RESOUNDING IMAGES:
MEDIEVAL INTERSECTIONS OF ART, MUSIC, AND SOUND

EDITED BY
SUSAN BOYNTON AND DIANE J. REILLY

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BREPOLS

The Play of Daniel in the Cathedral of Beauvais[1]

Andrew Tallon

The massive frame of the cathedral of Saint-Pierre in Beauvais dominates the valley in which the city lies (Fig. 1). It was begun in 1225 at the instigation of Bishop and Count of Beauvais, Miles de Nanteuil, with the clear wish to surpass anything that had previously been built. Though Bishop Miles was removed from office in 1234 following a conflict with the Crown when only the lower stories of the new church were under construction, his episcopal successors — in particular William of Grez — realized his initial vision with particular fervor. With vaults elevated 144 feet above the pavement, in direct emulation of the walls of the Heavenly Jerusalem — 144 cubits high, as recounted in Revelation 21:17 — it is the tallest French Gothic structure ever attempted, the first building north of the Alps to surpass the Pantheon in height.[2]

Fig. 1. Beauvais cathedral from the northeast (Photo: Andrew Tallon).

The cathedral of Beauvais holds pride of place in the traditional history of Gothic architecture as the last of a generation of colossi. But it also plays a key role in another history, that of medieval drama, as the *locus* of one of the most famous of all musical plays: *Danielis ludus*.[3] The *Play of Daniel* tells the story of the Prophet Daniel's service in the court of King Belshazzar, his fall from grace and miraculous rescue from the lions, and his return to favor, as recounted in chapters five and six of the biblical book of the same name. The opening *conductus* of the play — a metrical text set to music — supplies a succinct synopsis of the dramatic action:

> For him who rules the stars, all-powerful, the crowd of men and throng of boys are dancing with joy, because they hear that Daniel the loyal has endured many trials and borne them with steadfastness. The King [Belshazzar] summons the wise men to him, that they should tell him the explanation of the writing by a hand; because the doctors were unable to solve this for the King, they at once, dumbly, lapsed into silence. But to Daniel, as he read the writing, what had been hidden there in advance was soon revealed, and as Belshazzar saw him surpassing those sages, he is said to have given him preferment in court. A pretext that is found, a far from just one, destines Daniel to be torn apart in the lion's jaws; yet you, God, wanted those who had been hostile before to Daniel then to become benign. To him also bread (lest he be hungry) was sent by you, the swift-flying prophet [Habakkuk] bringing him meals.[4]

Fig. 2. Beauvais cathedral from the southwest (Photo: Andrew Tallon).

Once Daniel's divine protection is made clear, his detractors are pitched into the Lion's den in his stead, and they acknowledge their guilt as they are devoured. The prefiguratory resonances of Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection present in the play are rendered explicit in the closing lines: Daniel, now restored to his former function at the King's court, prophesies the coming of Christ, and an angel, singing from "an unexpected place" (*ex improviso*) confirms it.

To imagine how the *Play of Daniel* might have been set in the space of the cathedral of Beauvais is first to face the challenging question of which cathedral church is concerned.[5] Depending on the date one assigns to the play, one of two answers might apply: either the diminutive basilica built at the turn of the first millennium (at left in Fig. 2) — known since the thirteenth century, for reasons apparent in the photograph, as the *Basse-Oeuvre*, the "low-work" — or the structure that replaced it at the time the play was written down, the Gothic giant just behind. In fact this convenient binary dissolves when confronted with archeological reality. During the range of years in which the play was probably created and then written down, the cathedral church of Beauvais was in a state of near-constant architectural flux, as a slow transition was effected from the timeworn post-Carolingian basilica to the apotheosis of Gothic verticality.

One solution to "which cathedral?" would be to attempt to pinpoint the date of the play's creation in order to determine the corresponding space of original performance.[6] Yet the evidence currently available does not permit this sort of precision.[7] More importantly, to fix the date is to deny the possibility of a continuous performance tradition. Following its "invention" (*inventus*) by the "youth" (*juventus*) at Beauvais, the *Play of Daniel* — whether newly created or adapted from an existing music drama — was probably repeated annually in the context of the Feast of Fools at least until its commission to vellum in the early thirteenth century.[8] Just as Richard Emmerson has sought to avoid limiting the *Play of Daniel* to an "original meaning," so too should the static notion of original performance — a snapshot in time faithfully recorded years later in manuscript form — be expanded to embrace the probability of an actively-developing dramatic practice linked dynamically to a protean architectural space.[9] "Which cathedral?" begs the question: "which *Play of Daniel*?"

To understand the evolving intersection of text, space, and sound that the *Play of Daniel* represents, a series of newly-created reconstruction models will be used to clarify the changing architectural state of the cathedral of Beauvais from the mid-twelfth century to the end of the thirteenth century.[10] An examination of these models in parallel with the play's rubrics suggests that *Ludus Danielis* was able to adjust to its constantly shifting environment.

The Building

Though now huddled in truncated form in the lee of the lead-covered wall that seals it from the first bay of the incomplete Gothic nave, the *Basse-Oeuvre* — the cathedral church of Beauvais from the late tenth to the thirteenth centuries — was once grand in its own right (Fig. 3).[11] It would have appeared even taller in the tenth century than it does today, given that the level of the surrounding terrain, as well as the floor level of the church, has since risen nearly two meters. The cathedral was erected in large part using *pastoureaux*, the small cubic stones then found in abundance in the ruins of the Gallo-Roman monuments of the city, particularly in the nearby Roman wall. The nave originally extended six bays to the east beyond the surviving three, an impressive length by any standard. We have little information on the original configuration of the interior space: we know only that the walls were plastered, decorated
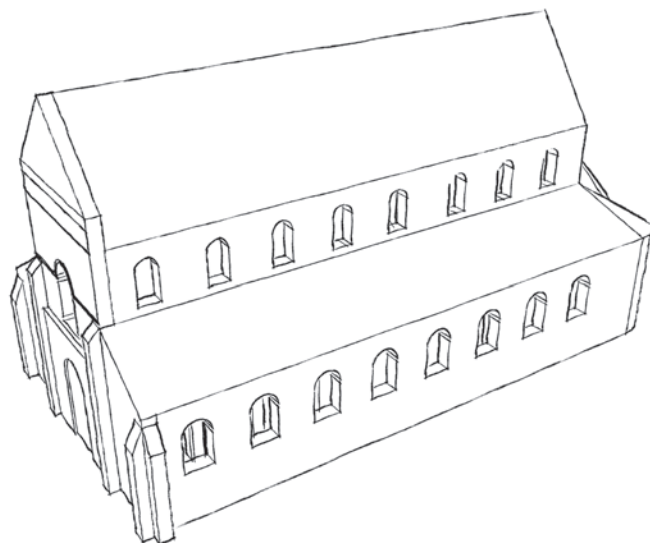
Fig. 3. Beauvais cathedral, hypothetical
reconstruction ca. 1170 (Model: Jessica Lentner).

