

›Per aures  
ad animum‹



# THE HARPSICHORD IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY II: ITALY

Augusta Campagne  
Markus Grassl  
eds.

m<sub>d</sub>wPress

Augusta Campagne, Markus Grassl (eds.)  
'Per aures ad animum'  
The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century II: Italy

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*In memory of*  
Edoardo Bellotti (1957-2025)



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## Introduction

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### *Markus Grassl, Augusta Campagne*

The present publication documents a conference held in Bologna in October 2023, organised by the Museo San Colombano – Tagliavini Collection and the Conservatorio di Musica Giovan Battista Martini in collaboration with the Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica Bologna and the mdw – University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. This was not the first conference dedicated to the harpsichord and its music from c. 1500 to 1600 organised by the editors of the present volume. Two years earlier, a symposium entitled ‘*Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt*’: *The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*,<sup>1</sup> was held, which, as was to be expected, proved that the topic was not only fruitful but also far from exhausted. This, in turn, motivated the organisation of a follow-up event.

Both symposia and, consequently, both publications shared several common ideas and goals. The starting point is the well-known fact that the 16th century was a period, which saw a considerable increase in the significance of keyboard instruments in general, and the harpsichord in particular. Just to recall the most important aspects of this process:<sup>2</sup> Stringed keyboard instruments spread throughout Europe and sometimes even beyond; this was accompanied by a regional diversification, not least in harpsichord building; keyboard instruments took on multiple musical and cultural functions, as they were now played both by professionals and amateurs and both as solo instruments as well as in various ensembles; they were used for improvising as well as for performing written music, be it pieces originally conceived for keyboard, or intabulations of various kinds of ensemble music; and finally the 16th century is marked by the emergence of the first substantial body of notated keyboard music.

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1 Its results have meanwhile been made available in an online-publication: ‘*Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt*’: *The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/books-harpsichord/>>.

2 Cf. in more detail: ‘Introduction’, in: *ibid.*, 3–4.

These few keywords alone indicate the breadth and the diversity of issues that the study of the harpsichord in the 16th century must address, ranging from the cultural role of keyboard instruments and keyboard playing to social history, organology, notation, repertoire and manifold aspects of performance practice. Furthermore, because of the close connection between the harpsichord and other keyboard instruments, questions concerning the harpsichord are often intimately related to keyboard culture, music and playing in general.

Of course, many of the relevant topics have already been addressed by scholars and performers, whose interest in stringed keyboard instruments from 1500 to 1600 has grown considerably in recent decades. On the other hand, as mentioned above, it is indisputable, that the subject is far from being fully explored. Not only are numerous research questions still unresolved. Moreover, new questions and lines of research have emerged, not least in correspondence with current developments in musicology, which have been stimulated by fields of research such as cultural studies, global history or gender studies. As for today's musical practice, it can be observed that, despite all recent endeavours, the keyboard music of the 16th century still appears to be somewhat overshadowed by later music. Even today it is sometimes regarded not as significant in its own right, but just as a mere prelude to the richness of Baroque keyboard music. This becomes manifest, for example, in the fact, that 16th-century keyboard music typically plays a minor role in the harpsichord and organ curricula of universities and conservatories. Similarly, its performance is often approached both aesthetically and technically from a perspective shaped by experience of the 17th and 18th century repertoires.

Thus, although the Vienna and the Bologna events shared several characteristics, they differed in one important respect: Whereas the Vienna conference addressed the topic in a general way, being open to papers on the harpsichord in the 16th century without any limitation in terms of thematic aspect or region, the conference in Bologna aimed to delve more specifically into a sub-area by focusing on Italy. Given the richness of the Italian keyboard culture of the Cinquecento and its impact on other European countries, this focus allowed both the discussion of aspects of more general significance and the raising of a wider spectrum of diverse issues. Accordingly, the papers dealt with questions of notation,<sup>3</sup> of music theory in relation to historically informed pedagogy and performance practice,<sup>4</sup> and with the reception of Italian keyboard instruments and Italian keyboard culture in other European regions.<sup>5</sup> The subject of harpsichord building was addressed both in terms of music theory and

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3 See the chapters by Ian Pritchard and Augusta Campagne.

4 See the chapter by Edoardo Bellotti.

5 See the chapters by Darryl Martin and Markus Grassl.

musical practice<sup>6</sup> and in terms of a specific local school.<sup>7</sup> On the basis of iconographic sources, two papers studied keyboard playing as a means of constructing (female) identity<sup>8</sup> and the phenomenon of harpsichord decoration.<sup>9</sup>

As with the symposium in Vienna, one of the basic ideas of the Bologna conference was to provide a forum for exchange of experiences and insights from diverse perspectives, bringing together participants from different fields – musicologists, scholar-performers, performers and specialist in instrument building and restauration. Accordingly, the event again combined different formats – papers, lecture-recitals and masterclasses for students.<sup>10</sup> The lecture-recitals and masterclasses in particular benefited from the fact, that the Museo San Colombano – Tagliavini Collection, one of the richest and most eminent collections of early Italian keyboard instruments in the world, served as the main venue for the event.

The present publication is structured according to the two types of contributions to the conference: Part One includes (the majority of) the scholarly papers, while Part Two consists of presentations which reflect the lecture-recitals given by scholar-performers and performers. All contributions have been revised and partially expanded by the authors for the printed version. In order to convey the content of the lecture-recitals as fully as possible, the respective chapters in this publication also include video or audio recordings of the works or groups of works that were the subject of the lecture-recitals. The publication further incorporates two papers which were not part of the Bologna conference: Augusta Campagne's article on notation conventions in 16th century keyboard music prints, which follows up an issue raised by Ian Pritchard at the previous conference, and Heidelinde Pollerus' study on harpsichord decoration. The latter is based on a paper presented at the 2021 Vienna Symposium, which, for several reasons, could not be published in the corresponding conference report.

It goes without saying, that a project like this would not have been possible without the support and participation of numerous institutions and individuals. We are very grateful to Catalina Vicens (Museo San Colombano – Tagliavini Collection) and Maria Luisa Baldassari (Conservatorio di Musica Giovan Battista Martini) for all their efforts in organising the event and in particular for the opportunity to hold the conference at their respective institutions. We would also like to thank the members of the Scientific Committee, Mario Aschauer, Frances Fitch, Massimiliano Guido, Francis Knights and Joel Speerstra, who advised on the planning of the symposium and who were responsible for selecting the proposals submitted in response to the call for papers. Our

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6 See the chapter by Martin Kimbauer.

7 See the chapter by Francesco Nocerino.

8 See the chapter by Jane Hatter.

9 See the chapter by Heidelinde Pollerus.

10 See the programme in the appendix to this volume.

specials thanks go to the students coming from Austria, Belgium, Italy, Latvia, Taiwan and the United States, whose participation made the workshops a success. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to our partner institutions in Bologna and to the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna for bearing the costs of the conference and of this publication, and to all those who have helped us to produce this volume: Chris Roth, Candace Smith, Gwendolyn Toth, Hugh Ward-Perkins, and Philippe Canguilhem for translating and editing the articles written by non-native speakers, and the board and staff of mdwPress, in particular Max Bergmann, Christian Keitel and Lisi Scheit, for their cooperation in the publishing process.

In the final phase of preparing this volume, we received the deeply saddening news of the passing of Edoardo Bellotti. We are profoundly grateful and honoured that, despite his serious illness, Edoardo was able to share his paper with us. We dedicate this book to his memory, in recognition of the immense contribution he made to the community of scholars and performers of early keyboard music.

Markus Grassl / Augusta Campagne

Vienna, February 2026

# PAPERS



# Further Notions of Notation: Performance Practice, Composition, and Notational Formats in Neapolitan Keyboard Music ca. 1600

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Ian Pritchard

'Partite artificiose sopra il Tenor de Zefiro con alcune Partite approporzionate per l'Arpa, havertendo però, che se in questo presente libro stà intitolate alcune cose per l'Arpa, non per questo si soprasedisca il Cimbalo, perche il Cimbalo è Signor di tutti l'istromenti del mondo, & in lei si possono sonare ogni cosa con facilità.'

(*'Partite artificiose on the tenor of Zefiro, with some variations allocated for the harp. However, that some items in this book are designated for the harp does not mean to supersede performance on the harpsichord, as the harpsichord is the Lord of all instruments of the world, and on it one can play anything with ease.'*)<sup>1</sup>

With this statement, Giovanni Maria Trabaci clearly indicates that all of the music published in his printed volume, *Il secondo libro de ricercate, & altri varij capricci* (Naples, 1615) should be playable – and *con facilità* at that – on a harpsichord. However, as many a modern performer knows, this isn't necessarily the case. The point was dramatically illustrated in a recent YouTube performance by the Italian harpsichordist Marco Mencoboni of the *Toccata prima à quattro*, in which the performer uses his nose to cover a middle part that is simply not executable with two hands.<sup>2</sup> (See Ex. 1 for some particularly treacherous excerpts.)

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1 Giovanni Maria Trabaci, *Il secondo libro de ricercate, & altri varij capricci* (Naples: Giovanni Giacomo Carlino, 1615), facs. repr. (Florence, 1984), 117, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/421259>> (accessed on 17 Sept. 2024). English translation by the author.

2 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m9nRxm8SnFw>> (accessed on 17 July 2024).

**Ex. 1a-d:** Passages in early Neapolitan keyboard music that are difficult to play with two hands. The music, originally printed in open score, has been transcribed into modern keyboard notation, with stem directions reflective of the parts in the open score (e.g. the tenor is notated on the bottom staff with upward stems).

a) The passage for which Mencoboni used his nose in performance: Giovanni Maria Trabaci, 'Toccatà Prima à Quattro', mm. 32–37, transcribed from Trabaci, *Il secondo libro de ricercate, & altri varij capricci* (Naples, 1615), facs. repr. (Florence, 1984), 82–4.

b) Ascanio Mayone, 'Canzon Francese terza', mm. 34–35, transcribed from Mayone, *Primo libro di diversi capricci per sonare* (Naples: Constantino Vitale, 1603), 22–6, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/501050>> (accessed on 31 Oct. 2024).

c) Giovanni de Macque, 'Partite sopra Ruggiero di Gio. Macque', mm. 68–74, transcribed from GB-Lbl Add. 30491, fol. 4<sup>v</sup>–6<sup>v</sup>.

d) Ascanio Mayone et al., 'Io mi son giovinetta del Ferabosco diminuito per sonare da Scipione Stella, Gio. Dom. Montella, Ascanio Mayone', mm. 9–11, transcribed from Mayone, *Secondo libro di diversi capricci per sonare* (Naples: Giovanni Battista Gargano & Lucretio Nucci, 1609), 68–78, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/462582>> (accessed on 31 Oct. 2024).

Awkward sustained notes, which if actually held in performance make passage-work in other voices impossible to execute, are usually the primary culprits, but other elements include an overall density of texture (largely created by active inner voices that fully participate in the contrapuntal fabric), large intervals between parts that are at best awkward – or at worst impossible – to execute (unless, of course, the performer uses their nose), and dense polyphony generated through highly-elaborate *passaggi* and the close imitation of diminution figures. In general, the music often seems to depart from the stylistic ‘norms’ of 16th-century Italian keyboard music, norms that I will identify in this article as ‘idiomatic’, as opposed to the unidiomatic style of the Neapolitans (as demonstrated in Ex. 1). These are closely linked to the experiential act of playing, what Leon Chisholm has described as ‘the haptic sensation of the fingers on the keyboard’, and, of course, the broader unwritten traditions of 16th-century keyboardists in Italy.<sup>3</sup> Much of this music betrays a polar attraction to the upper and lower ends of the texture – the treble and bass – and therefore foreshadows the soon-nascent Baroque style. In contrast, in the music of the Neapolitan school the middle parts (the *parti di mezzo*) often assume equal importance to the outer ones.

While the musical features that I just highlighted can be seen to be purely stylistic concerns, I wonder if the printing format the Neapolitans used might have also encouraged some of the difficulties in their music. Instead of using *intavolatura* – the most common format used for keyboard music by publishers and scribes on the Italian peninsula in the 16th and 17th centuries – Trabaci and colleagues largely published (and copied) their music in full open score.<sup>4</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, the notational conventions of Italian *intavolatura* directly influence aspects of the music on the page; describing intabulation more broadly, Victor Coelho portrays the intabulation process as a kind of translation, analogous to literary translation.<sup>5</sup> I will here argue that the open score format might have a similar translative effect, or rather an opposite one,

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3 Leon Chisholm, ‘Keyboard Playing and the Mechanization of Polyphony in Italian Music, Circa 1600’, PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2015, 58, <<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/950881g4>> (accessed on 1 Nov. 2024). Many of the commonly-seen textures in 16th-century Italian keyboard music, such as those based on *passaggi* in one hand and accompanying chords in the other, can certainly be seen to be derived from improvisation.

4 For a list of Italian printed sources of keyboard music in the 16th and 17th centuries, see Tab. 3.3 in Robert Floyd Judd, ‘The Use of Notational Formats at the Keyboard: A Study of Printed Sources of Keyboard Music in Spain and Italy c. 1500–1700, Selected Manuscript Sources Including Music by Claudio Merulo, and Contemporary Writings Concerning Notations’, 2 vols., PhD diss., University of Oxford, 1989, i, 89, <[https://www.academia.edu/attachments/50221810/download\\_file?st=MTcyMjY5NDI1Miw4MC4xMDkuMjM4LjIwMCwx-MzcxNjE5&s=profile](https://www.academia.edu/attachments/50221810/download_file?st=MTcyMjY5NDI1Miw4MC4xMDkuMjM4LjIwMCwx-MzcxNjE5&s=profile)> (accessed on 1 Nov. 2024).

5 Victor Coelho and Keith Polk, *Instrumentalists and Renaissance Culture, 1420–1600* (Cambridge, 2016), 217–20.

leading composers to adopt less idiomatic textures as well as compositional styles that foreground contrapuntal complexity.<sup>6</sup>

A relationship between contrapuntal complexity and printed open scores around 1600 was the focus of a recent article by Anthony Newcomb.<sup>7</sup> Newcomb highlights several volumes published in the decades around 1600 – including Trabaci's 1615 *Capricci* – as foreshadowing a much later concept of the musical 'work', one in which 'the notation on the page is complete and prescriptive, representing the essence of a piece'.<sup>8</sup> These scores are therefore demonstrative of a shift, both in function and in reception, from practice to object.<sup>9</sup> In Newcomb's formulation, the open-score format and the level of musical complexity aid and abet each other; the open-score format 'stimulated the increasing complexity of contrapuntal artifice that can be read from the page [...]. This complexity in turn affects the prescriptive authority of the musical elements presented in readable form by the notation on each page.'<sup>10</sup> Newcomb intertwines his argument using three threads, the first that these prints were intended for a particular mode of reception, a kind of 'silent reading' practiced by the part of the 'cultural and social elite of the late 16th and early 17th centuries', the second that the music was representative of the very height of an esoteric and highly *artificioso* compositional style, and the third that the prints were a remarkably early manifestation of the 'autonomous' musical 'work'.<sup>11</sup> This would fly in the face of normally-understood conceptions regarding the ontological status of early modern scores.<sup>12</sup> Crucially, any alteration of the music would 'destroy' the 'very identity of the piece':

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6 Although commonly known as *partitura*, I will use the term open score. As Campagne and Rotem point out, the term *partitura* – and several related terms – could refer to various species of 'short scores' in addition to full scores. The overlap speaks to the role for open scores for accompaniment. Augusta Campagne and Elam Rotem, *Keyboard Accompaniment in Italy around 1600: Intabulations, Scores and Basso Continuo* (Basel, 2022), <<https://forschung.schola-cantorum-basiliensis.ch/en/forschung/keyboard-accompaniment-1600.html>> (accessed on 21 Sept. 2024), 14.

7 Anthony Newcomb, 'Notions of Notations', in: *Il saggiatore musicale* 22 (2015), 5–31.

8 *Ibid.*, 6.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.*, 11–12.

11 This is my own framing of Newcomb's arguments. In the introduction to his essay, Newcomb also describes three preliminary 'steps', premises upon which his theories are erected. These are (1) that a 16th-century concept of a musical work existed; (2) that certain works and genres became increasingly 'composer-centered' due to the influence of print culture; and (3) the *artificioso* style of the late 16th-century led to an increasing 'prescriptive authority of notation'. See *ibid.*, 7–8.

12 Interestingly, the status of the intabulation – arguably much more prescriptive than descriptive – raises similar ontological issues.

I propose as a corollary of this complexity that the pitches and rhythms of the individual voices specified in the notation of such pieces were for the time unusually fixed and prescriptive. One could not and did not vary these elements in performance by such procedures as conflation or subtractions of voices, extraction of individual voices and/or revisions of the contrapuntal complex without destroying this structure, the very identity of this piece. One would not do this to this kind of piece, any more than one would fiddle with the mechanism of a complicated time-piece in a sophisticated patron's *Kunstkammer*. On the other hand, the looser and less *artificioso* the counterpoint, and the more flexible the attitude toward the inner parts, the more amenable other sorts of pieces would be to various performing versions.<sup>13</sup>

The printed volumes that form the nucleus of Newcomb's argument are in two genres, the madrigal and the instrumental *ricercar*. *Ricercars* were, of course, in the domain of the keyboardist, and with this we return to Trabaci's music and its performance challenges.<sup>14</sup> Performing Trabaci's music would be all the more difficult if one 'could not and did not vary these elements [i.e. the notation] in performance by such procedures as conflation or subtractions of voices, extraction of individual voices and/or revisions of the contrapuntal complex'. And logically, Newcomb's formulation should not only apply to Trabaci's volume and the other instrumental music in open score that he describes, but to the music of the entire post-Macque Neapolitan school – the majority of which was notated in open score – including that of Trabaci's colleague Ascanio Mayone, that of their probable *maestro* Giovanni de Macque, and that of the other Neapolitan composers found in sources such as Gb-Lbl Add. 30491, all of which is notably difficult to play exactly as written.

The unidiomatic textures and performance difficulties would therefore seem to go hand in hand with Newcomb's 'notions of notation': that this music was on some level not intended for performance, but to be contemplated or silently read. However, it is also of course well accepted that open scores were a common notational format used by keyboard players in the 16th and 17th centuries.<sup>15</sup> That this is the case would imply a kind of dual functionality held by these scores: they serve as practical scores for keyboardists to play from, but they also facilitate 'silent reading', to 'recognize and appreciate unusual examples of musical artifice in the notation on the page.'<sup>16</sup> This

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13 Ibid., 13.

14 Trabaci's two volumes feature a diversity of genres, but place *ricercars* front and center: each volume begins with a set of twelve *ricercars*, one for each tone.

15 See James Ladewig, 'The Use of Open Score as a Solo Keyboard Notation in Italy ca. 1530–1714', in: *Essays in Honor of John F. Ohl: A Compendium of American Musicology*, ed. Enrique Alberto Arias et al. (Evanston, 2001), 75–91.

16 Newcomb, 'Notions of Notation' (see n. 7), 7.

is made explicit by the title page of Gardano's well-known print of Rore's four-part madrigals 'spartiti et accommodati' to play on perfect instruments such as keyboards ('sonar d'ogni sorte d'Istrumento perfetto'), which is also indicated for the study of the counterpoint ('per Qualunque studioso di Contrapunti').<sup>17</sup> This volume, which presents a collection of Rore's madrigals without text and in open score, is indicated as an early example of the 'objectified score' by Newcomb.<sup>18</sup> In addition to being evidence of this sort of 'objectification', however, Trabaci's 1615 *Capricci* also carries clear practical performance indications.<sup>19</sup> Many of the genres in this volume – and, for that matter, in Trabaci's other volume of keyboard music, the *Ricercate canzone francese capricci [...] libro primo* (1603)<sup>20</sup> and the two volumes by his colleague Ascanio Mayone – contain music in genres with clear functional roles, most notably the 'cento' liturgical versets. Trabaci's 1615 print, cited by Newcomb for its distance from performance with its famous *Tavola dei passi et delle cose piu notabile* (and accompanying signs in the musical text, to highlight the specific instances of complexity and cleverness), is also filled with performance indications such as *allarga la battuta*, precise indication for dynamics (in the harp pieces), and lengthy instructions on how to execute particular ornamental figures.

## Intabulation as Performance

It would therefore seem clear that volumes like Trabaci's (or Gardano's Rore madrigal print) indicated dual functions. On the one hand, they fit Newcomb's ideal of the 'objectified score' around 1600; on the other hand, they also have a more practical, performance orientation. For Italian keyboard music in the 16th century, much data regarding the latter consideration can be found in the extant keyboard intabulations in organ or harpsichord *intavolatura*, which reflect performances practices recorded

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17 Cipriano de Rore, *Tutti i madrigali a quattro voci spartiti et accommodati [...]* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1577), see the title page, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/111823>> (accessed on 29 Sept. 2024). A companion piece of sorts, published in the same year, consists of a compilation of chansons – notably, many of which are seen commonly as lute or keyboard intabulations – also printed in open score without text. This collection is only indicated for players of perfect instruments, with no mention of the study of counterpoint. See Antonio Gardano, *Musica de diversi autori* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1577), facs. repr. (Bologna, 1971).

18 Newcomb, 'Notions of Notation' (see n. 7), 19.

19 It is also worth noting that all four Neapolitan prints are designated 'da sonare', and Trabaci goes further in designating his music specifically for 'ogni strumento; ma inspecialmente per I Cimbali, e gli organi.'

20 Naples: Costantino Vitale, 1603, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/421258>> (accessed on 29 Sept. 2024).

by the intabulation process itself. A handful of intabulations of works that were originally published in open score, and which meet Newcomb's criteria of the 'presentation of complex polyphony as a visually readable object on the page using the format of the open score';<sup>21</sup> are extant; these include an intabulation of one of Trabaci's versets from the *Secondo libro* (Tab. 1). To partially expand upon this small list, in Tab. 2 I list intabulations of music found in printed or manuscript open scores, that date after their original publication in part-book format (for these, a *direct* relationship between open score and intabulation cannot be assumed).

**Tab. 1:** Intabulations of pieces originally printed in open scores that meet the criteria of Newcomb's framing of the 'presentation of complex polyphony as a visually readable object on the page using the format of the open score'.

Source of Intabulation	Composer	Work Intabulated	Original Printed Source (in Open Score)	Publishing Information for Original Source	Comments
I-Nc Ms. Mus. st. 48, fol. 33 <sup>v</sup>	Trabaci	Verso nono, Sesto tono	<i>Il secondo libro de ricercate, &amp; altri varij capricci</i>	Naples: Giovanni Giacomo Carlino, 1615	
V-CVbav Chig.Q.IV.29, fol. 50 <sup>v</sup>	Frescobaldi	Ricercar terzo	<i>Recercari, et canzoni francese [...] libro primo</i>	Rome: Bartolomeo Zannetti, 1615	Four-bar fragment
I-RAc MS Classense 545, fol. 27 <sup>r</sup> -30 <sup>v</sup>	Frescobaldi	Capriccio sopra un soggetto	<i>Il primo libro di capricci [...] in partitura</i>	Rome: Luca Antonio Soldi, 1624	
I-RAc MS Classense 545, fol. 22 <sup>v</sup> -26 <sup>v</sup>	Frescobaldi	Capriccio sopra Il Cucho	<i>Il primo libro di capricci [...] in partitura</i>	Rome: Luca Antonio Soldi, 1624	

**Tab. 2:** Intabulations of pieces not originally published in open score – and, for which, therefore, a direct relationship between original source and intabulation cannot be inferred – but that also appear in later sources in open score.

<b>Source of Intabulation:</b>	I-Fmba Ms. 967 ('Bardini Codex') <sup>22</sup> , fol. 81 <sup>r</sup> -88 <sup>r</sup> , 105 <sup>r</sup> -109 <sup>v</sup>
<b>Composer:</b>	Cipriano de Rore
<b>Works Intabulated:</b>	'A la dolc'ombra', 'Non vide'l mondo', 'Un lauro mi difese', 'Però più ferm'ogn'hor', 'Selve sassi', 'Carita de Signore', 'La giustizia immortale', 'Amor ben mi credevo'

21 Newcomb, 'Notions of Notation' (see n. 7), 9.

22 Craig Monson, 'Elena Malvezzi's Keyboard Manuscript: A New Sixteenth-Century Source', in: *EMH* 9 (1990), 73-128.

**Original Printed Source:** Rore, *Il primo libro de madrigali a quatro voci* (Ferrara: Giovanni De Buglhat & Antonio Hucher, 1550)

**Later Full Score Version:** Rore, *Tutti i madrigali a quattro voci* (Venice, 1577)

**Comment:** Gardano's famous print issue of Rore's madrigals in open score might not fulfill Newcomb's notion of 'complex polyphony,' but he cites it as an example of full-score being used for the study of counterpoint.<sup>23</sup>

**Sources of Intabulation:** I-CARcc fasc. 4a, 14; I-Fl Ms. Acquisti e Doni 641, 6<sup>v</sup>-7<sup>r</sup>; D-Mbs Mus. Ms. 9437, 18<sup>v</sup>; I-TRmp [n.s.], 69<sup>v</sup>-72<sup>r</sup>; Andrea Gabrieli, *Il terzo libro de ricercari* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1596), fol. 32<sup>r</sup>-34<sup>r</sup>

**Composer:** Cipriano de Rore

**Work Intabulated:** 'Anchor che co'l partire'

**Original Printed Source:** Rore, *Il primo libro de madrigali a quatro voci* (Ferrara, 1550)

**Later Full Score Version:** Rore, *Tutti i madrigali a quattro voci* (Venice, 1577)

**Source of Intabulation:** I-CARcc fasc. 10

**Composer:** Florentio Maschera

**Works Intabulated:** 17 canzonas

**Original Printed Source:** Maschera, *Libro primo de canzoni da sonare, a quattro voci* (Brescia: Vincenzo Sabbio, 1584)

**Later Full Score Versions:** B-Bc ms 26660; I-Bc ms 2208; US-Wc M1490.M39, <<https://lccn.loc.gov/2011560474>>

**Comment:** Maschera's collection – which was extremely popular – exists in no fewer than three manuscript copies in open score.<sup>24</sup>

**Source of Intabulation:** Sperindio Bertoldo, *Toccate, ricercari et canzoni francese intavolate per sonar d'organo* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti, 1591), 15-9, 20-3, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/263347>> (accessed on 30 Sept. 2024)

**Composer:** Annibale Padovano

**Works Intabulated:** 'Ricarcar del Primo Tono', 'Ricarcar del Terzo Tono'

**Original Printed Source:** Padovano, *Il primo libro de ricercari a quattro voci* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1556), <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/676174>> (accessed on 30 Sept. 2024)

**Later Full Score Version:** B-Bc ms 26661

**Comment:** Bertoldo's two intabulations of ricercars from Padavano's 1556 publication are truncated.

23 Newcomb, 'Notions of Notation' (see n. 7), 9-10.

24 For an overview of the publication history as well as manuscript scores of Maschera's print, see the preface in Florentio Maschera, *Libro primo de canzoni ... a quattro voci* (Brescia, 1584), ed. Robert Judd, *Italian Instrumental Music of the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries 9* (New York/London, 1995), xi-xvi.

Intabulation in any particular format entailed following a set of guiding notational conventions as well as specific transcriptive processes; together, these reflect the actions and traditions of keyboard performance.<sup>25</sup> The notational conventions were rooted in performance practices, and the overall effect was one of musical-stylistic translation, from ‘polyphonisch’ to *keyboardian*. Crucially, not only does Italian keyboard *intavolatura* hide polyphonic detail in its process of ‘translation’, but the intabulation process itself often entailed the possibility of altering the musical text, both in order to make the music playable on the keyboard and to sit more idiomatically on the instrument. In Italian keyboard *intavolatura*, these alterations – more commonly but certainly not exclusively made to the inner voices, the *parti di mezzo* – not only ‘fix’ issues such as overly wide intervals between voices, but also create textures closer to the *cinquecento* stylistic norms described earlier. This process is clearly described in Diruta’s well-known section on intabulation in *Il Transilvano*, but it is also observable in extant intabulations; in fact, many of the intabulations show that Diruta was quite conservative in his advice, at least as stated in his text.<sup>26</sup> In addition to *changing* notes, it was equally possible – perhaps more common – to simply remove them when necessary.<sup>27</sup>

This is perhaps most observable in what I will identify as elaborate intabulations, intabulations that are highly ornamented and that seem to be intended for solo

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25 In a now somewhat legendary statement, Howard Mayer Brown pointed out that intabulations are the closest thing we have to Renaissance audio recordings. Howard Mayer Brown, *Embellishing Sixteenth Century Music* (London, 1976), xiii.

26 To be fair, Diruta does advise the student to consult Merulo’s published intabulations, ‘il quale più de ogn’altro si è affaticato in questa bell’arte d’intavolare diminuito come si vede in diverse sue Opera stampate.’ Girolamo Diruta, *Seconda parte del Transilvano Dialogo diviso in quattro libri* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti, 1609), i, 10, <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_D/D019/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_D/D019/)>. Augusta Campagne points out (private correspondence) that Merulo’s intabulations of canzonas – with faster-moving *note negre* – have fewer diminutions than the intabulations of chansons in the *Terzo libro*. This echoes Diruta’s advice – and musical examples – in that his intabulation of Gabrieli’s *La Spiritata*, with *note negre*, does not have added diminution, but the intabulation of Mortaro’s *L’Albergona*, with generally slower-moving notes, is used as a test-case for the addition of extensive diminution.

27 Diruta, *Seconda parte*. I would be remiss not to mention that Diruta describes open scores as a key step in his intabulation method: the intabulator is instructed to make an open score on a *cartella* – presumably an erasable tablet or paper – that includes the two staves of the *intavolatura*. This format can be seen in his own examples (see *ibid.*, i, 3). After the ostensible ‘preparatory’ step of extracting the parts from the part-books onto the score, the student intabulates from the score on to the two staves of the *intavolatura*. The use of open score is particularly interesting as *intavolatura* notation obscures voice leading by giving the highest sounding note on a staff an upward stem and the lowest-sounding note a downward stem, even if the original parts cross, creating a set of ‘fictitious’ or tablature voices. See Augusta Campagne’s article in the present volume, Ian Pritchard, ‘Hacking

performance. Elaborate intabulations entailed the addition of highly extensive *passaggi*, and substantial alterations were often employed to accommodate them (see Ex. 2). The alterations could go beyond small momentary changes (such as removing wide intervals between individual voices) to outright recomposition; for example, to accompany a *passaggio*, the other voices were often completely reworked to create chords. Therefore, elaborate intabulations often ‘default’ to idiomatic keyboard textures seen in ‘free’ (i.e., ostensibly model-less) genres like toccatas and dances, in which simple chordal figuration in one hand accompanies elaborate diminutions in the other. The overlap between these intabulations and free genres links the intabulation process to the broader unwritten practices of cinquecento keyboard players.

**Ex. 2a–b:** Two excerpts demonstrating the extent of alteration in elaborate intabulations.

The image displays a musical score for two excerpts, labeled 21 through 25. The top section (staves 21-25) shows a vocal line with lyrics: "mi peg - gior - che mor - te suo - le che mor - te suo -". The bottom section (staves 21-25) shows a keyboard intabulation of the same piece, featuring complex rhythmic patterns and chordal textures in both hands.

**a)** Anon. intabulation (bottom staves) of Alessandro Striggio’s ‘Nasce la pena mia’ (top staves), mm. 22–25, in: I-FI Ms. Acquisti e Doni 641, fol. 25<sup>v</sup>–28<sup>v</sup>.

the System: Italian Keyboard *Intavolatura* and Scribal Habit, in: ‘*Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt*: The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), 42–65, <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/en/mdwp003-hacking-the-system/>> (accessed on 1 August 2024), and Ian Pritchard, ‘Keyboard Thinking: Intersections of Notation, Composition, Improvisation and Intabulation in Sixteenth-Century Italy’, PhD diss., University of Southern California, 2018, <[https://ianpritchardearlykeyboards.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ian\\_pritchard\\_dissertation.pdf](https://ianpritchardearlykeyboards.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ian_pritchard_dissertation.pdf)> (accessed on 1 Nov. 2024). Strangely enough, Diruta does not describe this phenomenon explicitly, but having all of the parts visible in an open score would facilitate the process of creating fictitious voices. It is also interesting to consider Gardano’s two open-score prints in this light (see n. 16), as they are ostensibly exactly the kind of ‘prep score’ that Diruta describes.

34 par des - - loy - au - té De ce cors

34 8

34 8

34

34

b) Anon. intabulation of Lasso's 'Susanne un jour' (*Susanna*), mm. 34–36, in: I-TRmp [n.s.] ('Feininger manuscript'), fol. 39<sup>v</sup>–44<sup>r</sup>.

## An Aside: Considerations of Performers in the Present-Day

Elaborate ornamentation – extreme and often avant-garde – was a hallmark of the Neapolitan style, and is certainly a factor in making the music difficult to play. A modern player performing the music might consider intabulating it, either materially on paper, or by following the same processes spontaneously and without paper – a kind of hypothetical *intavolatura alla mente*.<sup>28</sup> Following the model given by extant intabulations, intabulating this music would entail altering and reworking the counterpoint as necessary in a fairly bold manner, prioritizing the *soggetti* (in imitative genres) and the *passaggi* over the accompanying voices. 'Reworking' accompanying voices could entail either changing the notes to create friendlier intervals, as Diruta suggests, or omitting them entirely, as commonly seen in extant elaborate intabulations. This is challenging, however, given that one must choose which notes to keep and which to recompose or omit. One might again turn to Diruta for advice, who clearly prioritizes the *fuga* or subject in an imitative work, advising to preserve the

28 Thanks to Augusta Campagne for the phrase *intavolatura alla mente*.

*fuga* and alter the accompanying voices.<sup>29</sup> In elaborate intabulations, the *passaggi* take precedence over the accompanying voices (or chords), echoing the hierarchy of musical elements implied by Diruta (*fuga* versus non-imitative material), and the intabulator would be wise to prioritize both *fuge* and *passaggi* over ‘accompanimental’ material. While I suspect that many modern performers on early keyboard instruments do indeed quietly alter the musical text when performing the music of Mayone or Trabaci – in particular, releasing sustained notes earlier than notated, which naturally decay on a plucked keyboard instrument – I would argue that they are, broadly speaking, far too conservative in their willingness to do so. Ironically, this speaks to the power of the 19th-century concepts of a musical work that Newcomb identifies these prints as foreshadowing.

## Literal Intabulations

The intabulations listed in Tab. 1 – extant intabulations of pieces from volumes discussed in Newcomb’s article – are largely what we might call ‘simple’ or ‘literal’ intabulations, in that they transcribe their material without the addition of *passaggi*. They also strive to maintain the musical texts of their models.<sup>30</sup> They therefore don’t seem particularly useful as models for the would-be intabulator of Newcomb’s open-score keyboard music, but seem to reinforce Newcomb’s notion regarding the prescriptive nature of their open-score texts – one would not be ‘allowed’ to alter these texts in intabulating or performing them. However, even in a literal intabulation the intabulation process automatically exerts a sort of translative effect. As I discussed extensively in my article for the previous volume of this series, the conventions of *intavolatura*, working in tandem with the intabulation process, would visually obscure voice leading

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29 Diruta writes, ‘Nel intavolare à più di quattro, si osserva l’istesso ordine; ma si trovano le compositioni à cinque, & à sei con due Tenori, over con due Contralti, & anco con due Soprani, & due Bassi. Trà quelle parti simili, ci nascono delli unisoni, bisogna avvertire di non lasciar la parte, che ha la fuga, & che la fuga si faccia intendere più, che sia possibile. Un’altro avvertimento vi voglio dare; alcune volte travarete il Soprano, & il Basso tanto estremi, che non potrete arrivare nè con l’una nè con l’altra mano à far le consonanze. Quando una delle parti estreme facesse la fuga, in modo alcuno no si deve lasciare. Quando poi vi sarà accompagnamento di consonanze, potrete accomodarsi à vostro modo, pur che non lasciate l’Armonia priva di Consonanze; come per essemplio: Se il Soprano sarà tanto estremo con il Basso, che non si possa arrivare a le parti di mezo, potrete fare altri accompagnamenti, & il simile farete quando le parti di mezo faranno la fuga.’ Diruta, *Seconda parte* (see n. 26), 10.

30 Ibid. Extant intabulations in Italian keyboard *intavolatura* run the gamut from ‘simple’ transcriptions to elaborate solo vehicles, mirroring the distinction established by Diruta between a simple intabulation process and the more ‘advanced’ *intavolature diminue*.

automatically (I use the analogy of the algorithm in popular concepts of computing) as a byproduct of the intabulator following the conventions of the notation.<sup>31</sup>

Therefore, even if the notes are technically shared between an intabulation and a version of a piece in open score (or partbooks), the intabulation still implies an alternate polyphonic construction. This can be seen in an intabulation of one of Trabaci's versets found in I-Nc 48<sup>32</sup> (Ex. 3). While largely preserving the polyphony of the original verset (not withstanding a few errors), the algorithmic processes obscure voice leading; this is largely driven by the fact that the two staves of the tablature prescribed the notes to be played by each hand, and by the fact that stem direction is dictated by a note's vertical placement in the staff, not by virtue of belonging to a specific polyphonic voice. As the processes of intabulation overlap with the conventions that define the notational system, the voice-leading is obscured. This is clearly observable in mm. 4–6, when tracing the contour of the alto part, which migrates from the bottom staff to the top. The choice of which notes go in which staff is largely dictated by what is playable; thus, the soprano, alto, and tenor are all moved to the top staff in m. 6. The process of intabulation – here without altering any notes in the original score – can be viewed as a window upon the keyboardist's mental image of the polyphony actively being translated.

