

“Gentile’s artful renditions of these 12th century pieces are impressive, but this album is essentially about devotional ecstasy. The soprano’s glorious voice celebrates Hildegard’s union with the divine...the sense of intimacy, trust, and abandonment in God...”

-Yoga Journal

“The range of recent Hildegard recordings is impressive and a testimony to the current standards in this kind of music...But there were three recordings that gave me unexpected pleasure, all for entirely different reasons...[including] that of the American singer Norma Gentile. The main virtue of this recording is that she approaches the music like the concert recitalist tackling Schubert, asking questions...and for each piece she offers a different answer. We need more singers with that attitude in this repertory.”

-David Fallows

Gramophone (London, England)

“Norma Gentile sings them radiantly and they soar up over a constantly sustained drone choral pedal. Beautifully recorded...this collection is one of the more memorable CDs of Hildegard’s very remarkable and individual melismas”.

Penguin Guide to Compact Discs and DVDs (2007)

“...deeply committed and sensuously spiritual.”

-Dr. Christopher Rothko, former Contributing Editor

High Fidelity and **Musical America Magazine**

“... a genuinely valuable contribution to the discography of Abbess Hildegard (1098-1179). She [Gentile] has a fine, rich-toned, splendidly controlled voice; and she realizes the shape of the melodies, in relation to the words, with great sensitivity, capturing the uniquely hypnotic, rhapsodic quality of Hildegard's mystical outpourings.”

-John W. Barker

American Record Guide

“Gentile’s liquid singing and breathless delivery combine with her almost supernatural presence, concentration, and modal sensitivity.”

- Mark Longaker (music reviewer, Washington Post)

Early Music America Magazine

“A lone soprano voice, pure and serene, echoes unaccompanied. Flitting from note to note, almost like the song of a bird, the singer conveys a sense of other-worldly joy...The purity and flexibility of voice provide a fine instrument for Hildegard’s music.”

- *Ray D. Hatton*, **Christianity and the Arts** Spring 1998

“In *Meditation Chants*, Norma Gentile’s exquisite soprano voice delivers each of these sacred monophonic Latin chants to the listener with a sense of healing and compassion. She and Hildegard describe the chants as translations of the subtle tones of the Universal Harmony or Cosmic Symphony. Gentile hears this symphony as well and honors Hildegard’s strength and beauty through each selection. The liner notes include the English translation of each chant.

“The chants provide a soothing background for meditation and simply bringing ourselves to a peaceful place that is green and lush and full of love. Enjoy the ecstasy of God by experiencing this symphony of joy and jubilation.”

-*Peg Noonan*, **Creation Spirituality Magazine**

“Like Gentile’s previous recording, it shimmers...”

-*Mark Longaker*, **Early Music America Magazine**

“... a mesmerizing loveliness, a loveliness that heightens the effectiveness of those moments of seemingly intense spiritual ecstasy... one is astonished by the rightness of her phrasing throughout the disc, by the subtlety in how she swells her voice to fullness and softens it to delicate, velvety pianissimos, and, most importantly, by how she so consistently captures Hildegard’s simple yet elusive and vocally challenging idiom.

There are many Hildegard discs on the market today, but this Lyrichord offering surely ranks among the best. It features splendid sound, excellent notes, beautiful singing, and the music of the intriguing, the remarkable Hildegard of Bingen.”

- *Robert Cummings* , **Cosmic Debris / Classical Net**

“The melodies are executed in a lyrically florid manner in a reverberant chapel, suggesting the ecstasy of a mystic...a superior recording...the Lyrichord disc is worth hearing.”

-*J. F. Weber*, **Fanfare Magazine**

“Gentile's dark, rich voice -- augmented occasionally by a drone choir -- is a wonderful vehicle for these pieces, and she sings with a commitment that reveals musical depths often hidden in some of the more academic recordings available on the market... Highly recommended.”

-*Rick Anderson*, **Critics' Choice/College Press Service**