna	bars 1, 2, 4	small caesura after the bar
	bars 5 ff.	minims → crotchet + crotchet rest
	1 before figure 5	michi [ch]
	2 after figure 6 ff.	slightly broader articulation than before
2. Fortune plango	all staccato notes	half of their actual length
3. Veris leta facies	4 after figure 16	Zephyrus [tse:-fi:-r <u>u</u> s]
5. Ecce gratum	bar 1 ff.	Ecce [ɛk-tsə]
	figure 25 ff.	Hyemis [h <u>y</u> -ɛ]
	3 before figure 33	Cypridis [ts <u>y</u>]
7. Floret silva	figure 50	eia [a- <u>ɪ</u> a]
	6 after 53	nah [nax]
	5 before 54	mime → mim
	5 after 54	wê → [we:]
	4 after 55ff:	gruonet → [gru- <u>a</u> net]
		wâ → [wɔ]
8. Chramer, gip die varwe mir	4 after 61ff	varwe [far-ue]
		iu [j <u>y</u>]
	3 before 64	no rit.
10. Were diu werlt	3 after 79 f.	diu [dj <u>y</u>]
		deme → omit the second e
14. In taberna quando sumus	bars 3 ff.	The famous old chorus master's secret to make the second semiquaver audible: repeat the first syllable with an additional "l": "in taberna quando sumus non curamus quid sit humus" becomes "ilin taberna qualando sumus nolon curalamus quilid sit humus" etc. Apply also to 4 before figure 101 ff.
	4 after 95	Baccho → [k]
	2 before 102	grace note on the beat

18. Circa mea pectora	1 after figure 119	mandaliet: ie → [ɪə] like “fear”
19. Si puer cum puellula	all	performed by solo sextet
20. Veni, veni venias	4 after figure 127	hyrca, hyrce → [-ka], [-tse]
24. Blanziflor et Helena	4 after 140	Blanziflor [z]

5. Carmina Burana music tutorials for further preparation at home:

Soprano1

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjJPaTQW9-OiSIPKips-1uPthRF3YP5_i

Soprano2

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjJPaTQW9-OjnUvjB9OI2O0PvB6ZOeHjy>

Alto1

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjJPaTQW9-OjOSO2UYp82b9g5ZRqaKJyY>

Alto2

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjJPaTQW9-OiWuHi6UXEZuAMjLbcLuUW0>

Tenor1

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjJPaTQW9-Og2MVtswSCfkDaD0LON9FwH>

Tenor2

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjJPaTQW9-Oi7HI2FqUN-8XISuBnPDjrj5>

Bass1

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjJPaTQW9-OjceCbFwVCUuMkdIcl1TAQF>

Bass2

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjJPaTQW9-OjceCbFwVCUuMkdIcl1TAQF>

Carmina Burana as original:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLA939E5B08BE7A183>