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31 Ian Pritchard, 'Hacking the System' (see n. 27).

32 For full versions of the intabulation models in this essay, please see the author's database online: <https://ianpritchardearlykeyboards.com/intavolatura-projects/>.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a harpsichord piece. The first system consists of four staves: a treble staff, an alto staff, a tenor staff, and a bass staff. The second system consists of six staves: a treble staff, an alto staff, a tenor staff, a bass staff, and two grand staves (treble and bass). Red arrows point to specific notes in the lower staves of the second system, indicating instances where the original voice leading is obscured by the intavolatura.

**Ex. 3:** Anon. intabulation, entitled 'Verso 6 tuono d. Trabace', of the 'Verso Nono, Sesto Tono', mm. 1-8, from Trabaci, *Il secondo libro de ricercate, & altri varij capricci* (Naples, 1615), 69. Intabulation (bottom staves), transcribed from I-Nc Ms. Mus. st. 48, fol. 33<sup>v</sup>. Red arrows show the contour of the original voice leading in instances in which the *intavolatura* obscures it. The upper staves are transcribed from Trabaci, *Il secondo libro de ricercate, & altri varij capricci* (Naples, 1615), facs. repr. (Florence, 1984), 69.

Two extant intabulations from Frescobaldi's 1624 *Il primo libro di capricci fatti sopra diversi soggetti, et arie in partitura* in I-Rac MS Classense 545 show similar tendencies. Ex. 4 shows four instances extracted from the *Capriccio sopra un soggetto*. The rule that any note's stem is determined by its vertical placement routinely gives the false impression of alternative voices and voice leading (creating what I call, after Alexander

Silbiger's concept of 'fictitious rests', *fictitious voices*); notes are distributed between the two staves in a way that reflects the way they fall comfortably under the hand; rests and unisons are omitted (Ex. 4b, m. 54; see especially Ex. 4d).<sup>33</sup> Without having recourse to Frescobaldi's print with its open score format, some of the voice-leading would need to be inferred. And, although the intabulator again strives to preserve the musical text, the line between visual realignment of voice leading through fictitious tablature voices and actual alteration of the musical text is occasionally blurred.

**Ex. 4a-d:** Anon. intabulation of Frescobaldi's *Capriccio sopra un soggetto* (1624), transcribed from I-RAC MS Classense 545 (bottom staves), fol. 27<sup>r</sup>-30<sup>r</sup>. Top staves transcribed from Frescobaldi, *Il primo libro di capricci [...] in partitura* (Rome: Luca Antonio Soldi, 1624), 69-77, <[https://www.museibologna.it/musica/viewschedatwbca/&path=/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_Z/Z170/](https://www.museibologna.it/musica/viewschedatwbca/&path=/images/ripro/gaspari/_Z/Z170/)> (accessed on 10 Oct. 2025).

The image displays a musical score for an anonymous intabulation of Frescobaldi's *Capriccio sopra un soggetto*. It consists of two systems of staves. The top system contains four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The bottom system contains two staves: one treble and one bass clef. A red rectangular box highlights a specific passage in the bottom system's bass staff, where a tie is used to connect two notes, clarifying the voice leading. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals.

**a)** mm. 14-15. The red box highlights the use of a tie to clarify voice leading, which is ordinarily hidden by *intavolatura* practice.

33 Silbiger describes the particular use of rests in *intavolatura*; these reflect the logic of the intabulation but not the logic of the underlying polyphony. He calls these 'fictitious rests'. Through its application of stem directions and other notational elements, *intavolatura* oftentimes gives the impression of an alternate set of voices; I have elsewhere described these as 'fictitious' or tablature voices (see n. 27 above). For a full description of this phenomenon see Pritchard, 'Hacking the System' (see n. 27). Also see Alexander Silbiger, 'Is the Italian Keyboard *Intavolatura* a Tablature?', in: *Recercare* 3 (1991), 81-103.

Musical score for measures 54-55. The score consists of five staves: two treble clefs, two alto clefs (marked with an 8), and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). Red boxes highlight specific notes in the second and third staves, and a larger red box in the grand staff. Red arrows indicate the contour of the original voices.

b) mm. 54–55. The bottom box highlights a large interval in one hand, wider than usually seen in *intavolatura* practice; arrows show the contour of the original voices. The upper boxes show notes removed from the tablature.

Musical score for measures 60-63. The score consists of five staves: two treble clefs, two alto clefs (marked with an 8), and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). Red boxes highlight notes in the third and grand staff staves. A red arrow points from the grand staff to the third staff.

c) mm. 60–63. The red arrow shows the contour of the original voice leading as it moves between the hands; note how the stem direction obscures the motion of the original voices. The tenor  $e^1$  (red box) is the opening note of the *soggetto*, which is omitted in the intabulation.

The image displays a musical score for measures 38-44, organized into two systems. Each system contains four staves: three individual staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs) and one grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals. Annotations include red boxes highlighting rests removed in the intabulation process, purple boxes highlighting unisons hidden by the *intavolatura* convention, and red and purple arrows indicating original voice leading and 'fictitious' tablature parts, respectively.

**d** mm. 38–44. The purple boxes show unisons hidden by *intavolatura* convention. Red boxes show rests removed in the intabulation process. The red arrows show the original voice leading, again obscured by the conventions of *intavolatura*, while the purple arrows highlight the ‘fictitious’ tablature parts.

In general, however, these intabulations largely preserve the original voice leading, pushing back against the rules of *intavolatura* to do so. In Ex. 4a, m. 14, a tie is added in the tenor  $e^1$ , to flag the continuation of the tenor, even as the stem directions give a ‘fictitious’ impression of the voice leading. In other instances beaming is used to clarify voice leading. Sometimes the original polyphony is preserved at the expense of playability, with awkward stretches that are difficult to perform as written – see Ex. 4b,

m. 54, Ex. 4c, m. 60, and Ex. 4d, m. 70. Again, the tendency to preserve Frescobaldi's musical text would seem to amplify Newcomb's point that the fundamental 'need' to preserve the particularities of these texts is part of their function as musical objects. However, there is a fundamentally Janus-faced quality of *intavolatura*; as I explored in my previous article for this series, the fact that *intavolatura* uses mensural notation means that its rules can be bent to show details of voice-leading, turning *intavolatura* into a kind of open score.<sup>34</sup> It is noticeable that the tendency to preserve musical text in the Frescobaldi intabulations in I-RAc MS Classense 545, which dates from the middle of the 17th century, goes against what one often sees in intabulations from the 16th century.<sup>35</sup> In fact, in two intabulations of *ricercars* by Padovano (originally published in part-books) by Sperindio Bertoldo (Ex. 5; see Tab. 2), the intabulator has no qualms with allowing the intabulation process to not only obscure voice leading but to essentially rework the polyphonic fabric, altering the original text as extensively as seen in elaborate intabulations. In fact, the integrity of the subject – in a 'learned' *ricercar* no less – is sometimes completely omitted in an effort to adapt the music for keyboard performance.<sup>36</sup> In Ex. 5a, notes from the *soggetto* are removed to avoid awkward stretches, and in Ex. 5b, for diminution in the right hand.

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34 Ian Pritchard, 'Hacking the System' (see n. 27).

35 Silbiger estimates that the manuscript dates from 1630–1640 or later; see preface to facs. ed., *Ravenna, Biblioteca comunale Classense, MS Classense 545*, Alexander Silbiger, ed. and introduction (New York/London, 1987), viii. This dating is echoed by Barbara Cipollone, who provides some fascinating context for the collection. See 'The *Libro di Fra Gioseffo da Ravenna*: A Little Light on a Seventeenth-Century Italian Keyboard Collection', in: *Interpreting Historical Keyboard Music*, ed. Andrew Wooley and John Kitchen (London, 2013), 83–96.

36 While it is impossible to directly link the two sources, it is notable that Padovano's *ricercars* appear as intabulations in Bertoldo's print, and also in a manuscript open score (B-Bc 26661); therefore, they are listed in the second part of Tab. 2. Bertoldo's intabulations are truncated versions of the original works; see Sperindio Bertoldo, *Toccate, ricercari et canzoni francese intavolate* (Venice, 1591).

## Ex. 5a-b: Intabulations by Bertoldo, of ricercars by Padovano.

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of four staves: a treble staff, an alto staff, a tenor staff, and a bass staff. The second system consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. In the first system, the tenor staff has several notes marked with a red 'X'. Two of these 'X' marks are enclosed in red boxes. In the second system, the bass staff has two notes marked with a red box. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals, typical of early modern lute tablature transcriptions.

a) Bottom staves transcribed from Sperindio Bertoldo, *Ricercar del Primo Tuono*, mm. 14–19, in: Bertoldo, *Toccate, ricercari et canzoni francese* (Venice, 1591), 15–9. Top staves transcribed from Annibale Padovano, *Il primo libro de ricercari a quattro voci* (Venice, 1556).

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of four staves: a treble staff, an alto staff, a tenor staff, and a bass staff. The second system consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. In the first system, the tenor staff has several notes marked with a red 'X'. In the second system, the bass staff has a sequence of notes highlighted with a red box, and red arrows point from this box to subsequent notes in the bass staff. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals, typical of early modern lute tablature transcriptions.

b) Bottom staves transcribed from Sperindio Bertoldo, *Ricercar del Terzo Tuono*, mm. 12–13, in: Bertoldo, *Toccate, ricercari et canzoni francese* (Venice, 1591), 20–3. Top staves transcribed from Annibale Padovano, *Il primo libro de ricercari a quattro voci* (Venice, 1556).

Newcomb's response would surely be to argue that these ricercars, representative of the Venetian school, are less contrapuntally rigorous and *artificioso* than the

Ferrarese-Roman-Neapolitan works that are the object of his study.<sup>37</sup> However, I am not sure if this entirely fair to the Venetians: not only do many of their works hint at the same ‘advanced’ level of *artificioso* composition as do the *ricercars* that Newcomb highlights (witness the c.f. treatment of the *soggetto* in the Padovano *ricercar* just cited), but, as Newcomb himself points out, these works come to us not in open score, but in *intavolatura*; in this case, the notational format has a material influence on the music style itself.<sup>38</sup> That is, the notation has a sort of agency that we would normally consider to belong completely to the composer, imposing a direct influence on musical style. In other words, the complex and *artificioso* tendencies of the works he cites are that way precisely because they are in full score, not *intavolatura*, just as the Venetian *ricercars* appear to be less complex because they are in *intavolatura*, and not in full score.

### ***Intavolatura* and Open Scores: a Comparison of Notational Influence**

One can get a further sense of this ‘notational influence’ by comparing ‘free’ (that is, model-less) keyboard works in both formats. Gb-Lbl Add. 30491, a major source of Neapolitan keyboard music ca. 1600, contains a sole piece in *intavolatura*, Macque’s *Capriccio sopra re fa mi sol*; the remaining keyboard works in the manuscript are notated in open score. In mm. 16–23 of Macque’s *Capriccio* (Ex. 6), a thoroughly contrapuntal texture is implied, but the counterpoint is loose and not particularly well-defined; witness the disappearance of the alto part in m. 20. I would suggest that this texture has to be seen as a by-product of *intavolatura* and its conventions: resting

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37 Newcomb writes, ‘One should note also that the less contrapuntally rigorous and *artificioso* *ricercars* of the Venetian school – those of Claudio Merulo, Andrea Gabrieli, Sperindio Bertoldo – come down to us in Italian keyboard tablature, often with substantial written-out diminution, especially at cadences.’ Newcomb, ‘Notions of Notation’ (see n. 7), 17.

38 One might reasonably push back against my challenge to Newcomb’s characterisation of Venetian *ricercars*; surely the *ricercars* of the Ferrarese-Neapolitan school – with their use of *inganni* and the subtle manipulation of multiple subjects – reach the height of *artificioso* counterpoint. However, some Venetian *ricercars* show a tendency towards the extreme development of a single subject, saturating the texture with devices such as inversion, stretto, diminution, and augmentation. To give two examples, see Andrea Gabrieli’s *Ricercar del Primo Tono Alla Quarta alta* (1595) or Annibale Padovano’s *Ricercar del Sesto Tono* (1556). See Andrea Gabrieli, *Ricercari di Andrea Gabrieli [...] libro secondo* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1595), fol. 4<sup>r</sup>–6<sup>v</sup>, <<https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-56111>> (accessed on 30 Sept. 2024). Annibale Padovano, *Il primo libro de ricercari a quattro voci* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1556). For a further discussion of Trabaci’s ‘new’ manner of developing *inganni*, see Massimiliano Guido, ‘Giovanni Maria Trabaci and the New Manner of *Inganni*: A Musical Mockery in the The Early Seicento *Ricercar*’ in: *Interpreting Historical Keyboard Music*, ed. Andrew Wooley and John Kitchen (London, 2013), 43–64.

voices are not given rests that would clearly indicate their contour (and continued existence), and stem directions hide the specifics of voice leading. Sustained notes tend to evaporate in a way reflective of the decay of a plucked string – see the soprano in m. 22, for example. The intabulation is an image of an improvised performance.

Ex. 6: Giovanni de Macque, 'Capriccio di Gio. De Macque, sopra re fa mi sol', mm. 16–23, transcribed from Gb-LB Add 30491, fol. 23<sup>v</sup>.

However, would the piece have had the same casualness in counterpoint if it were notated in open score? To start, the contrapuntal fabric would be cast fully in relief, each voice having its predefined physical space on the page. As we have seen, the intabulation process tends to create a hierarchy of elements that mirror the aural perception and the physical actions of performance, with the 'primary' voices containing elements, such as a *soggetto* or *passaggi*, that are more 'important' than the 'accompanying' voices. This is at least partly enabled by the fact that the *intavolatura* is a kind of open canvas – the voices are not given any sort of predefined physical space. In contrast, the predetermined space that receives each part in an open score would seem to encourage contrapuntal completeness. The notation need not capitulate to the practicalities of performance at all. I wonder if Macque might have been tempted – or rather, spurred on – to increase the complexity level if he had used open score, adding say, sustained notes to accompany a polyphonic complex (the kind that often give performers headaches today), or perhaps doubling one of the voices in thirds. In Ex. 7a, I created, following the advice of Alexander Silbiger, a detabulation of the passage in Ex. 6; in Ex. 7b, I 'filled the gaps' of my literal detabulation, in a speculative exercise to show how the music might have been written in open score: the evaporating long notes are left in, and I have added slight figuration to maintain a full four-voice texture (see brackets).<sup>39</sup>

39 Silbiger, 'Is the Italian Keyboard *Intavolatura* a *Tablature*?' (see n. 33), 81.

## Ex. 7a-b: Detabulations of Macque's Capriccio from Ex. 6

**Ex. 7a:** A literal detabulation of Macque's *Capriccio*, from Ex. 6. Due to the conventions of intavolatura, the two *soggetti* appear to be in separate voices; in detabulating, I have made sure that a given instance of a *soggetto* remained in the same voice. Apart from that concession, I have transcribed the parts literally from the tablature.

**Ex. 7b:** I have now added material to the detabulation, largely by sustaining the implied long notes. In addition, I have added contrapuntal material in two instances (brackets).

A fruitful comparison can be made with Trabaci's *Capriccio sopra la, fa, sol, la* from the *Libro primo* (1603). As noted by Silbiger, it is similar enough to Macque's *Capriccio* to warrant being identified as a kind of parody.<sup>40</sup> In parallel passages to the two just shown, we can see what Macque's 'missing' parts might have contained (Ex. 8); notable is the tendency to consistently add material in the fourth voice in contrapuntal complexes that are essentially in three voices; in comparable moments in Macque's *Capriccio*, the fourth voice often isn't present – one gets the impression that material is added only as it is possible to play (for example, the faster-moving imitative section from mm. 16–22 remains a 3 until the *soggetto* enters in all voices in augmentation, after which the texture is again reduced to three voices). It must also be noted that Trabaci's piece is considerably more difficult to perform as exactly written, precisely due to these ancillary parts.

**Ex. 8a–b:** Trabaci, 'Capriccio sopra la, fa, sol, la', transcribed from Trabaci, *Ricercate canzone francese capricci* [...] *libro primo* (Naples, 1603), 63–6. The music, originally printed in open score, has again been transcribed into modern keyboard notation, with stem directions reflective of the parts in the open score.

a) mm. 20–26

b) mm. 53–55

Following the same logic as the algorithmic conversion of polyphony to *intavolatura*, I wonder if the open-score format can be seen to have the opposite effect, at the very least encouraging – or perhaps even 'demanding' – additional notational detail, therefore possessing a degree of agency over musical style in exactly the opposite

40 Alexander Silbiger, *Italian Manuscript Sources of 17th Century Keyboard Music* (Ann Arbor, 1980), 167.

way that *intavolatura* does. Put another way, keyboard music in open score – at least around 1600 in Italy – represented a kind of objectification of *intavolatura*, with a parallel set of algorithmic processes at work. This is particularly the case if we assume that works such as Trabaci's and Macque's were likely 'composed' at the keyboard as a product of improvisation. In this case, the *intavolatura* is a kind of *tabula compositoria*. To the extent that the intabulated version of Macque's *Capriccio* is the *res facta* to the improvisation, notation in open score format would be the next step up the ladder of 'composedness' – or rather, the top rung.

Another comparison of works in each format is illustrative. Ex. 9a shows a passage from the *Toccata terza* from Ascanio Mayone's *Secondo libro di diversi capricci per sonare*, published in open score, and Ex. 9b a passage from an anonymous toccata-like piece in I-TRmp [n.s.] (commonly known as the 'Feininger' manuscript).<sup>41</sup> In the passage from the anonymous toccata, imitation of a figure (*a*) creates a move towards a cadence. Again, as would be expected in a work notated in *intavolatura*, the counterpoint is a sketch rather than fully fleshed-out. The texture thins out in m. 5, moving to an *a* 3 texture on the second beat, with the bass truncated on *c'*, evaporating on beat 4. This is presumably to facilitate the stretch between the bass and tenor on this beat, and is again an image of the physical actions (and aural reality) of performance on a plucked keyboard instrument. The passage sits easily under the hands. In contrast, the Mayone toccata (mm. 67–73), while almost identical in concept (imitation of a motive as a drive towards a cadence), has a quite different effect: wide intervals (such as seen in the last beat of m. 67 and 68) are awkward and sit unidiomatically on the keyboard, and the texture is considerably more dense overall. Conceptually, the musical kernel behind each excerpt is the same: two voices participate in an imitative complex of a motive, while the other two voices accompany this *a* 2 complex with accompanying contrapuntal material. However, in the anonymous toccata, this accompanying material is minimal, or even non-existent, whereas in the Mayone, it consists of long notes or 'extra' material that moves with the same note values as the motive, creating busy and highly unidiomatic textures (see, for example, m. 73). The point is highlighted further in Ex. 9c, an excerpt from another toccata by Mayone from his *Primo libro*, and an anonymous *Toccata piena* from the Feininger manuscript; the anonymous toccata fits the stylistic 'norm' of *passaggi* and chords to a tee, whereas the sustained notes in Mayone's toccata simply get in the way in performance – but also give the piece a sense of contrapuntal completeness (and added complexity).

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41 The latter is a major source for the works of Ercole Pasquini. Both intabulations share figuration with music from the Neapolitan school. The extent to which the works of Macque and Trabaci et al. constitute a distinct 'school', and to what extent one can speak of a broader Ferrarese-Neapolitan style, has been the subject of scholarly debate; see for example an earlier article by Newcomb, 'Frescobaldi's Toccatas and Their Stylistic Ancestry', in: *PRMA* 111 (1984/85), 28–44.

## Ex. 9a-c: Mayone, Toccatas

**Ex. 9a:** Ascanio Mayone, 'Toccatata terza', mm. 67–73, transcribed from Mayone, *Secondo libro di diversi capricci per sonare* (Naples, 1609), facs. repr. (Florence, 1984), 99–110. The music, originally printed in open score, has been transcribed into modern keyboard notation, with stem directions once again reflective of the parts in the open score, to facilitate comparison with the works in *intavolatura*.

**Ex. 9b:** Anon., [Toccatata], mm. 4–8, in: I-TRmp [n.s.], fol. 45<sup>v</sup>-46<sup>r</sup>. Transcribed from Italian keyboard *intavolatura*.

**Ex. 9c:** Ascanio Mayone, 'Toccatata prima', mm. 20–24, transcribed from Mayone, *Primo libro di diversi capricci per sonare* (Naples, 1603), 39–43. Transcribed into modern keyboard notation from open score.

**Ex. 9d:** Anon., ‘Toccata piena’, mm. 17–20, in: I-TRmp [n.s.], fol. 11<sup>v</sup>-13<sup>r</sup>. Transcribed from Italian keyboard *intavolatura*.

Again, one can interrogate the degree to which these elements are, in fact, influenced by the notational format itself. The difficult elements in the music of the Neapolitan school described earlier are encouraged (or required?) by the use of open score. Mayone’s toccata would *appear on the page* to be much more like the anonymous Trent toccata if it were notated in *intavolatura*, and the Trent toccata would have been more fully fleshed out, objectified in a way that leads to increased contrapuntal complexity, if it were written in open score. Giving a degree of agency to the notational format itself may certainly have radical implications for considerations of notions of ‘workhood’, and how these notions are theorized in music ca. 1600.

### Notating the Neapolitan *Madrigale Passaggiato*

These issues of notation, performance, and composition are aptly illustrated by the four madrigal arrangements in the published volumes of Trabaci and Mayone (one arrangement per volume). Although these are for all intents and purposes very similar to elaborate intabulations, they technically cannot be considered to be intabulations at all, as they are not notated in *intavolatura*.<sup>42</sup> While this definitional quibble may seem on the surface rather semantic, the arrangements contain the same difficult tendencies in performance, and overall level of complexity, as the other works in the volumes. Trabaci’s own terminology, used on the title page of his 1603 *Libro primo*,

42 Scholars do not typically draw a distinction; see, for example, Giovanni Michelini, ‘Ascanio Mayones und Girolamo Frescobaldi’s *Ancidetemi pur*’, in: *ZGMTH* 20/1 (2023), 91–100. Also see the discussion of the pieces in Frederick Hammond’s ‘extended’ web-hosted biography of Frescobaldi: *Girolamo Frescobaldi: An Extended Biography* (2023), <<https://girolamofrescobaldi.com/19-the-performance-of-frescobaldi-keyboard-music/>> (accessed on 21 Sept. 2024).

'*madrigale passeggiato*', might imply a process in which diminution was applied to each voice of the madrigal, but a closer examination reveals a process of arrangement akin to intabulation. In fact, these works can be seen as particularly exemplary of the kind of abstraction or *objectification* of an intabulation; ironically, their difficulty in performance once again suggests the need to intabulate them in order to perform them.

At the same time, that the *madrigale passagiato* is fundamentally related to the intabulation (while not being an actual intabulation) is obvious, at least superficially.<sup>43</sup> In Trabaci's intabulation of Ferrabosco's 'Io mi son giovinetto' in the *Libro primo* (1603) (Ex. 10), there are sections that strongly imply broken chords – highly idiomatic for a plucked instrument – and, generally speaking, the style of diminution is comparable to that seen in elaborate intabulations; in fact, the intabulations of Lassus's 'Susanne un jour' in the Feininger manuscript, and Striggio's 'Nasce la pena mia' in I-Fl Ms. Acquisti e Doni 641 contain particular diminution figures shared with pieces from the Neapolitan school.<sup>44</sup> (Ex. 11 shows a characteristic diminution figure, based on a series of falling thirds.) In the Neapolitan *madrigali passagiati* and in the 'Susanne un jour' and 'Nasce la pena mia' intabulations alike, not only is the ornamentation extensive, but there is a notable tendency for the diminutions to take on a life of their own, forming superstructures in which specific surface figures are subject to contrapuntal manipulation and development. This manipulation includes the use of learned contrapuntal devices such as inversion, diminution, and augmentation. In addition, all of these intabulations show the clear influence of *bastarda*-style ornamentation, with frequent leaps between vocal parts and ranges.<sup>45</sup>

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43 The style of diminution is very much akin to that found in the elaborate intabulations mentioned earlier, even as Trabaci's 1615 arrangement of 'Ancidetemi pur' is specified as being for the harp (one must remember Trabaci's assertion that it, along with all of the other harp music in the collection, can be performed on the harpsichord).

44 See also the *canzoni* of Merulo, or the intabulations found in manuscripts such as I-TRmp [n.s.].

45 The use of *bastarda* style ornamentation – in which the *passaggi* migrate and often leap from part to part in a polyphonic model – are commonplace in late 16th-century keyboard intabulations. Rognoni notes that 'questo modo di passeggiare alla Bastarda, serve per Organi, Luiti, Arpe & simili.' Francesco Rognoni Taeggio, *Selva de varii passaggi* (Milan: Filippo Lomazzo, 1620), facs. ed. (Bologna, 2012), ii, 2.

**Ex. 10:** Broken-chord figuration in Giovanni Maria Trabaci, 'Io mi son giovinetto', mm. 13–14, transcribed from Trabaci, *Ricercate canzone francese capricci [...] libro primo* (Naples, 1603), 117–22.

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 10, consisting of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (G minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with measure numbers 13 and 14. Red boxes highlight specific broken-chord patterns in the upper and lower staves, showing a sequence of notes that form a broken chord.

**Ex. 11a-c:** A common falling-third diminution figure seen in Italian intabulations and arrangements ca. 1600. Also, see previous example.

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 11a-c, consisting of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (G minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with measure numbers 14 and 15. Red boxes highlight specific falling-third diminution figures in the upper and lower staves, showing a sequence of notes that descend in thirds.

**a)** Ascanio Mayone, 'Ancidetemi pur', mm. 14–15, transcribed from Mayone, *Primo libro di diversi capricci per sonare* (Naples, 1603), 31–8.

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 11a, consisting of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom is in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (G minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with measure numbers 14 and 15. Red boxes highlight specific falling-third diminution figures in the upper and lower staves, showing a sequence of notes that descend in thirds.

**b)** Anon., 'Nasce la pena mia', m. 34, transcribed from I-FI Ms. Acquisti e Doni 641, fol. 25<sup>v</sup>–28<sup>v</sup>.

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 11b, consisting of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom is in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (G minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with measure number 34. Red boxes highlight specific falling-third diminution figures in the upper and lower staves, showing a sequence of notes that descend in thirds.

**c)** Anon., 'Susanna', m. 39, transcribed from I-TRmp [n.s.], fol. 39<sup>v</sup>–44<sup>r</sup>.

In addition to these superficial details, affinities with the intabulation process can be observed structurally as well. In particular, a close analysis reveals not so much a part-by-part strategy of diminution (as if one were, for example, applying diminutions to a single part), but a holistic approach in which all parts are considered at the same time. In many instances, Trabaci and Mayone employ the same sort of alteration to the voice-leading of the model as suggested by Diruta and as seen in elaborate intabulations. Often, alterations are undertaken in order to accommodate the logical contour of an ornamental figure. In Ex. 12a, the natural movement of the soprano *passaggio* towards  $f\sharp^1$  necessitates the recomposition of the alto. In other instances, entire ornamental complexes involving multiple voices lead to the extensive reworking of the model's polyphony, as can be seen in Ex. 12b. These moments of alteration align with Diruta's advice to briefly alter inner voices to accommodate large intervals – and even more so with the procedures seen in elaborate intabulations.

**Ex. 12a–b:** Giovanni Maria Trabaci, 'lo mi son giovinetto', transcribed from Trabaci, *Ricercate canzone francese capricci* [...] *libro primo* (Naples, 1603), facs. repr. (Florence, 1984), 63–6.

The image displays a musical score for a vocal piece with piano accompaniment. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (mm. 6-7) features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'tie - - - - - ri' (Soprano), 'tie - - - - - ri M'al -' (Alto), 'vo - - - - - lon - - - - - tie - - - - - ri' (Tenor), and 'tie - - - - - ri' (Bass). The piano accompaniment includes a treble clef staff with a trill marked 'T' and a bass clef staff with a rhythmic pattern. The second system (mm. 8-9) continues the vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the second system are: 'Mal -' (Soprano), 'le - gr'e' (Alto), and 'ri' (Tenor). The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures.

a) mm. 6–7

41  
 su le spi - - - ne e' bian - chi gi - - - - -  
 le ro - selin su le spi - nele' bian - chi gi - - - - -  
 ro - selin su le spi - nele' bian - chi gi - - - - -  
 su le spi - - - - ne e' bian - chi gi - - - - -

41  
 41  
 41  
 8  
 41  
 T

## b) mm. 41–46

In addition, the Neapolitan arrangements show instances of voice exchange that are strongly suggestive of *intavolatura*'s fictitious voices. In Mayone's arrangement of 'Ancidetemi pur', (Ex. 13a), the tenor part in m. 6 is placed in the soprano part in the arrangement; this makes sense as it is the highest-sounding part in this instance and would, of course, be placed in the upper staff of an *intavolatura* (with stems pointing up if sharing the staff with the next highest voice, the alto). Interestingly enough, a similar procedure is seen in the same place in Trabaci's arrangement of the same madrigal (Ex. 13b, m. 10); here the alto gets the material of the original tenor part (which in turn gets the material previously given to the alto part). The logic behind the voice exchanges and the alterations are both clearly influenced by *intavolatura*.

Ex. 13a shows a musical score for Ascanio Mayone's 'Ancidetemi pur', measures 5-6. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system contains vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor/Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The second system contains piano accompaniment staves. The lyrics are: 'ri Che'l vi - ver mi sia noi - - - -'. Colored rectangles highlight rearranged material: a purple rectangle in the vocal staves and a red rectangle in the piano accompaniment of the first system, and a red rectangle in the piano accompaniment of the second system.

**Ex. 13a:** Ascanio Mayone, 'Ancidetemi pur', mm. 5-6, (bottom staves), transcribed from Mayone, *Primo libro di diversi capricci per sonare* (Naples, 1603), 31-8. Colored rectangles show the rearrangement of material between parts.

Ex. 13b shows a musical score for Giovanni Maria Trabaci's 'Ancidetemi pur, Per l'Arpa', measures 10-12. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system contains vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The second system contains piano accompaniment staves. The lyrics are: 'Che'l vi - ver mi sia no - - -'. Colored rectangles highlight rearranged material: a purple rectangle in the vocal staves and a red rectangle in the piano accompaniment of the first system, and a red rectangle in the piano accompaniment of the second system.

**Ex. 13b:** Giovanni Maria Trabaci, 'Ancidetemi pur, Per l'Arpa', mm. 10-12, (bottom staves), transcribed from Trabaci, *Il secondo libro de ricercate, & altri varij capricci* (Naples, 1615), facs. repr. (Florence, 1984), 126-132.

At the same time, however, many of the difficulties in performance cited above are still observed – there are many passages that are very unidiomatic for the keyboard and almost impossible to perform as written. (See Ex. 1a at the top of the article, for example). Once again, it is relevant to inquire as to whether the notational format itself can at least partly explain these aspects, with the open-score notation ‘exerting’ its agency to influence musical style. At the same time, the processes of arrangement show obvious affinity to those seen in intabulation; it is almost as if these arrangements are the result of a *detabulatory* process, in which an actual ‘intabulation’ – again either a real one on paper or an *intavolatura alla mente* – was objectified in open score. The format allows for a highly ‘rationalized’ portrayal of the virtuosic and skilled art of the intabulator/performer, including improvising *passaggi* and the concomitant reworking of the original voice leading.

## Sounding Objects and Improvisation

In my 2018 study of *intavolatura*, I pointed out how certain published intabulations functioned as sounding objects.<sup>46</sup> These sounding objects act as imagined performances; the reader could either recreate a performance by playing the intabulation, executing the ‘instructions’ to reproduce the ‘encoded’ performance, or engage with the prints, highly intricate in notational and ornamental detail and very expensive to produce, as a kind of ‘hearing with the eyes’ – not at all dissimilar to the function advocated by Newcomb.<sup>47</sup> However, in the form of hearing with the eyes that I am proposing, the open score allows the reader to form a mental *image* of a virtuosic performance, not necessarily by literally recreating the performance in their head, but by forming a mental *impression* of it. This can be read as a kind of extreme objectification of the performance, with the patron not only appreciating the *artificioso* and the complex elements on the page, but also the imagined skills of the *virtuoso*. In elaborate intabulations, not only do the techniques of arrangement highlight the intabulator as author, but they elevate his status socially and culturally, particularly in the eyes of patrons.<sup>48</sup> The *madrigale passagiato* is in a sense an elaborate intabulation

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46 See Pritchard, ‘Keyboard Thinking’ (see n. 27), 224–331.

47 The term ‘hearing with the eyes’ was first coined by Cristle Collin Judd; see Judd, *Reading Renaissance Music Theory: Hearing with the Eyes* (Cambridge, 2000), 5. In describing his use of Judd’s conception, Newcomb writes, ‘Judd contrasts this version with “the very different visual and atemporal possibilities offered by notational representations in which [readers] could »see« relationships that they often were not capable of perceiving aurally.” It is this latter activity that I am proposing: the ability to recognize and appreciate unusual examples of musical artifice in the notation on the page.’ Newcomb, ‘Notions of Notation’ (see n. 7), 7.

48 The notion reflects a kind of self-fashioning on the part of the intabulator-performer, and aligns with more recent views of patronage as described by writers such as Claudio

on stieroids: not only does it show off the complexity of diminution, but it does so in a way that borrows from and evokes the kind of *artificioso ricercar* that are the focus in Newcomb's article, using its open-score format to reveal detail through its clear delineation of the fictitious tablature voices and voice-leading, which are squarely in the agency of the intabulator/performer, not the original composer.

In fact, other aspects of the *madrigali passaggiati* point strongly to performance, and specifically to a culture of improvisers. For example, the focus on a relatively minor Arcadelt madrigal ('Ancidetemi pur') is notable. Despite its presence in a well-known and often-reprinted collection, it was not a common choice for intabulation prior to the Neapolitans.<sup>49</sup> Interestingly enough, an arrangement – or a set of *bastarda* diminutions (the music itself is no longer extant) – by Giovanni de Macque is listed on the title page of Gb-Lbl Add. 30491. As Macque was the probably teacher of both Trabaci and Mayone, is it possible that 'Ancidetemi pur' was used pedagogically? The use of vocal models as vehicles for keyboard improvisation was certainly common in the 16th century. In fact, the intabulation of 'Susanne un jour' in the Feininger manuscript, mentioned earlier, contains a rather unique feature: the final section of Lassus's *chanson spirituelle*, the sequence beginning on the text 'Que d'offenser', is repeated a total of no less than three times, each time with completely new figuration. One gets the sense that this section was being used as practice for creating new diminutions,

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Annibaldi and Andrew dell'Antonio, which also posit a sort of self-fashioning on the part of the patrons – or at least the use of their patronage as a kind of social currency. See for example, Andrew Dell'Antonio, *Listening as Spiritual Practice in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, 2011). Annibaldi's ideas unfolded over a series of articles; see, for example, 'Frescobaldi's *Primo libro delle fantasie a quattro* (1608): A Case Study on the Interplay between Commission, Production and Reception in Early Modern Music', in: *Recercare* 14 (2002), 31–63. For a more recent study on authorship in 16th-century keyboard music, see Cristina Cassia, 'Authorship in Sixteenth-Century Italian Printed Keyboard Music', in: *Studies on Authorship in Historical Keyboard Music*, ed. Andrew Wooley (Abingdon/New York, 2024), 32–56.

- 49 Originally appearing in Jacques Arcadelt, *Il primo libro di madrigali d'Archadelt a quattro voci* (Venice: Girolamo Scotto [?], 1546), the madrigal is arguably best-known as a vehicle for keyboard arrangements; in addition to Frescobaldi's well-known intabulation (cited by Alexander Silbiger as a sort of Rosetta stone for the idea that improvising diminutions on madrigals were the key for the creation of the Frescobaldian toccata; see Alexander Silbiger, 'From Madrigal to Toccata: Frescobaldi and the *seconda prattica*', in: *Critica musica: Essays in honor of Paul Brainard*, ed. John Knowles, *Musicology* 18 [Amsterdam, 1996], 403–28), an arrangement was also included in Gregorio Strozzi's 1687 *Capricci da sonare cembali et organi* (Naples: Novello de Bonis, 1687). The madrigal appears as an earlier lute intabulation (Francesco Vindella, *Intavolatura di liuto* [Venice: Antonio Gardane, 1546], <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb00071963>> [accessed on 10 Oct. 2025]), and in a parody *bicinium* in Adriano Banchieri's *Il principiante fanciullo* (Venice: Bartolomeo Magni, 1625).

not dissimilar to the fragmentary harmonic patterns on the *ciaccona* and other bass lines that one sees in early Baroque sources.<sup>50</sup>

The specter of improvisation is also supported by the presence of strikingly similar figuration between the various arrangements; see, for example, the openings of 'Io mi son giovinetta' by Trabaci, and the later version Mayone and colleagues.<sup>51</sup> This latter arrangement – certainly one of the more unusual works in 17th-century music – features no less than three arrangers, each one taking a phrase in turn, and each turn clearly marked in the score. Each section develops strikingly diverse figuration, giving the distinct impression of a 17th-century jam session. Is it reflective of the keyboard practices of this school of Neapolitan composers ca. 1600 – a glimpse into a Macque studio class? In any event, by abstracting and objectifying their art in open score, the precise details of elaboration are displayed, creating an objectified and highly rationalized image of a performance, with a clear impression of the technical processes at work.

## Notational Ironies

I have suggested that, in approaching the performance of keyboard works in open score, a 16th-century player would have intabulated them, either literally on paper or *alla mente*.