Fig. 4. Beauvais cathedral interior, hypothetical
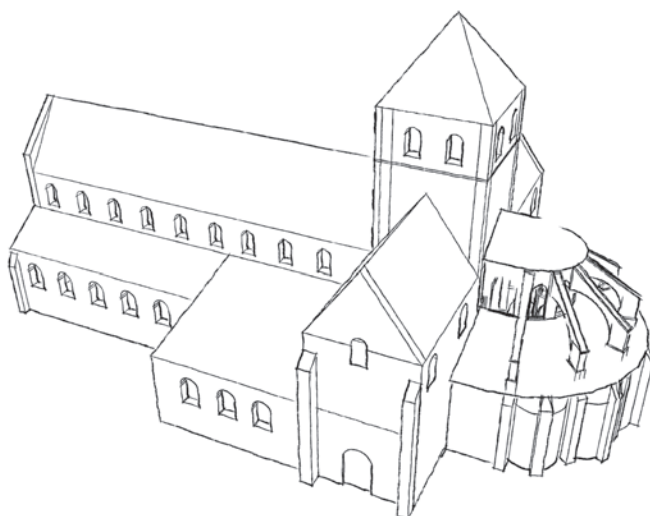reconstruction ca. 1170 (Model: Jessica Lentner).

Fig. 5. Beauvais cathedral, hypothetical
reconstruction ca. 1215. The chevet is based on
the example of contemporary churches; nothing is
known of the elevation of the original
(Model: Jessica Lentner).

Fig. 6. Beauvais cathedral, hypothetical
reconstruction ca. 1225 (Model: Jessica Lentner).

Fig. 7. Beauvais cathedral, hypothetical
reconstruction ca. 1230 (Model: Jessica Lentner).
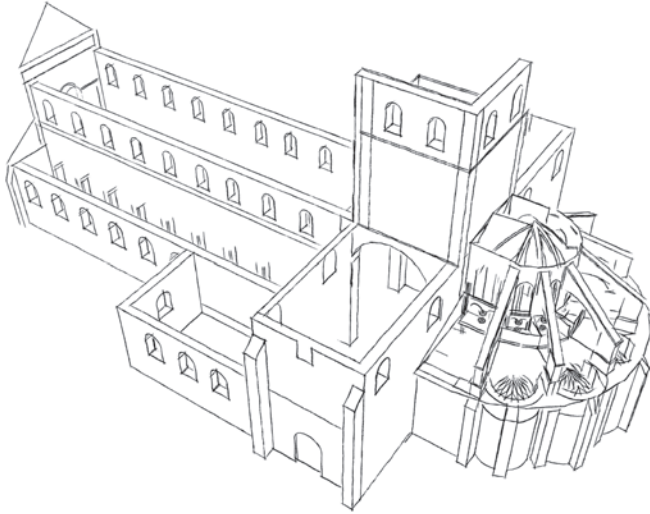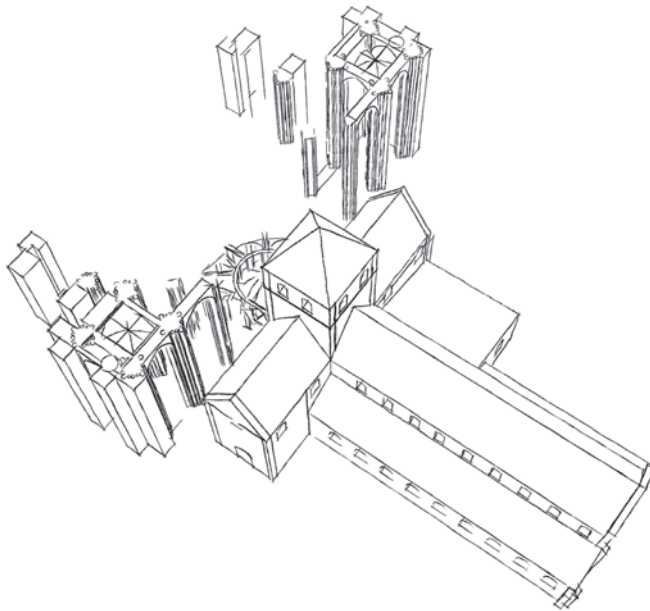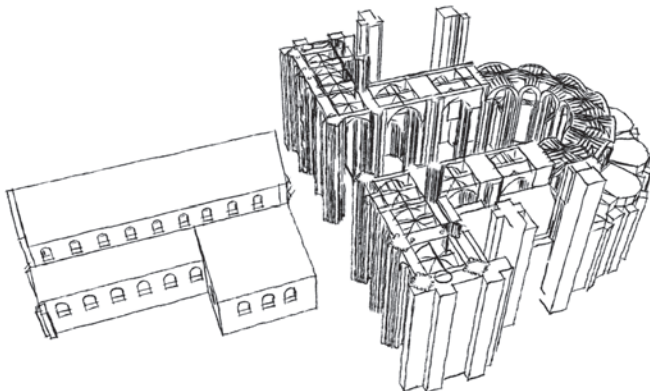
Fig. 8. Beauvais cathedral, hypothetical
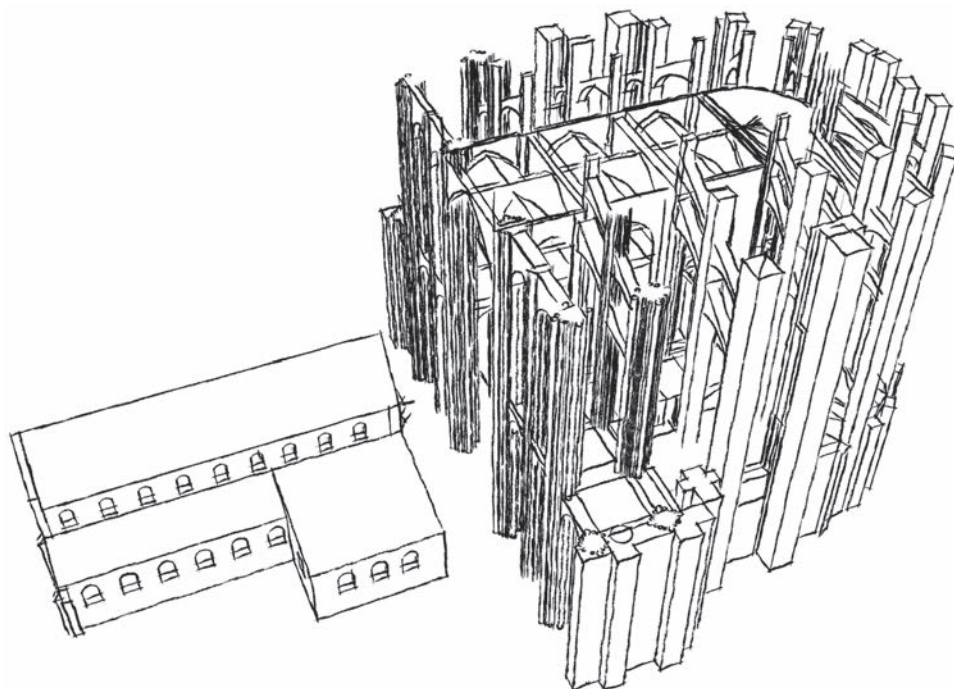reconstruction ca. 1240 (Model: Jessica Lentner).

