

Carmina Burana General Comments on Pronunciation

Carmina Burana's texts are in two languages:

- Medieval, scholastic/poetic Latin: closer to church Latin, not Italianate, but a little Germanic.
- Middle High German: similar to modern High German, with some notable differences.

Latin Pronunciation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vowels are the same 5 pure ones used in modern church Latin: • When "y" is used as a vowel in a Latin word, we will "Germanize" by making it a little like the umlaut "u" sound (ü). • Consonants present our biggest problem. Most are the same as in church Latin, which is closer to the poetic medieval than scholastic Latin. Notable consonant rules, exceptions, and examples in alphabetical order: 		
Consonant	American English Equivalent	Examples
c	normally "k"	mecum = meh-koom capillata = kah-pee-lah-tah
c followed by i or e (ce, ci)	ts	crescis = krehs-tsees aciem = ah-tsee-ehm cetus = tseh-toos
cc	ts	ecce = eh-tseh saccis = sah-tsees
ch (initial)	k	chorus = ko-roos
ch (not initial)	hard, almost guttural, like Modern German "ich" or the h in huge	michi = mee-chee Baccho = bah-chaw
cy	tsü	Cytharizat = tsü -tah-ree-dzaht Cypridis = tsü-pree-dees
g	hard, as in get, not j as in jet	egestatem = eh-geh-stah-tehm angaria = ahn-gah-ree-ah gentes = gehn-tehs
h (initial)	slightly pronounced not silent, as in modern Latin	Hecubam = heh-koo-bam herus = heh-roos
i before another vowel	y (transitional)	iam = yahm gaudia = gah-oo-dya iustis = yoo-stees
qu	kw, like in English	quis-quid = kwees-kweed antiquus = ahn-tee-kwoos
single s between vowels	z (voiced)	fusus = foo-zoos risum = ree-zoom misera = mee-zeh-rah
ending single s	s	nobilis = no-bee-lees
ss between vowels	s	promissio = pro-mee-see-o formosissima = for-mo-zee-see-mah

sc followed by vowel	ts	sceleris = tseh-leh-rees
th	t	Cytharizat = tsu-tah-ree-dzaht
ti between vowels	tsee	sevitia = seh-vee-tsee-ah decies = deh-tsee-ehs agentibus = ah-gehn-tsee-boos pretiosa = preh-tsee-o-zah
v	v (not w like scholastic Latin)	vana = vah-nah veluta = veh-loo-tah
w (initial)	is borrowed from the old German so sing as English w (see German pronunciation section)	Wafna = wahf-nah
x	x	sexies = sehk-see-ehs
z (initial)	dz	Zephyrus = dzeh-fu-roos nazaza = nah-dzah-dzah Blanziflor = blahn-dzee-flawr

German Pronunciation

- Vowels are actually a bit more like modern English. Also, they tend to be phonetic, that is, if two vowels appear together, pronounce them separately (or quickly elide if on the same note).
- Consonants are also much like modern English, so some modern German pronunciation rules don't apply. For instance, "s" is pronounced like modern English "s," and "w" is pronounced like modern English "w." However, some consonants are pronounced as in modern German: "v" = "f," "j" = "y," and "ch" endings in words like "ich" and "mich"
- Pronunciation: Because the Middle High German text is so much shorter than the Latin in Carmina Burana, a word-by word pronunciation guide follows.

Movement	Text	American English Equivalent
7. Floret siiva nobilis (The woods are burgeoning) (Note: the first segment of this movement is in Latin. The German text starts six measures after rehearsal 53.)	nan min gesellen ist mir we Gruonet der wait allenthalben, wa ist min geselle also lange Der ist geriten hinnen o wi, wer sol mich minnen?	nach meen geh-seh-lehn ihst meer weh (almost 'we') groo-oh-neht dayr wahit ah-lehnt-hahl-behn wah ihst meen geh-seh-leh ahl-seh lahn-geh dayr ihst geh-ree-tehn hih-nehn aw wee wehr sawl mich mih-nehn
8. Chramer, gip die varwe mir (Shopkeeper, give me colour) (How to form the mouth to sing 'a bocca chiusa' or 'with closed mouth')*	Chramer, gip die varwe mir, die min wengel roete, damit ich die jungen man an ir dank der minnenliebe noete Seht mich an, jungen man! lat mich iu gevallen! Minnet, tugentliche man, minnecliche vrouwen! minne tuot iu hoch gemout	krah-mehr gihp dee fahr-weh meer dee meen wen-gehl roh-eh-teh (the o sounds a little Swedish) dah-miht ich dee yoon-gehn mahn ahn ihr dahnk dayr mih-nehn-lee-beh noh-eh-teh (Swedish o) sayt mich ahn yoon-gehn mahn laht mich yoo geh-fah-lehn mih-neht tuh-gehnt-lee-sheh (slightly guttural) mahn mih-nehk-lee-sheh froh-oo-wehn (elide to second vowel quickly)

	<p>unde lat iuch in hohen eren schouwen</p> <p>Wol dir, Werit, daz du bist also freudenriche! ich will dir sin undertan durch din liebe immer sicherliche.</p>	<p>mih-neh too-oht yoo hoch geh-moh-oot oon (as in foot)-deh laht yooch ihn hoh-ehn eh-rehn shoh-oo-wehn</p> <p>wohl deer wehrit dahs doo bihst ahl-soh froy-dehn-ree-sheh ich wihl deer sihn oon-dehr-tahn doorch deen lee-beh ih-mehr see-cher-lee-sheh</p>
9. Reie (Round dance)	<p>Swaz hie gat umbe, daz sint alles megede die welient an man alle disen sumer gan!</p> <p>Chume, chum, geselle min ih enbite harte din Suzer rosenvarwer munt chum un mache mich gesunt</p>	<p>swahs hee-eh gaht oom-beh dahs sihnt ah-lehs meh-geh-deh dee weh-lehnt ahn mahn ah-leh dee-sehn suh-mehr gahn</p> <p>kuh-meh kuhm geh-seh-leh meen ich ehn-bee-teh hahr-teh deen soo-sehr roh-sehn-farh-wehr munt koom oon mah-che mich geh-suhnt</p>
10. Were diu werlt alle min (Were all the world mine)	<p>Were diu werlt alle min von deme mere unze an den Rin des wolt ih mih darben daz diu chunegin von Engellant lege an minen armen</p>	<p>weh-reh dyoo wehrlt ah-leh meen fawn deem meh-reh oon-seh-an dayn reen dehs wohit ich mich dahr-ben dahs dyoo koe-nih-gehn fohn ehn-geh-lant leh-geh ahn mee-nehn ahr-mehn</p>
18. Circa mea pectora (In my heart) <i>The first four bars of the chorus are in Latin</i>	<p>Manda liet min geselle chumet niet</p>	<p>mahn-dah lee-eht meen geh-seh-leh koo-meht nee-eht</p>

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