Intabulating the *madrigali passaggiati* of the Neapolitans would be somewhat ironic, however: if improvisatory practices – and specifically those reflected by intabulation – were at the root of the *creation* of the *madrigale passagiato*, and if the *madrigale passagiato* was a result of a kind of detabulation, re-intabulating these works would be making an intabulation of a detabulation that is in turn the product of an intabulation. The irony once again speaks, I think, to the fundamentally Janus-faced nature of these scores, a quality created by but also facilitated by their notational format. They are not solely musical objects to be studied or appreciated or scripts by which to execute a performance – nor something in between – but both, capable of fulfilling two functions simultaneously. While Newcomb argues for object over performance, it is impossible to view prints such as Trabaci's 1615 *Capricci* exclusively through this lens – object and performance are too intrinsically connected in this case, and the definition of 'the work' is too hard to determine. However, if we accept

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50 See, for example, sources such as the *Instructio nova* by Spiridion a Monte Carmelo (modern edition: *Spiridionis a Monte Carmelo Nova instructio pro pulsandis organis, spinettis, manuchordiis etc.*, ed. Edoardo Bellotti, Tastature 11 [Colledara, 2003]), or V-CVbav Chig.Q. IV.27.

51 Interestingly, there is also similar figuration to be found in Andrea Gabrieli's intabulation, found in his *Il terzo libro de ricercari* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1596).

a degree of agency on the part of the notational system itself, then the ‘core’ of the work has to be seen as existing in a fluid state, with details – not only notational but the ‘music itself’ – materially influenced by the notational format.

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# Hacking the System II: Notational Conventions in Early Sixteenth Century Printed Italian Keyboard *Intavolatura*

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Augusta Campagne

## Introduction

The vast majority of extant keyboard music in 16th-century Italy was notated in *intavolatura d'organo* or *intavolatura di cimbalo*. Other common methods for the printing of music for keyboard instruments included the use of either partbooks (from 1540 onwards) or open scores (mainly in Naples and Milan, from 1575 onwards). At a first glance, the Italian keyboard *intavolatura* resembles our modern system of keyboard notation on two staves, using mensural notation. This gives the impression that the former is easily transferable to the latter without any loss of information. However, as has been pointed out in more recent literature,<sup>1</sup> when the music is transcribed according to modern conventions certain information, for example regarding the part writing, is lost. Then again information, not present in the *intavolatura*, is

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1 Ian Pritchard, 'Hacking the System: Italian Keyboard *Intavolatura* and Scribal Habit', in: 'Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt': *The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), 42–65, <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/en/mdwp003-hacking-the-system/>> (accessed on 3 August 2024); Ian Pritchard, 'Keyboard Thinking: Intersections of Notation, Composition, Improvisation and Intabulation in Sixteenth-Century Italy', PhD diss., University of Southern California, 2018, <[https://ianpritchardearlykeyboards.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ian\\_pritchard\\_dissertation.pdf](https://ianpritchardearlykeyboards.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ian_pritchard_dissertation.pdf)> (accessed on 3 August 2024); Augusta Campagne, *Simone Verovio: Music Printing, Intabulations and Basso Continuo in Rome around 1600*, Wiener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte 13 (Vienna, 2018), <<https://www.vr-elibrary.de/doi/pdf/10.7767/9783205207184>> (accessed on 3 August 2024), and Augusta Campagne and Elam Rotem, *Keyboard Accompaniment in Italy around 1600: Intabulations, Scores and Basso Continuo* (Basel, 2022), <<https://forschung.schola-cantorum-basiliensis.ch/en/forschung/keyboard-accompaniment-1600.html>> (accessed on 3 August 2024).

frequently added in modern editions.<sup>2</sup> As Alexander Silbiger<sup>3</sup> has pointed out in his seminal article ‘Is the Italian Keyboard “Intavolatura” a Tablature?’, the *intavolatura* notation has its very own distinct set of conventions. It displays the characteristics of a *Griffsschrift*, a practical system of notation indicating hand positions, thereby incorporating a pronounced haptic element. It delineates the specific instances and locations where the fingers of each hand should press down a specific key, as well as the requisite duration of each key press. This can obscure some of the polyphonic information present in keyboard notation in other countries or in modern notation.

The only extant source containing comprehensive instructions for the conversion (or translation) of musical pieces into an *intavolatura*, a keyboard table<sup>4</sup> or tablature in Italy, is the *libro primo* in the *Seconda parte del Transilvano* by Girolamo Diruta (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti, 1609).<sup>5</sup> This provides a detailed account of the conventions in question, elucidating the significant divergences between the modern piano notation and the *intavolatura d’organo* or *intavolatura di cimbalo* notation.

As Ian Pritchard remarks, a more thorough examination of intabulations and tablature notation is long overdue.<sup>6</sup> Previous research has focused on the period around 1600 and on manuscripts, mainly from the latter half of the 16th century. The objective of this article is to give an overview of the notation in keyboard prints from the first half of the 16th century and to demonstrate that the majority of the conventions described by Diruta in 1609 were already in place nearly a century earlier. This in turn

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- 2 The direction of the stems is altered, rests are added, the distribution of the notes over the hands is changed etc., all according to modern conventions.
  - 3 Alexander Silbiger, ‘Is the Italian Keyboard *Intavolatura* a Tablature?’, in: *Recercare* 3 (1991), 81–103.
  - 4 John Griffiths has recently defined a tablature as a table and divided instrumental tablatures into two categories, fingerboard and matrix tablatures. He includes all keyboard tablatures in the matrix category. See John Griffiths, ‘Keyboard Tablatures and Imaginary Instrumental Interchange in the Sixteenth Century’, in: ‘*Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt*’: *The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), 24–41, <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/en/mdwp003-keyboard-tablatures/>> (accessed on 3 August 2024), and John Griffiths, *Turning the Tables: Reassessing Tablature*, paper read at the 2021 annual conference of the Musicological Society of Australia, for more information on types of tablatures, <[https://www.academia.edu/63608978/Turning\\_the\\_tables\\_reassessing\\_tablature](https://www.academia.edu/63608978/Turning_the_tables_reassessing_tablature)> (accessed on 3 August 2024).
  - 5 Girolamo Diruta, *Seconda parte del Transilvano Dialogo diviso in quattro libri* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti, 1609), <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_D/D019/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_D/D019/)> (accessed on 3 August 2024). Translation in Edward Soehnlein, ‘Diruta on the Art of Keyboard-Playing: An Annotated Translation and Transcription of *Il Transilvano*, Parts I (1593) and II (1609)’, PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1975.
  - 6 Pritchard ‘Hacking the System’ (see n. 1), 71.

suggests that the process of keyboard thinking and verticalisation, as described by Leon Chisholm and Ian Pritchard, was already well underway by 1520.<sup>7</sup>

## The Challenges

In contrast to the *intavolatura di liuto* notation, which only indicates the fastest note value at a given moment, the keyboard *intavolatura* additionally needs to show the length of all note values. This is important, as the length of every note can be controlled: the end of the sound is defined by the lifting of the key.<sup>8</sup> The musical importance of the exact moment a key is lifted, is highlighted in an example by Girolamo Diruta (see Fig. 1). In his discussion of the topic of touch, Diruta<sup>9</sup> emphasises the desirability of continuity of sound. According to him, this is achieved by ensuring that the hands remain on the keyboard to prevent any gaps in the sound. In *Il Transilvano* he illustrates the good way of playing (*primo esempio buono*) where the sound is continuous and the bad way of playing with gaps in the sound (*secondo esempio cattivo*).



Fig. 1: Girolamo Diruta, *Il Transilvano* (Venezia, 1593), fol. 5v.

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- 7 As the objective of this article is to examine the notation, ornamentation and other stylistic aspects have not been taken into account. This is the subject of several other more recent studies, for example Vania Dal Maso's article in this volume as well as Ian Pritchard, 'Hacking the System' (see n. 1), 'Keyboard Thinking' (see n. 1), and Leon Chisholm, 'Keyboard Playing and the Mechanization of Polyphony, Circa 1600', PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2015, <<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/950881g4>> (accessed on 31 August 2024), as well as Catalina Vicens' forthcoming PhD thesis 'Printed Keyboard Intabulation of Secular Vocal Works and Dances in 16th-century Italy'.
- 8 On plucked instruments from the lute family, some notes are stopped automatically, when the next note is played on the same string, whereas others are left to sound and can be stopped manually, like on the harp, if there is time.
- 9 Girolamo Diruta, *Il Transilvano dialogo sopra il vero modo di sonar organi, & istromenti da penna* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti, 1593), fol. 5v. There are several later editions with varying page numbers. I will be referring to the 1593 edition, <<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/muspre1800.100422>> (accessed on 29 July 2024).

In order to compensate for the decay of the sound on plucked keyboard instruments, Diruta suggests a number of potential methods, such as the addition of ornaments and the restriking of notes.<sup>10</sup>

But notating, playing and sustaining the right length of a note correctly was not the only challenge. The printing of multiple parts on a single staff with disparate note values, as found in the context of *intavolatura* notation, represented a significant challenge for printers.

A survey of the *intavolatura* prints also shows the technological development in music printing. The printing techniques employed in the 16th century encompass the full range of techniques in use for printing music: woodcut, printing with movable type, initially in double imprint, later in single imprint (made possible by the use of types including a note on a staff), and towards the end of the century the engravings from Verovio's workshop.

## The Prints

A total of approximately twenty-five out of around thirty known Italian prints<sup>11</sup> containing music for keyboard along with the majority of manuscripts prior to 1600<sup>12</sup> use the *intavolatura* notation. On the one hand we find keyboard adaptations of music for several parts originally printed in separate partbooks, and on the other hand we also find music originally conceived for keyboard, such as *ricercari* and music specifically for the liturgy, as well as dances and pieces based on ostinato basses.

Tab. 1 shows a list of the five prints of keyboard music from the first half of the 16th century. Although Ottaviano Petrucci seems to have been the first to apply for a privilege to print both lute and keyboard *intavolature* in 1498, no keyboard *intavolature* print seems to have been published until 1517 (almost twenty years later). Furthermore, this was printed by another printer, Andrea Antico.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., fol. 6r.

<sup>11</sup> See Robert Floyd Judd, 'The Use of Notational Formats at the Keyboard: A Study of Printed Sources of Keyboard Music in Spain and Italy c. 1500–1700, Selected Manuscript Sources Including Music by Claudio Merulo, and Contemporary Writings Concerning Notations', 2 vols., PhD diss., University of Oxford, 1989, Tab. 3.3, 89, <[https://www.academia.edu/attachments/50221810/download\\_file?st=MTcyMjY5NDI1Miw4MC4xMDkuMjM4LjIwMCwx-MzcxNjE5&s=profile](https://www.academia.edu/attachments/50221810/download_file?st=MTcyMjY5NDI1Miw4MC4xMDkuMjM4LjIwMCwx-MzcxNjE5&s=profile)> (accessed on 3 August 2024). Four prints are in four-part score (three of which were manufactured in Naples) and one in a number tablature (see the article by Paola Erdas in this volume). This number does not include partbook editions that mention keyboards on the title page.

<sup>12</sup> See Ian Pritchard, 'Hacking the System' (see n. 1).

Year	Composer	Title	Place	Publisher	Printing technique	
1517	(Andrea Antico) <sup>13</sup>	<i>Frottole intabulate da sonare organi libro primo</i>	Rome	Andrea Antico	Woodcut	Brown 1517 RISM B/I 1517 <sup>3</sup>
1523	Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni <sup>14</sup>	<i>Recerchari motetti canzoni [...] libro primo</i>	Venice	Bernardo Verzelensis	Double impression	Brown 1523 <sub>1</sub> RISM A/I-C 1574 RISM A/I-CC 1574
1543	Girolamo Cavazzoni <sup>15</sup>	<i>Intavolatura cioe recercari canzoni himni magnificati [...] libro primo</i>	Venice	B. V.	Double impression	Brown 1543 <sub>1</sub> RISM A/I C-1571
154?	Girolamo Cavazzoni <sup>16</sup>	<i>Intabulatura d'organo, cioe misse himni magnificat [...] libro secondo</i>	Venice	?	Double impression	Brown 154? <sub>2</sub> RISM A/I C-1572
1549	Jacques Buus <sup>17</sup>	<i>Intabolatura d'organo di recerari [...] libro primo [...] novamente stampate con carateri di stagno. Libro primo</i>	Venice	Antonio Gardano	Single impression	Brown 1549 <sub>4</sub> RISM A/I B-5197

**Tab. 1:** *Intavolatura* prints from before 1550

## The Conventions around 1600

To start making an intabulation, Diruta<sup>18</sup> recommends taking a *cartella* or sheet of paper including a barred system of two staves of which the upper one with five lines

13 CZ-Pk.54 E 102.

14 GB-Lbl K.8.b.8 and US-Cn VAULT Case minus VM 7-63.

15 <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_S/S002/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_S/S002/)> (accessed on 2 Sept. 2024).

16 <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_S/S411/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_S/S411/)> (accessed on 2 Sept. 2024), bound together with another copy of libro primo.

17 GB-Lbl K.1.f.16 and B-Bc 26.671 (incomplete).

18 Girolamo Diruta, *Seconda parte* (see n. 5), 1.

is for the right hand and the lower one with eight lines for the left.<sup>19</sup> This practice of notating each hand on a separate staff, was already in use in Italy c. 1400, as can be seen for example in the *Codex Faenza*.<sup>20</sup> To intabulate a given composition, Diruta instructs his reader to write the upper part on the top keyboard staff with the stems upwards and the lowest part on the lower staff with the stems downwards. Then he tells his student to add the alto part on the top staff unless the note is an octave or less above the bass, in which case it is notated in the bottom staff. The tenor should be notated in the staff for the left hand, unless it is more than an octave above the bass. In this way the middle parts are divided over the hands according to the distance above the bass.<sup>21</sup> If one hand plays diminutions, however, the other hand will take over the other parts.

As has been frequently observed (see n. 1 and 3), the practice of placing music for more than two parts on two staves naturally obscures the underlying polyphonic structure. Unless specific conventions are used – such as for example stem direction or special signs like a *custos* or colour coding<sup>22</sup> – the crossing of parts will not be visible: if one of the inner parts is lower than the bass, that part will visibly and audibly become the lowest part. Nowadays we call such a part a *basso seguente*. The same can be true for the uppermost parts, which can form a *canto seguente* and occasionally changed or new inner parts will appear that could also be described as *voci di mezzo seguente*. Ian Pritchard refers to these as ‘tablature voices’.<sup>23</sup> In certain instances, most frequently in the case of final chords, the original parts were enhanced by the addition of notes. As Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini observed, ‘chords were frequently not merely the consequence of the simultaneous sounding of parts, but autonomous entities

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19 The first thing that meets the eye when examining *intavolature* is, that unlike the modern piano notation or the *scala decemlinealis*, there is an overlap in the notes covered by the two staves. Depending on the clefs employed five or more notes can be notated on both staves, if to be played by the right hand on the top staff, or for the left hand on the bottom staff.

20 See <[https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP352519-PMLP569345-codex\\_faenza.pdf](https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/8/82/IMSLP352519-PMLP569345-codex_faenza.pdf)> (accessed on 3 August 2024). See Michael Kugler, *Die Tastenmusik im Codex Faenza*, Münchner Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte 21 (Tutzing, 1972), 34–42, esp. 38. See also Pedro Memelsdorff (ed.), *The Codex Faenza 117: Instrumental Polyphony in Late Medieval Italy. Introductory Study and Facsimile*, Ars Nova ser. n. 3 (Lucca, 2013).

21 For further information on how to intabulate see Campagne, *Simone Verovio* (see n. 1), 167–74, and Pritchard, ‘Hacking the System’ (see n. 1), or watch Elam Rotem’s video <<https://www.earlymusicresources.com/youtube/diruta>> (accessed on 6 Sept. 2024).

22 In some fifteenth-century manuscripts colour coding was employed to distinguish specific voices. For example in I-PEc MS 3410, fol. G I, the scribe uses black and white notation to differentiate between the two distinct parts on the left-hand stave, see Memelsdorff, *The Codex Faenza* (see n. 20), 178.

23 Pritchard ‘Hacking the System’ (see n. 1), 53.

in their own right'.<sup>24</sup> A further consequence of these *segunte* parts is that what is regarded as forbidden parallels can occur as a result of the crossing of these parts. Some composers do their best to avoid such forbidden consecutives, others are less careful and genres such as dances or arie seem to use the movement in consecutive fifths and/or octaves as a distinctive characteristic trait.

Unlike music published in partbooks, compositions in *intavolatura* are always divided by vertical tablature bar lines into what Diruta and others call *caselle*, 'measures' usually consisting of two semibreves.<sup>25</sup> As Pritchard summarises: these elements lead to 'an inherent "verticalization" of *intavolatura*, with polyphony reduced and made to coalesce around a structure of regular pulses (most typically at the minim level) [...]'.<sup>26</sup> Tab. 2 illustrates the principle conventions that differentiate the *intavolatura* notation from the contemporary 'piano' notation.

- 
- The division of the parts over the hands
    - The top staff is for the right hand and the bottom staff for the left hand
    - The top staff is commonly made up of five to six lines, the bottom of five to eight lines. There is an overlap of notes notated on both staves, avoiding the use of ledger lines
    - All parts except the highest are taken by the left hand unless the distance to the bass is more than an octave, with several exceptions
      - when the bass is ornamented chords will be taken in the right hand and vice versa
    - Middle parts can migrate from one hand to the other
  - Stem direction
    - The stems of the highest sounding part are upward and those of the lowest on the staff downward
    - A unison need only be notated in one hand; no double stems are needed to indicate two voices reaching a unison
  - Rests
    - If notes are present on the staff at a given moment, it is not necessary to include rests for other parts, even if these are present in the original parts.
    - 'Fictitious'<sup>27</sup> rests may occur to indicate the entry of a part
    - 'Mechanical'<sup>28</sup> rests occur as a sign to lift up a finger to make the key available by for the other hand

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24 Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini, 'Die italienische Orgelmusik vom Codex Faenza bis Giovanni Gabrieli', in: *Orgel und Orgelspiel im 16. Jahrhundert. Tagungsbericht Innsbruck 9.–12.6. 1977*, ed. Walter Salmen (Innsbruck, 1978), 70–6, at 72: 'Der "Akkord" ist kein ausschließliches Ergebnis der Stimmbewegung mehr, sondern wird zu einem eigenständigen Element; Akkorde vollstimmig zu greifen und die Harmonien auszukosten gehört zur neuen Kunst der Orgel- und Klaviervirtuosen.'

25 Diruta, *Seconda parte* (see n. 5), 2. This was already the case in fifteenth-century Italian keyboard manuscripts such as the Codex Faenza and other shorter manuscripts (see Kugler, *Die Tastenmusik* [see n. 20]).

26 Pritchard, 'Hacking the System' (see n. 1), 52.

27 Rests when there are no rests in the original parts. See Silbiger, 'Italian Keyboard *Intavolatura*' (see n. 3), 83.

28 The term 'mechanical' rest is suggested by Pritchard in 'Hacking the System' (see n. 1), 52.

- Caselle
    - *Caselle* (measures) are marked every two semibreves
  - Splitting longer notes into shorter ones
    - Longer note values are systematically broken up into shorter ones, with or without ties
    - Sustained voices are interrupted if another part needs the key
  - Correct vertical alignment is not always a priority
- 

**Tab. 2:** Conventions of the *intavolatura* notation around 1600

As Pritchard has demonstrated for manuscripts,<sup>29</sup> exceptions to these conventions can be observed. Some of these exceptions assist the understanding of the underlying polyphonic structure, for example the addition of signs such as a *custos*.<sup>30</sup> Other exceptions, also found in prints, concern the execution on the keyboard and are largely of a practical nature. For instance, chains of parallel thirds are typically maintained in one hand; in the event that the bass descends with a larger leap, some notes might be taken in the right hand to make the leap easier; scales are typically retained in one hand. In general, however, these are exceptions ‘that prove the rule’.

Four further notational aspects are of interest: the length of the *caselle*, the use of dots, the use of ties and the vertical alignment.

Diruta instructs the Transilvano to draw lines after two semibreves, thereby establishing regular *caselle* or ‘measures’ of a breve. In practice, in the musical content of his treatise most *caselle* conform to his instructions, although there are instances of both longer and shorter *caselle*. In earlier sources, triple time can be fitted into a *casella*, but in certain instances, particularly in dances and lute music, the metrical division does not necessarily align with the accentuation pattern of the music.<sup>31</sup>

In mensural notation dots had traditionally been used for a variety of purposes and practical applications of these traditions can be found in the earlier prints.<sup>32</sup> As well as the dots of addition (*punctus additionis*), still in use in our contemporary music notation, the earlier prints also feature dots as a means to indicate *ficta*, both sharps and flats.

The continuation of the tradition of mensural notation of what in English are referred to as ligatures, is reflected in the Italian term for ties: *ligature*. Ties might be used as a substitute for the dots of addition, either across bar lines or within a bar. Furthermore, ties are also found between notes of equal length, both when the note

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29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., 64.

31 See Vania Dal Maso’s article in this volume.

32 For a mid-sixteenth-century description see for example Claudio Sebastiani, *Bellum musicale* (Strasbourg: Paulus Macheropäus, 1563), Cap. XII, L3, <<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k8709495z#>> (accessed on 3 August 2024).

becomes a dissonance (*legatura de note dissonanti* according to Diruta) and when it remains consonant (*legatura de note consonanti*).<sup>33</sup>

Nowadays we have become accustomed to reading scores, that display a perfect vertical alignment of all notes as well as a clear spacing between them. When notes are intended to be played simultaneously, this is reflected in the notation and in general shorter notes will occupy less space than longer ones. When using moveable type, however, each type will be more or less the same size, so shorter notes can occupy the same amount of space as longer notes. The simultaneous printing of multiple notes with differing rhythmic values poses a significant challenge for printers, particularly when the objective was to minimise paper wastage as paper was an expensive commodity in the 16th century. This makes many of the *intavolatura* prints difficult, though not impossible, for players accustomed to modern piano notation to read. Thus, when examining the prints in *intavolatura* notation, the following conventions will be considered:

- The division of parts over the hands
- Stem direction
- The use of rests
- The splitting of longer notes into shorter ones
- The length of *caselle*
- The use of dots
- The use of ties
- The vertical alignment

## ANDREA ANTICO

The *Frottole intabulate*, published by Andrea Antico (c. 1480–after 1538) in Rome in 1517, is the earliest known printed publication of keyboard works.<sup>34</sup> The collection comprises twenty-six *frottole* by various composers, which have been adapted and ornamented for keyboard performance, probably by Antico himself. The majority of these *frottole* can be found in various collections published in partbooks by, among others, Petrucci and Antico himself. This allows for comparisons to be made between the original compositions and the intabulations, although sometimes it appears that Antico worked from a slightly different version of the *frottole* than the prints.<sup>35</sup>

33 Diruta, *Seconda parte* (see n. 5), 9.

34 New modern edition: Andrea Antico, *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi* (Roma, 1517), ed. Maria Luisa Baldassari (Bologna, 2016).

35 The first to do so was Knud Jeppesen in *Die Italienische Orgelmusik am Anfang des Cinquecento* (Copenhagen, 1943).

Furthermore, it is the sole surviving example of a collection of printed keyboard music in Italy that employs woodcuts.

### The division of parts over the hands

In general, the top staff (five lines) is assigned to the right hand and the bottom staff (also five lines) to the left hand, though there are numerous exceptions. In contrast to many later publications, the clefs usually remain the same throughout a piece. This might be due to the range of the parts, which is less extensive than in later music. In general, there seems to be a preference for keeping two parts, though not necessarily the same two parts, in each staff.<sup>36</sup> At times this results in unplayable positions for the left hand. At other times, notes that Diruta would have placed in the left hand, are on the top staff, despite the fact that playing them in the right hand is awkward and it would be more straightforward to place and play these in the left hand (see Fig. 2, m. 4). Although the number of parts is mostly equivalent to the number of parts active in the partbook pieces, the last chords are always thicker and usually consist of six notes.



**Fig. 2:** Andrea Antico, ‘Hor chel ciel e la terra B[artolomeo]. T[romboncino]’, *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi libro primo* (Rome: Andrea Antico, 1517), fol. 36<sup>r</sup>. Collection of the National Museum of the Czech Republic, National Museum Library, Nostic gg 19.

### Stem direction

The direction of the stems follows the vertical placement on the staff rather than the specific part being intabulated; however, there are a few exceptions. As in later music, we encounter *tablature voices*, particularly when the parts cross. There are no double stems, but occasionally the same note is notated in both hands and sometimes stems are placed in a complicated way (see Fig. 3).

### The use of rests

Unnecessary rest, both ‘fictitious’ and ‘mechanical’ rests, are found in many pieces.

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<sup>36</sup> How much this is due to the technical limitations of woodcutting is not clear.

### The splitting of longer notes into shorter ones

Most breves are divided into two separate semibreves (which are only exceptionally tied) thus indicating the restriking of long notes. However, even when the text has two syllables on two distinct minims, in the intabulation these are occasionally adapted to a semibreve.<sup>37</sup> Thus shorter note values might be grouped together into one note, whilst longer note values are divided and restruck.

### The length of a *casella*

In accordance with Diruta's instructions, lines are drawn after two semibreves, thereby establishing regular *caselle* or 'measures' of a breve. Only final notes are invariably *longae*, which results in irregular last measures. In *tempus perfectum* the *caselle* follow the accentuation pattern of the triple rhythm, but as in *tempus imperfectum*, not necessarily that of the text.<sup>38</sup>

### The use of dots and ties

Flats and sharps are indicated by dots, which are placed either above or below the note in question. In instances where there is limited space, the dot may be placed behind the note. With only a very few exceptions our modern dotted notes are indicated either as colored notes without stems (usually a *color minor*), or as equal notes complying to the old rule '*similis ante similem perfecta*'. One of the few exceptions employing a tie can be seen in Fig. 2, m. 1. Alternatively, in the event that such notes cross the bar line, or if the following note is not half the value of the initial one, ties are printed. In one exceptional example (*Animoso mio desire*, fol. 20') dots are used both to indicate the accidentals and the lengthening by half of the note. This occurs in one of two pieces in ternary time.

### The vertical alignment

In general, the alignment presents a significant challenge to those accustomed to reading modern editions (see Fig. 3).

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37 For a detailed discussion of the relationship between text and the accentuation patterns see Fabio Antonio Falcone, 'On the Performance Practice of Andrea Antico's *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi, libro primo* (Rome, 1517)', in: '*Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt*': *The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), 112–35, <<https://dx.doi.org/10.21939/harpsichord-16c-07>> (accessed on 30 July 2024).

38 Ibid.



**Fig. 3:** Andrea Antico, 'Che debbio fare B[artolomeo]. T[romboncino]'. *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi libro primo* (Rome, 1517), fol. 12r. Collection of the National Museum of the Czech Republic, National Museum Library, Nostic gg 19.



**Ex. 1:** ‘Che debbio far B[artolomeo]. T[romboncino].’ Score of the choir-book version from *Frottole libro septimo* (Venice: Ottavio Petrucci, 1507), fol. 13<sup>v</sup>–14<sup>r</sup> (RISM 1507<sup>3</sup>) and the intabulation from *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi libro primo* (Rome, 1517), fol. 12<sup>r</sup> (see Fig. 3).

Ex. 1 shows the choir-book version from Petrucci’s *Frottole libro septimo*<sup>39</sup> of ‘Che debbio far che mi consigli amore’ in comparison with the transcription of Antico’s intabulation (see Fig. 3).<sup>40</sup> By colour-coding the parts (cantus: magenta, altus: orange, tenor: blue, and bassus: red) I have attempted to show the formation of the various *segunte* or tablature voices that emerge when transcribing and adapting this piece for a keyboard instrument. Some notes are omitted, some ornamentation added, and an initial chord highlights a vertical texture. The final chord (not shown) is thicker, with six notes. Despite the considerable amount of ornamentation, it becomes evident that these ‘new’ tablature voices are derived from the four vocal parts primarily as a result of the crossing of the parts. Although most stems are in the ‘correct’ direction (upward for top parts in each staff and downward for the lower parts) several exceptions can be noted (mm. 7–8). No double stems occur and, typically, the upper part is given precedence in the direction of the stem. Both ‘fictitious’ rests to show part-writing and ‘mechanical’ rests (m. 7) can be observed.

39 *Frottole libro septimo* (Venice: Ottavio Petrucci, 1507), <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb00082313>> (accessed on 30 July 2024).

40 In the transcription, care has been taken to remain as close to the original as possible regarding the division of notes over the hands, as well as the note values, stem directions, rests, dots and ties. Due to technical limitations, it was not possible to replicate the original note values as documented in the partbook version. Consequently, the parts contain a multitude of ties that are not present in the source material. Notable adaptations of the notational aspects are indicated in red. For obvious reasons the alignment has been modernised.

The intabulator was not especially meticulous: this frottola, originally in *cantus mollis*, appears in *cantus durus* with quite a few accidentals omitted. Occasional awkward hand divisions pose challenges for performers.

It should be noted that, although a system as described by Diruta seems to be the basis for this initial publication, there are more exceptions (and mistakes) than in any of the later editions.

## MARC'ANTONIO CAVAZZONI

The second extant print is the *Recerchari motetti canzoni [...] libro primo* by Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni or Marcoantonio da Bologna (c. 1490–c. 1560) as indicated on the title page. Whereas Antico employed existing compositions by other composers (primarily Marchetto Cara and Bartolomeo Tromboncino), Cavazzoni, as Cristina Cassia has observed, takes ownership of the compositions, presenting himself as the composer. Furthermore he played an active role in the publication of the print, signing the dedication and acquiring the privileges himself.<sup>41</sup> This print uses a double impression process with movable type: one for the staves and one for the notes, a demanding process to print correctly. The printer, Bernardino Vercellense (Bernardino Viani, fl. 1501–1543)<sup>42</sup> is otherwise not known for printing music, and as yet there is no evidence to suggest that the types were used elsewhere.

This publication is the first to contain original works for keyboard, not merely arrangements of vocal pieces. The collection contains two free ricercares, two hymns and four chansons. Although some of the compositions are titled chanson, they are not strict arrangements for keyboard, but rather what John Ward calls paraphrase-parodies,<sup>43</sup> created by using material from the chanson to construct a new composition.<sup>44</sup> A noteworthy feature of this print is its deviation from a regular number of parts, which can vary from two to six. These form chords that are autonomous entities.

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41 Cristina Cassia, 'Authorship in Sixteenth-Century Italian Printed Keyboard Music', in: *Studies on Authorship in Historical Keyboard Music*, ed. Andrew Wooley (Abingdon/New York, 2024), 32–56, at 33–4.

42 <<https://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/editore/CNCT000442>> (accessed on 2 Sept. 2024). He was known for printing theological and philosophical works.

43 John Ward, 'The Use of Borrowed Material in Sixteenth-Century Instrumental Music', in: *JAMS* 5 (1952), 88–98.

44 See Martin Picker, 'A Josquin Parody by Marco Antonio Cavazzoni', in: *TVNM* 22 (1972), No. 3, 157–9. Picker shows that *Plus.ne regres* is based on material from the famous five-part chanson by Josquin *Plusieurs regretz* (see Josquin Desprez, *Secular works for five voices*, NJE 29.21, ed. Patrick Macey [Utrecht, 2017]). The other chansons have not been identified. For an in depth comparison of these pieces see Chisolm, 'The Mechanization' (see n. 7), 27–38.

### The division of parts over the hands

Whereas in the Antico print there are certain instances where the notes need to be played by the hand of the other staff, in the Cavazzoni 1523 publication this is not the case. In general, each staff has six lines; however, this may be expanded to eight lines if necessary (see Fig. 4). In consideration of the fact that the music is purely instrumental, the full range of the keyboard (C to  $f^3$ ) is employed, which frequently necessitates clef changes. There is a large variety of the number of notes being played simultaneously and finals are always full.

### Stem direction

All stem directions of the highest notes on each staff point upwards and of the lowest part downwards, if there is more than one note on the staff. Notes in between, in chords, can have stems in either direction. Stem directions do not provide any extra polyphonic information.

### The use of rests

In addition to some 'fictitious' rests, there are also some instances of 'mechanical' (see Fig. 4, m. 3, where the  $d'$  in the right hand needs to be raised for the same note in the left).

### The splitting of longer notes into shorter ones

As we cannot compare any of the music from this print to other sources, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that the use of breves and semibreves is very precise (see Fig. 4 and in particular Fig. 5).

### The length of a *casella*

The length of a *casella* is always two semibreves. The length of the *caselle* in the only triple time section in the 'O Stella Maris' fits the accentuation patterns.

### The use of dots and ties

Dots are exclusively used for accidentals. In a highly limited number of instances a flat sign is employed to ensure that a note is not automatically interpreted as a *mi*, thus not necessitating an alteration of a sharp. Notes with dots of addition do not occur. Such notes are either notated as coloration (Fig. 4, m. 8) or with ties (Fig. 4, mm. 1, 2, 3 and 7).

### The vertical alignment

The vertical alignment is exemplary, demonstrating that if and when it is considered important, it is technically feasible to align the notes horizontally (see Fig. 2 and 3).

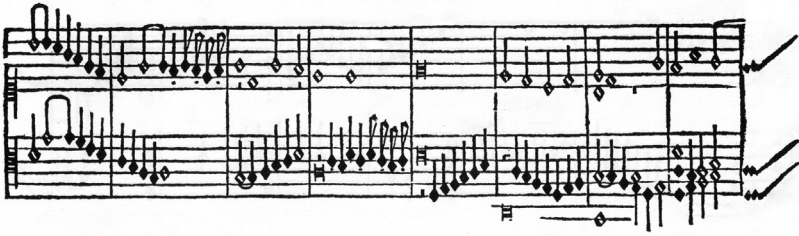


Fig. 4: Marcoantonio da Bologna, 'Recercare primo', *Recerchari motetti canzoni [...] libro primo* (Venezia, 1523), fol. [Aiii].

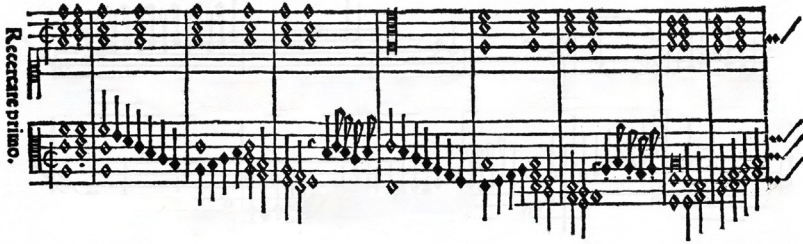


Fig. 5: Marcoantonio da Bologna, 'Recercare primo', *Recerchari motetti canzoni [...] libro primo* (Venezia, 1523), fol. Aii.

One striking aspect of this print is the difference between the hands in the variety of forms of ornamented *cantizans* cadences. As can be seen in Fig. 4 these ornamented cadences occur both in the right and left hands, but only very exceptionally in the bass. Ex. 2 shows one of the most common variants, of which there are several versions. For the right hand four types can be distinguished: with a minim and repeated crotchet, with a minim and a tied crotchet, with a dotted minim or with a *color*. For the left hand two types can be discerned: with a rest and with a tie. These occur over a *tenorizans* in the bass or, much less frequently, over a *bassizans*. In the majority of such cadences, the dissonance is tied in the right hand; however, in the left hand, the majority are notated with a rest. In general the 'tablature tenor' part has many more rests than the 'tablature cantus'.<sup>45</sup>

45 These kind of rest in the tablature tenor cannot be found in the other *intavolatura* prints, but in the Castel' Arquato Ms, fasc. 2, 3, they do appear sporadically. See Pritchard, 'Keyboard Thinking' (see n. 1), 198, Ex. 2.14 from the 'Jaches' *Missa de la domenica*; *Chirie*.



Ex. 2: Standard *cantizans* cadence figurations in the 1523 print

Although the version with a tie does also appear in the left hand, these instances mostly occur in what nowadays would be called sequences of descending circle of fifths. In the ‘Recercare primo’ for example such sequences occur where the cantus and tenor alternately have a *cantizans* (see Fig. 6). In general, there are many more rests, particularly in the ‘tablature tenor’ part in the left hand, also when this part is in a higher register (in the octave above c’).<sup>46</sup>



Fig. 6: Marcoantonio da Bologna, ‘Recercare primo’, *Recerchari motetti canzoni [...] libro primo* (Venezia, 1523), fol. B<sup>r</sup>.

46 It would be possible to speculate that this is for the sake of clarity, but further practice-based research is needed.

As Chisholm has pointed out, many of the characteristics of intabulations that can also be found in early 17th-century intabulations are present in this print. These include on the one side the conflation of parts into one, on the other the addition of notes creating ‘Griffe’, the adding of ornaments and diminutions, the acceptance of parallel perfect intervals, and the obscuring of voice crossing.<sup>47</sup>

In general, this print seems to be free of significant errors, indicating that it was produced with meticulous attention to detail and precision.<sup>48</sup> The instructions to lift fingers through the use of rests in *cantizans* cadences, particularly in the tablature tenor, illustrate that the printed material is meant to be used as a guide for performance. The varying number of parts (with chords of up to six parts, even in the hymns and canzonas) demonstrates an inherent verticalisation and chordal manner of thinking and playing, which can be observed alongside more imitative passages. This style is markedly distinct from the polyphonic vocal style at the time.

