

Vireo Opening: Forest
from the opera *Vireo: The Spiritual Biography of a Witch's Accuser*

Lisa Bielawa

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Note

Premiere: March 6, 2015, San Francisco Symphony SoundBox
Duration: 5'30"
Instrumentation: Treble chorus & String Quartet

Vireo: The Spiritual Biography of a Witch's Accuser is a made-for-TV opera composed by Lisa Bielawa on a libretto by Erik Ehn and directed by Charles Otte, released in 2017 on multiple media platforms by KCET-TV in LA. The eponymous heroine Vireo is a fourteen-year-old girl genius entangled in the historic obsession with female visionaries, as witch-hunters, early psychiatrists, and modern artists have defined them. *Opening: Forest* is the first scene of the opera, in which a young girl appears as if shoved into existence, walking through a medieval forest outside of Reims, France. She has been sent to collect hot coals for a fire that has gone out at home, and as she wanders through the beautiful spring morning the “forest women” sing to her from all directions, beckoning to her from other realms and realities far from home.

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