

# ABBIE BETINIS

**PERUSAL ONLY**  
(PERFORMANCE PROHIBITED)

## YHINX:

### AN ANCIENT GREEK LOVE CHARM

*~ for men's voices, a cappella ~*

*commissioned by Cantus*

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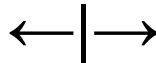
# YHINX: AN ANCIENT GREEK LOVE CHARM

Written for Cantus' spring 2003 concert series "Magic, Myth, and Legend," *Yhinx* melds together two ancient Greek love charms for an energetic setting of the evocative texts. The *Yhinx* (spelled "Iunx" in Greek, and now known as a "jinx") is an ancient Greek spell which requires a spinning brass disk bound with a wryneck bird. It is specifically an "erotic binding spell" meant to freeze a wayward lover in any sinful act, then return the lover to the one casting the spell.

The text here is from two ancient Greek sources. The verses are from Theocritus' *Idyll II*, written in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. In it, the narrator, Simaetha, lays a binding spell onto her neglectful lover. She burns barley-meal, bay leaves, bran, and a waxen puppet upon an altar, then demands that the maid, Thestylis, secretly smear the ashes above her absent lover's doorway. True to the much longer English translation by J.M. Edmonds (1912), this musical setting uses whistling, spitting, and the vocal equivalent of the beating of drums to evoke the mysticism of the event. Voiced shadow vowels ("charms-zah!") add extra drama.

The second source of text is from a stone recently discovered in Egypt which contains the following string of Greek letters:

Ιυνξι: α β ε ρ α μ ε ν θ ω ο υ λ ε ρ θ ε ξ α ν α ξ ε θ ρ ε λ υ ο ω θ ν ε μ α ρ ε β α



Like the Theocritus text, it is thought to be a binding *Yhinx* spell, dating from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Because these 39 letters can be read the same way backward and forward, much of the melodic and rhythmic figures in Yhinx are written symmetrically. The first half of the refrain, for instance, is from an ancient Hymn to Apollo (incidentally the twin of Artemis, who Simaetha entreats), while the second half is its retrograde. Many of the 7/8 figures are subdivided symmetrically as 3+2+2 / 2+2+3. The mixed meter, a feature of Greek music, is superimposed in symmetrical rhythms to match the mystical palindromic structure of the *Yhinx*.

But does the spell work? In the hope that there may have been some truth to these awkward syllables, the very last statement of the chorus features the inversion of the *Yhinx*. Finally the chant has turned itself upside down – and hopefully the lover returns home!

~ Abbie Betinis, January 2003

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# YHINX: AN ANCIENT GREEK LOVE CHARM

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Hey-dey, hey-dey, tah-ku, tah-ku  
(Now, now, quickly quickly!)

Ιυνξ: α-βερ-α-μεν-θω-ου-λερ-θεξ-α-να-ξεθ-ρελ-υο-ω-θνεμ-α-ρε-βα  
*Yhinx: ah-behr-ah-men-thoh-oo-lehr-thex-ah-na-kseth-rehl-oo-oh-thnem-ah-reh-bah*

Where are my bay leaves? Come, Thestylis; Where are my love charms? Come, crown me the bowl with the crimson flower o' wool...

First Barley meal to the burning, Come, Thestylis! Throw it on! On, on with the meal! So I burn the bay, As it crackles and then – Lo!

Ιυνξ: α β ε ρ α μ ε ν θ ω ο υ λ ε ρ θ ε ξ α ν α ξ ε θ ρ ε λ υ ο ω θ ν ε μ α ρ ε β α

Now for the bran... O Artemis! Artemis! Whelmed in the flames! Hark Thestylis! Quick – beat the pan!

And as this puppet melts for me  
So melt my Love so speedily –  
And as this wheel of brass  
Turns by grace of Aphrodite,  
So (my Love shall) turn and turn again...