Fig. 9. Beauvais cathedral, hypothetical reconstruction ca. 1260 (Model: Jessica Lentner).

in part with frescoes, and that the nave was unvaulted, originally covered with a wooden ceiling (Fig. 4) that has since been replaced with one made in plaster and lath.

Documentary records indicate that a great fire swept through the building in 1180 and/or 1188. An important reconstruction campaign was mounted soon thereafter: the nave was extended farther to the east, the transept arms were made longer, and the tenth-century sanctuary was replaced with one built probably in the dominant Gothic style of the nearby Ile-de-France (Fig. 5).[12] The new space appears to have been completed by the death of Bishop Philippe of Dreux in 1217: had it not been so, one would expect the record of a donation to the building fabric in his will.[13] A subsequent textual source indicates that the high altar of the cathedral was consecrated in 1222, surely that of this new sanctuary.[14]

A second fire damaged the cathedral in 1225. Bishop Miles of Nanteuil quickly established a fund for the construction of a new cathedral church and for repairs to the existing building in the interim. Though the nave and transept roofs were destroyed, the sanctuary seems to have survived (Fig. 6): Bishop Miles's new church was begun at the northern and southern reaches of the site to make it possible, it seems, to leave the still-functional liturgical space of the existing building intact for use as long as possible (Fig. 7).[15]

A charter of 1228 indicates that a high altar was still in use: either that of the putative early Gothic sanctuary, consecrated in 1222, or, more probably, a new and provisional high altar, placed before a wall built between the western crossing piers of the *Basse-Oeuvre*, sealing its nave from the progressive demolition of the existing building and the new construction to the east (Fig. 8).[16] It was during this period of radical spatial transformation, sometime between 1227 and 1234 — when the functional space of the cathedral of Beauvais was nothing more than the truncated nave of the tenth-century building — that the *Play of Daniel* was written down.[17]
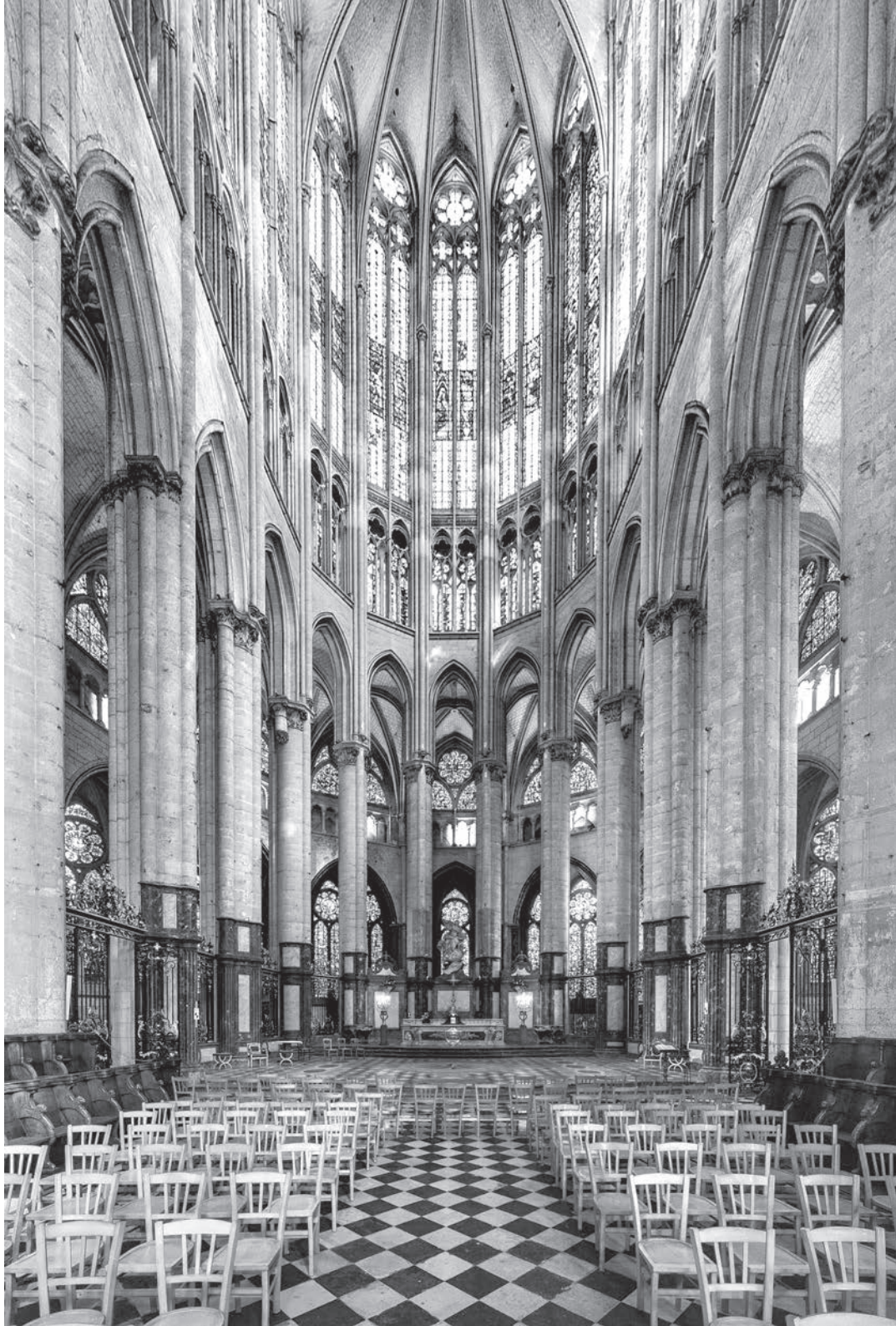
210

Fig. 10. Beauvais cathedral choir (Photo: Andrew Tallon).