## GIROLAMO CAVAZZONI

In 1542, almost 20 years after the publication of his father’s print, the young Girolamo Cavazzoni (c. 1525–after 1577) obtained a privilege to print his own keyboard works, the first of which was the *Intavolatura cioe ricercari canzoni himni magnificati composti per Hieronimo de Marcantonio da Bologna detto Urbino libro primo*. In contrast to the two preceding prints which both bear the inscription *libro primo* on the title page, but lack any evidence of a *libro secondo*, Girolamo Cavazzoni’s *libro primo* is, in fact, followed by a second print: the *Intabulatura dorgano cioe misse himni magnificat composti per Hieronimo de Marcantonio da Bologna detto d’Urbino libro secondo*. The dedication of the *libro primo*, signed by Girolamo himself, is dated 1542, however, one of the two copies<sup>49</sup> in the Bologna library states that it was printed in 1543 by B.V. A reprint was published by Antonio Gardano in Venice probably after 1555. However, in the reprint the title is confusingly given as *libro primo: Di Hieronimo D’Urbino il primo libro de intabolatura d’organo dove si contiene tre messe ricercare da Antonio Gardano ristampato & da molti errori emendato*.<sup>50</sup>

47 See Chisholm, ‘Keyboard Playing’ (see n. 7), 39.

48 In the critical notes of his modern edition most of the corrections Tamminga mentions are related to missing dots of alteration and missing ties and rests, all comprehensible additions, but personal choices. See Marco Antonio Cavazzoni, *Recerchari Motetti Canzoni Libro Primo (Venezia 1523)*, *Recercada (CastellArquato, II)*, ed. Liuwe Tamminga, *Tastata 23* (Latina, 2009), xii–xv.

49 I-Bc S411. The title page and dedication are not included in the second copy I-Bc S002.

50 I-Bc S003 <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_S/S003/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_S/S003/)> (accessed on 2 Sept. 2024).

Whereas Marcantonio's *ricercare* from 1523 are characterised by free forms with passage work, the *Recercari* twenty years later are more strict polyphonic works with several sections and multiple *soggetti* or themes. Similar to Marcantonio's music, the number of parts is not always strictly the same. In general, it is possible to identify four parts, not always active at the same time, with some added notes at cadences (see Fig. 7). The two canzonas are once again loosely based on material from French chansons, but not intabulated versions. These are followed by hymns and magnificat settings for alternatim use. The *libro secondo*, which lacks both a date and the name of a printer, contains alternatim masses, hymns and magnificats. A comparison of the two books reveals similarities that suggest they were produced by the same printer in more or less the same period.

In contrast to his father's print, the two Girolamo prints appear to be less meticulously crafted and more oriented towards optimising the utilisation of the paper, an expensive commodity at the time. As noted by Gardano in his reprint, numerous mistakes needed to be corrected (*da molti errori emendato*), and the notation is frequently quite compressed. The dissimilarity of the types employed in the father's 1523 print and the son's prints, in addition to the aforementioned factors, lends credibility to the hypothesis that different printers were at work.<sup>51</sup>



**Fig. 7:** Girolamo Cavazzoni, 'Recercar IIII', *Intavolatura cioe ricercari canzoni himni magnificat* (Venice, 1543), [D ii<sup>v</sup>]. Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna S411.

### The division of parts over the hands.

As in his father's print, the division of the hands over the staves follows the system described by Diruta more than sixty years later. However, it is possible to identify a

51 According to most modern research B.V. is probably Bernardino Vitali rather than Bernardino Vercellense, although Judd believed the latter was the printer, citing the similarities between Girolamo's double impression prints and that of his father. See Judd, 'The Use of Notational Formats' (see n. 11), App. A, 6; Claudio Sartori, 'Precisazioni bibliografiche sulle opera di Girolamo Cavazzoni', in: *RMI* 44 (1940), 359–66; Stanley Boorman, Art. 'Vitali, Bernardino', in: *Grove Music Online*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/>> (accessed on 2 Sept. 2024). I would like to thank Jane Bernstein for kindly providing me with this information.

number of instances where exceptions are made for practical reasons. Once more, such instances appear to be exceptions that prove the rule, as they are also evident in music published in *Il Transilvano* as well as in manuscripts. Again the last chords are fuller and mostly consist of six notes, three in each hand.

### Stem direction

When there is only one part per staff, the stems can be in either direction. As soon as a second part appears on the staff, the stems of the highest part will point upwards and the stems of the lowest downward.

### The use of rests

In general, there are fewer instances of 'unnecessary' rest.

### The splitting of longer notes into shorter ones

As with his father's music, it is not possible to make comparisons with other sources. However, the use of semibreves and breves, etc., whether tied or not, appears to be more haphazard than in the 1523 print.

### The length of a *casella*

The length of a *casella* is variable, encompassing either two or three semibreves. As in the previous publications, the length of the *caselle* in *tempus perfectum* sections is consistent with the accentuation patterns.

### The use of dots and ties

Dots are used to indicate accidentals. In the *libro primo*, they are employed exclusively for sharps (see Fig. 8, m. 7), whereas flats are indicated by a 'b'. In contrast to previous prints a flat at the beginning of each staff is used in certain compositions to indicate the presence of *cantus mollis*, thus requiring a reduced number of accidentals. In the second book, a sharp sign is also used as an alternative to dots (see Fig. 9, first system, m. 6). However, it is evident that dots of addition are also employed (see Fig. 8, second system, m. 1). While ties are always used across bar lines, there appears to be no discernible system governing the use of dots or the tying of notes of the same length, even if they occur within the same *soggetto* (see Fig. 8, first system, mm. 7 and 9). The same can be said of the selection of tied equal notes, such as the choice between two tied semibreves and a breve.

### The vertical alignment

In comparison to the 1523 print, Girolamo Cavazzoni's prints demonstrate an attempt to incorporate a greater number of notes into a single system. This has negative consequences for the alignment (see Fig. 8).

Fig. 7 provides an example of what we now refer to as a *basso seguente* bass. The piece begins with two voices; a third enters in the next bar, followed by a fourth in bar four. At the cadence in bar seven, an additional note is added, and the piece ends with a six-part chord on the final. The inner voices shift between the hands, and the overall distribution of notes between the hands follows the conventions described by Diruta.



**Fig. 8:** Girolamo Cavazzoni, 'Credo cardinalis', *Intabulatura d'organo, cioe misse himni magnificat [...]* libro secondo (Venice, [154?]), fol. C<sup>r</sup>. Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, S411.

Fig. 8 shows the use of sharps as accidentals, and dots functioning both as accidentals and as dots of addition.



**Fig. 9:** Girolamo Cavazzoni, 'Missa Dominicalis Chirie primus', *Intabulatura d'organo, cioe misse himni magnificat [...]* libro secondo (Venice, [154?]), fol. D<sup>r</sup>. Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna S411.

## JACQUES BUUS

In 1549 Antonio Gardano published *Il secondo libro di ricercari [...] da cantare, & sonare d'organo & altri stromenti* in partbook format.<sup>52</sup> In the same year, Gardano also produced the *Intabulatura d'organo di recerari di M. Giaques Buus [...]* which included an ornamented intabulation of a *ricercar* from the partbook edition and three additional pieces. As Jane Bernstein has observed, this publication was the first *intavolatura*

<sup>52</sup> The first book was brought out in 1547: *Recercari di M. Jacques Buus organista in Santo Marco di Venetia da cantare & sonare d'organo & altri stromenti nouamenti posti in luce. Libro primo. A quattro Voci* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1547). This edition, containing ten *ricercari* was also printed in partbook format. <<https://stimmbuecher.digitale-sammlungen.de/view?id=bsb00071914>> (accessed on 30 Sept. 2024).

*d'organo* using movable type in single impression.<sup>53</sup> Buus (c. 1500–1565) dedicated the collection to his student, a young nobleman, Paolo di Hanna. In the dedication Buus asserts that he intabulated these ricercares for his student Hanna and subsequently had them printed because his friends persuaded him to do so.<sup>54</sup> This print is the first keyboard publication in Italy explicitly showcasing an exemplary adaptation of compositions originally published in partbook format. Compared to most other 16th-century keyboard music in print, these pieces are exceedingly long and complex, with several *soggetti* and a significant number of voice crossings.<sup>55</sup> Fig. 10 shows the beginning of the *Recercar primo*. In general the number of parts active in the partbook version is maintained, although in several cases notes are added.



**Fig. 10:** Jacques Buus, 'Recercar primo', *Intabolutura d'organo di recerari di M. Giaques Buus* (Venice, 1549), fol. Aii<sup>r</sup>. Library of the Brussels Conservatories, B-Bc 26.671.

53 Jane Bernstein, *Print Culture and Music in Sixteenth-Century Venice* (New York, 2001), 65.

54 'Essendo io dalli preghi de molti amici stato astretto à dovere dare in luce I Ricercari in Tavolutura ad instantia vostra da me fatti'. Jacques Buus, *Intabolutura d'organo di recerari di M. Giaques Buus* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1549): opening of the dedication 'al molto Nobile, & Vertuoso Giovane M. Paolo di Hama'. This was a common topos at the time.

55 See for example Gordon Sutherland, 'The Ricercari of Jacques Buus', in: *MQ* 31 (1945), 448–63, and the preface to the modern edition, *Jacobus Buus Orgelwerke I. Intabolutura d'organo Venezia 1549 Quattro ricercari*, ed. Thomas Daniel Schlee (Vienna, 1980), and Filipe Mesquita de Oliveira, 'Some Aspects of P-Cug, MM 242: Antonio Carreira's Keyboard tentos and His *fantasias* and Their Close Relationship with Jacques Buus's *ricercari* from His *Libro primo*', in: *Interpreting Historical Keyboard Music*, ed. Andrew Wooley and John Kitchen (Abingdon, 2013), 7–18, at 8 and 13.

Ex. 3 shows a transcription of mm. 6–17 from the ‘Recercar primo’ (partly shown in facsimile in Fig. 10), together with the corresponding parts from the partbook publication in score.<sup>56</sup> In general, possibly due to the nature of the ricercares, the ornamentation is less free and extensive than in the Antico print. It would seem that the diminutions added in the Buus ricercars bear a resemblance to the *minute* added by Diruta in his *intavolatura diminuita* of the canzona ‘L’albergona’ by Antonio Mortaro.<sup>57</sup> Typically, only a single part is diminished. Although the example (Ex. 3, mm. 10–11) shows relatively few voice crossings, it is worth noting that the *ricercars* as a whole feature numerous instances of this technique. Felipe Oliveira de Mesquita has shown that in the *Libro primo* (1547) up to 36% of the bars have voice crossings.<sup>58</sup> In Ex. 3 the differences, mainly tablature voices, have been highlighted in red.

The image displays a musical score for 'Recercar primo' in two systems. Each system consists of five staves: two treble clefs, two bass clefs, and a lute tablature staff at the bottom. The first system covers measures 7, 8, and 9, while the second system covers measures 10, 11, 12, and 13. The tablature staff in the second system features red markings, including stems and flags, which indicate differences from the original manuscript. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests, with some notes beamed together.

56 Aside from *intavolatura*, the only other tablature system used in Italy was that developed by Antonio Valente, a blind organist active in Naples. His system numbered the keys from bottom to top rather than employing mensural notation. As in lute tablature, only the fastest rhythmic value is explicitly notated. In the case of the Buus publication, the Brussels copy presents an especially intriguing example where someone attempted to translate one notational system into another (see Fig. 10).

57 Diruta, *Seconda parte* (see n. 5), 18–21.

58 See Mesquita de Oliveira, ‘Some Aspects’ (see n. 55), 12.

**Ex. 3:** Jacques Buus, 'Recercar primo': comparison of the partbook version and the *intavolatura*, mm. 6–17.

### The division of parts over the hands

In general the conventions as set out by Diruta are adhered to strictly.

#### Stem direction

The stem directions usually adhere to the conventions established by Diruta: the stems of the highest parts on a staff point upward, the lowest parts downward and there are no double stems. There is no system in place to show voice crossings when these occur (see for instance Ex. 2, m. 10.) This results in the generation of several tablature voices. The direction of the stem of the new entry of a part after a rest is prioritised over the part that was already there (see Fig. 10, first system, m. 3).

#### The use of rests

The pieces are characterised by a strict contrapuntal imitative style, which gives rise to a greater number of 'fictitious' rests than is the case in the previous prints. This can lead to a rest creating a 'fifth part' to highlight the entry of a theme in a specific part or to indicate that the part moves from one hand to the other (see Fig. 9, second system, m. 3, and Ex. 2, m. 8). In other measures, however, this was not deemed necessary (see Ex. 2 the altus entry at m. 7 or in m. 12 where tenor and altus move from one hand to the other). Additionally, the incorporation of 'mechanical' rests can be observed when appropriate (see Ex. 2, m. 13). Although these 'fictitious' and 'mechanical' rests seem to be common practice, there are numerous places where these are not added.

#### The splitting of longer notes into shorter ones

In general the longer note values of the partbook version are transcribed literally, with minims and semibreves, unless there is ornamentation. In a few cases semibreves are divided into two minims (see m. 14), or even a minim and two crotchets (see mm. 13–14) or a dotted minim with a crotchet.

### The length of a *casella*

The typical length of a *casella* is usually two semibreves, although there are *caselle* where the length is one semibreve, and others of three. In sections in three, the accentuation patterns are reflected in the length of the *caselle*.

### The use of dots

Gardano exclusively uses dots of addition. Accidentals are indicated by sharp signs and in *Recercar terzo* and *quarto*, which are notated in *cantus mollis*, also by flat signs.

### The use of ties

With very few exceptions ties are used exclusively across bar-lines.

### The vertical alignment

Although in many cases the alignment is not perfect but intelligible, in other cases it is not optimal for our modern eyes. This is usually the case when there is abundant ornamentation.

## Conclusions

It can be concluded that the system of notation as described by Diruta, was already habitual around 1520.

- The music is divided between the two staves according to the respective hands, rather than according to the polyphonic parts. The Antico print appears to contain the greatest number of exceptions.
- The stem directions follow the position on the keyboard. There are never any double stems.
- Unnecessary rest are used in all prints, more so in the stricter polyphonic genres but never consistently. In Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni's print rest are used frequently in the tablature tenor on the left hand staff.
- In contrast to many later prints (with the exception of the first Gardano print for keyboard instruments, the Buus *recercari*), the *caselle* are consistently two semibreves long. The pieces or sections in ternary time are notated as such, unlike in the 1551 Gardano print of dances and many lute tablatures.<sup>59</sup>
- In the earlier prints dots are exclusively used to indicate alteration. Coloration is employed for what we now refer to as 'dotted notes'. In the prints from the 1540's, the use of dots is primarily that of dots of addition. Accidentals indicate

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59 See Vania Dal Maso article in this volume, which also points out the similarities between the dances for lute and the Gardano print.

alteration; if, however, there is a lack of space, dots of alteration are exceptionally used.

- In the overwhelming majority of cases, ties are principally used across bar lines. The earliest prints have very few ties within the bar. Later these are used for dotted rhythms and, on occasion, to join two notes of equal length, again never consistently.
- With the exception of Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni's print, the question of alignment, although it might have been perceived as the ideal, does not appear to have been given the highest priority.

The five prints examined are diverse, with different genres of music and different degrees of precision in their notation. Even in the most skilful and rigorous polyphonic compositions, such as the *recercari* by Buus and the masses by Girolamo Cavazzoni, there is a notable absence of methods to explicitly delineate the individual part-writing. All the conventions to indicate the individual part-writing used today, such as using double-stemmed noteheads, keeping the stems in the direction of the parts (that is: cantus and tenor always pointing upward and altus and bassus downward) or the addition of dotted lines to indicate the crossings of the parts, were not in use at the time in question. Although certain conventions, such as the use of fictitious rests,<sup>60</sup> can facilitate more clarity, and aid in identifying the underlying polyphony, these were not consistently employed. When they were used, they were primarily employed to highlight the entries of a *soggetto*.

Keyboard music in the early modern period was conceived as an interplay between linear counterpoint and vertical sonority. Depending on the genre of a composition, emphasis could lean more towards verticality – as in Marc'Antonio Cavazzoni's *recercari* and in dances – or more towards horizontal polyphony, as in stricter imitative *recercari*. As Tagliavini observed: chords were often not merely the incidental result of the simultaneous sounding of parts, but autonomous sonorities with structural significance. *Intavolatura* functioned as a *Griffsschrift* – a tactile notation system that could even specify finger-lifting to avoid interference between the hands. It offers not just a way of notating music, but a way of embodying it – *intavolatura* was a durable system that could adapt to stylistic evolution while retaining its deeply physical, keyboard-centric orientation. Keeping the separate parts clearly distinct or notating these parts as well-aligned chords was not always the first priority.

Although stylistic and compositional conventions may have evolved over time, the notational habits appear to have remained relatively consistent from the early 16th to the early 17th century. It seems reasonable to assume that, while the printing of

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60 Other signs to indicate exact part writing, such as for example *custos*, can be seen in the Attaignant prints, English Virginalist notation and the Layolle manuscript. See Pritchard, 'Hacking the System' (see n. 1).

keyboard music was a radically new phenomenon in 1517, the method of intabulating as described by Diruta in 1609 must have been well established by the beginning of the 16th century.

Intavolatura was not merely a practical tool – it functioned as a musical lens, shaping how performers conceived, internalized, and realized music. When compositions originally written in separate parts were adapted for keyboard, their structural character could shift in transmission, with increased emphasis on vertical sonorities. Chords – no longer incidental byproducts of contrapuntal interaction – emerged as discrete musical units. This conceptual reorientation laid the groundwork for later shorthand systems such as short scores and basso continuo.

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# The Rhetoric of Invertible Counterpoint in the Sixteenth Century: Between Keyboard Pedagogy and Performance Practice

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## Foreword

For many centuries, composer and performer were very often the same person. Especially for a keyboard player, improvising was the normal way of performing. Very rarely was he requested to perform music composed by others and, when he did that, he played music of his time. The music of the past was studied only as a model to be analysed and imitated in order to acquire the necessary tools and competences to become a musician. Performing music from the past is a practice that originated in the late 18th century and developed during the 19th century. The rediscovery of Bach is probably the most famous example, followed by many others. Composer-performers like Mendelssohn or Liszt included compositions of the past in their recital repertoire, in transcription, reductions, or elaborations.

It was not until the second half of the 20th century that the 'historical perspective' became very important. Keyboard music, like most other areas of music, was dragged into a revolutionary storm engaged by the rediscovery and the restoration of historical instruments, organs, harpsichords, clavichords, and fortepianos. A new sound, very different from the sound of a grand piano or a modern pipe organ, was imposing substantial changes on the performance of the keyboard music of the past. This created the need to publish more accurate and correct scores, with the aim of assisting the performer in developing a more nuanced understanding of the music. The well-known Early Music Movement advocated the historically informed performance practice in reaction to romantic or modernist interpretations in use in the 20th century. The use of period instruments, original or copies, and of *Urtext* editions became extremely important. Every organist or harpsichordist in the early eighties was fascinated not only by the way the music of Bach, Handel, Vivaldi sounded on an

period instrument, but also by the rediscovery of many forgotten composers, whose music was given new life by its performance on the appropriate instruments.

The beauty of the sound of original instruments and the result of performances in accordance with the original scores and practices has paved the way for a new phase in the rediscovery of the music of the past: modern instrument makers wanted to study and imitate the processes used by the old masters. They wanted to understand how these processes could lead to such amazing results, and to discover the reasons for such a lively and rich sound. The reconstruction of the Arp Schnitger organ in the Örgryte Church in Goteborg, based on an instrument destroyed during the Second World War, was among the first results of this investigation and, together with other research projects on organs, clavichord, harpsichord and fortepiano, opened a new era in the approach to, and performance of, the music of the past.

In the 21st century something similar started in the field of music theory. Theorists and musicologists began studying and publishing treatises and educational sources of the past. These sources, made available in several recent editions, enlighten us on musical pedagogy: how people learned to play, improvise, and compose, and how these three processes were closely and inseparably conjoined. A well-known example is given by the Neapolitan *partimenti*, a method of learning music currently attracting a growing interest among theorists and musicologists. But in turn, the Neapolitan *partimenti*, which seem to have strongly influenced music theory and pedagogy in the 19th-century French Conservatoire, are based on a long tradition of teaching and practice discoverable in Renaissance and Baroque sources. Some of those sources are now available through modern editions or facsimiles, such as *Il Transilvano* by Girolamo Diruta<sup>1</sup>, *L'Organo suonarino* by Adriano Banchieri<sup>2</sup>, the *Instructio nova pro pulsandis organis, spinettis et manuchordis* by Spiridion a Monte Carmelo<sup>3</sup>, and the

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1 Girolamo Diruta, *Il Transilvano Dialogo sopra il vero modo di sonar organi, & istromenti da penna / Seconda parte del Transilvano Dialogo diviso in quattro libri* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti 1593 and 1609), <<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/muspre1800.100422>> (book of 1593), <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_D/D019/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_D/D019/)> (book of 1609) (accessed on 25 July 2024).

2 Adriano Banchieri, *L'Organo suonarino* (Venice: Ricciardo Amadino, 1605), <<https://books.google.at/books?id=yZyZAQAAAJ&hl=de&pg=PA36 - v=onepage&q&f=false>> (accessed on 25 July 2024). Modern edition: *L'Organo suonarino (Venezia 1605)*, ed. Edoardo Bellotti, Tastata 31 (Latina, 2014).

3 Spiridion a Monte Carmelo, *Instructio nova pro pulsandis organis, spinettis, manuchordiis etc.* (Bamberg: Johann Georg Seuffert / Johann Jacob Immel, 1669–1672) (VD17 14:705645R), <[https://imslp.org/wiki/Nova\\_Instructio\\_\(Spiridion\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Nova_Instructio_(Spiridion))> (accessed on 25 July 2024). Modern edition: *Spiridionis a Monte Carmelo Nova instructio pro pulsandis organis, spinettis, manuchordiis etc.*, ed. Edoardo Bellotti, Tastature 11 (Colledara, 2003).

Wegweiser [...] *die Orgel recht zu schlagen* based on the lost *Ars cantandi* by Giacomo Carissimi.<sup>4</sup>

It is my contention that this rediscovery of a substantial unity and consistency among the historical pedagogical sources, is now ushering in a new period, marked by the need to redesign our approach to music, the way we learn, perform, and deliver it. I discussed this fascinating process in a lecture in May 2016 at the University of Rome Tor Vergata with the title *Music-Museum or Creative-Music, a Baroque Antithesis?* One of the challenges of classical music in the 21st century is the rediscovery of creativity, an aspect that other kinds of music, such as jazz, have never lost. In the context of classical music, extemporaneous creativity has been preserved in the art of continuo playing and in the use of embellishments or adding diminutions of a melodic line which, as we shall see, has to do with the contrapuntal training in which every professional musician was educated. But, despite the prevailing opinion today, being a good continuo player requires much more than a basic knowledge of harmony. As Banchieri states, basso continuo is strongly related to the other ways of playing (*fantasia, spartitura, intavolatura*)<sup>5</sup> and to approach it correctly many elements are needed. These include knowledge of counterpoint, knowledge of the cadences for the different church tones, knowledge of how to make imitations, canons and fugues, and memorisation of patterns and formulae learnt through the study of the music of the past. In other words, a comprehensive and integrated approach that seamlessly integrates theoretical and practical perspectives is essential.

Today the question is increasingly insistent: how has this conjoined vision of theory and praxis, creation and delivery, composition, and performance, worked so successfully for at least three centuries? This paper is part of a larger research project focusing on the teaching of keyboard instruments between 1500 and 1700: how was music – and keyboard music in particular – taught and learnt? I believe that understanding the teaching methods of the past not only offers us better answers

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- 4 This Handbook for organists has been reprinted several times between 1668 and 1718. Rudolf Walter discusses the question in his preface to a modern edition that unfortunately collects only the music examples and completely omits the didactical chapters: *Orgelstücke aus der Orgelschule Wegweiser* (Augsburg 1668). *Kurze und leichte Präambula und Versus in den acht Kirchentönen*, ed. Rudolf Walter, *Süddeutsche Orgelmeister des Barock* 8 (Altötting, 1964), 3–4. A modern edition of the 1692 reprint is available: Elinore Barber and Walter B. Hewlett, 'Riemenschneider Bach Institute Vault Holdings, facsimile series: ... *Wegweiser ... die Kunst die Orgel recht zu schlagen*, Part i–vi', in: *Bach. Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute* 18 (1987), no. 1, 25–36; no. 2, 4–35, 37–63; no. 3, 11–37; no. 4, 29–54; 19 (1988), no. 2, 25–56; no. 3, 19–74. A digital copy of the edition of 1689 is available on: <<http://data.onb.ac.at/rep/10597330>> (accessed on 26 July 2024).
- 5 Adriano Banchieri, *Conclusioni nel suono dell'organo* (Bologna: Giovanni Rossi, 1609), 24–5, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/115414>> (accessed on 8 August 2024).

concerning performance practice, but also makes us question our modern methods of teaching music and offers opportunities to improve them.

The following pages examine the interrelationship between counterpoint and rhetoric (as an art presiding over both creation and delivery) in 16th-century keyboard music.

## 1. Exordium. Invertible Counterpoint

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) in C major, 4/4 time. The treble staff has a whole rest followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The bass staff has a quarter rest, then a quarter note G2, an eighth note F2, a quarter note E2, and a quarter note D2. The second system shows the same two themes inverted. The treble staff starts with a quarter rest, then a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The bass staff starts with a quarter rest, then a quarter note G2, an eighth note F2, a quarter note E2, and a quarter note D2. Labels 'A' and 'B' are placed above and below the notes to identify the themes.

**Ex. 1:** Theme from Johann Sebastian Bach, *Tocatta* (BWV 913).

Renaissance and Baroque musical sources highlight the importance of learning invertible counterpoint as one of the cornerstones of a musician's training. Even the young Bach, as Ex. 1 shows, experimented in a practical way with the treatment of a subject and took his first steps towards fugal imitation through familiarity with invertible counterpoint. Both the second and the fourth sections of *Tocatta* BWV 913 are built on two short themes in invertible counterpoint. Invertible counterpoint is an important element in cadences and sequences too. In the 'Sonata ottava in aria francese' in *L'Organo suonarino*, Banchieri condenses all the necessary practical rules for imitative and fugal counterpoint – exposition, answer, stretto and invertible counterpoint in cadences – into a few bars, as Ex. 2 shows.

5

9

13

17

21

2.

*Da capo sin al fine.*

Ex. 2: Adriano Banchieri, 'Sonata ottava, in aria francese' from *L'Organo suonarino* (Venice, 1605), 36-7.

The following table (Ex. 3) shows the structure of the two cadences, with the motion of the three involved voices.

**Ex. 3:** Invertible counterpoint in the two cadences (Banchieri, 'Sonata ottava in aria francese'), bb. 5 and 9.

If, as seems to be the case, this was the normal approach to music creation, then certain questions immediately arise: What was musical education like in the 16th century? And more specifically: how were harpsichordists and organists trained and how was counterpoint (particularly invertible counterpoint) taught and learned?

Before going in search of answers, some terminological clarifications are necessary, particularly with regard to the words *armonia* and *accordo*. Throughout the 16th century, the term *armonia* (harmony) referred to the contrapuntal construction of the piece and the term *accordo* (better translated as agreement, concordance) to the set of well-organised, concordant voices and/or instruments. As is widely acknowledged, the concept of the harmonic triad did not yet exist at the time.<sup>6</sup>

6 In his *Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558) Zarlino declares that music is composed of two elements: *armonia* and *numero*. By *armonia* he means the contrapuntal construction and by *numero* the rhythmic/metric structure. Cf. Paolo Cecchi, 'Il rapporto tra testo letterario e intonazione musicale nei teorici italiani di fine Cinquecento', in: *Claudio Monteverdi: Studi e prospettive: Atti del convegno, Mantova, 21-24 ottobre 1993*, ed. Paola Besutti, Teresa M. Gialdroni and Rodolfo Baroncini (Florence, 1998), 549-605. For further discussion of this topic see Edoardo Bellotti, 'Basso continuo e contrappunto nelle fonti seicentesche: un moderno approccio alla didattica musicale', in: *Basso Continuo in Italy: Sources, Pedagogy and Performance*, ed. Marcello Mazzetti (Turnhout, 2023), 265-84.

## 2. Medium. Teaching/Learning Counterpoint in Sixteenth-Century Sources

In the 16th century the teaching and learning of counterpoint was conducted through singing. Numerous examples of *bicinia* can be found in sources that are to be performed by a teacher and a pupil, in many cases as a canon either read from a score or improvised. This topic has been the object of extensive studies and research<sup>7</sup> and is not the subject of this article. In regard to keyboard music, the information is derived from three types of sources:

1. Treatises and handbooks for keyboard players
2. Collections of pieces for beginners
3. Written compositions

In this paper, due to the limitations of space, we will focus on a select few examples from the following sources:

- Tomás de Santa María, *Libro llamado arte de tañer fantasía* (Valladolid: Francisco Fernandez de Cordova, 1565)<sup>8</sup>,
- Hernando [Antonio] de Cabezón, *Obras de música* (Madrid: Francisco Sánchez, 1578) (RISM 1587<sup>24</sup>)<sup>9</sup>,
- Girolamo Diruta, *Il Transilvano Dialogo sopra il vero modo di sonar organi, & istromenti da penna / Seconda parte del Transilvano Dialogo diviso in quattro libri* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti 1593 and 1609),
- Adriano Banchieri, *L'Organo suonarino* (Venice: Ricciardo Amadino, 1605),
- Music examples by Andrea Gabrieli (c. 1532–1585) and Antonio Valente (c. 1520–1601).

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7 The educational production of duos is endless. A large collection can be found in Andrea Bornstein, *Two-Part Italian Didactic Music: Printed Collections of the Renaissance and Baroque (1521–1744)*, 3 vols. (Bologna, 2004). Peter Schubert has studied Renaissance vocal practice extensively, emphasising its didactic importance. See Peter Schubert, 'Counterpoint Pedagogy in the Renaissance', in: *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge, 2002), 503–33; and idem, 'From Improvisation to Composition: Three Sixteenth-Century Case Studies', in: Rob C. Wegman, Johannes Menke and Peter Schubert, *Improvising Early Music*, Collected Writings of the Orpheus Institute 11 (Leuven, 2014), 93–130.

8 <<http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000158382&page=1>> (accessed on 25 July 2024).

9 <<http://purl.org/rism/BI/1578/24>> (accessed on 25 July 2024).



**Fig. 1:** Frontispiece of Hernando de Cabezón, *Obras de música* (Madrid, 1578).

In 1578, Hernando de Cabezón published a large collection of music, according to the title page, for keyboard, harp and vihuela in Madrid, consisting mainly of music composed by his famous uncle Antonio. Following vocal practice, the collection opens with *Duos* for beginners. The *Duo* no. 1, reproduced in full in Ex. 4, is an extended exercise in which the student learns a series of fundamental elements of musical composition:

- bb. 1–6: first species counterpoint. The two voices can also be inverted: it is a clear example of invertible counterpoint.
- bb. 13–16: canon based on the movement of the descending third and ascending second.
- bb. 17–19: two-voice cadence.
- bb. 19–24: third species counterpoint. On the main accent of each bar the upper voice, with its movement of crotchets, starts on a different interval above the lower voice: unison, fifth, major sixth, minor sixth, major third, octave. Variety in the use and alternation of intervals is in fact a fundamental element of counterpoint. The same happens in bb. 25–29, in which the lower voice is moving with crotchets.
- bb. 30–33: second species counterpoint. Imitations between the two voices in invertible counterpoint.
- bb. 34 to the end: florid counterpoint.
- bb. 41–52: two points of imitation on a subject separated by a cadence: in the first imitation the upper voice starts, in the second the lower voice starts.
- bb. 65–71: two points of imitation on a different subject.
- bb. 72–75: motion in parallel thirds.
- bb. 76–78: final cadence.
- bb. 80–82: *supplementum*.

Even though the duo is a didactic piece, it must be noted that its structure, organised according to the principles of counterpoint, also follows a precise rhetorical project:

- bb. 1-18: *exordium*, opened by the first species counterpoint and closed by the cadence.
- bb. 19-72: *medium*, opened by the crotchets and closed with the last imitation.
- bb. 72-82: *finis*, starting with the *passaggio doppio*, preparing the cadence of b. 78, followed by the *supplementum*.

Ex. 4: Antonio de Cabezón, First 'Duo' from *Obras de música* (Madrid, 1578), fol. 1<sup>r</sup>.

What appears in Cabezón's duo allows us to outline a training path corroborated by sources from the 16th century, as follows:

1) LEARNING CADENCES: the 8 modes and their characteristics (Zarlino, *Istitutioni harmoniche*, Ortiz, *Tratado de glosas*, Diruta, *Il Transilvano*, Banchieri, *L'Organo suonarino*).

Cadences are the supporting elements of the musical structure. Each of the eight church tones has its own principal *corde* (axes) on which the three cadences are built: the middle cadence generally on the fifth degree of the modal scale, the second cadence (which Banchieri defines as *indifferente*, because it can be used optionally) generally on the third degree and the final cadence, the most important, on the *finalis* or fundamental note of the tone.<sup>10</sup> Ortiz's *Tratado de glosas* opens with a large collection of cadences and some explanations of their use. Keyboard players could realize the same cadences for two, three and four voices.

Tauola del libro primo.	
Cadenze corte per b. mol.	
Cadenze in g. fol re vt sopr'acuto	5
Dichiaratione per far le dette cadenze	5
Altre maniere di cadenze nel medesimo g. fol re vt	6
Cadenze in ala   mi re sopr'acuto	7
Cadenze in b. fa   mi sopr'acuto	8
Cadenze in c. fol fa & de la fol	9
Cadenze in f. faut acuto	9
Cadenze in de la fol re	10
Cadenze larghe per b. mol	
Cadenze in g. fol re vt sopr'acuto	10
Cadenze in ala mire & b. fa   mi sopr'acuti	11
Cadenze in c. fol fa & d. la fol	11
Cadenze in d. la fol & f. faut sopr'acuti	21
Cadenze nella medesima qualita senza b. mol	
Cadenze in f. faut acuto	11
Cadenze in g. fol re vt & ala mire sopr'acuti	13
Cadenze in c. fol fa & d. la fol	13
Cadenze corte senza b. mol	
Cadenze in f. faut acuto	14
Cadenze in g. fol re vt sopr'acuto	14
Cadenze in ala mire & c. fol fa sopr'acuti	15
Cadenze in de la fol	15
Cadenze in ela	
Dichiaratione per far cadenze in g. fol re vt grauic	16
Altra forte di cadenze nel medesimo g. fol re vt	17
Cadenze in f. faut grauic	17
Altra cadenze nel medesimo f. faut	18
Dichiaratione per far cadenze di tenore	19
Altre due forte di cadenze larghe di tenore	20
Dichiaratione per chiosare ogni forte de punti	20
Per fallire & ballare vna seconda di breue	20
Per fallire & ballare vna seconda di semibreue	21
Per fallire & ballare vna seconda di minima	21
Per fallire vna terza di breue	21
Per ballare vna terza di breue	22
Per alzar & descendere terze di semibreue	22
Per fallire & calare terza di minima	22
Per fallire & ballare quarta di breue	23
Per fallire & descendere vna quarta di semibreue	23
Per fallire & ballare quarta di minima	23
Per montare vna quinta di breue	24
Per calare vna quinta di breue	24
Per alzare & abballare vna quinta di semibreue	24
Per alzar & abballare yn passo di semiminima	24

**Fig. 2:** Diego Ortiz, *Tratado de glosas sobre clausulas y otros generos de puntos en la musica de violones / El primo libro* [...] nel qual si tratta delle glosse sopra le cadenze & altre sorte de punti in la musica del violone (Rome: Valerio & Luigi Dorico, 1553), table of contents, fol 4r, <<http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000037748>> (accessed on 17 July 2024).

<sup>10</sup> Diruta and Banchieri provide a table with all the cadences organised into the eight tones. Cf. Diruta, *Seconda parte* (see n. 1), lib. iii, 2–3. Adriano Banchieri, *L'Organo suonarino*, ed. Edoardo Bellotti (Latina, 2014), 28–9. Cf. Edoardo Bellotti, 'Adriano Banchieri and the Theory and Practice of Counterpoint and Basso Continuo in the Seventeenth Century', in: *The Organ Yearbook* 47 (2018), 49–78.

Equally the *Fundamenta* and manuals for organists from the late 15th and early 16th centuries present collections of cadential formulas, often organised according to the eight church tones.<sup>11</sup>

Tomás de Santa María dedicates a few pages to the *clausulas*, specifying where they must be placed in each tone.<sup>12</sup> Adriano Banchieri offers a collection of hundred cadences in two, three, four and five voices at the end of his *Cartella musicale nel canto figurato, fermo e contrapunto* (Venice, 1614).<sup>13</sup>

2) TWO-PART COUNTERPOINT (WITH INVERTIBLE SOLUTIONS): exercises based on Bicinia (all the sources).

As a complement to his explanation of modal theory, Zarlino, in his *Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558), proposes twelve short *ricercare*s for two voices, as models for learning the character of each church tone and the main formulas of counterpoint.<sup>14</sup>

3) SCHEMATA (BASED ON THE CHARACTER OF INTERVALS): progressions, canons (Cabezón, *Obras de música*, Ortiz, *Tratado de glosas*, Santa María, *Arte de tañer fantasía*, Banchieri, *L'Organo suonarino*).

Even before his presentation of the church tones, and the different kinds of cadences, Tomás de Santa María provides several examples of two-voice canons based on ascending and descending movements.<sup>15</sup> (Ex. 5 shows a *Duo* in which the canon is based on the commonly used schema of an ascending third followed by a descending second.