Lo there! Now wave is still and wind is still, though never still the pain burning in my breast. For I am all afire, afire alas! So take thou these ashes, come Thestylis, while tis yet dark, and smear them privily, and spit for what thou doest and... Thrice this libation I pour – Thrice this prayer... O Artemis, Artemis! Thrice I say to Thee:

Ιυνξ: α β ε ρ α μ ε ν θ ω ο υ λ ε ρ θ ε ξ α ν α ξ ε θ ρ ε λ υ ο ω θ ν ε μ α ρ ε β α

Ιυνξ: α β ε ρ α μ ε ν θ ω ο υ λ ε ρ θ ε ξ α ν α ξ ε θ ρ ε λ υ ο ω θ ν ε μ α ρ ε β α

Ιυνξ: α β ε ρ α μ ε ν θ ω ο υ λ ε ρ θ ε ξ α ν α ξ ε θ ρ ε λ υ ο ω θ ν ε μ α ρ ε β α

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## Notes on Ancient Greek Pronunciation:

“Yh” of Yhinx is an aspirated Y sound, with the front of the tongue close to the roof of the mouth.

Vowels are pure (like Latin vowels), with the exception of the “i” in Yhinx which (because it is “υ”) may have been more similar to the pointed French “eu.”

R’s should be rolled or trilled.

Because the Yhinx chant is thought to be a nonsense word, there is no specific text stress.

Greek names all have pure vowels: Aphrodite = “Ah-phro-DEE-teh” (etc)

Commissioned by Cantus  
Premiered May 2003, Minneapolis, MN

# YHINX

~ an ancient Greek love charm for men's voices

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Theocritus (c.250 BC)

Abbie Betinis  
rev. 4/04

*Freely, out of time*

Musical score for the first system of 'Yhinx'. It features four staves: Solo 1, Solo 2, Tenor I, II, and Bass I, II. The time signature is 9/4. The tempo is 'Freely, out of time'. The dynamics are marked as *mf* and *p*. The lyrics are: Solo 1: Hey - dey! Yhinx... Hey - - - - - dey! Yhinx...; Solo 2: Yhinx... Hey - - - - - dey! Yhinx...; Tenor I, II: Yhinx... Yhinx...; Bass I, II: Yey... Yhinx... Yey... Yhinx...

Musical score for the second system of 'Yhinx'. It features four staves: 1., 2., T I, II, and B I, II. The time signature is 9/4. The tempo is *f* with a metronome marking of ♩ = 120, rhythmically. The lyrics are: 1.: Hey - - - - - dey! Yhinx...; 2.: Hey - - - - - dey! Yhinx...; T I, II: Hey - - - - - dey! Yhinx... ta - ku, ta - ku!; B I, II: Yey... ta - ku, ta - ku!

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4 *p* *8va*

2. *(solo:whistled)*

T I, II *sub p*

B I, II *sub p* *mp* *mf*

Where are my bay leaves?

A - ber - a - men - tho - ou - ler - thex - a - na - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - a - re - ba are my bay leaves?

8 *f* *mf* *f*

T I, II

B I, II *f* *mf* *f*

(~zah!) Come Thes - ty - lis; Where are my love charms? (~zah!) Come, crown me the bowl with the crim - son

12 *p*

T I, II

B I, II *p* *with anticipation*

flow - er o' wool; *tutti:* Come, Thes - ty - lis!

*solo:* First bar - ley meal to the burn - ing,

16 *f* *sub p*

T I, II

B I, II *f* *sub p* *p*

Throw it on! On, on with the meal! (LL)

*opt. solo:* So I burn the bay - As it crack - les and

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33 *mp* *poco a poco cresc.*

T I, II  
8 Hey - dey! Hey - dey! Hey - dey! Hey - dey! Hey - dey!

B I, II  
*poco a poco cresc.*

37

T I, II  
8 Hey - dey! Hey - dey! Hey - dey! Hey - dey! ta - ku!

B I, II

41 *f*

T I, II  
8 Hey - dey! ta - ku! Hey - dey! Hey - - - dey! ta - ku!

B I, II  
*f*  
Bum - ba - da - da Bah - dah

44 *Fluidly, same tempo* *mp*

1. And as this pup - pet melts for me,

2. *f* Yhinx... *mp* So

T I, II  
8 *f* Yhinx... *p* Oh... *8va-p* (solo:whistled)

B I, II  
*p* Bum - ba - da - da Bah - dah Bah - dah (sim.) Oh... Oh...

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*♩ = 60, half-tempo, straight-tone*  
*pp*

1. 48  
 8 — my love so speed - i - ly, ————

2. 48  
 8 melt my love ———— so speed ———— ly.