The construction of the radiating chapels and lower part of the main arcade of the new cathedral church was undertaken in a second phase, which ran from the late 1230s to the 1240s. A third campaign, from the 1250s to the 1260s, continued the construction up to the high vaults, shown in Figure 9 without the provisional roof which would have protected the ensemble from the weather.[18] In 1272 the canons occupied their stalls; the new space was essentially complete (Fig. 10).[19]

The Play

Immediately following the incipit ("In your honor, Christ, this play of Daniel was composed in Beauvais and it was the youth who composed it") is the opening *conductus*, which, as we have seen, supplies a summary of the dramatic action to follow.[20] This *conductus*, sung in procession, sets the tone for the rest of the play, which continues to be interspersed with moments of ambulatory movement.[21] In fact, of the 402 total manuscript lines of the play, fully 165 — or 41 percent — are delivered in procession, and, when considered in terms of performance time, given the spatial and logistical demands of movement, the quotient would surely have been even greater.

Each *conductus* is introduced by a rubric that indicates the processional movement to be followed:

l. 2 (f. 95r)   While King Belshazzar is making his entry, his nobles shall sing this sequence in his presence[22]
l. 26 (f. 96r)   The satraps, bringing the vessels, shall sing this sequence in praise of the King
l. 54 (f. 97v)   The processional song of the Queen coming to the King
l. 84 (f. 99r)   The processional song for Daniel as he comes to the King
l. 122 (f. 101r)   The Queen's processional song
l. 136 (f. 101v)   The processional song of the men bringing the vessels back to Daniel
l. 153 (f. 102r)   At once King Darius and his nobles shall appear, and his lutists and musicians shall come before him, performing the following song
l. 193 (f. 103v)   Daniel's processional song

Though we learn which of the protagonists of the play is involved in each of these sequences, what we do not learn from the rubrics is how precisely these movements were meant to be incorporated into the architectural space. The rubrics for the entire play, when examined for specific spatial content, are not much more helpful.

l. 21 (f. 95v)   Then the King shall mount the throne [*solium*][23]
l. 47 (f. 97r)   Meanwhile, in full view of the King, a hand shall appear writing on the wall [*in pariete*]
l. 121 (f. 101r)   Then, leaving the palace [*palatio*], the satraps shall take the vessels back
l. 169 (f. 102v)   Before the King reaches his throne
l. 226 (f. 105v)   Daniel, on hearing this, shall go into his house [*in domum suam*]
l. 248 (f. 106v)   Then they shall throw Daniel into the pit [*lacum*]. . . And Daniel, entering the pit, shall say
l. 256 (f. 107r)   Then the angel, seizing him by the hair of his head, shall bring him to the pit

l. 261 (f. 107r)   When this is over, the angel shall bring Habakkuk back to his own place. Then the
                    King, descending from his throne, shall come to the pit
l. 268 (f. 107v)   When they have been stripped and have come to the pit-edge [*ante lacum*]
l. 271 (f. 107v)   Thrown into the pit, they shall at once be devoured by the lions
l. 276 (f. 108r)   Then, from an unexpected place, an angel shall call out

We learn that there are three primary playing spaces required: the *solium* and *palatium* of the king, the *domus* of Daniel, and the *lacum* of the lions, with the addition, at the very end of the play, of an "unexpected place" for the song of the angel. These are typical of the references to playing locations found in twelfth century liturgical plays, and represent a first level of spatial specificity. What is lacking in the *Play of Daniel*, however, is the second level: the direct references to architectural space that occur in comparable works of liturgical drama. It is instructive to compare the rubrics in the *Play of Daniel* to several chronologically and geographically proximate examples taken from the so-called Fleury Playbook and from three Pilgrim plays performed at the cathedrals of Bayeux, Rouen, and Beauvais.[24]

In the play of the *Scene at the Lord's Sepulchre* [*Ad faciendam simultudinem Domini sepulchri*] from the Fleury Playbook, the following rubric indicates the action to be performed by the three Marys: "When they have come into the choir [*Cum autem venerint in chorum*], let them go to the tomb as if seeking."[25] (By choir is meant the portion of a church which contained the stalls for the choir of monks or canons.) In a similar way, the Fleury *Slaughter of the Innocents* [*Ad interfectionem puerorum*] makes several specific architectural references. The initial rubric states, for example: "For the Slaughter of the Children let the Innocents be dressed in white stoles, and, rejoicing through the monastery church [*monasterium*], let them pray to God."[26] We learn also that an angel is meant to be located "on high" [*ab excelso*] in one case and to sing "from above" [*de supernis*] in another, and that the Innocents, upon hearing their song, are meant to "enter the choir" [*chorum*].[27] In another of the Fleury plays, the *Service for Representing Herod* [*Ordo ad representandum Herodem*], the Magi are instructed to proceed to the manger, which will have been readied at [one of] the doors of the church [*quod ad januas monasterii paratum erit*]; they later arrive "at the entrance of the choir" [*ad ostium chori*].[28] We learn also that Herod is to "order the companions who are sitting with him dressed as young gallants to lead in the scribes, who in a separate room [*diversorio*] have been gotten ready."[29]

The thirteenth-century Pilgrim [*Peregrinus*] play from the cathedral of Bayeux opens as follows: "In returning to the font a station is made in the middle of the church [*In regrediendo ad fontes fit statio in medio ecclesiae*], and when all have settled down there a representation is made of how the Lord appeared to the two disciples going to Emmaus, who are called the Pilgrims."[30] A more elaborate version of the same play, also from the thirteenth century, was represented at the cathedral of Rouen. "The procession. . .to the font singing the psalm *In exitu* comes to a halt in the middle of the nave of the church [*Post Benedicamus fiat processio ad fontes. . .et processione stante in medio navis ecclesiae*]. Towards the end of the psalm two clerks. . .shall enter the church by the right-hand western door and slowly come up to the procession [*intrent ecclesiam per dextram portam occidentalem, et lento pede venientes usque ad processionem*]. . . then a priest. . .shall enter the church through the left-hand western door [*intret ecclesiam per sinistram portam occidentalem*]. . .[the pilgrims] lead him to the structure [*tabernaculum*] in the middle of the nave of the church [*in medio navis ecclesiae*] made to look like the town of Emmaus."[31]

Another example of a Pilgrim play was, like the Daniel Play, performed at the cathedral of Beauvais, and, also like it, dates from the twelfth century.[32] There are only two locational cues in the manuscript:

the first simply indicates that the character of Christ is to be led "to the table"; the second instructs the disciples to "go through the church [*et vadant per ecclesiam*] as if hunting for [Christ] . . ."[33] Both levels of spatial specificity are present, yet this second cue, even if architectural, could hardly be less specific. The church can only be the cathedral church of Beauvais, but we are left to wonder, as in the case of the *Play of Daniel*, just which iteration of the church.