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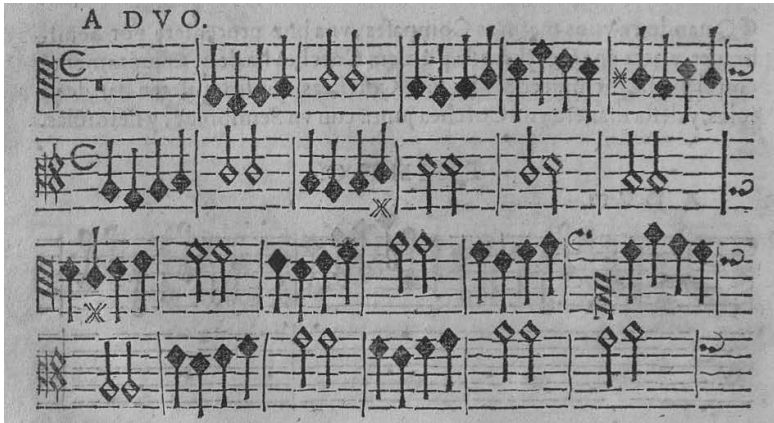
11 Cf. Mariateresa Muttoni, 'Modi dell'improvvisazione nelle intavolature tedesche per organo fra Quattro e Cinquecento', in: *Sull'improvvisazione*, ed. Claudio Toscani (Lucca, 1998), 11–62; August Valentin Rabe, 'Singing, Reading, Writing, Playing: Practising with Tomás de Santa María', in: *Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt': The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), 66–78, <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/mdwp03-singing-reading/>> (accessed 13 Oct. 2025); August Valentin Rabe, 'Benutze nun die Tafeln selbst'. *Sammeln, Schreiben, Lehren und Üben mit einem Fundamentum* (ca. 1440–1550), Wiener Forum für ältere Musikgeschichte 14 (Vienna, 2025).

12 Tomás de Santa María, *Libro llamado arte de tañer fantasía* (see n. 8), i, fols. 62<sup>r</sup>–64<sup>r</sup>.

13 Adriano Banchieri, *Cartella musicale nel canto figurato fermo e contrapunto* (Venedig: Giacomo Vincenti, 1614), 236–48, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/158853>> (accessed on 17 July 2024).

14 Gioseffo Zarlino, *Le istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558), 320–35, <<https://archive.org/details/leinstitutionihar00zarl>> (accessed on 17 July 2024).

15 Tomás de Santa María, *Libro llamado arte de tañer fantasía* (see n. 8), i, fols. 53<sup>v</sup>–55<sup>v</sup>.



Ex. 5: 'Duo' from Tomás de Santa María, *Libro llamado arte de tañer fantasía*, i, fol. 54<sup>v</sup>.

4) COUNTERPOINT ON CANTUS FIRMUS OR TENORI AND THREE/FOUR-VOICE RICERCARI (Ortiz, *Tratado de glosas*, Cabezón, *Obras de música*, Diruta, *Il Transilvano*, Banchieri, *L'Organo suonarino*).

Following the collection of *Duos para principiantes*, Cabezón introduces two-voice pieces based on a liturgical cantus firmus, such as an *Ave maris stella*. The cantus firmus is placed first in the bass and subsequently in the soprano. The next step entails the introduction of three-voice pieces in which the cantus firmus is alternately placed in all three voices.

5) FAUXBOURDON (all the sources).

In the chapter 'favordones de todos los ochos tonos' ('Fauxbourdons in the eight church tones') Cabezón documents the process of learning *fauxbourdon* technique and memorising its related patterns. The *fauxbourdon* was one of the most used pedagogical tools for teaching diminution. Each *Fabordon* is followed by three versions in which respectively cantus, bassus and tenor are enriched by *glosas* (diminutions). Ex. 6 shows the first *Fabordon* in the first tone and Ex. 7 its version with diminutions in the bass.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a piece in common time. The first system begins at measure 1 and the second at measure 11. Each system consists of a treble staff and a bass staff. The music is primarily chordal, with some melodic movement in the bass line. A repeat sign is present at the end of each system.

Ex. 6: Antonio de Cabezón, 'Fabordon del primer tono' from *Obras de música* (Madrid, 1578), fol. 13<sup>r</sup>.

The image displays four systems of musical notation for a piece in common time. The first system starts at measure 1, the second at measure 6, the third at measure 12, and the fourth at measure 17. Each system has a treble and a bass staff. The music features a more active bass line with eighth-note patterns, while the treble staff contains chords and some melodic fragments. Repeat signs are used at the end of the first, second, and fourth systems.

Ex. 7: Antonio de Cabezón, 'Fabordon del primer tono' ['Glosado con el contrabaxo'] from *Obras de música* (Madrid, 1578), fols. 13<sup>r-v</sup>.

6) IMITATIVE COUNTERPOINT (all the sources). In general, most of the examples given consist of collections of verses, generally grouped in church-tone order. We will return to such verses later.

The cadential formulas, schemes for invertible counterpoint, and patterns for canons and imitations listed in treatises and handbooks can be widely identified in the keyboard repertoire. This research intentionally focused on the repertoire in which counterpoint has a greater importance, excluding other musical forms such as dances and variations. Five examples have been chosen from compositions by the Venetian Andrea Gabrieli and the Neapolitan Antonio Valente.

**Ex. 8:** Andrea Gabrieli, 'Canzon ariosa', bb. 1–10, from *Il terzo libro de ricercari* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1596) fol. 30<sup>r-v</sup> (author's transcription), <<https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-55399>> (accessed on 27 August 2024).

The *Canzon ariosa* is one of Gabrieli's best-known pieces, included in several printed and manuscript collections.<sup>16</sup> It is a perfect example of counterpoint and brilliant use of diminutions. The short subject, with a dactylic incipit, is stated in stretto format in

16 E.g. in: Johannes Woltz, *Nova musices organicae tabulatura* (Basel: Johann Jacob Genath, 1617), part III, no. 49, <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb00050860>> (accessed 13 Oct. 2025). For a complete list see Giuseppe Clericetti, 'Le composizioni per strumenti a tastiera di Andrea Gabrieli. Catalogo, bibliografia, varianti', in: *L'Organo* 25/26 (1987/88), 9–61, at 21–2.

the first four bars and again, from b. 7 to b. 10 with some *coloratura*. The two expositions are connected by a richly ornamented cadence (see Ex. 8).

The second example is the 'Ricercare del quinto tono' from Gabrieli's *Libro secondo* published posthumously in 1595. Two short subjects, based mainly on stepwise motion, are presented one after the other by the tenor, while the soprano states the two answers in melodic inversion (see Ex. 9). This contrapuntal strategy initiates a series of imitations that occupy the entire first part of the composition.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a keyboard instrument, likely a lute or harpsichord. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system (bars 1-6) shows a tenor line in the treble staff with stepwise motion and a soprano line in the bass staff with melodic inversion. The second system (bars 7-11) continues the tenor line and shows the soprano line with more complex ornamentation. The third system (bars 12-16) shows further imitations and ornamentation in both parts.

**Ex. 9:** Andrea Gabrieli, 'Ricercare del quinto tono', bb. 1-16, from *Ricercari di Andrea Gabrieli* [...] *libro secondo* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1595), fol. 17<sup>v</sup> (author's transcription), <<https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-56111>> (accessed on 17 July 2024).

The remaining three examples are taken from *Versi spirituali sopra tutte le note*, published in Naples in 1580, the second printed collection by the Neapolitan Antonio Valente, organist in Sant'Angelo a Nilo.<sup>17</sup> A collection of verses, i.e. short compositions, with the practical purpose of responding to the plainchant during the rites, is of particular importance. Although often overlooked due to its brevity (which makes

17 Antonio Valente, *Versi spirituali sopra tutte le note, con diversi canoni spartiti per sonar negli organi* [...] *libro secondo* (Naples: Eredi di Mattio Cancer, 1580), <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/907887>> (accessed on 17 July 2024). The first collection of Valente, titled *Intavolatura de cimbalo, recercate, fantasie et canzoni francese desminuite con alcuni tenori, balli et varie sorte de contraponti* (Naples: Gioseppe Cacchio dall'Aquila), was printed in 1576. On this collection see the contribution of Paola Erdas in this volume.

it unsuitable for concert performance), the verse condenses the best melodic and contrapuntal solutions of the time and is therefore a precious didactic testimony. Very often, in fact, the same elements already present in the structure of a verse are employed to create more complex compositions such as *ricercari* and *canzoni*. Renaissance repertoire enumerates a large collection of verses: in addition to the prints by Cavazzoni, Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli, Merulo, Cabezón and Valente, verses are found in the manuscripts of Castell'Arquato and in the German tablatures preserved in Turin and Berlin. Beyond its liturgical duty, the verse had an important didactic function, even at the end of the seventeenth century, as the large autograph collection of verses by Bernardo Pasquini attests. The composer used this material to teach counterpoint and composition to his nephew Bernardo Ricordati.<sup>18</sup>

This paper considers three of the verses by Antonio Valente. His *Verso Primo sopra dell'Ut* (Ex. 10) offers a clear example of canonic imitation, based on the movement of the rising fourth and falling third in invertible counterpoint.

**Ex. 10:** Antonio Valente, 'Verso primo sopra dell'Ut', bb. 1–8, from *Versi spirituali sopra tutte le note* (Naples, 1580), 1.

In bb. 1 and 2 the canon is introduced by the tenor and the alto, while the bass presents the entire subject from the middle of b. 3 and the soprano does the same from the middle of b. 5. The four descending crotchets in the alto voice in b. 2 are then taken up for further imitations and for parallel third movements in bb. 6–8.

*Verso sesto sopra il Re* presents a double pair of voices in canonic imitation: the canon at the fifth between bass and tenor runs through the entire verse, while the subject is freely imitated in alto and soprano. Ex. 11 presents the first five bars of the verse.

18 Bernardo Pasquini, *Opere per Tastiera*. Vol VII: London, Bl Ms.Add. 31501, II–III, ed. Armando Carideo, *Tastata 19* (Latina, 2006).



**Ex. 11:** Antonio Valente, 'Verso sesto sopra il Re', bb. 1–5, from *Versi spirituali sopra tutte le note* (Naples, 1580), 30.

In the *Verso quarto sopra il Re* (Ex. 12), there is a subject covering an interval of a seventh, an apparently unusual extension. The theme, all in eighth notes, is made up of two elements, a *circulo* covering an interval of a third and an ascending *tirata* covering the remaining fifth. In this way the subject touches all three *corde* (axes) of the first tone (*re-fa-la*) to end up on the note *c*, i.e. the *fa* of the new hexachord in which the answer enters. The imitation between soprano and alto in the first five bars is repeated identically by tenor and bass in the following five bars. The imitations based on the descending *tirata* in bb. 4–5 are again repeated an octave lower in bb. 9–10. The economy of material and procedures constitutes the basis of the entire verse.

**Ex. 12:** Antonio Valente, 'Verso quarto sopra il Re', bb. 1–13, from *Versi spirituali sopra tutte le note* (Naples, 1580), 23.

A subject like the previous one is found in Adriano Willaert's *Ricercare I*, which opens *Musica nova*, a collection of *ricercari* published in Venice in 1540.<sup>19</sup> As in Valente's verse, soprano and alto state the subject and answer in the first five bars, while tenor and bass repeat the same imitation in the following five bars (see Ex. 13).

Ex. 13: Adriano Willaert, 'Ricercare I' from *Musica nova* (Venice, 1540) / *Musicque de joye* (Lyon, [1544]), bb. 1-10.

In all the examples above, with the exception of Valente's *Verso secondo*, the interval of a fourth seems to be preferred in the creation of subjects. The most commonly used patterns can be reduced to four schemes, shown in Ex. 14. Scheme 4, based on the motion of an ascending fourth and a descending third (as well as their inversions), was very frequently used in the construction of canons.

Ex. 14

19 *Musica nova accomodata per cantar e sonar sopra organi* (Venice: Andrea Arrivabene, 1540) (RISM 1540<sup>22</sup>, Brown 1540.). As is well known, only the bass part book of this print has survived (in I-Bc). Yet, nineteen of twenty-one compositions including the *Ricercare* by Willaert, were reprinted in *Musicque de joye* (Lyon: Jacques Moderne [1544]) (RISM c.1550<sup>24</sup>, Brown 154?<sup>o</sup>), <[https://imslp.org/wiki/Musicque\\_de\\_joye\\_\(Moderne,\\_Jacques\) - IMSLP58337](https://imslp.org/wiki/Musicque_de_joye_(Moderne,_Jacques) - IMSLP58337)> (accessed on 17 July 2024).

In Diruta's *Transilvano*, under the name of *Accadenzie di Gabriel Fattorini*, a large collection of four-part formulas based on invertible counterpoint is presented. Each of these is a musical box that can be opened to create an entire composition.<sup>20</sup> Ex. 15 shows this kind of *contrapunto trasportato in tutte le parti* (counterpoint transposed in all parts). Scheme no. 176 features four melodic lines overlapped in four-voice counterpoint. In schemes nos. 177, 178 and 179 the same melodic lines are exchanged between the voices: the soprano of 176 becomes the alto in 177 and the bass in 178, while the bass of 176 becomes the soprano in 177 and the tenor in 178, etc.

Ex. 15: 'Accadenzie di Gabriel Fattorini' from Diruta, *Seconda parte del Transilvano* (Venice, 1609), lib. ii, p. 19.

20 Cf. Massimiliano Guido and Peter Schubert, 'Unpacking the Box in Frescobaldi's *Ricercari* of 1615', in: *Music Theory Online* 20 (2014), <[https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.14.20.2/mto.14.20.2.guido\\_schubert.html](https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.14.20.2/mto.14.20.2.guido_schubert.html)> (accessed on 15 July 2024).

### 3. Finis. Counterpoint and Rhetoric

Having analysed the way counterpoint was taught and learnt, it is now necessary to consider its rhetorical function in Renaissance musical composition. Humanism led to the rediscovery of the classical world and particularly of the Greek theatre. Interest in Greek music and theatre was cultivated throughout the 15th and 16th centuries, particularly in Italian humanistic circles. In the Greek world, music and poetry formed one whole, while in the following centuries they came to be separated, giving rise to autonomous disciplines. Humanistic circles, in their attempt to recreate Greek theatre, sought a new way of unification between music and poetry, and found it in the concept of *imitatio*. Two of the most influential exponents of humanistic culture, both from Venice, were Pietro Bembo and Gioseffo Zarlino. Through the concept of imitation, the first elaborated a musical description of poetry, the second a poetic description of music. In *Prose della volgar lingua* (Venice, 1525), Bembo writes:

Da sciegliere adunque sono le voci, se di materia grande si ragiona, gravi, alte, sonanti, apparenti, luminose, se di bassa e volgare, lievi, piane, dimesse, popolari, chete: se di mezzana tra queste due, medesimamente con voci mezzane e temperate [...].<sup>21</sup>

(‘One must, therefore, when speaking of lofty matters, choose voices that are grave, high, sonorous, striking, luminous; for low and mean matters, light, flat, humble, common, quiet [voices]: if in the middle between these two, likewise with middling and temperate voices [...].’)

Zarlino in the *Sopplimenti musicali* (Venice, 1588) writes:

Si com’al Poeta è concesso d’imitar le cose con parole accomodate nel Verso [...] così è concesso al Musico & Melopeio, imitar con la Modulatione & con l’Harmonia, con quel modo migliore ch’ei può fare, quello che esprimono le parole contenute nell’Oratione.<sup>22</sup>

(‘Just as the poet can imitate things with words organised in verse [...], so the musician and *Melopeio* can imitate with Modulation and Harmony, in the best way he can, what the words contained in the oration express.’ [Translation by the author])

21 Pietro Bembo, *Prose [...] della volgar lingua* (Venice, 1525), fol. xxiii”, <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb10142586>> (accessed on 17 July 2024). Modern edition: *Prose e rime di Pietro Bembo*, ed. Carlo Dionisotti (Turin, 1966), 137. Translation by Candace Smith.

22 Gioseffo Zarlino, *Sopplimenti musicali* (Venice: Francesco de i Francesci Senese, 1588), 316, <<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k582296/f25.item>> (accessed on 7 August 2024). Paolo Cecchi discusses these issues extensively in ‘Il rapporto tra testo letterario e intonazione musicale’ (see n. 6).

Imitation is the key to understanding music and poetry. Poetry expresses the content through an appropriate choice of sounds, exactly as music makes a choice of modes, intervals, and figures, in relation to the content to be transmitted. Consequently, the formal organisation of a poetic text, as well as a musical score, is based on rhetoric. The entire creative process in music, as in poetry, is inspired by the canons of classical rhetoric, which humanism had rediscovered and reworked.

It should be noted, however, that this reworking of rhetoric is proposed not without contention among theorists. The performers (musicians, but also actors, poets, and artists in general) spontaneously implement it through experience directly received from their respective teachers and matured in the heat of the performance.<sup>23</sup> The creative process in music, as in other arts and in language, can be summarized as follows:

1. The choice of the subject/s, or *inventio*: This could be derived from a *cantus firmus* (plainchant) or a secular *tenore* (Bergamasca, Ruggiero, Romanesca etc.) This process requires analysis of the structure and recognition of the mode, with its related cadences and sequences. Alternatively it could be freely created by the composer, a process called *fantasia* by Banchieri. In this case the subject must be short, and prevalently within the range of a fourth or a fifth.
2. The organisation of the piece, or *dispositio*: This must follow the mode, with the correct order of cadences and the most suitable progressions. It involves the creation of a second subject with invertible counterpoint.
3. The choice of figures and ornaments, or *elocutio*: Intervals, figures, and diminutions or ornaments must be chosen in accordance with the topic and the character of the piece.
4. The memorisation, or *memoria*: Memorisation is an important part of music education: it is the best way to collect ideas, schemes, patterns, melodies, and canons, which can all become part of a personal database. For a keyboard player, memorisation is a physical process involving fingers, hands, and posture, as well as a mental one. A correct fingering was – and still is – the best way to memorize patterns and to facilitate their transpositions.
5. Finally the performance, or *actio*: The art of delivery of a piece of music involves choice of the instrument, registration, articulation, tempo, dynamic etc. In Italy theatre and music have always given great importance to this final element. From

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23 The necessarily formal and theoretical study that we are conducting inevitably risks distancing us from the living context of musical production, making us forget that in the 16th century music, like any other artistic form, was learned *in the workshop*, through an interaction between master and disciple: the pupil not only received lessons but was present (and very often helping the master) during any direct realisation of the artistic-musical event.

the middle of the 16th century onwards, the performer delivering the message of the text, music, and action to the public gained an increasing importance, almost equivalent to that of the composer. This was especially the case of singers, as Bottrigari writes:

[...] della espressione degli affetti & della pronuntia delle parole; dalle quali, & massimamente essendo bene imitate dall'Eccellente Musico nella sua cantilena, veramente deriva il maggiore di tutti i commovimenti de gli animi delle persone ascoltatrici.<sup>24</sup>

([...] of the expression of the affects and the pronunciation of the words; from these, especially when well imitated by the Excellent Musician in his song, does there truly derive the greatest stirring in the souls of the listeners.' [Translation by the author])

In the field of keyboard music, as already observed in the foreword, composer and performer were very often the same person, and the performer has a similar duty to that of a good *orator* who deeply moves his listeners through a skillful delivery of his speech.

## Afterword

For over three centuries, the entire musical education was based on the study of counterpoint, which was learned in a practical way. A substantial body of research conducted in recent years has already highlighted the techniques which enabled the extemporaneous contrapuntal vocal improvisation practiced by the *scholae* in the 16th century.<sup>25</sup> Singing was also an essential component of keyboard player's education. Various sources discussed above present us with special techniques of direct learning on the keyboard that can be applied to this context. The teaching method was based on the imitation and memorisation of formulas. With this process the student presented with a theme or *cantus firmus* was immediately able to recognize its

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24 Ercole Bottrigari, *Il Desiderio overo de' concerti di varij strumenti musicali* (Venice: Ricciardo Amadino, 1594), 12, <<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k58168t>> (accessed on 17 July 2024).

25 Cf. Peter Schubert, 'Teaching Theory Through Improvisation', in: *Studies in Historical Improvisation: From Cantare super Librum to Partimenti*, ed. Massimiliano Guido (New York, 2017), 175–84. To delve deeper into the theme of imitation and the creative/compositional process in the Renaissance cf. Honey Meconi, 'Does Imitatio Exist?', in: *JM* 12 (1994), 152–78, and the studies of Philippe Canguilhem respectively, especially: *L'improvisation polyphonique à la Renaissance* (Paris, 2015), and: 'Singing upon the Book According to Vicente Lusitano', in: *EMH* 30 (2011), 55–103. Concerning rhetoric in music cf. the contributions in: *Rhetorik. Ein internationales Jahrbuch*, vol. 35: *Rhetorik und Musik*, ed. Hartmut Krones (Berlin/Boston, 2016).

fundamental elements and, consequently, to add other voices, which in turn led to the construction of a complete musical piece. The methodology was identical to the one we use today to learn a language: memorisation and repetition of words, phrases and formulas through activity or *conversation*. Grammar comes later. This approach invites us to review our educational and performance practices.

Musical study is still too preoccupied with a dichotomy between theory and practice, adhering to a somewhat museum-like approach to compositions. The methodology develops reading and performance techniques and devotes very little attention to the way in which these compositions were constructed, composed, and improvised. Performance practice focused on the *actio* without an attentive study of the other moments of musical creation (*inventio, dispositio, elocutio*) prevents an adequate interpretation of the content of the scores and the meaning of the musical signs and figures contained therein. This in turn affects the quality of performance.

Harmony studies should be preceded by counterpoint studies, concretely applied in an active experience at the keyboard. The study of the musical building blocks as described in the cited sources, therefore allows us not only to improve our understanding of the repertoire, but also to develop a more creative way of teaching of music for the benefit of the new generations and to increase their interest in the world of classical music.

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# Why Should One Build an Archicembalo? An Attempt at a Response According to Nicola Vicentino

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Martin Kirnbauer

This paper was shaped by two major research projects that were carried out at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in the last ten years. The first was ‘Studio31’ with a reconstruction of two keyboard instruments proposed by Nicola Vicentino in his treatise *L’antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (Rome, 1555): the *archicembalo* and the *arciorgano*, two keyboard instruments with 36 keys per octave.<sup>1</sup> After having started the project, we decided not to build an *archicembalo* according to Vicentino (among other reasons, Marco Tiella lent us his reconstruction of the *archicembalo*, built in the 1970s). Instead we opted for a kind of new interpretation of the *clavemusicum omnitonum*, i.e. the only completely preserved harpsichord with 31 keys per octave (although this instrument has a different story that has yet to be told).<sup>2</sup> Since then, a reconstruction of Vicentino’s *arciorgano* (Fig. 1) and of the *clavemusicum omnitonum* (see Fig. 2) in Basel have been available for further research and practical exploration. It can already be emphasised at this point that the presence and availability of the reconstructed instruments (especially Vicentino’s *arciorgano*) was – and is – fundamental for reading and understanding Vicentino’s treatise which is the focus of the second project ‘Vicentino21’. This project has the creation of a digital edition and

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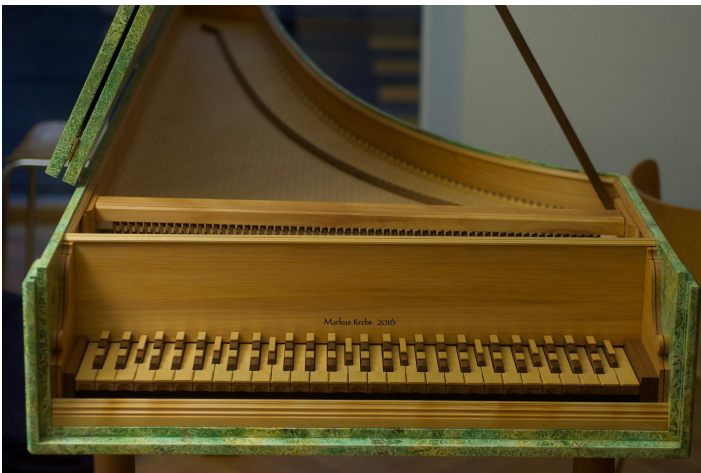
1 <<https://www.fhnw.ch/de/forschung-und-dienstleistungen/musik/hochschule-fuer-musik-klassik/projekte/studio-31>> (accessed on 26 August 2024); <<https://www.projektstudio31.com/>> (accessed on 26 August 2024); see also the contributions in Martin Kirnbauer (ed.), *Zwischen Vieltönigkeit und Mikrotonalität. Materialien und Beiträge aus dem Forschungsprojekt ‘Studio31’*, Schola Cantorum Basiliensis Scripta 10 (Basel, 2024), <<https://schwabe.ch/Martin-Kirnbauer-Zwischen-Vieltoenigkeit-und-Mikrotonalitaet-978-3-7965-5193-2>>.

2 Cf. Johannes Keller, ‘Das Basler *Archiorgano* und *Clavemusicum omnitonum*’, in: Kirnbauer (ed.), *Zwischen Vieltönigkeit und Mikrotonalität* (see n. 1), 137–70; in particular to the *clavemusicum omnitonum* see David Gallagher, ‘Vicentino’s missing music’, in: *ibid.*, 9–84, at 82–4.

translation (into German and English) of Vicentino's notorious treatise as its aim.<sup>3</sup> A team consisting of Luigi Collarile, David Gallagher, Johannes Keller, Anne Smith and me, began an intensive re-reading of Vicentino's treatise, which led to new insights and understanding of his ideas. In my contribution I would like to try to analyse the role of the *arcicembalo*, described in detail by Vicentino in the treatise, and what the function of the instrument is. Before attempting to answer the question in the title, a few preliminary remarks on Nicola Vicentino, his treatise *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* and the instruments presented in it are necessary.



**Fig. 1:**  
Reconstruction of Vicentino's *arcicorgano* by 'Studio31' and Bernhard Fleig, Basel 2016 (Photo: Susanna Drescher).



**Fig. 2:**  
Reconstruction of the *clavemusicum omnitonum* by 'Studio31' and Markus Krebs, Schaffhausen 2016 (Photo: Susanna Drescher).

3 <<https://www.fhnw.ch/plattformen/vicentino21/>> (accessed on 26 August 2024); <<https://vicentino21.ch/>> (accessed on 26 August 2024). Unless otherwise stated, all translations are by the author or 'Vicentino21', when quoting from Vicentino's texts..

Don Nicola Vicentino dei Vicentini (Fig. 3), as he called himself, was probably born in Vicenza in 1510 (but this is not certain) and he must have been active in Venetian circles in which the ancient genres and their potential for modern music were discussed, especially in the circle of Willaert, as whose pupil he describes himself.<sup>4</sup> In Venice, he applied in 1549 for a printing privilege for music ‘in the two genera (long ago lost), that is, the enharmonic and chromatic’ (de li dui generi [gia tanto tempo persi] cioe henarmonico et cromaticho).<sup>5</sup> He explicitly states that he sings and plays them (‘cantar et sonar’), which suggests the existence of an instrument capable of producing the fine subdivisions of the octave in instruments, and not only in singing.



**Fig. 3:** Portrait of Nicola Vicentino dei Vicentini at the age of 44; frontispiece of Vicentino, *Lantica musica*, fol. [A1<sup>r</sup>].

This specialisation led him to Rome in the service of the powerful cardinal Ippolito II d'Este, who was 'papabile' several times, and the famous dispute with Vicente Lusitano in the spring of 1551. This dispute – behind which also lay a power struggle between competing cardinals –, which Vicentino is known to have lost, influenced and inspired the publication of his notorious treatise *Lantica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica*

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- 4 For references for the following biographical information see Davide Daolmi, 'Vicentino, Nicola', in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 99 (2020), <[https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/nicola-vicentino\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/>](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/nicola-vicentino_(Dizionario-Biografico)/>) (accessed on 26 August 2024); Martin Kirnbauer, 'Nicola Vicentino (1510–1577) – Ein biographischer Abriss', in: idem (ed.), *Zwischen Vieltönigkeit und Mikrotonalität* (see n. 1), 3–8.
- 5 Richard J. Agee, 'The Privilege and Venetian Music Printing in the Sixteenth Century', PhD diss., Princeton University, 1982, 101–2, 179, 222–3; the quote on p. 202.

(Rome: Antonio Barrè 1555). According to Claude Palisca, this was 'one of the most famous books in the history of music theory and one of the least read'.<sup>6</sup>

The colophon of the treatise is dated the day after the election of Pope Paul IV, an ardent opponent of Vicentino's patron Ippolito d'Este, who was immediately sent into exile. Vicentino had to leave Rome together with his patron, never to return, which could explain the failed 'marketing' of slightly differing printed versions and editions of his voluminous treatise. Vicentino's further life is irrelevant for the topic of this paper, and we do not know all his later positions apart from his being *maestro di cappella* in Venice, Vicenza and then in Milan, where he was called by Cardinal Carlo Borromeo; he died there of the plague in 1577.

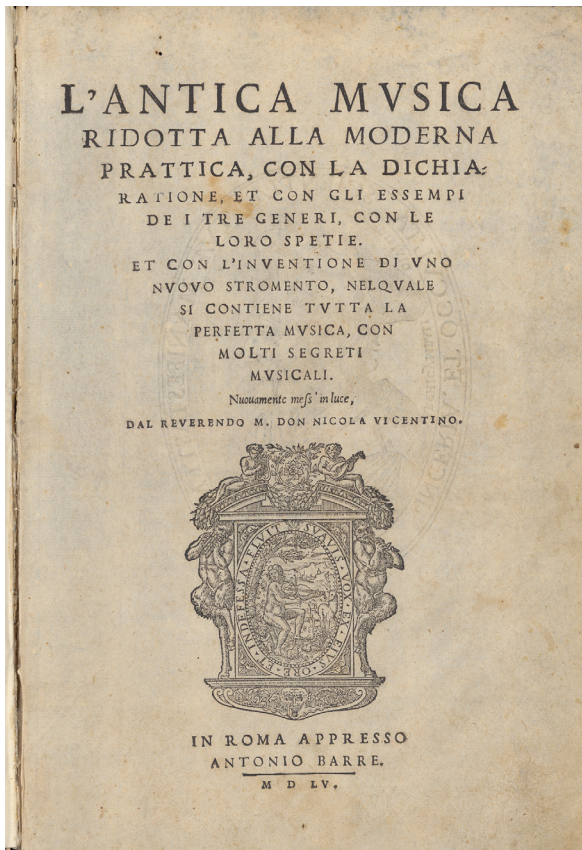


Fig. 4: Titlepage of Vicentino, *L'antica musica*, fol. [A1<sup>r</sup>].

6 Claude V. Palisca, 'Foreword by the Series Editor', in: Nicola Vicentino, *Ancient Music Adapted to Modern Practice*, trans. by Maria Rika Maniates, Music Theory Translation Series (New Haven/London, 1996), vii–viii, at vii.

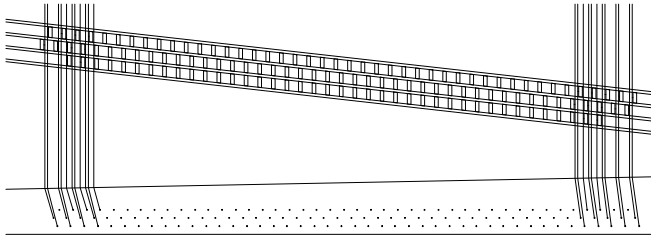
*L'antica musica* is a lavishly printed and extensive treatise of 152 folios in small folio format, dedicated to Vicentino's patron Ippolito d'Este (Fig. 4). The title 'Ancient music adapted for modern practice' very clearly describes its content, although this title was and still is often misunderstood; it is not a treatise on music theory, or more precisely a scholarly contribution to the music theory of antiquity, on the contrary, Vicentino was interested only in the 'moderna prattica' and accordingly he writes about many aspects of the musical practice of his time. He also provides rare first-hand information about composition and performance practice of conventionally composed music. But at the centre is 'nostra prattica', by which he means above all the use of a much larger number of pitches. Vicentino calls these the 'gran ricchezza de i gradi' – 'the great wealth of steps', embedded within the demands of the polyphony of his time, which he made audible and measurable in the form of a musical instrument, his so-called *archicembalo*.<sup>7</sup> This instrument is highlighted prominently on the title page of the treatise (cf. Fig. 4) announcing the invention of a new instrument, which contains within it all perfect music, with many musical secrets ('con l'inventione di uno nuovo stromento, nelquale si contiene tutta la perfetta musica, con molti segreti musicali'). One of the six books of the treatise is devoted to the practice of the instrument, he calls *archicembalo* ('sopra la Prattica del stromento, da lui detto Archicembalo').<sup>8</sup> At the beginning of this book, Vicentino describes in detail how to build the harpsichord with 36 pitches in the octave with very practical building instructions, including three foldout woodcuts for the instrument builder with the design of the keyboard, keys and key-lever, and the wrestplank with the position of the tuning pins and jack guides (Fig. 5). With these detailed specifications an *archicembalo* can be built by every experienced instrument maker ('ogni Prattico de fare stromente'), as Vicentino claims.<sup>9</sup> But why build an *archicembalo* at all?

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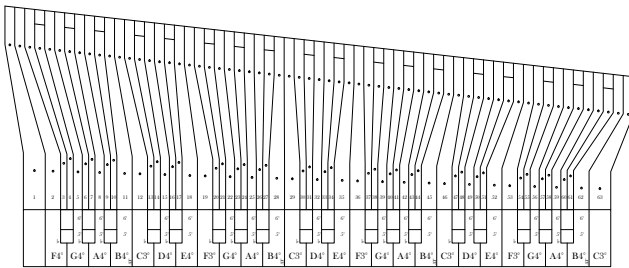
7 Nicola Vicentino, *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (Rome: Antonio Barrè 1555), III.44.2 (fol. 61<sup>r</sup>); Vicentino's treatise is cited according to the following principle: Book.chapter.paragraph-subparagraph (fol. indication), as it is also used in the digital edition *Vicentino21* (<<https://vicentino21.ch>>).

8 *Ibid.*, V.1.title (fol. 99<sup>r</sup>).

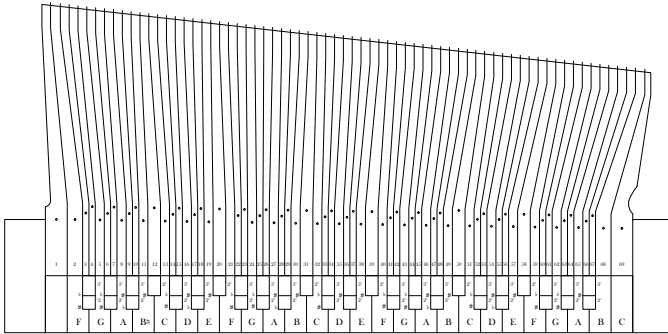
9 *Ibid.*, V.2.1 (fol. 100<sup>r</sup>).



wrestplank



upper manual



lower manual

AUFBAU CEMBALO | VORABZUG | MST. 1:5 | 14.11.2023

0 5 10 15 20 25CM

**Fig. 5:** CAD drawing of the assembled woodcuts for the keyboard of the *archicembalo* from the appendix of Vicentino, *L'antica musica* by 'Vicentino21' (Jacqueline Benzinger, Architekturbüro Werner Keller).

Several attempts have already been made to answer this question in the secondary literature, wherein it becomes evident that a certain obsession with tunings and temperaments has been cultivated within the field of musicology. I now would like to present a few prominent stances:

Patrizio Barbieri, in his magistral study on *Enharmonic instruments and music*, asks the question ‘Why enharmonic keyboards?’ and gives three categories:<sup>10</sup>

- transpositions of church modes and the increasing spread of their ‘major mode’ version
- the revival of the ancient Greek enharmonic genus
- the ‘stylus metabolicus’, later ‘enharmonic of the Italians’ (for which I coined the term ‘vieltönig’ as a tag for this context – see below).

For Vicentino, Barbieri explicitly refers here to the latter’s intention of a ‘revival of chromatic and enharmonic genera’; at the same time he criticises that Vicentino ‘did not strictly respect the original tetrachordal form of the three Greek genera, but instead mixed them together’.<sup>11</sup> Barbieri goes on to present the *archicembalo* in detail in the chapter ‘ETS 31: Vicentino’s *archicembalo*’ (‘ETS’ stands for ‘Equal Tempered System’ also known as ‘EDO’ or ‘Equal Division of the Octave’), i.e. as an instrument with which a closed cycle of fifths is possible through ‘an equal multiple division’ of the octave into 31 equal parts. Here Barbieri cites the description of the *archicembalo* by Francesco de Salinas in *De musica libri septem* (Salamanca: Mathias Gastius, 1577):

à quibusd[am] magni nominis Musicis in precio habitum, & vsu receptu[m]; eò quòd omnis in eo sonus habet omnia interualla, atque omnes consonantias (vt sibi videntur) infernè, & supernè, & post certam periodum ad eundem, aut æquiualentem sibi sonum post 31 interualla reditur.<sup>12</sup>

(‘esteemed and accepted in practice by certain famous musicians, for the fact every one of its notes can command any interval and any consonance – as they claim – both above and below, and that every interval, after 31 repeats, returns with a specific periodicity to the starting note or to one equivalent to it’)

But in Vicentino’s treatise, the possibility of a circular tuning does not seem to have interested him; there is no mention of this anywhere, unlike in later research.

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10 Patrizio Barbieri, *Enharmonic Instruments and Music 1470–1900. Revised and Translated Studies*, Tastata 2 (Latina, 2008), 45–52.

11 *Ibid.*, 49.