T I, II 48  
 8 (oh...)

B I, II 48  
 8 Oh... ————

*mp* And as this wheel of

T I, II 52  
 8 *mp* So turn and turn ———— a -

B I, II 52  
 8 *fp* *mf* turn and turn a -

brass Turns by grace of Aph - ro - di - te Yhinx: (kss) A - ber - a - men -

gain,

T I, II 55  
 8 gain, and turn a - gain, ———— a - gain... A -

B I, II 55  
 8 *f* *f*

tho - ou - ler - thex - a - na - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - a - re -

Ah...!

T I, II 58  
 8 ———— *mp* *♩ = 120, rhythmically*

B I, II 58  
 8 *ff* *accel. to m.64* *decresc.* *mp*

ber - a - men - tho - ou - ler - thex - a - na - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - a - re - ba ber -

b'a - ber - a - men - tho - ou - ler - thex - a - na - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - a - re - b'a - ber -

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63 *p*

T I, II  
8 a - men - tho - ou - ler - thex - a - na - - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - re -

B I, II  
8 a - men - tho - ou - ler - thex - a - na - - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - a - re -

*pp*

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*Fluidly, same tempo*

67 *mf*

1. Lo there! Now Wave is still and wind still, still the pain burn - ing

2. *sub f* Yhinx... *mp* *mf* Though ne - ver still burn - ing

T I, II  
8 Yhinx! *p* *8va* (whistled) Ah...!

B I, II  
8 *fp* ba Oh... Oh... Oh...

73 *f* *ff* *accel.*

1. in my breast, For I am all a - fire, a - fire a - las!

2. *f* *ff* *accel.* in my breast, For I am all a - fire, a - fire a - las!

T I, II  
8 *mf* *ff* *accel.* burn - ing burn - ing Oh... For I am all a - fire, a - fire a - las! So... *p*

B I, II  
8 *mf* *ff* *accel.* burn - ing burn - ing Oh... For I am all a - fire, a - fire a - las! So... *p*

*With much energy*

*mf* *f*

T I, II  
8  
Take thou these ash - es, (~zah!) Come Thes - ty - list while his yet dark, and

*mf* *f*

B I, II  
ash - es, ash - es,

*f* *sub p* *f*

T I, II  
81  
(spitting) (pdu) pri - vi - ly, Smear them pri - vi - ly,

*f* *sub p* *f*

B I, II  
(spitting) (pdu) Smear them pri - vi - ly,

85

T I, II  
(pdu) and Spit for what thou do - est and (pdu) for what thou do - est and

B I, II  
(pdu)

*mf* *f* *mf*

T I, II  
88  
Thrice this li - ba - tion (~nah!) I pour Thrice this prayer

*mf* *f*

B I, II  
a - ber - a - men (~nah!) Thrice this prayer

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91 *f* *p*

T I, II  
8  
(~rah!) O Ar - tem-is, Ar - tem-is, Thrice I say to Thee...

B I, II  
8  
(~rah!) Ar - tem - is, Thrice say to Thee...

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95 *p poco a poco cresc. et accel.* *mf*

T I, II  
8  
A - ber - a - men - tho - ou - ler - thex - a - na - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - a - re - ba ber - a - men - tho - ou -

B I, II  
8  
*p poco a poco cresc. et accel.* *mf*

99 *poco a poco cresc.* *f cresc...*

T I, II  
8  
ler - thex - a - na - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - a - re - ba A - ber - a - men - tho - ou -

B I, II  
8  
*poco a poco cresc.* *f cresc...*

102 *ff* *pp*

T I, II  
8  
ler - thex - a - na - kzeth - rel - ou - oh - thnem - a - re - ba "Yhinx!"

B I, II  
8  
*ff* *pp*

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## Also by Abbie Betinis . . .