The decision to inscribe the *Play of Daniel* — an act of permanence — in the early thirteenth century, at a moment of peak architectural change, can be seen as evidence that the text of the play itself reflects the spatial variability of the cathedral church, and the expression of the stage directions further adds to this body of evidence. Recording the play in manuscript obliged its scribe to commit to explicit terms what had thus far existed only in oral tradition; the act of rubrication, in other words, was one not of simple transcription, but of meditated translation. The fact that the rubrics refer only to the throne of the king, the house of Daniel, and the pit of the lions suggests a desire on the part of the scribe and his troupe to keep the play in a state of performance flexibility, given what they knew about the provisional nature of the dramatic space. The same might well have been true of the Beauvais Pilgrim play. The architectural non-specificity of the rubrics in the *Play of Daniel* — including those that introduce each *conductus*, which, as we have seen, are indeterminate as to location — might thus be interpreted as evidence of a play whose performance space was in a constant state of flux. The spatially noncommittal nature of the rubrics in the manuscript of the Beauvais Daniel play might be interpreted further as an anticipation of the radically different space of the new Gothic choir, whose performance characteristics could only be surmised at the time of the creation of the manuscript.

Performance Space

As Dunbar Ogden has argued, the predisposition to procession in the Beauvais *Daniel* play underscores an investment of the drama in its performance space: the indication of movement in the play implies that the necessary space must be available for its realization in a dramatically interesting way.[34] Yet we are once again confronted with architectural reality: the processions might take very different forms depending on the state of the building. To summarize the spatial evolution at Beauvais:

a. From ca. 1000–ca. 1180 (Figs. 3 and 4), the cathedral was a simple basilica with aisles and (probably) an apsidal termination to the east;

b. From ca. 1180–ca. 1225 (Fig. 5), it was supplied with transepts and perhaps also an early Gothic sanctuary with ambulatory, which meant a considerable increase in processional real estate;

c. From ca. 1225–1272 (Fig. 6-9), the cathedral church assumed its most reduced form, that of a truncated nave with aisles;

d. Finally, from ca. 1272 onward (Fig. 10), the older building, the *Basse-Oeuvre*, was taken out of service, replaced by a vast Gothic choir with ambulatory and radiating chapels, which — it seems important to point out given lingering assumptions to the contrary — was unavailable for use in the early thirteenth century, when the manuscript of the *Play of Daniel* was created.[35]

The schematic character of the reconstruction drawings presented here might suggest that the spatial potential in each of these cathedral church iterations was unlimited. What is missing from the images is the ensemble of liturgical furnishings, which would have created a more complex processional topography

214

by subdividing the available playing area. It can be assumed, based on contemporary examples, that the stalls of the canons were located in the easternmost bays of the nave of the Romanesque church; the sanctuary was located further to the east. When the building was enlarged following the 1180 fire, the stalls may have been removed or expanded into the space of the transept, only to be reconfigured once again following the second fire (as in C, above).[36]

How might the play have *sounded* in each of these configurations? The space was as much an instrument as the voices (and perhaps, instruments) of the players: the space, in no uncertain terms, sang along. Yet its voice is today difficult to qualify; our knowledge of the acoustics of the various iterations of cathedral church at Beauvais in their original states is hampered by our inability to recover not only the buildings themselves, but also the precise liturgical configuration, and the ephemeral objects, such as choir stalls; paintings and hangings on which the sound quality of the space depended. We can be certain of one thing only: that the sound was different in each case. Stated in other terms, the sound changed — perhaps even radically — a number of times over the course of the performance tradition of the play.

These differences would have been perceived primarily in terms of reverberation, which is the principal sonic byproduct of sound and enclosed architectural space. Reverberation is a series of reflections, or echoes, of a sound source from the surfaces of the building and the objects that it contains, spaced in sufficiently short succession to be indistinguishable one from another. The quality (frequency characteristics), intensity (loudness), and persistence (duration) of this reverberation were dependent on two primary factors, the first of which is the volume of the space. Sound travels further in a large building between reflections; the resultant reverberation will take longer to decay. This said, a larger building may not necessarily *sound* more reverberant, despite its greater size. In a vast, vaulted space such as the new Gothic choir at Beauvais, for example, sound would have tended to lose energy, particularly at higher frequencies, as it traveled greater distances. The second factor is the degree of sound absorption of walls and furnishings. While stone is highly reflective across the frequency spectrum, a tapestry tends to dampen higher frequencies, because its pile is made up of elements that are of the same order of magnitude as the wavelengths of high frequency sounds; in the same way, the wooden panels of choir stalls would have primarily reduced the sound energy at lower frequencies through sympathetic resonance.[37]

The direct consequence of the presence of reverberation in a space, in terms of a dramatic performance, is reduced intelligibility. Put simply, the more reverberation present, the more difficult it would have been to understand the texts, and, to a certain extent, the music being sung. The situation could nonetheless be fairly easily controlled by adjusting the conditions of performance it would have been a simple matter, when confronted with text-obscuring reverberation, to reduce performance tempo to allow the sound energy reflected by the building more time to dissipate in the sonic troughs between musical events.[38]