12 *Ibid.*, 308–24, at 308; in Salina’s treatise on p. 164, <<http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000046156&page=1>> (accessed on 20 Dec. 2024).

In a similar direction to Barbieri, Nicolas Meeüs in his *New Grove* article on ‘Enharmonic keyboard’ writes:

Such keyboards may serve various purposes, to make available mean-tone temperament in tonalities involving more than two flats or three sharps; to make possible the playing of a number of chords in Just intonation; and to produce microtones.<sup>13</sup>

Meeüs explicitly assigns Vicentino’s approach to the third category:

Nicola Vicentino [...] appears to have been one of the very few Renaissance or Baroque theorists to realize that the best purpose of an enharmonic keyboard would be the playing of microtones, and some of his compositions use the quarter-tone as a melodic interval.<sup>14</sup>

This deduction seems to me to be ahistorical, since the concept of ‘microtones’ (as well as ‘quartertones’) was only developed in much later times (especially in the 20th century) and is inappropriate in the thought and sound world of the 16th century. This is why I have argued to use less historically loaded terms for this purpose, i.e. ‘vieltönig’ (literally, ‘many-toned’ or ‘multitonal’) or ‘Vieltönigkeit’ (as a noun) to describe music that, in its conceptual and structural design, employs more than twelve pitches per octave – leaving open for the time being what the concrete occasion for the respective ‘Vieltönigkeit’ is.<sup>15</sup>

A few years before the publication of Barbieri’s book, Rudolf Rasch asked the same question and begins his answer with the earliest instrument known to him, the

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13 Nicolas Meeüs, ‘Enharmonic keyboard’, in: *New Grove*2, xiii (London, 2001), 248–50, at 248. Similar explanations can also be found in Volker Rippe, ‘Nicola Vicentino – sein Tonsystem und seine Instrumente: Versuch einer Erklärung’, in: *Mf* 34 (1981), 393–413, at 413, or Franz Josef Ratte, *Die Temperatur der Clavierinstrumente: Quellenstudien zu den theoretischen Grundlagen und praktischen Anwendungen von der Antike bis ins 17. Jahrhundert*, Veröffentlichungen der Orgelwissenschaftlichen Forschungsstelle im Musikwissenschaftlichen Seminar der Westfälischen-Universität Münster 16 (Kassel etc., 1991), 376 (who on pp. 387–8, however, also names the ‘manifold possibilities of differentiation’ arising in the *archicembalo* with ‘affective qualities’ for ‘imitar le parole’).

14 Meeüs, ‘Enharmonic keyboard’ (see n. 13), 249.

15 Cf. Martin Kirnbauer, *Vieltönige Musik: Spielarten chromatischer und enharmonischer Musik in Rom in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Schola Cantorum Basiliensis Scripta 3 (Basel, 2013); idem, “‘Vieltönigkeit’ instead of Microtonality. The Theory and Practice of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century “Microtonal” Music”, in: *Experimental Affinities in Music*, ed. Paulo de Assis, Orpheus Institute Series (Leuven, 2015), 64–90, at 64–7, <<https://library.open.org/handle/20.500.12657/32935>> (accessed on 14 August 2024)>.

*archicembalo*.<sup>16</sup> Rasch begins with a description of Vicentino's approach. This differs from that of the ancient tetrachords, i.e. with the division of the diatonic semitone by means of the chromatic semitone, resulting in either the sequence chromatic semitone – *diesis*, or *diesis* – chromatic semitone. In the end this leads to a division of the diatonic semitone into three more or less equal intervals. This concept had enormous consequences, 'since it makes the generalization over the entire keyboard possible'. Rasch concludes:

So Vicentino's motivation for building the archicembalo may be summarized in the following succinct phrase: the archicembalo was constructed in order to make audible the enharmonic pitches of Greek music theory.<sup>17</sup>

This is more cautious than Barbieri's formulation, but leaves open the question of what Vicentino intended with the 'enharmonic pitches of Greek music theory', apart from the fact that Vicentino knew and used many other smaller 'gradi' (or steps) which he called 'propinque' or even 'propinquissime' (see below), that cannot be systematized, nor has Vicentino tried to do so.

This leads to the classic 'chicken-and-egg question': did Vicentino design his instrument after he had developed his ideas and musical concepts based on the revival of ancient genera? Or vice versa, i.e. did he first develop the instrument and then its possible uses? In my attempt to answer this question, I propose to approach it differently and place Vicentino's perspective at the centre. In addition, I would like to separate the egg from the chicken (so to speak), or the hardware from the software, i.e. the instrument from what Vicentino did with it – and also ask what was before the chicken or the egg.

The motivation and beginning of Vicentino's interest can be traced back to the then current and fashionable interest in the Greek genera, which is documented since the end of the 15th century, especially in Italy.<sup>18</sup> In this context, we should consider

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16 Rudolf A. Rasch, 'Why were enharmonic keyboards built? From Nicola Vicentino (1555) to Michael Bulyowsky (1699)', in: *Chromatische und enharmonische Musik und Musikinstrumente des 16. & 17. Jahrhunderts – Beiträge zu einem Kolloquium der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Hochschule für Alte Musik Basel, und dem Musikwissenschaftlichen Institut der Universität Basel am 9. April 2002*, ed. Thomas Drescher and Martin Kirnbauer, in: *Schweizer Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft* 22 (2002), 11–250, at 35–93 (in particular 37–43), <<https://www.e-periodica.ch/digbib/view?pid=sjm-004%3A2002%3A22 - 40>>.

17 Rasch, 'Why were enharmonic keyboards built?', 43.

18 See for instance Claude V. Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* (New Haven/London, 1985); Karol Berger, *Theories of Chromatic and Enharmonic Music in Late 16th Century Italy*, *Studies in Musicology* 10 (Ann Arbor, 1980) [PhD diss., Yale University, 1975]; David R.M. Irving, 'Ancient Greeks, world music, and early modern constructions of

Vicentino's teacher Adrian Willaert and the discussions about antique genera and their use in Venice and its environs. A prime example of this are letters in the Spataro correspondence from autumn 1532. They report conversations in the house of the English ambassador in Venice in the presence of Willaert, discussing the question, if 'in view of the marvellous effects ascribed to ancient Greek music – compositions could be written in other than the common diatonic genus' ('se el se poteva comporre canti per altri generi che per el genere diatonico usitato').<sup>19</sup> It is therefore quite conceivable that Willaert's circle actually tried to use the other genera in practice and to explore their musical possibilities.

Interest in the Greek genera is also reflected in the earliest document of Vicentino's activities in this regard, namely the Venetian printing privilege of 1549 as mentioned above, and also in the title lines of his treatise, 'con la dichiarazione, et con gli essempli de i tre generi, con le loro spetie' ('with an explanation and examples of the three genera with their species', cf. Fig. 4). But reading Vicentino's treatise, he already states in his extremely short book on theory (covering only 8 pages of 270 pages in all), that much of the music theory of the ancient is not applicable to today's practice, which is why he does not discuss it ('Hauiamo lasciato à dire tutte queste cose per non ci essere hoggi utile alcuno alla nostra prattica [...]).<sup>20</sup> Noteworthy is Vicentino's observation that the qualities of contemporary music, which are in principle higher, cannot come to the fore because among other reasons it is heard too often and 'because of its abundance, it is afforded little esteem' ('& ne loro tempi erano tenute bonissime, per il che si conclude molto piu sapersi di Musica ne I nostri tempi che innanzi, ma per la abbondanza di quella esserne fatta poca stima').<sup>21</sup>

Vicentino describes the three genera and their species only to motivate the multiplicity of accidentals and thus the 'gradi' (steps) – introduced shortly after the beginning of the following First Book of Musical Practice. In a spectacular list at the end of this book called the 'arbore delle proportoni & delle diuisioni' (fol. 26<sup>v</sup>; Fig. 6), he introduces not only the smaller subdivisions of the *semitono*, for which he introduced what he calls his 'inuentione' (i.e. invention or device) of dots placed above the notes designating a half of a *semitono minore*,<sup>22</sup> but also different types of *diesis* and an even smaller *comma* (as a kind of smallest unit).

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Western European identity', in: *Studies on a Global History of Music: a Balzan Musicology Project*, ed. Reinhard Strohm, SOAS Musicology Series (London/New York, 2018), 21–41.

19 Bonnie J. Blackburn, Edward E. Lowinsky and Clement A. Miller (eds.), *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians* (Oxford, 1991), 548–62, (No. 46) at 548.

20 Vicentino, *L'antica musica*, libro della theorica.16.5 (fol. 6<sup>v</sup>).

21 Ibid.

22 '& anchora l'inuentione, ch'io ho fatta nel scriuere sopra le note con il punto', I.7.6 (fol. 14<sup>v</sup>). It should be noted that for him, of course, the whole tone is divided into two unequal semitones, one 'maggiore' and the other 'minore', which at the same time ensures that his ideas

Remarkable here is the category of 'propinque' (literally close or related), which means that the step is a little bit larger (by about a 'diesis enarmonico minore') than the 'normal' step and can be used for aesthetic reasons. In the Vicentino21-team we called this 'precise, but not exact'.<sup>23</sup>

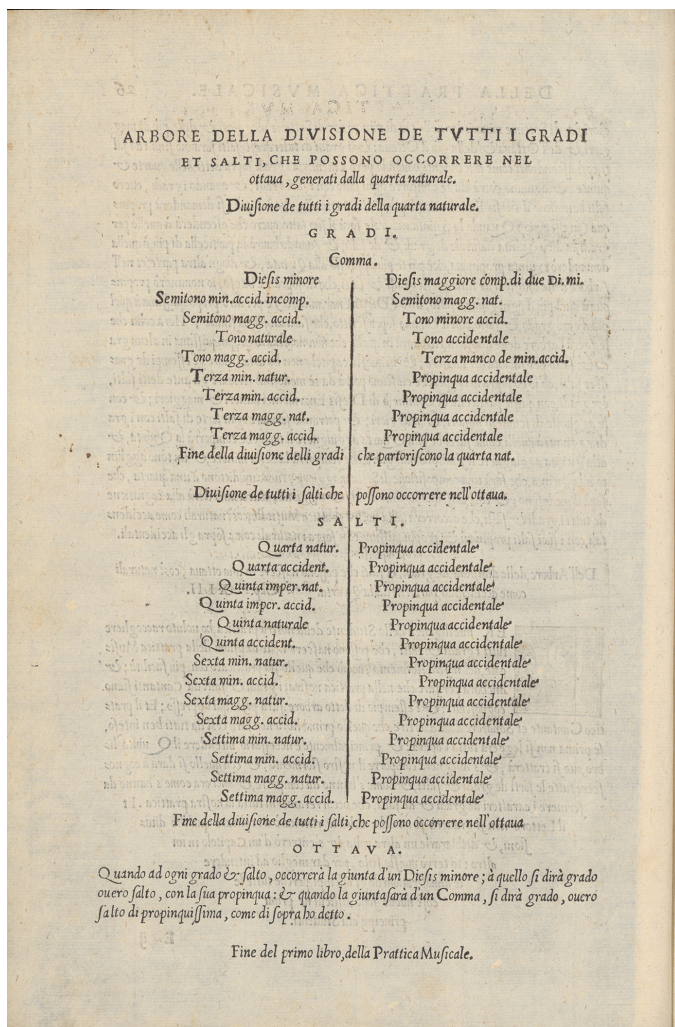


Fig. 6: 'arbore delle proportoni & delle diuisioni' in Vicentino, *L'antica musica*, I.42 (fol. 26°).

were consistent with the music of his time, which was tuned in meantone – to which his claim 'ridotta alla moderna prattica' probably also refers.

23 This category is only briefly explained in I.18.2-3 (fol. 21<sup>v</sup>-22<sup>r</sup>), but frequently appears in the catalogue of all intervals available on the *archicembalo* in the Fifth Book.

This supposed terminological blurring clearly demonstrates how a concept is pragmatically expanded by the reality of the instrument and access via the keyboard, unlocking a new kind of aesthetic potential. At the same time, it can also be experienced and understood in practice. Accordingly, Vicentino ‘declines’ all possible pitches and intervals of his instrument in the fifth and last book ‘On the Practice of the Instrument, called by him *Archicembalo*’ (‘sopra la prattica del stromento, da lui detto Archicembalo’) presenting them in long lists of note examples. If you have the instrument at hand, this huge tonal variety can also be understood and experienced through the senses (Fig. 7 from chapter V.38) with ‘all the consonances of *Bfa b mi quinto* [*bB*] descending with their *propinque* and *propinquissime*, and the same of *Bmi quinto* [*bB*] ascending through an *ottava*’ [‘tutte le consonanze di B fa b mi quinto discendenti con tutte le sue propinque & propinquissime, & il simile di B mi quinto ascendente per una Ottava’].<sup>24</sup> The reader is invited to visualise the individual intervals through the music examples, to play them on the instrument, and thereby to experience and to memorise them sensually.

**Fig. 7:** ‘tutte le consonanze di B fa b mi quinto discendenti con tutte le sue propinque & propinquissime, & il simile di B mi quinto ascendente per una Ottava’, in Vicentino, *L'antica musica*, V.38 (fol. 118<sup>v</sup>) in the edition of Vicentino21: a) digital representation of the original music example and b) transcription in modern notation and clefs with c) video of the presentation on the *arciorgano* (Johannes Keller – Vicentino21).

a)

Queste sono tutte le consonanze di Bfa b mi quinto discendenti  
con le sue propinque e propinquissime,  
et il simile di Bmi quinto ascendente per una ottava

Le quattro terze [discendenti]

Quinta

Le quattro seste [discendenti]

Ottava

Terze minori / terze maggiori

Seste minori / seste maggiori

Le quattro terze [ascendenti]

Quinta

Le quattro seste [ascendenti]

Ottava


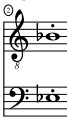

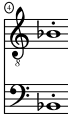




Terze minori / terze maggiori

Seste minori / seste maggiori

24 Vicentino, *L'antica musica*, V.38 (fol. 118<sup>v</sup>).

b)

These are all consonances of Bfabmi quinto descending with their propinque and propinquissime, and the same of Bmi quinto ascending through one ottava

<p>The four [descending] terze</p>  <p>Terze minori / terze maggiori</p>	<p>Quinta</p> 	<p>The four [descending] seste</p>  <p>Seste minori / seste maggiori</p>	<p>Ottava</p> 
<p>The four [ascending] terze</p>  <p>Terze minori / terze maggiori</p>	<p>Quinta</p> 	<p>The four [ascending] seste</p>  <p>Seste minori / seste maggiori</p>	<p>Ottava</p> 

c)

**Video i:** The four [descending] terze



**Video v:** The four [ascending] terze



**Video ii:** Quinta



**Video vi:** Quinta



**Video iii:** The four [descending] seste



**Video vii:** The four [ascending] seste



**Video iv:** Ottava



**Video viii:** Ottava



The key point is that, with reference to his *archicembalo*, all these intervals are declared both singable and usable. Vicentino has, so to speak, created a taxonomy of all the intervals that can be distinguished and heard through his instrument, effectively creating a kind of acoustical microscope. Immediately upon introducing these many intervals and steps, Vicentino refers to the explanation and examples in the Fifth Book, stating that

Et tal pratica non ti paia strana in questo principio, perche queste diuisioni meglio l'intenderai nel quinto libro da molti essempli accompagnato sopra tal diuisione, & più ti farà capace il nostro instrumento, detto Archicembalo, che

ti mouera più l'esempio accompagnato dalla prattica, che gli essempli scritti & accompagnati con parole non fanno.<sup>25</sup>

(‘This practice should not seem strange to you in this beginning, as you will better understand these divisions [later] in the Fifth Book from many accompanied examples on this division. And our instrument, called the *archicembalo*, will make you more competent, because an example accompanied by practice will sway you more than written examples accompanied by words.’)

A few lines later, in the context of teaching how to sing the subtle steps via scaled-down traditional solmisation he explains the ‘Viertönigkeit’ in relation to the keyboard of his instrument:

& non sarà fuore della regola Cromatica nominare ut. re. mi. fa. sol. la. in ogni riga, & in ogni spatio, & come le mutationi uengano piu commode al cantante; Ma queste mutationi, lo nostro instrumento li certificarà, come in esso apparenno, che in ogni luogo delli tasti si può dir ut. re. mi. fa. sol. la. scritti con li segni delli semitoni, & delli Diesis Enarmonici<sup>26</sup>

(‘And it would not be outside the chromatic rule to utter *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la* in every line and in every space [sc. of the staves], so that the mutations become more convenient for the singer. But our instrument [*archicembalo*] will confirm these mutations by the way they appear on it, because in every position of the keys one can say *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*, written with the signs of the *semitoni* and of the *diesis enarmonici*.’)

Perhaps this can be misunderstood as a kind of technical extension of the tonal range resulting from the design of the instrument and its keyboard. But Vicentino goes much further in supporting the use of all intervals aesthetically. Already in the First Book of Musical Practice, he muses on the imperfection of things and the duty of every good artisan, to adorn the defects through their skill:

così auiene nella prattica Musicale, che si uede l'ordine naturale mancare in molte cose, et con gli accidenti, di aggiugnere et minuire alli gradi naturali, si fa un grandissimo acquisto, di poter usare in ogni luogo, ogni sorte di consonanze, come si uedrà nel nostro Archicembalo, quanta ricchezza de gradi, in quello si hà racquistata, et così anchora nella prattica del cantare, come per questa mia fatica la esperienza ne farà ogniuno certissimo, et se tal abundantia de gradi è tanto utile: [...]<sup>27</sup>

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25 1.5.10 (fol. 11<sup>v</sup>).

26 1.5-1.5 (fol. 12<sup>r</sup>).

27 1.30.1 (fol. 22<sup>v</sup>).

(Thus it happens in the musical practice that one sees the natural order is lacking in many things, and with the accidentals for adding to or decreasing [the number of] the natural steps, one has made a very great acquisition, which one can use any place and for any sort of consonance; just like one sees in our *archicembalo* what a wealth of steps has been recovered in it, and also in the practice of singing, where due to my effort, anybody may make the most certain experience of whether the abundance of steps is so useful.)

Elsewhere, in the context of composing not only in eight diatonic modes (or scales), but also in eight chromatic and enharmonic modes, Vicentino writes that the composer

haurà modi di comporre con tanta ricchezza de gradi, & di uarie spetie insieme adunati, con uarietà di procedere, che sarà cosa marauigliosa all'Oditoro, per le tante differenze de gradi commisti.<sup>28</sup>

(‘will have ways of composing with so great a wealth of steps and of various species gathered together, with such a variety of ways to proceed, that it will be a marvelous thing for the listener, because of the mixture of so many different steps.’)

This is also where the listeners come into play, because, according to Vicentino, the purpose of the music is ultimately to convince them and to satisfy the ear (‘adunque il fine della Musica è di satisfare à gl’orecchi.’).<sup>29</sup> To explore this variety of intervals and gain practical musical experience, an appropriately equipped instrument, the *archicembalo* or *arciorgano*, is needed, perhaps comparable to a catalyser or interface.<sup>30</sup>

Although concrete evidence is sparse, presumably earlier instruments (monochords, as well as keyed monochords, i.e. clavichords, and harpsichords) were set up for the practical implementation of the genera, as well as for acoustic reference or as research devices.<sup>31</sup> In the literature, a ‘chordotonom’ is mentioned by Franchino Gaffurio in his treatise *Practica musica* of 1496, perhaps referring only to a hypothetical monochord designed for finding the notes of the enharmonic genus.<sup>32</sup> However, a real instrument was the ‘manocordio’, described by John Hothby, a Lucca-based

28 III.49.5 (fol. 65<sup>v</sup>).

29 IV.40.5 (fol. 93<sup>v</sup>).

30 Cf. Johannes Keller and Martin Kimbauer, ‘Keyboards Adapted to Music vs. Music Adapted to Keyboards: An Essay on “Vieltönigkeit” and Keyboard Instruments’, in: *Keyboard Perspectives. Yearbook of the Westfield Center for Historical Keyboard Studies* 12 (2019/20), 61–82.

31 For the broader context see Alexander Rehding, ‘Instruments of Music Theory’, in: *Music Theory Online* 22/4 (2016), <<https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.16.22.4/mto.16.22.4.rehding.html>> (accessed on 24 August 2024).

32 Franchino Gaffurio, *Practica musice* (Milan: Guillermus Le Signerre for Johannes Petrus de Lomatio, 1496), fol. [a6<sup>v</sup>], <<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k15160772>> (accessed on

English theorist and composer, who died in 1487. It featured additional red upper keys ('tasti rossi') for so-called enharmonic notes (such as a<sup>#</sup>, e<sup>#</sup>, or b<sup>#</sup>), alongside the normal 'tasti bianchi' for the diatonic and 'tasti neri' for the chromatic keys.<sup>33</sup> Hothby explained the necessity of these additional keys in relation to the different sizes of the semitone (*semitonio maggiore*, *semitonio minore*, *semitonio minime*) and connected them to the chromatic and enharmonic genera, referring to two species of the tetrachord as described in ancient Greek theory. He referred to his clavichord as a 'true master of all music' ('el monochordia e vero maestro di tuta la musica') because, in Hothby's view,<sup>34</sup> of its ability to produce all the necessary pitches for any kind of music. However, Hothby oriented himself according to Pythagorean tuning, which made the instrument unsuitable for musical practice in his time – in distinct contrast to Vicentino.<sup>35</sup>

The basic design of the keyboard as described by Hothby would later be called 'cimbalo cromatico'.<sup>36</sup> Although it seems obvious to assume that split keys – used sporadically for tuning and temperament reasons on keyboard instruments from the second half of the 15th century – served as a makeshift solution to the limitation of

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9 Sept. 2024); see also Irwin Young, *The 'Practica musicae' of Franchinus Gafurius, Translated and Edited with Musical Transcriptions* (Madison/Milwaukee/London, 1969), 27, n. 30.

- 33 John Hothby, 'Epistola' (in: I-Fn Magl.XIX.36), fol. 74–8, at 75"; ed. Albert Seay (ed.), *Johannes Hothby: Tres tractatuli contra Bartholomeum Ramum*, CSM 10 (Rome, 1964), 79–92, at 83–5.
- 34 Hothby, 'Epistola', fol. 76"; Seay (ed.), *Johannes Hothby*, 89.
- 35 Bonnie J. Blackburn, 'Musical Theory and Musical Thinking after 1450', in: *Music as Concept and Practice in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Reinhard Strohm and Bonnie J. Blackburn, *New Oxford History of Music III.1* (Oxford, 2001), 301–45, at 324–5; Sigrun Heinzelmann, 'John Hothby as Innovator: The Solmization System in La Calliopea Legale', in: *Studi Musicali*, N.S. 2 (2012), 353–96, at 366–72.
- 36 Christopher Stembridge 'The *Cimbalo cromatico* and Other Italian Keyboard Instruments with Nineteen or More Divisions to the Octave', in: PPR 6 (1993), 33–59, <<https://scholarship.claremont.edu/ppr/vol6/iss1/>> (accessed on 17 August 2024); Denzil Wraight and Christopher Stembridge, 'Italian Split-Keyed Instruments with Fewer than Nineteen Divisions to the Octave', in: PPR 7 (1994), 150–81, <<https://scholarship.claremont.edu/ppr/vol7/iss2/>> (accessed on 17 August 2024); Denzil Wraight, 'The *cimbalo cromatico* and other Italian string keyboard instruments with divided accidentals', in: *Chromatische und enharmonische Musik und Musikinstrumente des 16. & 17. Jahrhunderts – Beiträge zu einem Kolloquium der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Hochschule für Alte Musik Basel, und dem Musikwissenschaftlichen Institut der Universität Basel am 9. April 2002*, ed. Thomas Drescher and Martin Kirnbauer, in: *Schweizer Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft* 22 (2002), 11–250, at 105–34, <<https://www.e-periodica.ch/digbib/view?pid=sjm-004%3A2002%3A22-110>>, and the addition 'Checklist of Italian Harpsichords and Virginals with Split Sharps' (2016) <<http://www.denzilwraight.com/download.htm>> (accessed on 28 August 2024); Martin Kirnbauer, 'Viele Tasten – viele Töne. Das Cimbalo cromatico und musikalische Praxis', in: *Les espaces sonores. Stimmungen, Klanganalysen, spektrale Musiken*, ed. Michael Kunkel (Büdingen, 2016), 43–57.

only 12 keys per octave, they were also likely applied for all semitones on a keyboard. However, there is no concrete evidence of such an instrument before the middle of the 16th century and thus before the activities of Vicentino. Zarlino in 1558 claimed that the construction of such an instrument occurred as early as 1548.<sup>37</sup> But he is not necessarily a credible witness here, as he was also a student of Willaert and an aspirant to succeed him, clearly in competition with Vicentino, who had published his treatise three years prior.<sup>38</sup> In any case, Vicentino can claim to be the first to have combined two *cimbali cromatici* for his *archicembalo* by placing, so to speak, one on top of the other.

The instrument thus functioned as a catalyst, triggering and accelerating further development by making concrete listening experiences possible. It also made the many intervals and steps nameable and accessible in a very practical way via the keyboard, functioning here as an interface. On this basis, Vicentino developed new musical and previously unheard-of possibilities for 'nostra prattica'. It was neither an interest in ETS31, in microtones or quarter-tones, nor the antiquarian revival of chromatic and enharmonic genres, that led him to 'invent' the *archicembalo*, although these latter were probably already in Vicentino's mind earlier. But as soon as the instrument was available, the concrete experiences made completely different musical realities possible. This is also confirmed by the *arciorgano* built in 1561, as can be seen from the advertising leaflet published for it (Fig. 8).<sup>39</sup>

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37 Gioseffo Zarlino, *Le Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice: author, 1558), 139–42. Incidentally, the term *cimbalo cromatico* is not used in the text, but in Zarlino's estate inventory the instrument is explicitly described as 'Vn clauiciembalo cromatico'; Isabella Palumbo Fossati, 'La casa veneziana di Gioseffo Zarlino nel testamento e nell'inventario dei beni del grande teorico musicale', in: NRMI 20 (1986), 633–49, at 640 and 648 (facs.). On this instrument see now also Denzil Wraight, 'The Tuning of Trasantino's "Clavmusicum Omnitonum" and Zarlino's Enharmonic System' (2024) <<https://www.denzilwraight.com/publications.htm>> (accessed on 20 Dec. 2024).

38 See Michael Fend, *Gioseffo Zarlino, Theorie des Tonsystems – Das erste und zweite Buch der Istitutioni harmoniche (1573). Aus dem Italienischen übersetzt, mit Anmerkungen, Kommentaren und einem Nachwort versehen*, Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe XXXVI, Musikwissenschaft 43 (Frankfurt a.M., 1989), 397–9 and 429–33.

39 I-Bc C.32; see the edition in Martin Kirnbauer, 'Das Werbeblatt für das *Archiorgano*: Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar', in: idem (ed.), *Zwischen Vieltönigkeit und Mikrotonalität* (see n. 1), 115–27, at 116–19; for an English translation see Henry William Kaufmann, 'Vicentino's *Archiorgano*: An Annotated Translation', in: *JMT* 5/1 (1961), 32–53.

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**F** S E N D O cosa manifesta ad ogn'uno che il tenere alcose quelle cose che possono giouare al mondo, toma di grandissimo biasno. Il  
 Reverendo Don Niccola Vicentino di Vicentini, non uolendo incorrere in questo errore, fa per la presente manifestato, per beneficio  
 vniuersale della Musica, come egli con lung'hissima fatica e continuo studio, ha ritrouato è posto nouamente in pratica vno Arciorgano  
 di mirabilissimo artificio & armonia, il quale si vede manifestamente hauer suplito a molte imperfettioni che si ritrouano ne gli Organi or  
 dinarij, & hauer fatto l'organo perfetto.

Messer Vincenzo Colombo, & eccellentissimo in questa professione di organi, è stato quello il quale, ha posto in opera il detto Arciorgano se-  
 condo l'inuentione de l'autore, il quale con stupendo artificio l'ha in questa forma ridotto.

Tutte le canne son fatto di legno accioche sia lungo tempo accordato, e renda dolce intonatione; la canna piu lunga è di sette piedi, ma  
 per commodità di poterlo portare a viaggio, le sette canne maggiori sono state voltate di sopra in giù, tal che la canna piu lunga in appa-  
 rentia nella facciata dinanzi rimane di cinque piedi, & questo si è fatto a fine che si possa trasportar di loco in loco per commodità di  
 quei Principi che l'voranno godere.

Tutto disfatto e posto ne i suoi forciere non serà la carica d'vno mulo, e sarà facile il metterlo insieme, e non v'andra piu tempo di quattro,  
 o cinque hore.

Il numero de le canne sono in tutto cento venti sei di voce graue e dolcissima, & ha cento ventici tasti & altre tanti catenacci, le canne son  
 poste in quattro ordeni in modo di vna mitra, & col sommiere tanto bene ordinato, con certo ventici animelle, che per il suo marauil-  
 glioso artificio, oltre la sua dolcissima armonia, è bellissimo da uedere, con cento ventici tasti, non solamente di possi che rallegrano a vederli  
 comodi alla pratica del sonatore, accomodati in si breue spatio, che non occupano piu luogo della lunghezza & larghezza  
 della tastatura ordinaria de ogni organo.

L'acquisto, e la ricchezza dell'armonia, e di gradi che ha con tante corde aggiunte alla tastatura del comune organo, che tutte mancano;  
 è questa, che ui si guadagna tutta la Musica perfetta Diatonica semplice e mista, e cinque forti di consonantie in tal pratica mai piu non  
 vditte ne vlate.

Prima si son guadagnate le quinte perfette sopra i tasti bianchi del comune organo che fanno vno vdir mirabile, poi due forti di terze, vna  
 maggiore, & l'altra minore, e finalmente due forti di sette doue auiene che quando le quinte perfette son toccate insieme con le terze  
 perfette, empiono di tanta armonia l'orechie, che meglio in terra non si puo sentire.

Si sono ancora acquistati molti gradi d'accenti che fra tasti si ritrouano accomodati, a varie forti di pronuntie, simili alla pronuntia huma-  
 na, di modo che proua pure vn cantore de intonar qual li voglia vocce, l'organista haurà sempre modo di rispondergli nel medesimo tuo-  
 no sopra vno de tasti del detto perfetto organo, e sopra di quello potrà dar principio a sonar de tutti i tuoni, cosa di ammiratione grandis-  
 sima nella professione della Musica, il simile auerà nelle chiese, che ogni Maestro di cappella potrà intonare, o fare intonare, qual li for-  
 gia voce in choro che tornerà comoda a suoi cantori, & l'organista col detto instrumeto sempre risponderà in tuono, e ce per forte  
 cantando i cantori, e cercheranno ouer caleranno, l'organista potrà sempre accordar co' cantori nel fin de la loro voce, con bel modo potrà  
 ritornare nella prima intonatione, che alcuno non se n'accorderà.

Si ha ancor in questo instrumeto questo guadagno che nel concertare varie forti d'instrumeti non occorre accordarsi con detto Arciorga-  
 no, ma sia qual sonatore li voglia di liuro di viola o d'altro, potrà accordare indistipato a suo modo il suo liuro, o la sua viola sempre accor-  
 derà con detto Arciorgano, perche è di tal ricchezza, e perfettione che ha il modo di accordarsi subito, con tutti gli instrumeti e con  
 tutte le voci.

Si è fatto questo primo d'vn registro solo, ma si potranno gli altri far di piu registri, e da camera e da chiesa secondo l'intentione di chi  
 vorrà seruirsene.

Sopra questo instrumeto si possono sonare tutti i tre generi della Musica cio è il Diatonico, il Chromatico, & l'Enarmonico, in ogni talto es-  
 aminando però d'vno in altro talto, & anchor tutte le forti di Musica, antiche, & moderne con commodità di comporre, e di sopra can-  
 tare, e sonare tutti i modi di cantari e di aciri secondo l'idioma che da natura cantano tutte le nationi del mondo, cio è se l'inuente della so-  
 pra detta armonia, sentirà cantare vn Spagnuolo, vn Francese, vn Polonio, vn Inglese, vn Turco, o vero vn Hebreo, ancora che tutte le  
 nationi del mondo san differenti di pronuntie, e di uarij accenti, egli serierà e comporrà a quattro & a piu voci quel suo cantare con  
 maggiore armonia, & con piu consonantie che non si fa nella Musica comune, e potrà dettare compositioni cantare con gran diletto de gli  
 ascoltanti sopra il detto Arciorgano.

Molte altre commodità sono in detto instrumeto, come farebbe a dire da imparare a sonare, & a cantare le pronuntie delle passioni delle  
 parole, cosa che non si puo se non in qualche parte nella comune Musica; quando dolce, quando amaro, quando allegro, quando mesto,  
 quando soaue, quando alpro, quando ombroso & oscuro, e quando lucido, e chiaro, quando pio e diuoto, e quando crudele e disperato,  
 quando di lamentatione e di pianto, quando di allegrezza e di iubilatione, quando morto, & quando viuo, secondo l'asserto che vuol  
 muouere il sonatore, tutto questo appresso a gli altri, e stato grandissimo acquisto, hauendo ritrouato il modo del cantare, e con armonia  
 comporre, e sonare, i modi del cantare di tutte le nationi del mondo.

Piu oltre tra gli altri modi di comporre, e di sonare, v'è vno da comporre vna Musica da far recitar, ad vn cantor. Rito con l'instrumeto,  
 e sarà Musica tale, che da quello s'vdrà recitare ogni forte di parole, ouer parlar alquanto alto accompagnato dall'armonia.

Tutte le sopradette cose ogni giorno sono vedute, & vditte da molti Signorri, & gentili huomini, & da molti altri, e chi piu s'intende di Mu-  
 sica, piu li marauiglia di tale inuentione, conoscendo chiaramente, che con detto instrumeto, gli eccellenti pratici de la Musica commu-  
 ne possono imparare a sonare & a cantare questa noua Musica in vniuersale, o poco piu, secondo che piu o meno vi faranno studio.

L'autore di detta armonia, ha fatto vn Clauicembalo fatto al modo dell'Arciorgano con altre tanti tasti per poter studiare sopra quello, e fin'  
 hora egli vi sona alcune compositioni, che ricercano, parte diatonica mente tutti i tasti, e parte molti di varie forti de gradi, caminando  
 da vn talto all'altro con belli accordi in proposito delle parole con vario proceder d'armonia e de gradi.

L'inuenteur de questo Arciorgano l'ha voluto publicare, a fine, che se ad alcuno di quelli Principi che li dettano di fauore quelle inuentioni  
 che diano giouamento a l'arti & a le scientie, e consequentemente al mondo; piacere d'vdarlo, o di farlo in pratica se ne possi preua-  
 lere facendo sapere quel generoso Principe che l' detto inuenteur, gli donarà il Clauicembalo, l'Arciorgano, e se stesso offerendosi d'in-  
 segnare il modo di sonarlo ad ogn'vno che ne farà desideroso, & appresso d'insegnar di cantare quei due generi di Musica, che hoggi non  
 sono in vso i quali si potranno cantare, nelle chiese & nelle camere, & comunicarà quelli ad ogn'vno, a laude del eterno Iddio, & tutta  
 quella virtù, che con vn studio di tanti anni s'ha acquistata, per beneficio del mondo, & a perpetua memoria de presenti, & di quelli  
 che verranno dopo noi per molti secoli.

IN VENEZIA, Appresso Nicolò Beuilacqua. 1561. Adì 25. Ottobre.

Fig. 8: Advertising sheet of the *arciorgano*, Venice 1561 (Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, C.32).

In the list of advantages, the three *genera* are mentioned only briefly and in passing; where at the centre of this ‘organo Perfetto’ are (again and to mention only a few)

- ‘the richness of *armonia*, and of steps it has with so many pitches added to the keyboard of the common organ, that they [the common organs] all lack’ (‘la ricchezza dell’armonia, e di gradi che ha con tante corde aggiunte alla tastatura del comune organo, che tutte mancauano’; line 19)
- the ‘many gradations of accents which can be found among the keys, accommodated to various kinds of pronunciation, similar to the human pronunciation’ (‘molti gradi d’accenti che fra tasti si ritrouano, accommodati, a varie sorti di pronuntie, simili alla pronuntia humana’; line 25)
- ‘to learn to play, and to sing the pronunciations of the passions of words’ (‘da imparare a sonare, & a cantare le pronuntie delle passioni delle parole’; lines 45–46)
- and ‘to set a music to be recited by a single singer with the instrument’ (‘da comporre vna Musica da far recitar, ad vn cantor solo con l’instrumento’; line 51).<sup>40</sup>

In addition to the other advantages emphasized by Vicentino — such as the ability to better accompany singers and other instruments with flexible tuning, allowing performers to move beyond the constraints of meantone tuning when using a keyboard instrument, and adjust slightly to enhance the tuning of certain chords — the goal of linking music theory and practice is also clear here. His ideas resonate far into the future and, in my opinion, provide more than enough motivation to build an *archicembalo* or *arciorgano*.

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40 Cf. Martin Kirnbauer, “‘sonare & cantare le pronuntie delle passioni delle parole’ – Annäherungen an Nicola Vicentinos *arciorgano*”, in: *Stimme – Instrument – Vokalität. Blicke auf dynamische Beziehungen in der Alten Musik*, ed. Martina Papiro, Basler Beiträge zur Historischen Musikpraxis 41 (Basel 2021), 71–91, <<https://schwabe.ch/martina-papiro-gross-gegen-um-1500-orazio-michi-und-die-harfe-um-1600-978-3-7965-4109-4?c=833>> (accessed on 20 Dec. 2024).

