

**W. H. Auden - Hymn to St. Cecilia**

In a garden shady this holy lady  
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,  
Like a black swan as death came on  
Poured forth her song in perfect calm:  
And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin  
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer  
And notes tremendous from her great engine  
Thundered out on the roman air.  
Blond Aphrodite rose up excited,  
Moved to delight by the melody.  
White as an orchid she rode quite naked  
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;  
At sounds so entrancing the angels dancing  
Came out of their trance into time again,  
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses  
The huge flame flickered and eased their pain.  
  
Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions  
To all musicians, appear and inspire:  
Translated Daughter, come down and startle  
Composing mortals with immortal fire.