More effective still would have been to maximize the ratio of direct to reverberant sound by keeping the performers and audience close to one another. The rubrics make no mention of the audience of the *Play of Daniel*; at very least it included the canons, but probably also would have included laypeople if, as it seems, the annual performance of the play took place during the role-reversing Feast of Fools — virtually the only time the people would have been permitted into the otherwise off-limits zones of sanctuary and choir.[39] Mobility would have permitted far greater flexibility in terms of staging the three primary areas (the *solium* and *palatium* of the king, the *domus* of Daniel, and the *lacum* of the lions) to which the rubrics refer. It would have been critical in the case of the processions: the texts of the *conducti* would have been lost in reverberation had the spectators remained in their places. If the audience followed the performers
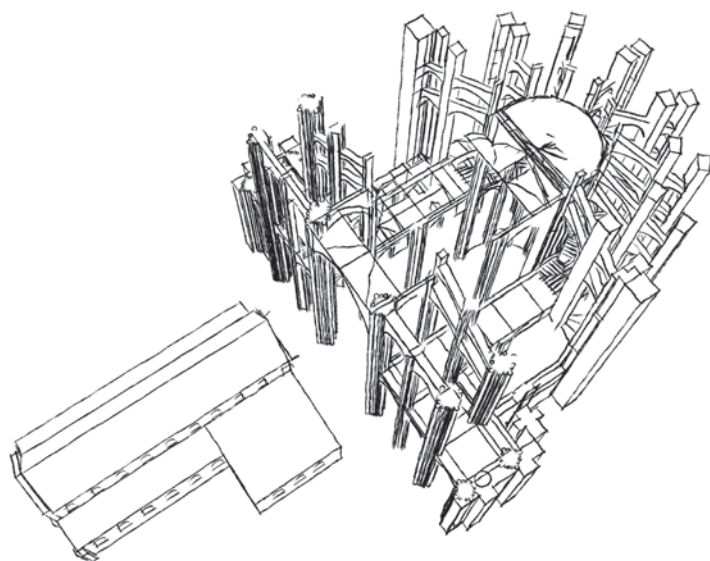
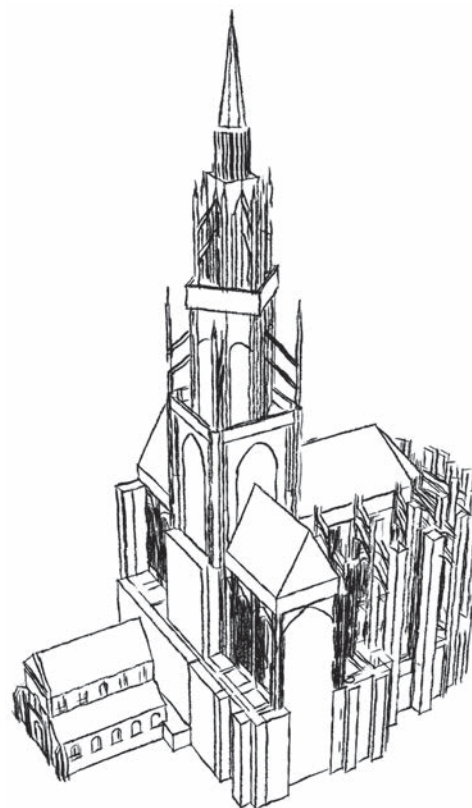Fig. 11. Beauvais cathedral, hypothetical reconstruction ca. 1285 (Model: Jessica Lentner).

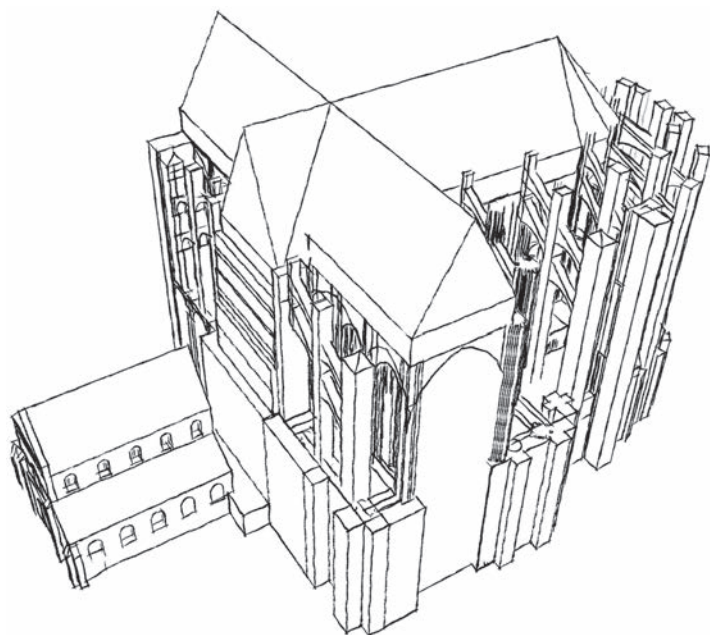Fig. 12. Beauvais cathedral, hypothetical reconstruction ca. 1570 (Model: Jessica Lentner).

Fig. 13. Beauvais cathedral ca. 1610 (Model: Jessica Lentner).

216

as they moved through the building, audibility and textual intelligibility stood a better chance of being maintained.

To what extent did the clergy and musicians involved in the production of the *Play of Daniel* actively modify the architectural space and its attendant acoustics in order to better respond to the needs of the play? It is one thing to speculate that a tapestry was hung as a sound dampener; it is another to suppose that the configuration of the new church begun in 1225 had a component of acoustical design. The musicologist Craig Wright was able to document a direct link between the disposition of the choir enclosure at the cathedral of Paris in the late Middle Ages, where acoustically absorptive decorations were deployed in proportion to the rank of the feast being celebrated, and the harmonic and temporal complexity of the music performed on the occasion.[40] Yet the documentary evidence with which Wright worked at Notre-Dame is sorely lacking at Beauvais, and whatever physical evidence there might have been is long gone. It can be supposed, however, that had there been some interest in controlling a perceived problem of acoustics, the solution would have been local rather than global. Stated in other terms, the likelihood is slim that acoustical design was high enough on the list of requirements held by Bishop Miles de Nanteuil during planning and construction to warrant a major modification of architectural form for the sake of acoustics alone.

This hypothetical conjugation of space and play at the cathedral of Beauvais has produced a complex matrix of possibilities, a view of the interrelationship of drama and architectural space that defies simple categorization. The Romanesque cathedral, with its long nave and resonant plastered walls, was home to the group of players who performed the drama for the first time with a unique vision of the text and the spatial practice that accompanied it. The work was staged again, probably year after year, morphing in synchrony with the architectural changes to which the playing space was subjected in the following decades. At a moment when the present or future form of the space could not have been less certain, the decision was taken to have the play committed to parchment, and its spatial rubrication was kept noncommittal. This seems to have been by design: though text and music were now fixed, their reification as drama in the three-dimensional space of Beauvais cathedral was not. The straightforward textual and musical layout of the play, as the musicologist Mark Everist has pointed out, and the small size of the manuscript — at five by nine inches, it could easily be carried and used — are further indications that the *Play of Daniel* was intended for continued life, which it has indeed enjoyed.[41]

Epilogue

Had the play been performed in the new Gothic choir, it could have been for only twelve years, for on November 29th, 1284, a portion of the choir vaults collapsed, bringing down with it windows, piers, and choir stalls (Fig. 11).[42] It took nearly sixty years to repair and reinforce the building. Paradoxically, during this time, all interior liturgical actions of the cathedral — including performances of the *Play of Daniel* — would have been located once again in the *Basse-Oeuvre*.

In May of 1500 the decision was taken to complete the Gothic building. During the next fifty years, a vast transept was erected (Fig. 2); it was fitted with the monumental portals the church had so long lacked.[43] In 1563, an immense tower, whose tip rose over 425 feet above the pavement, was begun. It was finished six years later (Fig. 12), although it had already begun to show signs of structural distress.[44] On April 30th, 1573 — the feast of the Ascension — the tower collapsed into the body of the church. By 1604, repairs were complete, but the effort to finish the new cathedral of Beauvais ceased this time for good (Fig. 13).[45]

NOTES

1. This essay began as a seminar paper written for Susan Boynton at Columbia University; I am grateful for her encouragement and comments both then and now. I would also like to thank John Ahern and Ronald Patkus for inviting me to present this research at Vassar College.