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# Alessandro Fabri and his Pupils: Protagonists of the Art of the 'Zimbararo' in Naples

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Francesco Nocerino

Homines dum docent discunt.  
(L.A. Seneca)

Born in the second half of the 16th century, Alessandro Fabri lived in an era that witnessed the flourishing of important musical personalities in our culture, and through a combination of rationality and passion, he gave life to masterpieces that still amaze today. He was one of the masters of the art of harpsichord and organ-making in Naples, as confirmed by new archival documents.

Thanks to his craftsmanship, Fabri's harpsichord and organ workshop became a point of reference for the production and commerce of high-quality keyboard instruments which were admired by musicians and noble patrons and contributed to the spread of refined musical culture in Naples. Indeed, many representatives of important noble Neapolitan families at the time, together with high prelates of the Church, were prominent figures among Fabri's vast clientele, and they contributed to fostering a rich and lively market that attracted apprentices and labourers to Naples from many parts of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Keith A. Larson, 'Condizione sociale dei musicisti e dei loro committenti nella Napoli del Cinque e Seicento', in: *Musica e cultura a Napoli dal XV al XIX secolo*, ed. Lorenzo Bianconi and Renato Bossa (Florence, 1983), 61-77; Enrica Donisi, "La deve essere stata una bella, et non mai più udita musica". Gli organisti, i nobili e le accademie culturali a Napoli dalla metà del Cinquecento alla metà del Seicento', in: *Napoli e l'Europa: gli strumenti, i costruttori e la musica per organo dal XV al XX secolo*, ed. Luigi Sisto and Emanuele Cardi (Battipaglia [SA], 2005), 177-91; Francesco Nocerino, 'Gli strumenti musicali a Napoli', in: *Storia della musica e dello spettacolo a Napoli. Il Seicento*, ed. Francesco Cotticelli and Paologiovanni Maione, 2 vols. (Naples, 2019), ii, 1767-814.

Alessandro Fabri<sup>2</sup> was the son of Ercole Fabri, a Florentine organ-builder already in Naples from 1567.<sup>3</sup> From a young age, Alessandro was initiated into the art of making musical instruments at his father's workshop, and soon showed great talent as well as business skills. In 1579, he sold a used clavichord<sup>4</sup> to the bishop of Pozzuoli, Giovan Matteo Castaldo, and signed a contract of *locatio personae* for one of his collaborators, Luca Dernofio, despite the fact that Alessandro was still under the *patria potestas* of his father Ercole, owner of the workshop. The *emancipatio pro Alexandro Fabri*, a formal act that freed him to exercise his profession without constraint, arrived on 25 January 1582,<sup>5</sup> and from that moment on, Alessandro was able to run the workshop on his own, signing contracts and performing other legal acts independently.

Alessandro Fabri, a contemporary of notable musicians, was court organ builder in Naples during the period when Jean de Macque, Giovanni Maria Trabaci and Ascanio Mayone<sup>6</sup> were active. From 1591 he received payments for work on the organs of the royal chapel,<sup>7</sup> and from 1609<sup>8</sup> he officially appears as palace organ builder, remaining in office until at least 1624.<sup>9</sup>

Although he owned real estate,<sup>10</sup> Fabri lived in a rented house in the densely populated Carità district<sup>11</sup> where he carried out his activities. Certainly before June 1593,

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- 2 The surname Fabri, in addition to Ercole and Alessandro, respectively father and son, also includes the harpsichord makers Francesco and his nephew Filippo, both active in Rome in the 17th century and originally from Senigallia. Cf. Patrizio Barbieri, 'Cembaloro, organaro chitarraro e fabbricatore di corde armoniche nella Polyanthea di Pinaroli (1718–32)', in: *Recercare* 1 (1989), 123–209, at 150–1; Donald Boalch, *Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord 1440–1840*, 3rd ed., ed. by Charles Mould (Oxford, 1995), 56. There is still no known relationship between the two Fabris active in Rome and those active in Naples.
  - 3 App. B, doc. 1.
  - 4 App. B, doc. 2.
  - 5 Archivio di Stato di Napoli [= ASN], *Notai del Cinquecento, scheda 369* (notary Cesare Rosanova), protocollo 1, fols. 66<sup>r</sup>–67<sup>r</sup>; cf. Panayotis K. Ioannou, 'Documenti inediti sulle arti a Napoli tra Cinque e Seicento (seconda parte)', in: *Ricerche sul '600 napoletano. Saggi e documenti 2002* (Naples, 2003), 135–46, at 140.
  - 6 Cf. Ulisse Prota-Giurleo, 'Giovanni Maria Trabaci e gli organisti della Real Cappella di Palazzo di Napoli', in: *L'Organo* 1 (1960), no. 2, 185–95; Domenico Antonio D'Alessandro, 'Giovanni de Macque e i musicisti della Real Cappella napoletana. Nuovi documenti, precisazioni biografiche e una fonte musicale ritrovata', in: *La musica del Principe. Studi e prospettive per Carlo Gesualdo*, ed. Luisa Curinga (Lucca, 2008), 21–156.
  - 7 Nunzio Faraglia, 'Bilancio per arbitro del real patrimonio de questo regno del Anno V. e Indictionis 1591 et 1592', in: *Archivio storico per le provincie napoletane* 1 (1876), fasc. iii, 409.
  - 8 Ulisse Prota-Giurleo, 'Organari napoletani del XVII e XVIII secolo', in: *L'Organo* 2 (1961), no. 2, 109–28, at 121.
  - 9 App. B, doc. 48.
  - 10 App. B, docs. 6, 7.
  - 11 App. B, doc. 11.

he married Belluccia Mennardo,<sup>12</sup> sister of the Flemish painter Ottavio Mennardo.<sup>13</sup> They very probably had no children, a fact suggested by the restitution of part of his late wife's dowry in 1632.<sup>14</sup>

Despite periods of economic fluctuation, Alessandro Fabri enjoyed an intense commercial activity, as evidenced by the numerous monetary transactions on his banking records. These movements include purchases, sales, loans, rentals, and annuities.<sup>15</sup> The same bank records also reveal that this skilled organ-builder customarily granted loans at interest,<sup>16</sup> a practice of investing one's assets that was quite common among craftsmen and artists of the time.<sup>17</sup>

Substantial archival documentation confirms that numerous instruments came out of Fabri's workshop: organs, harpsichords, *claviorgani*. Unfortunately, only two of his precious instruments have come down to us. One is the spinet in the Tagliavini Collection, signed and dated 'OPUS ALEXANDRI FABRI NEAPOLITANI MDXCVIII',<sup>18</sup> of which the lid of the outer case is attributed to Belisario Corenzio.<sup>19</sup> The other, though considerably altered, is the organ in the Church of Sant'Anna dei Lombardi in Naples (Monteoliveto).<sup>20</sup> Both fine works demonstrate the competent and careful craftsmanship of this skilled maker of musical instruments.

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12 App. B, docs. 10, 54.

13 Panayotis K. Ioannou, 'Documenti inediti sulle arti a Napoli tra Cinque e Seicento (terza parte)', in: *Ricerche sul '600 napoletano. Saggi e documenti 2009* (Naples, 2010), 79–86, at 80–1. The Flemish surname Menhart in ancient Neapolitan documents appears altered in many ways, including Minardo, Menardi, Mendardo and, indeed, Mennardo.

14 App. B, docs. 10, 54.

15 App. B, passim.

16 App. B, docs. 52, 53.

17 He shared this practice with the well-known harpsichord maker Onofrio Guarracino. Cf. Francesco Nocerino, 'Arte cembalaria a Napoli. Documenti e notizie su costruttori e strumenti napoletani', in: *Ricerche sul '600 napoletano. Saggi e documenti 1996–1997* (Naples, 1998), 85–109, at 95–8.

18 *Clavicembali e spinette dal XVI al XIX secolo*, ed. Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini and John Henry van der Meer (Bologna, 1987), 150–5; *Collezione Tagliavini. Catalogo degli strumenti musicali*, ed. John Henry van der Meer and Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini, 2 vols. (Bologna, 2007/08), i, 322–9, <<https://digital.fondazioneclarisbo.it/artwork/collezione-tagliavini-catalogo-degli-strumenti-musicali-3>> (accessed 2 Nov. 2024).

19 Cf. Pierluigi Leone de Castris, *Pittura del Cinquecento a Napoli* (Naples, 1991), 203.

20 Cf. Stefano Romano, *L'arte organaria a Napoli*, vol. 1 (Naples 1979), 117–20. An article about the last restoration carried out in 2012 by Giuseppe Fontana is in Vincenzo Pica, *L'organo di Sant'Anna dei Lombardi a Napoli un atto d'amore: il ripristino dell'anno 2012* (Naples, 2012), 43–61.



**Fig. 1:** Alessandro Fabri, *Rectangular Spinet* (Naples, 1598), Tagliavini Collection, Bologna (Photo: Catalina Vicens, @Museo di San Colombano – Collezione Tagliavini, Genus Bononiae).

Information referring to the 16th-century Neapolitan spinet can be found in the catalogue of musical instruments in the Tagliavini Collection in San Colombano. Concerning the important and imposing organ of Monteoliveto in Naples, built by Alessandro Fabri and situated in the church behind what used to be Piazza Carità, it must be said that very little was previously known, and the scant information available referred mainly to a reworking carried out in 1697 by the organ builder Cesare Catarinuzzi.<sup>21</sup> Thanks, however, to old payments and notarial documents from 1607, not only can we now confirm that the organ in Sant'Anna dei Lombardi was built by Alessandro Fabri, but we also know the names of other craftsmen who took part in the construction of the instrument. The complex design of the case, one of the richest and most beautiful Italian organ facades, was the work of Mario Cartaro and his son Bartolomeo.<sup>22</sup> The carvings were made by Giovan Domenico Saccataro while the gilders were Giacomo de Martino, Bartolomeo Magliocca and Giovan Tommaso Smiraglia.<sup>23</sup>

21 Furio Luccichenti, 'I Caterinozzi, famiglia di organari', in: *Recercare* 9 (1997), 243–60, at 254.

22 Michela Tarallo, 'Santa Maria di Monteoliveto a Napoli, dalla fondazione (1411) alla soppressione monastica: topografia e allestimenti liturgici', tesi di dottorato in Scienze archeologiche e storico-artistiche, Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, 2013/14, 172.

23 *Ibid.*, 172–7, 414–17.

Fabri, taking as his point of reference the organ situated at that time in the Chiesa dei Girolomini in Naples, was entirely responsible for the sound producing part of the instrument.<sup>24</sup> The 61 facade-pipes made of tin, partly obtained from the pipes of an earlier organ, are still today divided into five compartments and arranged in a pyramid shape in each section (15-11-9-11-15), as indicated in the descriptions of 1607, which also mention the dummy pipes still present in the upper part of the facade. The facade-pipes all corresponded to the *Principal*, and it is very likely that the instrument's manual, with ivory and ebony keys and an extended octave, would have consisted of 61 keys with a full five octave range (C-c<sup>4</sup>).<sup>25</sup> There is no mention of a pedalboard. We also know that Fabri's organ had nine stops activated by a draw-stop action ('tirante à balestra') with a walnut spring chest. Finally, the windchest consisted of four bellows. As payment for the entire sounding part, 400 ducats were agreed upon, using 'only the pipes of the old organ'. Fabri committed to building the instrument in six months. Today, the original tonal design is unfortunately completely compromised by the numerous renovations and restorations undergone over time, and we can now only admire the aesthetic magnificence that has survived from Fabri's day.



**Fig. 2:** Church of Monteoliveto, *Organ*, prospect of the facade, 1607, Naples (Photo: F. Nocerino).

24 App. B, docs. 26, 27, 28. Cf. Tarallo, 'Santa Maria di Monteoliveto a Napoli', 413-14.

25 This range of 61 keys is documented, and still present today on the 17th-century De Franco organ of 1650 in the Chiesa del Gesù Nuovo in Naples, cf. Stefano Romano, *L'organo restaurato nella chiesa del Gesù Nuovo* (Naples, 1986).

Alessandro Fabri was referred to as a nobleman as early as 1589, and he is mentioned as a *cavaliere* (knight) in various documents. The document concerning the organ in the Church of Sant'Anna dei Lombardi confirms that Fabri indeed held this honour: it specifies that he was a *Cavaliere dello Speron d'Oro* (Knight of the Golden Spur), a pontifical knightly order whose members included famous musicians such as Orlando di Lasso, Pomponio Nenna, Alessandro Scarlatti, Wolfgang Amadé Mozart and Niccolò Paganini. An unedited document, dated 1609, confirms that Alessandro Fabri was also baron of Moyo (now Moio della Civitella [Salerno]), a hamlet in the ancient province of Principato Citra (see Fig. 3).<sup>26</sup>

C. ad. die decimo mens febr. 3. ind. 1609. n. p.  
 . cord nobi. dom. by Alexander fabri (una  
 Cing. de sprondors Baro Casaly di m. moio  
 di v. p. Citra sp. de aff. conit. Lauretis  
 longo dello peltore. quiti la juris dict.  
 civile del d. Casale con la mira dactia a  
 larecognit. delle p. cas. ed tutte glle d.  
 g. honori g. g. em. dom. n. juris d. casale  
 ed adessa juris d. civile specta. con. pec  
 casale ed tutte glle vend. ed adessa juris  
 d. civ. spectaans colli come l'alt. g. dec. m.  
 L. h. v. o

Fig. 3: ASN, Notai del Cinquecento, scheda 437 (notaio Lutio Capezzuto), protocollo 24, 10 febbraio 1609, fol 102<sup>v</sup>-104<sup>r</sup>.

The last records of Alessandro Fabri's life date back to 1632.<sup>27</sup> Although the precise date of his death is not yet known, starting with the earliest document of 1579, his activity as an instrument maker is attested to for no fewer than 53 years.

The papers examined consist principally of documents relating to payments for acquisitions, sales and maintenance, but also testimonies in matrimonial proceedings and various parish certificates. From them, valuable information emerges concerning the typical organisation of a craftsman's workshop and the working relationships

26 App. B, doc. 59.

27 App. B, doc. 54.

between owner and employees. Fabri's reputation as a skilled craftsman, already well known thanks to his construction of instruments of exquisite workmanship, is enhanced by the fundamental role he played in the training of numerous artisans who enlivened the Neapolitan musical scene of his time.

Generally speaking, at the top of the hierarchy of a workshop, which was often the residence of the head craftsman, was the *mastro* (*maestro*, teacher), who possessed the so-called 'secrets of the trade' (the techniques of production), who directed the work and represented the heart of the activity. Alongside him were various collaborators, sometimes linked by kinship (brothers, sons, nephews), who were divided into workers and apprentices. The contract that regulated the relationship between the collaborators and the master, most often drawn up by a notary, was the *locatio operarum* or *locatio servitiorum* in the case of the workers, i.e., more or less specialised labourers who received remuneration and who usually attained this status after a period of apprenticeship. For the apprentices, who were usually youngsters or even children as young as six or seven, the *locatio personae*, an actual contract of apprenticeship, was used. In exchange for the workers' commitment, the master took responsibility for their training, not only passing on to them the knowledge and techniques of the trade, but also providing them with food, lodging and clothing. This system was based on learning by imitation and correction. The apprentices observed the master's work and imitated him, being corrected and directed when necessary. At the same time, they performed simple tasks commensurate with their abilities, thus contributing to the workshop's production. This apprenticeship unquestionably represented a path of growth and emancipation for the youths who, through hard work and dedication, could acquire a valuable profession that would allow them to enter the job market as independent craftsmen. And alongside the aspect of training, one should not overlook the social value of apprenticeships, considering that the young workers were welcomed into the master's family, learning not only a trade, but also the principles of morality and respect that regulated daily life.

Lastly, it must be remembered that the contracts of *locatio personae* often involved young adults from towns outside the city walls. This occurred because such a contract was the easiest way for a young craftsman to enter a workshop, enabling him to get to know the demands of a new market and the preferences of a different clientele. The contract of *locatio personae* was also profitable for the master of the workshop, who thus obtained qualified collaboration at a very low cost.

In the instrument-maker's workshop, other figures also contributed to production in the advanced stages. Organ and harpsichord makers, in particular, made use of the valuable collaboration of other artisans and artists. Above all, these included the gilder, carver, painter and sculptor, but also the carpenter and tinsmith, each of whom contributed with his personal expertise to the production of the finished instrument. These craftsmen did not limit themselves to simple manual tasks, but instead elevated the construction of the organ to a true work of art. By means of complex and exquisite

workmanship, and thanks to a careful synergy within the workshop, these artisans created an instrument that was not only a masterpiece of sound, but also a marvel for the eyes.

We possess information concerning two of Alessandro Fabri's disciples. The first, Luca Dernofio, came to Naples from his native city of Bologna to learn the art of making instruments.<sup>28</sup> Paolo Gentile, born in 1577 and originally from Caserta, worked first in Fabri's workshop before going to Filippo Zuccaloni in Rome, and finally returning to Fabri in Naples.<sup>29</sup> In addition to these two men, the pupils of the 'noble' Fabri also included renowned craftsmen with whom we are already familiar,<sup>30</sup> such as Francesco Beghini, Crisostomo Noci and Giuseppe Pesce. The testimonies found in the documents of the time offer precious details regarding the master-pupil relationship that bound Fabri to his disciples. Francesco Beghini, from Lucca, declared that he learnt the art from Fabri during an apprenticeship that began when he was around fourteen years old.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Crisostomo Noci, an organist and craftsman of Roman origin, attested to having been a pupil of the Neapolitan master. Giuseppe Pesce, a harpsichord and organ builder from Catania, also recognised Fabri as his mentor, from whom he learnt the art from about the age of six. It was in his master's workshop that he met Francesco Beghini during the period in which he completed his apprenticeship. The climate of collaboration and mutual support in the activities of the *cavaliere's* workshop is particularly interesting, especially in light of the new family relations that resulted from the marriage between Francesco Beghini and Vittoria Frezzarola. Vittoria, originally from Lauro, was Fabri's niece and the cousin of Crisostomo Noci's wife. These relationships not only strengthened the ties within the workshop between master and pupils, but also certainly contributed to creating an environment of mutual support and cooperation that led to the success and growth of the business.<sup>32</sup>

Also mentioned in the documents are Giovan Domenico Rizzo<sup>33</sup> and Geronimo d'Amato,<sup>34</sup> certainly collaborators of Fabri, though an actual apprenticeship, while probable, is unconfirmed.

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28 Cf. Ioannou, 'Documenti inediti' (see n. 5), 140–1.

29 Francesco Nocerino, 'Indocta manus noli me tangere. Cembalari a Napoli nel secolo della meraviglia', in: *Informazione Organistica e Organologica* 33 (2021), no. 48, serie iii, 93–139, at 114–15.

30 See App. A.

31 ASN, *Processetti matrimoniali*, 1608, letter F, n. 280. I thank the scholar and friend, Domenico Antonio D'Alessandro, for pointing me to this document as well as the subsequent one found by him.

32 Nocerino, 'Indocta manus noli me tangere' (see n. 29), 105–6.

33 App. B, doc. 31.

34 App. B, docs. 19, 40. Geronimo D'Amato, active between 1599 and 1624, was the organ builder of the church of the Concezione degli Spagnoli, the Annunziata and the Naples Cathedral

Finally, an examination of the documents allows us to confirm that Alessandro Fabri's legacy lived on through the work of Beghini's pupil, Giulio Cesare Molinaro. Beghini himself, in fact, acknowledged that he had passed on the teachings of Fabri, emphasising the fundamental role that his master played in the training of Molinaro, who served as court harpsichord maker until 1656.

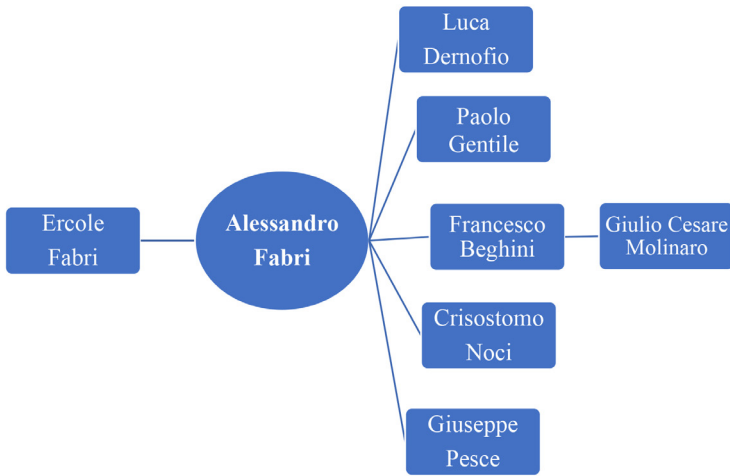
In that same year, a terrible epidemic of the plague swept through Naples, decimating around two thirds of the entire population. This event constituted a veritable sea change separating many Neapolitan activities into a time 'before' and 'after'. Even in the sphere of musical instrument making, the year 1656 marked the end of a generation, represented by Alessandro Fabri and his pupils, and the advent of a new generation, comprised of the Neapolitan Onofrio Guarracino (who survived the plague) as well as various other makers not native to Naples such as Andrea Basso, Gian Gualberto Ferreri, Giovanni Natale Boccalari and Antonio Sabatino. The latter, active in Naples, built new instruments in the second half of the 17th century.

To conclude this brief overview of information regarding keyboard instruments built and the biographical data of the builders, it is evident that Alessandro Fabri was not only a protagonist and point of reference, but also a true leader in the art of harpsichord and organ building between the 16th and 17th centuries in Naples.

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(cf. Prota-Giurleo, 'Organari napoletani' [see n. 8], 112, and Roberto di Stefano, *La Cattedrale di Napoli* [Naples, 1974], 35). His instruments are documented at the Cathedral of Nola, the Chiesa Maggiore of Morrone in Molise and the Chiesa di San Domenico in Nicastro, now Lamezia Terme (Catanzaro). Cf. Franco Strazzullo, 'Inediti per la storia della musica a Napoli', in: *Il Fuidoro. Cronache napoletane* 2 (1955), no. 3-4, 106-8, at 108, and Vincenzo Rizzo, 'Documenti', in: Stefano Romano, *L'arte organaria a Napoli*, vol. 2 (Naples, 1990), 185-96, at 195. For the organ in Nicastro see also the file in Giorgio Ceraudo (ed.), *Capolavori di arte organaria restaurati in Calabria* (Soveria Mannelli, 1995), 15-17.

## Appendix A: Fabri's Workshop



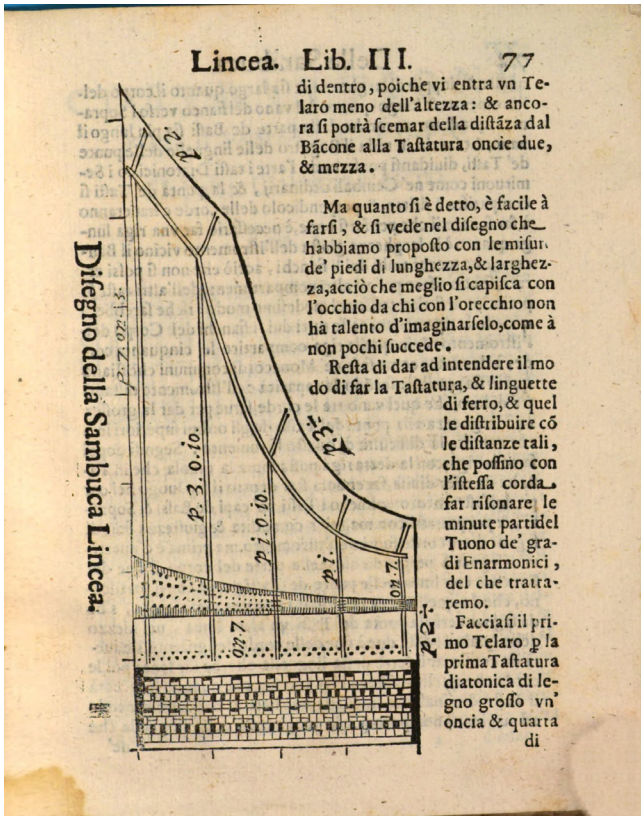
**Fig. 4:** Persons in Fabri's workshop. Image: Francesco Nocerino.

### BEGHINI, FRANCESCO

Born in 1568 in Lucca, Beghini moved to Naples in around 1580. He was an apprentice in the workshop of the court harpsichord and organ builder, Alessandro Fabri. Hitherto best known as the builder of the *Sambuca Lincea* described by the member of the Accademia dei Lincei, Fabio Colonna,<sup>35</sup> Francesco Beghini was an esteemed craftsman and the master of Giulio Cesare Molinaro, the court harpsichord maker until 1656. His activity is documented until at least 1621.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Fabio Colonna, *La sambuca lincea, ovvero dell'istromento musico perfetto lib. III* (Naples: Vitali, 1618), p. 76, <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb10162265>> (accessed 18 July 2024).

<sup>36</sup> App. B, doc. 45.



**Fig. 5:** Construction diagram of the *Sambuca lincea*; Fabio Colonna, *La sambuca lincea, ovvero dell'istromento musico perfetto lib. III* (Naples: Vitali, 1618), p. 77, <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb10162265>> (accessed on 17 July 2024).

## DERNOFIO, LUCA

Very little information exists concerning the biography of this first apprentice of Alessandro Fabri. Luca Dernofio, born in 1561, of Bolognese origin, arrived in Naples at the age of 18 and from 1579 was tied to Alessandro Fabri, 'organistro e cimbararo', through a contract of *locatio personae* for six years for the purpose of learning the 'artem predictam organistrj et cimbali'.<sup>37</sup>

At present, no instruments have come down to us by either Luca Dernofio or Paolo Gentile, nor do we know whether Dernofio ever started his own business.

<sup>37</sup> Ioannou, 'Documenti inediti' (see n. 5), 140; ASN, Notaio Cesare Rosanova, 319/1, 2 March 1579, fols. 66<sup>r</sup>-67<sup>r</sup>.

**GENTILE, PAOLO**

Paolo Gentile, born in 1577, son of the late Marino Gentile of Caserta, began his apprenticeship at the age of 14 as a keyboard instrument maker in the Neapolitan workshop of Alessandro Fabri, remaining there for about eight years.<sup>38</sup> In 1597, we find him in Rome in the service of the harpsichord maker Filippo Zuccaloni, who hired him 'ad usum artis conficiendi ut dicitur li gravicimboli'. Zuccaloni undertook to keep him in his workshop for four years (1597–1600), in order to teach him the trade and, in the last year, to pay him 1.20 *scudi* per month.<sup>39</sup> In reality, the arrangement was an example of a *locatio personae*, simply providing the master of the workshop with cheap skilled labour and the 'apprentice' a rapid access to the job market. In December 1600, Paolo Gentile returned to Naples as Fabri's collaborator, probably with a contract of *locatio servitorum*.

To the best of our current knowledge, no instruments built directly by Paolo Gentile have surfaced, nor is it known whether this craftsman ever had his own workshop.

**MOLINARO, GIULIO CESARE**

Born in 1594 in Vallo de Novi, present-day Vallo della Lucania (in the province of Salerno), Molinaro arrived in Naples in 1609, where he began to learn the art of harpsichord building in the workshop of Francesco Beghini. From June 1639, we find him as court harpsichord maker. He was in the service of the Cappella Palatina until 1656, the year of his death due to the terrible epidemic of the plague.<sup>40</sup>

**NOCI, CRISOSTOMO (ROMANO)**

Born in 1575, the organ and harpsichord maker Crisostomo Noci (also called 'Romano' for his Roman origins) was active in his native city until November 1596.<sup>41</sup> A few years

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38 Francesco Nocerino, 'L'attività cembalaria e organaria di Alessandro Fabri', in: *Quaderni dell'Archivio Storico / Istituto Banco di Napoli Fondazione*, 2005/2006, 179–93, at 184.

39 Patrizio Barbieri, 'Harpsichord-Makers in Late Renaissance and Early Baroque Rome', in: *Informazione organistica* 29, no. 2 (Dec. 2017), 187–215, at 200 and 208–9.

40 Salvatore di Giacomo, 'La casa della Musica', in: *Napoli Nobilissima*, nuova serie, vol. 2 (Jan./Feb. 1921), 132–6, at 136; cf. Prota-Giurleo, 'Organari napoletani' (see n. 8), 123; Dinko Fabris, 'Strumenti di corde, musicisti e congregazioni a Napoli alla metà del Seicento', in: *Note d'Archivio per la Storia Musicale*, nuova serie 1 (1983), 63–110, at 80, 85, tab. I and II.

41 Barbieri, 'Harpsichord-Makers' (see n. 39), 208.

later in 1603, we find him in Naples,<sup>42</sup> frequenting the workshop of Alessandro Fabri (of whom he claimed to be a pupil). He still had ties to Rome in 1604 where, as Fabri's collaborator, he delivered an organ to be inserted into an ebony desk.<sup>43</sup> Noci's activity is attested in Naples until July 1621<sup>44</sup> (the date on which he received payment for a 'large four-register harpsichord' and a very rare 'spinet together with the *zimbalò*'). This document would seem to confirm the production in Naples of a type of instrument known particularly in the area of Flanders.<sup>45</sup>

## PESCE, GIUSEPPE

Giuseppe Pesce, originally from Catania, was born around 1585. He was a pupil and collaborator in Naples of Alessandro Fabri in whose service we find him already in 1595.<sup>46</sup> In the *cavaliere's* workshop, he met Francesco Beghini and Crisostomo Noci. His kinship with Orazio Pesce has not been proven.<sup>47</sup> He had his own workshop in the piazza of Monteoliveto and his activity in Naples as organ and harpsichord maker is documented until at least 1636.

## Appendix B: Documents

In the transcription of the documents, certain editorial decisions have been made to improve legibility. Some abbreviated words have been written out (e.g.: d=*don*; xbre=*dicembre*); the alternation of upper/lower case, accentuation and punctuation have been brought into line with current usage; the letters j and y have been replaced by i and ii; ducats are indicated by the letter 'd.' followed by the amount in numbers (e.g.: *ducati venti* = d.20).

The documents contain numerous grammatical and lexical errors, often originating from the common use of the Neapolitan dialect or from jargon used by local craftsmen. In these cases, editorial interventions, additions, corrections and cuts have been indicated in square brackets. Unless otherwise indicated, the location of archives, churches and monasteries is the city of Naples.

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42 Giuseppe Ceci, 'Maestri organari nell'Italia meridionale', in: *Samnium. Rivista storica trimestrale* 5 (1932), no. 2, 112-29, at 122; Prota-Giurleo, 'Organari napoletani' (see n. 8), 123-4; Nocerino, 'Arte cembalaria a Napoli' (see n. 17), 99.

43 Barbieri, 'Harpsichord-Makers' (see n. 39), 72.

44 App. B, doc. 46.

45 Francesco Nocerino, 'Evidence for Italian Mother-and-Child Virginals: an Important Document Signed by Onofrio Guarracino', in: *GSJ* 53 (2000), 317-21.

46 App. B, doc. 15.

47 Nocerino, 'Indocta manus noli me tangere' (see n. 29), at 127.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that in Naples in the period between the 16th and 18th centuries:

- for monetary values, one *ducato* was divided into 5 *tari*, one *tari* into 2 *carlini*, one *carlino* into 10 *grana*;
- for measurements of length, one *canna* was equivalent to 8 *palmi* (m. 2.109) and one *palm* (cm 26.36) was divided into 12 *once* (1 *oncia* = cm 2.19);
- for measurements of weight, one *cantaro* was equivalent to 100 *rotoli* (kg 89.09), one *rotolo* was divided into 1000 *trappesi*, and one *libbra* into 360 *trappesi*.

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**doc. year    Text**

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1.    1567    *A Maurizio della Quadra d.5. E per lui a mastro Ercole Fabri fiorentino a compimento di d.250 che il detto mastro Ercole doveva avere da lui per la vendita di uno istrumento di musica de più registri da lui comprato per detto prezzo con dichiararsi che li restanti d.245 glieli ha pagati in più e diverse partite in contanti et a compimento ancora di qualsivoglia negozio tra di loro sino a questo dì. (ASN, Banchieri antichi, giornale di cassa 39, 23 aprile 1567).  
[Maurizio della Quadra buys for 250 ducati a musical instrument with multiple registers from Ercole Fabri, Florentine].*

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  2.    1579    *Al reverendissimo vescovo de Pezuolo [= Pozzuoli] d.10, et per lui ad Alesandro Fabri dissero per prezzo d'uno gravicordio usato che le ha venduto. A lui contanti (ASN, Banchieri antichi, giornale di cassa 73, 18 maggio 1579).  
[The bishop of Pozzuoli buys for 10 ducati a clavichord Alessandro Fabri].*

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  3.    1588    *A Tiberio del Pezzo d.100 et per lui al magnifico Alessandro Fabri dissero sono per compimento del prezzo de uno organo de dece [= dieci] palmi a tre registri con una spinetta che li have venduto che lo restante ngelo [= glielo] have pagato con altri registri et istromenti che li have consignato et detto organo resta in potere suo da consignarlo adovi [= dove] da lui sarà ordinato. (ASN, Banchieri antichi, giornale di cassa 94, 20 ottobre 1588).  
[Tiberio del Pezzo buys for 100 ducati an organ joined with a spinet from Alessandro Fabri].*

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  4.    1592    *A Pietro Villanova d.43 et per lui ad Alessandro Fabri dissero seli pagano per il prezzo d'uno Cimbalo di due registri et Cinquanta tasti che li ha venduto, et consignato con obbligo che facendo alcun motivo per mancamento del detto Istromento sia obligato detto Alessantro a rifare il danno al detto Pietro (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 4, 2 dicembre 1592, fol. 800).  
[Pietro Villanova pays 43 ducati for a harpsichord with two registers and 50 keys from Alessandro Fabri].*