### The Burt Family Carols Series:

(Abbie is the grand-niece of composer Alfred Burt, and carries on his tradition of writing a new carol every Christmas)

|                             |                                     |                                 |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Behind the Clouds</b>    | <b>SATB a cappella</b>              | <b>Fred Bock Music</b><br>F2368 |
| <b>Hail, Christmas Day!</b> | <b>SATB a cappella</b>              | <b>Fred Bock Music</b><br>F2354 |
| <b>Prayer for Peace</b>     | <b>SATB a cappella, s./t. solos</b> | <b>Fred Bock Music</b><br>F2358 |
| <b>Run, Toboggan, Run</b>   | <b>SATB div., a cappella</b>        | <b>Fred Bock Music</b><br>F2356 |
| <b>In a Far Judean City</b> | <b>SATB div., a cappella</b>        | <b>Fred Bock Music</b><br>F2355 |

### Selected Choral Works:

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight</b><br>Text: Vachel Lindsay                                     | <b>TTBB, piano, snare drum</b>               | <b>Abbie Betinis Music Co.</b><br>AB-061-00 |
| <b>The Babe of Bethlehem, arr.</b><br>Text and tune: William Walker in <u>Southern Harmony</u>       | <b>SATB div., a cappella</b>                 | <b>Abbie Betinis Music Co.</b><br>AB-031-01 |
| <b>Bar xizam (Upward I rise)</b><br>Text: Hâfez (in Persian)   | <b>SATB div., s. a. t. b. solos, a capp.</b> | <b>Abbie Betinis Music Co.</b><br>AB-052-02 |
| <b>Dormi, Jesu (Sleep Jesus)</b><br>Text: traditional (in Latin)                                     | <b>SATB a cappella</b>                       | <b>G. Schirmer</b><br>Cat. No. 50486936     |
| <b>Carmina mei cordis (Songs of my heart)</b><br>Text: Aeterna lux divinitas & Angele Dei (in Latin) | <b>SATB div., a cappella</b>                 | <b>Abbie Betinis Music Co.</b><br>AB-030-03 |
| <b>Cedit, Hyems (Be gone, winter!)</b><br>Text: Prudentius (in Latin)                                | <b>SATB div. (or SSAA div.), flute</b>       | <b>G. Schirmer</b><br>Cat. No. 50486492     |
| <b>Chant for Great Compassion</b><br>Text: traditional Chinese                                       | <b>SSAA div., a cappella</b>                 | <b>Abbie Betinis Music Co.</b><br>AB-057-01 |
| <b>Jerusalem Luminosa</b><br>Text: Thomas a Kempis (in Latin)  | <b>SA a cappella</b>                         | <b>Kjos Music</b><br>Cat. No. 6323          |
| <b>Long Time Trav'ling</b><br>Text: traditional American shape-note texts                            | <b>SATB div., tenor solos, a capp.</b>       | <b>Santa Barbara Music Pub.</b><br>SBMP-702 |
| <b>Spell of the Elements</b><br>Text: Elizabeth Jennings   | <b>SATB double chorus, piano</b>             | <b>Abbie Betinis Music Co.</b><br>AB-053-00 |
| <b>Yhinx: An Ancient Greek Love Charm</b><br>Text: Theocritus & ancient Greek stone (in Greek)       | <b>TTBB a cappella, t. t. b. solos</b>       | <b>Abbie Betinis Music Co.</b><br>AB-018-01 |



Reviewed as “audacious... edgy and thrilling,” the music of Abbie Betinis is being performed increasingly in the United States and abroad. Born in 1980, Abbie has been commissioned by more than 40 music organizations including the Dale Warland Singers, Cantus, The Rose Ensemble, and The Schubert Club. A 2009 McKnight Fellow, she has also won a Jerome Commissioning Grant, the Craig and Janet Swan Composer Prize, and awards from the American Composers Forum, ASCAP, Minnesota Music Educators Association and the Sorel Organization. Ms. Betinis studied composition at St. Olaf College, the University of Minnesota, and the European American Musical Alliance in Paris, France, where faculty from Juilliard and the Paris Conservatory teach harmony and counterpoint in the tradition of Nadia Boulanger. Abbie’s music is primarily self-published (Abbie Betinis Music Co) and is distributed internationally, with additional scores published by Fred Bock Music, Graphite Publishing, Kjos, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, and, most recently, in G. Schirmer’s *Dale Warland Series*.

Since 2005, Abbie has been Composer-in-Residence for The Schubert Club. She has also held residencies with The Singers—Minnesota Choral Artists and The Rose Ensemble. A three time cancer survivor, she lives in St. Paul, Minnesota.

## Abbie Betinis Music Co.

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