2. Stephen Murray, *Beauvais Cathedral: Architecture of Transcendence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), xiv.

3. The reputation of the play is due in no small measure to its regular performance, most recently in 2013 and 2014 in New York City, directed by Drew Minter and Mary Anne Ballard.

4. *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*, ed. Peter Dronke, Cambridge Medieval Classics 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 120–21.

5. The question is generally avoided in the primary studies of the play: Edmond de Coussemaker, *Drames liturgiques du moyen âge* (Rennes: H. Vatar, 1860), 322–26; Karl Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), vol. 2, 290–306; William L. Smoldon, *The Music of the Medieval Church Dramas* (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), 224–29 and 234–245; *Hilarii Aurelianensis Versus et Ludi, Epistolae, Ludus Danielis Belouacensis*, ed. Walther Bulst and Marie–Luise Bulst-Thiele, Mittellateinische Studien und Texte 16 (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 1–20; Margot Fassler, "The Feast of Fools and *Danielis Ludus*: Popular Tradition in a Medieval Cathedral Play," in *Plainsong in the Age of Polyphony*, ed. Thomas Forrest Kelly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 65–99; *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*, ed. Dronke, 110–46; David Wulstan, "Liturgical Drama and the 'School of Abelard,'" *Comparative Drama* 42 (2008): 347–57; Max Harris, "A Reassessment of the Feast of Fools: A Rough and Holy Liturgy," in *Risus Sacer–Sacrum Risible: Interaktionsfelder von Sakralität und Gelächter im kulturellen und historischen Wandel*, ed. Katja Gvozdeva and Werner Röcke (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), 77–100; and Max Harris, *Sacred Folly: a New History of the Feast of Fools* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 113–27. A terse mention of the playing space is made by Fletcher Collins in his book *The Production of Medieval Church Music-Drama* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1972), 254. William L. Smoldon and David Wulstan, in *The Play of Daniel: A Mediaeval Liturgical Drama* (Sutton: Plainsong and Mediaeval Society, 1976), ii, and Dunbar H. Ogden, in "The Staging of *The Play of Daniel* in the Twelfth Century" (*The Play of Daniel: Critical Essays*, ed. Dunbar H. Ogden [Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1996], 11–32), address the "original" architectural context of the play; both descriptions, however, are compromised by an inexact conception of the archeology.

6. As does Ogden, "The Staging of The Play of Daniel," 14.

7. For various arguments about the date of the play see Wilhelm Meyer, *Fragmenta Burana* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1901), 55–57; Wulf Arlt, *Ein Festoffizium des Mittelalters aus Beauvais in seiner liturgischen und musikalischen Bedeutung*, 2 vols. (Cologne: Arno Volk, 1970), I:21–37; *The Play of Daniel*, ed. Smoldon and Wulstan, ii; Smoldon, *The Music of the Medieval Church Dramas*, 226; *Ludus Danielis Belouacensis*, ed. Bulst and Bulst-Thiele, 1–20; *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*, ed. Dronke, 118–19; Richard K. Emmerson, "Divine Judgment and Local Ideology in the Beauvais *Ludus Danielis*," in *The Play of Daniel: Critical Essays*, ed. Ogden, 45 and 59 n. 45; Wulstan "Liturgical Drama and the 'School of Abelard,'" 349; Harris, "A Rough and Holy Liturgy," 87; and Harris, *Sacred Folly*, 113 n. 3.

8. The *Play of Daniel* is inscribed on fols. 95r–108r of London, BL Egerton 2615. For an analysis of the manuscript see Mark Everist, *Polyphonic Music in Thirteenth-Century France: Aspects of Sources and Distribution*, Outstanding Dissertations in Music From British Universities (New York: Garland, 1989), 50–96. On the possibility that the *Play of Daniel* was adapted from an existing work, either the Daniel play composed by Hilarius of Orléans contained in Paris, BnF Lat. 11331, or some other text, see Meyer, *Fragmenta Burana*, 57; Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, 2: 304; *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*, ed. Dronke, 118–19; Ogden, "The Staging of The Play of Daniel," 18–19; Emmerson, "Divine Judgment and Local Ideology," 57 n. 29; and Wulstan, "Liturgical Drama and the 'School of Abelard,'" 349. On the relationship between the *Play of Daniel* and the Feast of Fools see Fassler, "The Feast of Fools," 65–99, Harris, "A Rough and Holy Liturgy," 77–100, and Harris, *Sacred Folly*, 113–130.

9. Emmerson, "Divine Judgment and Local Ideology," 52. Susan K. Rankin, in her discussion of the sources for the music of the *Visitatio sepulchri* ceremonies, stresses the importance of seeing these, as well as other medieval liturgical dramas, as continually-evolving works in progress; see Rankin, "The Mary Magdalene Scene in the 'Visitatio sepulchri' Ceremonies," *Early Music History* 1 (1981): 230.

10. The reconstructions were created by Jessica Lentner in the context of her senior thesis in the Department of Art at Vassar College (2009). I am grateful for her permission to publish them here.

11. What follows, in terms of both images and text, is based on Emile Chami, "Chronique des fouilles médiévales en France (Beauvais)," *Archéologie médiévale* 1 (1971): 277–280; 3–4 (1973–4): 403; 6 (1976): 339–341; 7 (1977): 259–261; 11 (1981): 275; Philippe Bonnet-Labordrie, *Cathédrale Saint-Pierre: Histoire et architecture* (La Mie-au-Roy: G.E.M.O.B., 1978), 25–41; Emile Chami, "Notre-Dame de la Basse-Oeuvre," in *Paysage monumental de la France autour de l'an mil*, ed. Xavier Barral I Altet (Paris: Picard, 1987), 628–31; Murray, *Beauvais Cathedral*, in particular 51–60, 152–161, and plates 4–5 and 21–22; Marie-Claude Vernat-Chami, "La Basse-Oeuvre de Beauvais," in *L'art roman dans l'Oise et ses environs. Actes du colloque tenu à Beauvais les 7 et 8 octobre 1995* (Beauvais: G.E.M.O.B., 1997), 35–45; Jean-François Reynaud, "La Basse-Oeuvre," in *La cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Beauvais: architecture, mobilier et trésor*, ed. Martine Plouvier, *Images du Patrimoine* (Amiens: Association pour la généralisation de l'Inventaire régional en Picardie, 2000), 9–11; and Stephen Murray, "Le choeur gothique," in *La cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Beauvais: architecture, mobilier et trésor*, ed. Martine Plouvier, *Images du Patrimoine* (Amiens: Association pour la généralisation de l'Inventaire régional en Picardie, 2000), 14–19.

