

London, British Library, MSS Add. 17802–5 ('Gyffard Partbooks') [London, c.1540–80]

The musical score is for a Kyrie titled 'Le Roy' by John Taverner. It features four vocal parts: TRIPLEX, CONTRATENOR, MEDIUS, and BASSUS. The time signature is 6/8. The lyrics are in Latin: Ky - ri - e - lei - son. The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the beginning of the piece, with the TRIPLEX part starting on a high note and the other parts following. The second system continues the melody, with the CONTRATENOR part having a semitone higher note at measure 4. The third system shows the continuation of the melody, with the CONTRATENOR part having a semitone higher note at measure 8.

† Contratenor, m.9.4: a semitone higher in the source (presumed erroneous)

12

lei

Chri - ste

Chri - ste

Chri - ste

16

son. Chri - ste

son. Chri - ste

son. Chri - ste

son. Chri - ste

20

e

ste e

e

ste e

24

lei

lei

lei

lei

† Contratenor, m.13.1-2: the source contains an additional minim beat, resolved by deletion of a minim B between these notes

28

son. Ky ri e

33

e Ky - ri e e e e e e

38

e - lei e - lei e - lei e - lei

43

son. son. son. son.

† Tenor, m.33.3: a semitone higher in the source (presumed erroneous)

Editorial Notes:

This setting of the *Kyrie* — which is a 'standalone' work, rather than a movement from a complete mass setting — takes its name from an anonymous tune that appears in a number of Tudor-period manuscripts. Taverner sets the tune in the *Triplex* part. The work survives only in the Gyffard Partbooks, which were probably copied for use in St Paul's Cathedral during the reign of Mary I. The source contains three perceived errors that have been corrected in this edition, as indicated in footnotes.

This edition is set at original pitch. Original note values are retained: thus, consistent with 16th-century convention, the C and C mensuration signs (and their modern-equivalent time signatures used in this edition) should both be read as 'slow two in a bar', with the latter somewhat faster than the former. A suitable tempo relationship may be found by maintaining the same underlying minim pulse. Bar lines are added only to aid reading and direction: 'strong' and 'weak' beats implied by their position should never take precedence over phrasing or word stress. Ligatures and coloration in the source are acknowledged with overarching square brackets and open 'corner' brackets respectively.

Word underlay is consistent with the source — which is unusually clear in this regard — with one exception. The source reflects the custom in English Renaissance settings to elide the final 'e' of *Kyrie* and *Christe* with the initial 'e' of *eleison*, insofar as the manuscript omits either the latter or the former in most instances. The long *melismata* that are so typical of Taverner and his contemporaries afford the opportunity to restore the elided/implied syllable — as indicated in *italic* — at a point judged musically appropriate.