12. The function of the structure appended to the south flank

of the nave, whose existence became apparent during the excavations of Emile Chami, has yet to be identified.

13. Murray, *Beauvais Cathedral*, 57.

14. Ibid., 57.

15. Ibid., 11.

16. Ibid., 57.

17. The manuscript in which the *Play of Daniel* is found, London, BL Egerton 2615, can be dated fairly securely between 1227 and 1234. Included in the Office for the Feast of the Circumcision is a *laudes regiae* (fols. 41v–42r) with the designation "Ludovicus rex," which could refer to either Louis VIII (1223–1226) or Louis IX (1226–1270). "Gregorius papa"—certainly Gregory IX (1227–1241)—is also mentioned; the king thus can only be Louis IX. The fact that no queen is named suggests that the text was inscribed before Louis married Marguerite of Provence in 1234.

18. Murray, *Beauvais Cathedral*, 60.

19. Ibid., 161.

20. "Ad honorem tui, Christe, Danielis ludus iste in Belvaco est inventus, et invenit hunc iuventus." *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*, ed. Dronke, 120–21.

21. On the music of the *Play of Daniel* in BL Egerton 2615 see David G. Hughes, "Liturgical Polyphony at Beauvais in the Thirteenth Century," *Speculum* 34 (1959): 184–200; Smoldon, *The Music of the Medieval Church Dramas*, 224–29 and 234–45, Mathias Bielitz, "Bemerkungen zur Musik des Daniel-Spiels von Beauvais," in *Hilarii Aurelianensis Versus et Ludi*, ed. Bulst and Bulst-Thiele, 120–79; *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*, ed. Dronke, 110–46; Audrey Ekdahl Davidson, "Music in the Beauvais *Ludus Danielis*," in *The Play of Daniel: Critical Essays*, ed. Ogden, 77–86; David Wulstan, "'The Play of Daniel': Critical Essays by Dunbar H. Ogden," *Notes* 54 (1998): 682–84; and Wulstan, "Liturgical Drama and the 'School of Abelard,'" 347–57.

22. Translations are from *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*, ed. Dronke, 120–43.

23. Translations are from ibid., 120–43.

24. On the Fleury Playbook see David M. Bevington, "The Staging of Twelfth-Century Liturgical Drama in the Fleury 'Playbook,'" *Comparative Drama* 18 (1984): 97–117; C. Clifford Flanigan, "The Fleury 'Playbook' and the Traditions of Medieval Latin Drama," *Comparative Drama* 18 (1984–85): 348–72; Thomas P. Campbell, "The Two Cities in the Fleury Playbook," *Comparative Drama* 16 (1982): 148–65; and Thomas P. Campbell, "Introduction," in *The Fleury Playbook: Essays and Studies*, ed. Thomas P. Campbell and Clifford Davidson, *Early Drama, Art, and Music Monograph Series* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1985), xi–xvii.

25. David M. Bevington, *Medieval Drama* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975), 39–44 (40). The play is found in Orléans, Bibliothèque Municipale 201, fols. 220–25.

26. Ibid., 67–72 (67). Orléans, Bibliothèque Municipale 201, fols. 214–20.

27. Ibid., 67–72 (69 and 71 respectively).

28. Ibid., 57–66 (58 and 59 respectively). Orléans, Bibliothèque Municipale 201, fols. 205–14.

29. Ibid., 57–66 (62).

30. The Latin text of the rubrics is found in Karl Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 1:690; the translation is from Peter Meredith, "Latin Liturgical Drama," in *The Medieval European Stage, 500–1550*, ed. William Tydeman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 95.

31. Edited by Young, *Drama*, 1:461–63; the translation is from Meredith, "The Medieval European Stage," 95–96. Two twelfth-century Anglo-Norman plays, *The Play of Adam* and the *Holy Resurrection*, both intended for exterior performance, might also be cited as examples; each is replete with specific spatial cues. See Bevington, *Medieval Drama*, 78–121 and 122–36, respectively.

32. The play is contained in Paris, BnF, NAL 1064, fols. 8r–11v. Henri Omont, "Le mystère d'Emmaüs (Ordo ad Peregrinum), d'après un manuscrit du XIIe siècle de la cathédrale de Beauvais," *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes* 74 (1913): pages 257–66 indicate that the bound volume contains a litany in which the bishop of Beauvais (Pierre de Dammartin, 1114–1133) and the King of France (Louis VI, 1108–1137) are listed, which would suggest a date, at least for this part of the manuscript, of the first half of the twelfth century. The manuscript of the play itself, however, is in a different hand, whose date, while apparently twelfth century, is more difficult to fix. See also Young, *Drama*, 466–70, and Bevington, *Medieval Drama*, 45–49.

33. Bevington, *Medieval Drama*, 47 and 48, respectively.

34. Ogden, "The Staging of The Play of Daniel," 14.

35. Bevington implies the Gothic cathedral in writing that "the church interior. . . shows its ability to accommodate itself to productions of considerable magnificence" (*Medieval Drama*, 138). In a similar way, Dronke suggests that at the conclusion of the play the angel sang "from one of the cathedral's upper galleries"—in other words, the triforium of the thirteenth-century building (*Nine Medieval Latin Plays,* 142).

36. In the new cathedral church the stalls occupied the entirety of the straight bays of the main vessel.

37. For a general introduction to room acoustics see: Ronald Lewcock, Rijn Pirn, and Jürgen Meyer, "Room Acoustics," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edition, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 70–97.

38. A modern example is supplied by Dom Jean Claire (d. 2006), director of the choir at the abbey of Solesmes. In 1948 the abbey made a new foundation at Fontgombault with twenty-five monks, who were accustomed to the acoustics of the mother house. When they encountered the substantially more reverberant environment at Fontgombault, "c'était une catastrophe." After some practice they reduced the performance speed until intelligibility and the dissonance generated by the superimposition of pitches in reverberation were properly equilibrated. Dom Jean Claire, personal interview with Andrew Tallon (Solesmes, 10 February 1992).

39. See Fassler, "The Feast of Fools," 65–99; Harris, "A Rough and Holy Liturgy," 77–100; and Harris, *Sacred Folly*.

40. Craig M. Wright, *Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris 500–1550*, Cambridge Studies in Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1–18.

41. Everist, *Polyphonic Music in Thirteenth-Century France*, 64–71; see also Carol Symes, "The Appearance of Early Vernacular Plays: Forms, Functions, and the Future of Medieval Theater," *Speculum* 77 (2002): 801.

42. Murray, *Beauvais Cathedral*, 112.

43. Ibid., 127–31.

44. Ibid., 144–45.

45. Ibid., 147–49.