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  5.    1592    *Ad Alessandro Fabri d.32 et per lui a Marco Romano dissero se li pagano per il prezzo d'un Zimbalo a due registri, che li ha venduto et consignato (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 4, 15 dicembre 1592, fol. 835).  
[Alessandro Fabri buys a harpsichord with two registers from Marco Romano].*
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6. 1592 *A Sansonetto Moschetto d.13.2.10 et per lui ad Alessandro Fabri dissero se li pagano in conto di d.27 per una casa dietro il palazzo de Monsignor Nunzio consistente in uno bascio due cammere, et una saletta atteso li restanti d. 13.2.10 disse pagarseli alla mità di luglio prossimo venturo mediante cautela per notare Aniello Rosanova alla quale se habbia relatione* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 4, 15 aprile 1592, fol. 245).  
[Sansonetto Moschetto pays 13 and a half ducats to Alessandro Fabri for a house on the ground floor consisting of two bedrooms and a parlour, located behind the palace of the Apostolic Nunzio].
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7. 1592 *A Sansonetto Moschetto d.12 et per lui ad Alessandro Fabri dissero se li pagano per l'uscita della Casa a lui locata havendoli pagata l'Intrata nel principio che detto Sansonetto cominciò ad Habitare come per poliza in questo banco per ciò che se li pagassero quando havea prestatò fede di notare Aniello Rosanova di haverli cassata l'obbliganza di detta locazione notata nelli margini con declaratione di essere integrante sodisfatto per causa di tal locazione in dorso della qual poliza vi è fede di detto notare Aniello come il predetto Alessandro per detti d.12 ha fatto quietanza al detto Sansonetto, et cassatoli detta obliganza conforme alla supradetta poliza mediante Instrumento fatto per lui notato nell'Immagine di detto obliganza.* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 4, 4 agosto 1592, fol. 499).  
[see doc. no. 6].
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8. 1593 *Ad Alessandro Fabri d.100 et per lui a Giovan Battista Della Porta, dissero se li pagano per final Conto fatto tra di loro di denari, et resto che ha ricevuto da lui in conto d'uno organo, che il detto Giovan Battista con uno Zimmalo con la Cascia di noce et restano saldi insieme e in sino a questo presente di 22 stante di tutti i Conti fatti tra di loro* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 7, 22 marzo 1593, fol. 229).  
[Alessandro Fabri purchases for 100 ducats a harpsichord from the philosopher and scientist, Giovan Battista della Porta].
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9. 1593 *Al magnifico Alessandro Fabri d.6 et per lui al magnifico Giovanni Antonio Mari dissero sono per una spinetta da esso venduta, a lui contanti* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale, matr. 6, 16 settembre 1593, fol. 213).  
[Alessandro Fabri buys for 6 ducats a spinet from Giovanni Antonio Mari].
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10. 1593 *Ad Ottavio Mennardo [sic = Ottavio Menhart, pittore] d.50 e per lui ad Alessandro Fabri suo cognato, detti celi Impronta gratis per quindici di da questo presente giorno dodici stante delli quali ne lo ha Cautelato per instrumento per notare Oratio Griffò* (ASBN, Banco dello Spinto Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 7, 12 giugno 1593, fol. 468).  
[Ottavio Mennardo lends 50 ducats to his brother-in-law, Alessandro Fabri].
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11. 1593 *Al magnifico Alessandro Fabri d.5 et per lui al magnifico Massentio Sabatino dissero a complimento di d.12, atteso li altri li ha ricevuti per questo banco et contanti, quali d.12 sono per l'integra peggione d'uno anno finiendo all'ultimo d'aprile1594 d'una camera con dispensa et astraco tiene da lui locata per uno anno finiendo ut supra a ragione di d. 12 l'anno sita alla carità dove al presente detto Alessandro habita del qual peggione già ne l'ha quietato come per obbliganza fatta a 30 di luglio prossimo passato per notar Fabritio Coppola alla quale se refere [...]. (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 5, 9 agosto 1593, fol. 1357).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays 12 ducati a year to Massenzio Sabatino for the rental of a house in the Carità quarter where he lives].*
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12. 1593 *Al magnifico Alessandro Fabri d.3 e per lui a Mario Tartaglia dissero se li pagano a complimento di d.10 atteso li altri ducati 7 gliene ha dato un ronzino morello et consignatolo in poter di detto Martio quali d.10 sono per una annata anticipata finienda a la metà d'agosto 1594 d'un censo li rende ogni anno per rendita territorio l'ha censuato alli Virgini dove se dice Lanzato mediante instrumento per notare Pietro Vincenzo Mirella al quale se refere a lui contanti (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 6, 11 settembre 1593, fol. 177).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays 3 ducati and a horse worth 7 ducati to Mario Tartaglia for the annuity of a piece of land].*
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13. 1593 *Al magnifico Alessandro Fabri d.2 et per lui al magnifico Giovanni Scalabrino Procuratore del magnifico Giovanni Andrea d'Aponte et di Cesare d'Aponte dissero se li pagano per final pagamento della parte della parte [sic] del formale [= scolo di acque] che dovea pagare alli predicti d'una casa contigua alla sua alle pedamentina di S. Martino, a lui contanti (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 6, 3 dicembre 1593, fol. 694).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays his own share of 2 ducati for the repairs on a house].*
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14. 1593 *Al magnifico Alessandro Fabri d.2 e per lui a Paolo Gentile dissero sono per altritanti a lui contanti (ASBN Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 6, 26 agosto 1593, fol. 59).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays 2 ducati to his collaborator, Paolo Gentile].*
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15. 1595 *Al magnifico Alessandro Fabri d.2 et per lui a Gioseppe Pesce disse ce li paga per final pagamento di suoi servitii in sin al presente di a lui contanti (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 10, 5 maggio 1595, fol. 623).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays 2 ducati to his collaborator, Giuseppe Pesce].*
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16. 1597 *A Giovanni Piccolo de Martina d.20 et per lui a Alexandro Fabri dissero se li pagano in Conto delli d.150 se li devono per uno organo c'ha da consignare in Martina como appare per cautela fra di loro (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 15, 8 agosto 1597, fol. 314).  
[Giovanni Piccolo de Martina purchases an organ for 150 ducati from Alessandro Fabri].*
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17. 1597 *Ad Alesandro Fabri ducati 2.1, e per lui a fra Ludovico de Curbello dissero sono per uno rifonno [sic = rifusione] d'un menacordio, venduto a fra Giovanni Debabi a lui contanti* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 14, 21 agosto 1597, fol. 917). [Alessandro Fabri pays 2.1 ducati to Friar Ludovico de Curbello for the reimbursement of a clavichord].
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18. 1597 *Ad Alesandro Fabri d.4, et per lui a cesare vellano mettetoro d'oro [sic = Cesare Villano, indoratore] dissero per Compimento del pagamento dellanauratura [sic = dell'indoratura] del organetto de S. Jesu Maria a lui contanti* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 14, 1 settembre 1597, fol. 955). [Alessandro Fabri pays 4 ducati to the gilder Cesare Villano for the gilding of the organ built for the Chiesa di Gesù e Maria].
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19. 1599 *Alesandro Fabri d.20 et per lui a Geronimo d'Amato disse per tanto lavoro che li ha fatto et consegnato come per obbliganza appare* (ASBN, Banco di S.Maria del Popolo, giornale matr. 22, 6 ottobre 1599, fol. 333). [Alessandro Fabri pays 20 ducati to his collaborator, Geronimo d'Amato].
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20. 1599 *Ad Alesandro Fabri d. 4 et per lui a Gio Antonio de Marino [sic = Giovanni Antonio de Martino, intagliatore] disse ad complimento di ducati sedici atteso li altri li have ricevuti da lui in contanti et disse sono per li tagli che ha fatti nel organo di piedimonte* (ASBN, Banco di S. Maria del Popolo, giornale matr. 22, 22 ottobre 1599, fol. 460). [Alessandro Fabri pays 4 ducati to the carver Giovanni Antonio de Martino for the carvings on the organ of Piedimonte].
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21. 1599 *Ad Alexandro fabri d.16, et per lui a mastro cesare villano [sic = Cesare Villano, indoratore] disse a complimento di ducati trenta quattro atteso li altri d.18 li have ricevuti da lui di contanti quale sono in conto della nauratura [sic = dell'indoratura] che fa nel organo di Piedimonte* (ASBN, Banco di S. Maria del Popolo, giornale matr. 22, 23 ottobre 1599, fol. 469). [Alessandro Fabri pays 16 ducati to the gilder Cesare Villano for the gilding on the organ built for the church of Piedimonte].
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22. 1600 *A Ascanio Pignatello d.100 et per lui a Alexandro Fabro et sono per prezzo d'un organetto di X palmi [= unito] con uno spinetto che l'have venduto et consignato d'accordio per lo prezzo* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 23, 24 gennaio 1600, fol. 58). [Ascanio Pignatelli pays 100 ducati to Alessandro Fabri for an organ joined with a spinet].
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23. 1600 *Ad Alessando Fabri d.4 et per lui a Paolo Gentile dissero per spese di casa a lui contanti* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 25, 12 dicembre 1600, fol. 457). [Alessandro Fabri pays 2 ducati to his collaborator, Paolo Gentile].
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24. 1601 *A Carlo Carrafa d.46 et per lui al Cavalier Alexandro Fabro e sono per compimento de ducati ottanta per lo prezzo d'un organo vendutuli* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 28, 6 settembre 1601, fol. 591). [Ascanio Pignatelli buys for 80 ducati an organ from Alessandro Fabri].
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25. 1601 *A Damiano e Francesco Pallavicino d.6 et per essi a Alexandro Fabro e sono per conto del organo c'ha dato alli preiti [sic = preti] di Santa Maria d'ogni [bene] elimosinaliter (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale di banco, matr. 28, 6 settembre 1601, fol. 592). [Damiano and Francesco Pallavicino give 6 ducati in advance payment for an organ to Alessandro Fabri].*
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26. 1607 *Al Cavaliere Alessandro Fabri d. 80 e per esso a Carlo de Roggieri, disse sono per due Cantare de stagno a lui venduti e Consignati e per esso a Matteo e Cesare de Roggieri per altritanti (ASBN, Banco di S.Giacomo, giornale di banco, matr. 13, 13 novembre 1607, fol. 155<sup>v</sup>). [Alessandro Fabri pays 80 ducati to Carlo de Roggieri for a quantity of tin].*
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27. 1607 *A don Benedetto de Napoli Monastero de Monte Oliveto d. 14 e per esso al Signor Cavaliero Alessandro Fabri disse sono per scudi 200 di Moneta papale de 10 giulij per scudo che con sua poliza in Roma fece pagare don Gaspar de Salerno il quale li ha consignati di contanti al Molto Reverendo Padre don Geronimo de Verona, procuratore generale de Monte Oliveto a conto de quello che deve questo nostro Monasterio allo presente (ASBN, Banco di S.Giacomo, giornale di banco, matr. 13, 5 novembre 1607, fol. 142). [Alessandro Fabri receives 200 scudi from the monks of the monastery of Monte Oliveto].*
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28. 1607 *Promissio pro monasterio Montis Oliveti cum Alexandro Fabri per l'organo. Die vigesimo mensis Martii quinte indictionis 1607, Neapoli, in nostri monasterio Montis Oliveti in nostri presentia constitutus Alexander Fabri de Neapoli eques de spironi d'oro devenit ad infrascrittam conventionem cum admodum reverendo padre don Carolo de Neapoli, abbate dicti monasterii, presente et infrascritta recipiente et stipulante nomine et pro parte dicti monasterii, in vulgari sermone loquendo pro faciliiori intelligentia, videlicet:*  
*che esso cavaliere Alexandro promette al detto molto reverendo padre abbate quo supra nomine presente de fare uno organo compito per servitio dela chiesa di detto monasterio, con le qualità infrascritte, videlicet de diece palmi choristo et con l'octava stesa conforme [130<sup>v</sup>] all'organo dela chiesa dell'Oratorio deli Gelormini de questa città, con la medesima tastame, fuor che de' cromatici et tromboni, et li tasti tutti de avorio et d'ebano, con nove registri a balestra et quattro mantici, et lo banchone tutto de noce ad vento di quella stessa bellezza et manufactura, et con tutte le sextant'uno canne de stagno novo in faccia chiamato il principale, et tante altre quante bisogneranno dala parte di dietro che manchassero (oltre le canne vecchie che se li consegnaranno ut infra) ad fare un organo compito che sia bello, buono, musicale, giusto et sonoro, con le canne de proportionata misura, intonate, chiare, spiccanti et che piglino subito il vento con quella sonorosità et proportionone che ricerca l'arte ad giuditio di experti tanto dele supraditte cose quanto dele eruditioni [= riduttioni] vaghe, ferri, piombo, chiodi, legni et ogn'altra cosa necessaria etc. In tanto che mancando alcuna dele cose predette, anchor che minima, sia sempre tenuto et obligato ad rifarlo et accomodarlo a sue spese, cioè s'habia ad intendere quello solo che concerne il sonare di detto organo, di modo che circa il casamento et ornamento di legno esso cavaliere Alexandro non sia [131<sup>r</sup>] obligato a cosa alcuna,*

avertendo che, se ci haveranno da fare doi altri ordini de canne di stagno morte, tre per banda, conforme al disegno facto da Mario Cartaro, nel quale disegno de' cinque ordini come si vede doverà fare fare in mezo nove canne grosse, undici dale parti et quindici dall'altra, che in tutto saranno sessant'una, tutte nove di stagno, che tutte le sessant'una sonino et si dirà il principale, come si dice, et tante altre canne per compimento de tutto l'organo quante saranno necessarie per fare un organo compito come di sopra, al quale il monasterio predetto sarà tenuto de dare tutte le canne solamente dell'organo vecchio di detto monasterio et non altro, quali egli doverà agiustare et accomodare talmente che senza una minima dissonanza sonino cossi bene le vecchie come le nove di equal conserto et di tal forma et misura che vadino tutte, cossi le vecchie come le nove, proportionate al disegno sudecto che se li è mostrato et exhibitio et subscripto di sua mano et di mano del detto molto reverendo padre abbate. Et dopo tutte queste conditioni si obbliga et promecte de farlo tanto meglio et di maggiore excellentia quanto ha facto tutte le altre cose sue, et non facendolo, il monasterio possa farlo fare da altro a spese, danni et interesse di esso cavaliere Alexandro. De più promecte darlo fornito di tutto punto infra sei mesi da hoggi avante numerandi, et facendolo del modo con tutte le conditioni supradette quando che haverà fornita tutta [131'] l'opera et posta di tutto punto. Il monasterio sia tenuto cossi come detto molto reverendo padre promecte darli nomine quo supra darli et pagarli per decta opera ducati quattrocento, con fare esso Alexandro tutta la spesa come di sopra et volendo stare nel monasterio mentre si fa detta opera, il detto monasterio sia obligato darli da magnare [sic] et stanza per la persona sua con tutto, et acciò che possa detto cavaliere Alexandro dare fernita [= finita] detta opera per lo termino predetto sia tenuto il monasterio darli il casamento fatto per tutto il mese de Agosto in pace ut supra et preinde partes ipse dicti nominibusque obligaverunt se ipsas no inique quibusque ut supra et quae libet ipsasque dictisque monasterium ac dicti monasterii et dicti equitis Alexandri heredes successores et bona ordo una pars alteri et aliae alii dictis nobisque presentibusque sub pena et ad pena duplis medietates cum potes capiendis constome gratiis et rendis et iuraverunt ut supra dicta almodum Reverendo Abbas in pectore more religiosore et dicto eques Alexander iste in pectore supra verum modum equitum et voluerunt.<sup>48</sup>

Presentibus iudice Io: Baptista Bracale notario ad contractus

Angelo Salviano de Calitro

Mario Cartaro de Neapoli

Petro Bigonio de Neapoli

Et Io: Domenico Saccataro de Neapoli, squatrator de lignami.

(ASN, Notai del Cinquecento, scheda 276 (notaio Marco de Mauro), protocollo 58, 20 marzo 1607, fols. 130<sup>r</sup>-132<sup>v</sup>).

[Complete document of the contract stipulated between Alessandro Fabri and the monks of Monte Oliveto for the organ in the church of S. Anna dei Lombardi. Among the witnesses: Mario Cartaro, who made the design, together with his son Bartolomeo; Pietro Bigonio, plasterer; and, finally, Giovanni Domenico Saccataro, maker of the wooden carvings].

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29. 1608 A Francisco Antonio Ametrano d.10 et per lui a Christofaro [sic] Noce, dissero a compimento de d.30 per l'organo ha da fare per servitio dela Congregatione del Giesù delli Nobili che li altri d.20 li ha ricevuti contanti, con sua firma a lui d. 10 (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 48, 30 gennaio 1608; D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 8).  
[Francesco Antonio Ametrano purchases for 30 ducati an organ from Crisostomo Noci].
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30. 1610 Banco della Nunziata pagate a Horatio Settimio Falconieri d. 70 con i quali li pago per tanti che alli mesi passati mi paghornò [sic = pagarono] i loro Horatio e Settimio Falconieri per il banco del Monte, e ponete a conto, In Napoli il dì 14 Agosto 1610. Alesandro Fabri (ASBN, Banco dell'Annunziata, Volume Bancali 375, Polizza di ducati 60 estinta il 21 agosto 1610).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays 70 ducati to Orazio and Settimio Falconieri].
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31. 1610 Ad Alessandro Fabri d.2.2.10 e per lui a Giovanni Domenico Rizzo disse pagarglieli per final pagamento di tre registri di canne di piummo [sic = piombo] ad esso consegnate a lui contanti (ASBN, Banco dell'Annunziata, giornale matr. 54, 4 settembre 1610, fol. 448<sup>v</sup>).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays 2 and a half ducati to Giovanni Domenico Rizzo for three lead organ pipes].
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32. 1610 A Alexandro Fabri d.10 e per lui a Fabio Spartari disse pagarceli a Compimento di d.30 che li deve in Virtù di obliganza per mano seu in curia di Notar Lutio Capezuto atteso li altri d.20 li ha ricevuti contanti d.10 et altri d.10 per il banco di S. Giacomo restando con questo pagamento integramente sodisfatto da esso dando per rotta e cassata obliganza; e per esso a Giuseppe Pesce disse a compimento di d.28 atteso li altri 18 li ha ricevuti da esso contanti quali sono in conto di un organo che li ha da fare conforme all'albarano che è tra essi; [...]. (ASBN, Banco dell'Annunziata, giornale matr. 54, 30 agosto 1610; Nocerino, 'Arte cembalaria a Napoli' [see bibl.], 99).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays 30 ducati to Fabio Spartari as payment of a debt. Spartari then turns over payment to the organ builder Giuseppe Pesce for an organ].
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33. 1612 A Giovan Battista Mollica d. 8, polisa de 15 settembre 1612, e per esso a Francesco Beghini e sono per altrettanti riceuti da esso, e per esso al signor Giovanni Villano marchese della Polla a compimento di d. 18 per la entrata prossima finita di una bottega con camera e cantina che tiene locata da detto signore sotto il suo palazzo, dichiarando d'essere contento e sodisfatto per tutto il tempo passato, e con firma ed in credito del sudetto marchese della Polla (ASBN, Banco della Pietà, giornale di banco, matr. 27, 17 settembre 1612).  
[Francesco Beghini turns over payment of 8 ducati received from Giovan Battista Mollica to the Marquis of Polla, owner of his workshop].
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34. 1612 *Banco del Monte della Pietà pagate per me [Carlo Sellitto, pittore] a Crisostimo Noce d.8, et sono a complimento di d. 40 che li altri le arreciputi [sic = ha ricevuti] di contanti et sono in conto di d. 70 per la fattura di uno organo che detto Crisostimo à da fare a me Carlo Sillitta [sic], et detto organo à di esse di tono di palmi diece di lingname [sic] de tre registri, cioè principale quinta decima et visegesema secunda con una spenetta sopra attono di l'organo fatto come quello della cappella di Palazzo fatto per mano di Alessandro Fabri e detto organo mello [sic = me lo] habia a consegnare per la metà di aprile prossimo venturo et ponesi a conto di casa a di 7 febraro 1612.*

Docati 8 contanti

Carlo Selitto

[verso] Io Crisostimo Noce mano propria.

(ASBN, Banco della Pietà, filza di bancali matr. 14, 9 febbraio 1612; D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 483; cf. Porzio, Carlo Sellitto [see bibl.], 273).

[Payment from Carlo Sellitto to Crisostomo Noci for an organ joined to a spinet]

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35. 1612 *A Carlo Sellitto d.9 et per lui a Crisostimo Noce, disse a compimento di d.100 atteso l'altri li have ricevuti in più partite, et sono per il prezzo di uno organo di tono di due palmi con una spinetta sopra con tre registri quale l'have consignate, et per esso a Melchionne Loti per altritanti (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 72, 21 maggio 1612; D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 487; cf. Porzio, Carlo Sellitto [see bibl.], 273).*
- [See document no. 34. The total amount will be 100 ducati].
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36. 1612 *A donna Maria Ruffo principessa di Scilla d.25 et per lei a Crisostomo Noce a compimento di d.55, quali sono a conto di d.95 per lo integro prezzo d'uno organo con uno spinetto dentro che l'ha da fare e consignare con quattro registri con le canne di legne et lo principale habia da essere longo diece palmi stappata et l'ottava e la quinta, decima et vigesimaseconda così come corre con detto principale con doi oceletti [sic = due uccelliere], quale l'havrà da consignare finito per tutto giugno primo venturo e lo cascione da fare habia da essere tutto di noce e resta obligato consignarcelo di tutta bontà e perfettione a sua sodisfatione, con patto ancora che resta obligato per uno anno continuo succedendo che detto organo facesse alcuno mutivo sia obligato accomodarlo tutte a sue spese atteso cossì sono restati d'accordo che li restanti d.30 l'ha ricevuti per prezzo d'uno organetto et uno cimbalò con sua firma (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 73, 27 marzo 1612; D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 273).*
- [The princess Maria Ruffo purchases from Crisostomo Noci an organ joined with a spinet].
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37. 1613 *A Ottavio Brancaccio d.10 e per esso a Giuseppe Pesce, quali disse esserno in conto del prezzo dell'organo dal medesimo ad esso girante venduto. Poliza de 28 Gennaro 1613 (ASBN, Banco della Pietà, giornale matr. 31, 29 gennaio 1613; Nocerino, 'Arte cembalaria a Napoli' [see bibl.], 99).*
- [Ottavio Brancaccio purchases an organ from Giuseppe Pesce].
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38. 1614 A Ottavio Casarano di Pietro Antonio d.6. E per lui a Mastro Crisostomo Romano *cimbalaro* [sic = Crisostomo Noci, *cembalaro*]. E sono a compimento di ducati nove. Atteso gli altri d.3 l'ha riceuti contanti, quali d.9 li paga ad esso girante di suoi propri danari per l'ultimo e final pagamento di un Cimbalo che l'ha venduto per mandarlo in Gaeta al Padre Don Marcello Patrizio che l'have scritto da Gaeta che avesse comprato detto Cimbalo con patto fra essi che quanto al detto Padre Marcello in ogni futuro tempo non li piacesse sia obligato il detto Crisostomo di tornarselo a pigliare e tornarli subito li detti d.9 senza replica alcuna a semplice parola di esso girante. E per lui a Gasparre di Giorgio [*cembalaro*] per altritanti poliza de detto die (ASBN, Banco della Pietà, giornale matr. 60, 14 novembre 1614; Nocerino, 'Arte cembalaria a Napoli' [see bibl.], 99).  
[Ottavio Casarano purchases a harpsichord from Crisostomo Noci in order to send it to Gaeta].
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39. 1616 A Vincenzo Recco d.16.80. E per esso a Alessandro Fabri che concia l'organo a compimento di d.18 per la loro congregazione (ASBN, Banco del Popolo, Giornale matr. 110, 26 febbraio 1616).  
[Payment on the part of Vincenzo Recco, procurator of the Royal Chapel, to Alessandro Fabri for the maintenance of the organ].
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40. 1616 A Eugenia de Muro d. 19.40. E per lei a Mario Guidi. E per lui al cavalier Alessandro Fabri in conto di che li deve. Et per lui a Geronimo d'Amato a compimento di d. 40 per il prezzo di un organo di legno con il cascione di noce. (ASBN, Banco dei Poveri, Giornale matr. 15, 18 maggio 1616).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays 40 ducati to Geronimo d'Amato for an organ].
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41. 1619 A Luise Caracciolo d. 12 et per lui a mastro Francesco Beghini *cimbalaro*, disse in conto del zimbalo che ha da fare et per esso a Gioan Battista Mollica, disse in conto del pesone [=pigione] d'una bottega quale tiene locata da esso, et per esso a Gioan Domenico Mollica (ASBN, Banco di San Giacomo, giornale matr. 51, 9 agosto 1619).  
[Luigi Caracciolo pays an advance of 12 ducati for a harpsichord to Francesco Beghini, who turns over the payment as rent to the owner of his workshop].
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42. 1620 Ad Aniello de Bellis d.17.0.70. E per esso a Alessandro Fabri conciatore di organi a compimento di d.18 (ASBN, Banco di San Giacomo, Giornale matricola 59, 1 aprile 1620).  
[Aniello de Bellis pays Alessandro Fabri for the maintenance of an organ].
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43. 1620 Ad Aniballe Falese d.14.2.10 e per lui a Francesco Beghini dissero per lo prezzo di un Cimbalo a levatore di Cascia che ha venduto e consignato per servizio della Duchessa di Vietri (ASBN, Banco della Pietà, giornale matr. 107, 8 agosto 1620, fol. 419).  
[Annibale Falese pays an advance of 12 ducati to Francesco Beghini for a harpsichord 'a levatore di cassa' (inner-outer case) for the Duchess of Vietri]
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44. 1620 A Gio. Maria Trabacce [sic = Giovanni Maria Trabaci] d. 5 et per lui a Grisostomo Noci quale ce li paga per caparro et in conto di d. 27 della quale summa ce li ha da fare uno organetto di detto di legno acorestò [sic = a corista] a tono di palmi 10 con tre registri cioè uno principale, una quinta decima et una vigesima seconda, il quale organo ci sia la tasteatura d'avolio, con le sue porte dietro et davanti, con li mantici dentro la sua cascia, con l'aste et correo, con li soi piedi sotto de detto organetto che sia in ogni cosa di nuovo et li promette dare sudetto organo per tutti li 9 di novembre prossimo venturo et non dandolo a detto tempo non serve più et li debbia tornarceli soi dinari (ASBN, Banco del Popolo, giornale matr. 151, 28 settembre 1620; D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 555).  
[Giovanni Maria Trabaci purchases a small organ from Crisostomo Noci].

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45. 1621 A Jacovo Pera e Francesco Derinaldi d. 20. Et per essi a don Giovanni Gaetano per altritanti. E per esso a Francesco Beghini in conto di d. 60 per prezzo fra essi convenuto di un cimbalò et enormanìa [sic = enarmonia; cf. D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 560] a cinque ordini del modo che appare per una poliza privata fattali da detto Francesco Beghini quale sta in suo potere alla quale si refere (ASBN, Banco della Pietà, giornale matr. 119, 5 ottobre 1621).  
[Jacovo Pera and Francesco Derinaldi purchase an enharmonic harpsichord from Francesco Beghini].

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46. 1621 A Cesare Lubrano d.8 et per lui a Crisostamo di Noce [sic = Crisostomo Noci] disse sono accompimento di d.36 che l'altri l'have ricevuti contanti e sono per il prezzo di uno cimbalò grande a quattro registri et una spinetta insieme con il zimbalo che l'ha venduto e consignato nulleo [sic = annullato] de accordi proprio prezzo et con detto pagamento resta integramente sodisfatto e non resta ad havere cosa alcuna (ASBN, Banco di Sant'Eligio, giornale matr. 115, 5 luglio 1621; D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 557).  
[Cesare Lubrano purchases from Crisostomo Noci a harpsichord joined with a spinet].

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47. 1621 A Gio. Marea Trabace [sic = Giovanni Maria Trabaci] d.2 et per lui a Grisostomo Noce disse ad compimento di d.27 per final pagamento de uno organo de legname fattoli et consignatoli che li altri li have ricevuti parte contanti et parte per lo medesimo banco [see doc. 44] declarando che detto organo si è defettato declarando che li tasti restati sia obligato conciarli, altronde lo farà acconciare a suo danno interamente et sia obligato accomodarli il 3° registro che da che celo have consegnato non sta accordato et per lui a Giosepe Saturnino per altritanti (ASBN, Banco del Popolo, giornale matr. 153, 26 marzo 1621; D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 556).  
[Giovanni Maria Trabaci (maestro di cappella of the Royal Chapel in Naples) pays Crisostomo Noci for an organ (see doc. 44), saying that he must, however, repair the third register which is not tuned].

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48. 1624 Ad Aniello de Bellis d.17.0.70. E per lui ad Alessandro Fabri conciatore d'organo di Palazzo per lo semestre finito a maggio passato a ducati 3 il mese (ASBN, Banco di Sant'Eligio, giornale matricola 128, 18 novembre 1624).  
[Alessandro Fabri is paid for the maintenance of the organs in the Royal Palace].

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49. 1629 *Al Signor Diego Lambiasi scudi n.6, e per esso al signor Giuseppe Pesce a compimento di d.80 per fattura di un organo e cassa* (ASBN, Banco della Pietà, 23 febbraio 1629; Nocerino, 'Arte cembalaria a Napoli' [see bibl.], 99).  
[Giuseppe Pesce receives payment for an organ from Diego Lambiase].
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50. 1630 *A Giovani Battista Maggio d.5 Poliza de 13 maggio 1630. E per esso a Mastro Giuseppe Pesce, e sono per lo prezzo d'un Cembalo che l'ha da fare per servizio suo* (ASBN, Banco della Pietà, giornale matr. 223, 13 maggio 1630)  
[Giuseppe Pesce receives payment for a harpsichord from Giovan Battista Maggio].
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51. 1630 *A Giovan Battista Maggio d.4 tari 4. Poliza de 12 giugno 1630. E per esso a Mastro Giuseppe Pesce, e sono a compimento di d. 9 e tari 4 ed in conto di d. 25. per lo prezzo d'un Cembalo che ha da fare per servizio suo. E con firma del Suddetto Giuseppe Pesce* (ASBN, Banco della Pietà, giornale matr.225, 12 giugno 1630; questo documento e il precedente si riferiscono allo stesso strumento: Nocerino, 'Arte cembalaria a Napoli' [see bibl.], 99).  
[see doc. 50].
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52. 1632 *Ad Alesandro Fabri doppie numero 11 e per lui a Giovanni Antonio Tralbalzo per altritanti d.33 li quali ne li presta gratis ad ogni sua requesta e per esso a Michele Noto per altritanti* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 243, 27 gennaio 1632, fol. 23).  
[Alessandro Fabri lends money to Giovanni Antonio Tralbalzo].
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53. 1632 *Ad Alesandro Fabri d.10 e per lui a Giovanni Francesco Califano disse ce l'impronta gratis ad ogni sua requesta e per lui a Don Giuseppe de Tigliola per altritanti* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 243, 27 gennaio 1632, fol. 23).  
[Alessandro Fabri lends money to Giovanni Francesco Califano].
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54. 1632 *Ad Alessandro Fabri d.19 e per lui a Pascale Buonocore a complimento de d.42 Anni se li pagano come olim marito di Belluccia Mennardo [sic = Belluccia Menhart, wife of Alessandro Fabri] per la sua dote di Capitale di d.600 declarando essere sodisfatto per tutte l'annate passate per Insino al presente anno 1632 citra pregiudizio di qualsivoglia ragione li spettasse contro l'heredi et l'heredità d'Ottavio Mennardo [sic = Ottavio Menhart, painter] come appare per poliza del sopradetto* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 243, 19 ottobre 1632, fol. 418).  
[Alessandro Fabri pays for the restitution of money on the dowry of his wife, Belluccia Menhart].
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55. 1635 *A Giuseppe Pesce d. 8 e per lui a Marc'Antonio Vallone in conto di d. 19 per prezzo di due casse d'organo di pioppo di Cervinara una alta undici palmi e larga cinque tt 2.10 [sic = cinque e mezzo] e l'altra alta otto palmi e mezzo, larga quattro con due colonne lo terzo Intagliato la Capitello con l'archetti e strafure [sic = fretwork and carvings] quali promette d'averceli finiti cioè la Grande per la fine di settembre seguente e l'altra per li 20 d'Ottobre prossimo d'ogni bontà e perfettione e non consegnandoli per detto tempo se sia lecito farli fare da altri danni et spese d'esso Marco Antonio* (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 266, 24 agosto 1635).  
[Giuseppe Pesce pays Marc'Antonio Vallone for two poplar organ cases].
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56. 1636 A Giosepe Pesce d.10 e per lui a Domenico Zampieri [=Pittore bolognese, detto "il Dominichino"] et disse ce li paga per ordine et decreto della Gran Corte della Vicaria per la Causa et atti nella banca d'Agostino a Relatione del Giudice Corcione dichiarando che con questo Pagamento resta Integramente sodisfatto, et detti atti si diano per Cassi et non possa servirsene più, e per esso a Francesco Raspantini per altritanti (ASBN, Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale matr. 269, 8 febbraio 1636). [Giuseppe Pesce pays 10 ducati to the Bolognese painter Domenico Zampieri for an unspecified legal matter].
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57. 1645 A don Carlo Fons d.1.2.4 e per esso a mastro Giulio Molinaro cembalaro della Regia Cappella di Palazzo a compimento de d.1.2.10, atteso le altre grana seie [=6] sono per la rata che li spetta del relascio che si è fatto a Francesco de Fusco e li sudetti se li pagano per una mesata in conto del suo soldo a ragione de carlini 15 lo mese, con dechiaratione che il sudetto per tutto novembre 1644 non resta a consequire altro che mesate cinque grana 17, e questo pagamento lo fa come mastro e thesoriero della sudetta Regia Cappella e per ordine dello illustrissimo signor cappellano maggiore (ASBN, Banco di S. Giacomo, giornale matr. 208, 13 ottobre 1645; D'Alessandro, 'Appendice documentaria in cd-rom' [see bibl.], doc. 392). [Giulio Cesare Molinaro receives payment as harpsichord maker of the Royal Palace].
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58. 1649 A Giulio Cesare Molinaro d.5.3.10 e per lui a Diego Bernardo y Mendoza disse a compimento di d.23 a causa dell'affitto della poteca et camera dove al presente habbita, del peggiore maturato a 4 di maggio passato [...]. (ASBN, Banco dei Poveri, giornale di banco, matr. 272, 7 luglio 1649). [Giulio Cesare Molinaro pays rent for the workshop and house in which he lives].
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59. 1609 Eodem die decimo mensis febraij 7 Indictionis 1609 Neapoli coram nobis constitus Alexander Fabro Cavalerius de spron doro Baro Casalis dicti Moyo province Principatus Citra, [sic = Cavaliere dello Speron d'oro, Barone del Casale detto Moyo della Provincia di Principato Citra (oggi Moio della Civitella, in provincia di Salerno)] sponte affictavit Laurentio Longo delle pellare [Pellare è oggi una frazione di Moio della Civitella] presenti la iurisdictione civile del detto casale con la mastroductia et la recognictione delle predette cariche con tutte quelle di guita, honori gagii emolumenti iurisdictioni et altro che ad essa iurisdictione civile spectat et può spectare con tutti quelli renditi che ad essa iurisdictione spectano cossi come l'altri per decessioni [fol. 103<sup>r</sup>] si hanno soluto havere e questi per anni quattro da hoggi avante numerandi per prossimi dodice per qualsivoglia anno durante detto afficto; li quali pti dodice esso Lorenzo promette pagarli ad esso Alexandro in fine de qualsivoglia anno cuy [sic = qui] in Napoli o vero in detto casale ad electione di esso Alexandro [...]. (ASN, Notai del Cinquecento, scheda 437 (notaio Lutio Capezzuto), protocollo 24, 10 febbraio 1609, fol 102<sup>v</sup>-104<sup>r</sup>; inedito). [Alessandro Fabri, Knight of the Golden Spur and Baron of Moyo, hamlet in the province of Principato Citra, leases the civil jurisdiction of the hamlet to Lorenzo Longo of Pellare].
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# Italian Instruments in England, and Their Adaption for Use

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Darryl Martin

It is likely that the majority of keyboard instruments used in England throughout the 16th and 17th centuries were made there. The list of makers, even from as early as the first decades of the 16th century, suggests that the demand could have been met.<sup>1</sup> However, there is no doubt that foreign-made instruments were also imported into the country, although it is not possible to determine how common this was. Whereas the inventories of King Henry VIII contain a reasonable number of instruments which are probably foreign, such a list is surely not representative of the country as a whole – since many of the instruments were undoubtedly gifts<sup>2</sup> rather than purchases.<sup>3</sup>

In many ways, the question about the number of continental-made instruments in England is only part of that story. Showing that Venetian-made harpsichords were in England (for example), based on several references in the inventories of Henry VIII

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- 1 Raymond Russell, *The Harpsichord and Clavichord* (London, 1959), and subsequent reprints gives a list on p. 65 (n. 1) of about 20 makers working in England during the 16th century. The third edition of Donald Boalch, *Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord 1440–1840*, ed. by Charles Mould (Oxford, 1995), 693–5, lists 22 makers in England with dates starting before 1600.
  - 2 Any purchases would be included in the Privy Purse accounts. These are essentially day books in which all payments are recorded. These records are meticulously kept, given their importance (at the time) to Royal household expenditure. Non-inclusion in the Privy Purse accounts would mean that no money exchanged hands, and the items were therefore gifts. The various records relating to Tudor and Stuart musical activities have been compiled and published by Andrew Ashbee as *Records of English Court Music* in 9 volumes (Aldershot, 1986–1996).
  - 3 It should be noted that there were actually two inventories of the musical instruments belonging to the Court of Henry VIII. The first of these is dated 1542 (PRO: E315/160), and the better known one (from after the death of Henry VIII, and using the earlier one as a basis) was completed in 1547 (GB-Lbl, Harley MS 1419). Both inventories have been published in Ashbee, *Records of English Court Music*, vol. 7 (1993), and the relevant keyboard entries have been included in the present author's thesis 'The English Virginal', PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2003, 2 vols., as App. 1.

in which cypress is mentioned as a case wood, gives half the story. The other half is that for various reasons it is likely that a number – possibly the majority – of foreign instruments were modified to make them more useful for the playing of English music. Two examples of imported instruments – one from Venice (Queen Elizabeth's Virginal), and the other from Antwerp (the Windebank harpsichord) – show active contemporary consideration of the issues resulting from bringing foreign instruments into England, albeit that the found solutions were rather different.

The better known of the inventory entries which mentions cypress concerns two separate instruments, almost certainly harpsichords:<sup>4</sup>

Item. Twoo faire paire of neue longe Virginalles made harpe fasshion of Cipres with keies of luorie havinge the Kinges armes crowned and supported by his graces beastes with a gartier guilte standinge ouer the said keies with twoo caeses to them couered with blacke leather the inner partes of the liddes to the saide caeses beinge of walnuttre with sondrie antickes of white woode wroughte in the same.<sup>5</sup>

This entry only appears in the 1547 inventory, and the passage says that the instruments are 'newe'. By way of contrast, the other entry appears in both the 1542 and 1547 inventories:

Item oone pair of doble Virgenalles of Cipers in a case of Wainscott.<sup>6</sup>

Neither the decoration above the keys in the first entry, nor any outer case, has any relevance here, since it is almost certain this type of work could have been – and at least in the second example having a wainscot outer case – almost certainly was done in England.<sup>7</sup> This second instrument has such a vague description that little

4 It could be argued that the description '[...] made harp fashion [...]' suggests a clavicytherium (upright harpsichord), but it is much more likely to refer to the curved bentside shape as found in a harpsichord.

5 See n. 4 for full details of where the inventories have been published in modern times. The original is in GB-Lbl, Harley MS 1419. The above wording comes from Ashbee, *Records of English Court Music*, vol. 7 (1993) (see n. 3), as copied in Martin, 'The English Virginal' (see n. 3), i, 288, and can also be seen in 158.

6 The original 1542 inventory is in the Public Records Office (PRO E 315/160) and the 1547 inventory is in the British Library (Harley MS 1419). The above wording comes from Ashbee, *Records of English Court Music*, vol. 7 (1993) (see n. 3), as copied in Martin, 'The English Virginal' (see n. 3), i, 288, and can also be seen in Russell, *The Harpsichord and Clavichord* (see n. 1), 157.

7 Although wainscot normally refers to panelling in a room, in this particular context the term wainscot refers to oak generally (in other words, that the outer case was made of solid oak).

(apart from its country of origin) can be determined. It could be either a harpsichord or polygonal virginal, and there is precedent from reliably-identified instruments to suggest the location could be any of a number of Italian cities – Venice, Rome, Verona, Brescia, Mantua, and Milan might all be possible.

On the other hand, there were fewer places where harpsichords (rather than virginals) are known to be made in the 1540s. Realistically the most likely place of manufacture for the two instruments is Venice. Rome might also be a possibility, though less likely given the break between Henry VIII and the Pope as part of his efforts to divorce Katherine of Aragon, and the evidence of other surviving instruments of that period, almost all of which were made in Venice or Naples.<sup>8</sup> As shall be discussed, the instruments of Naples are notably different from Venetian instruments – primarily in their use of maple rather than cypress for their cases – and can therefore be discounted here.

As the only Italian-made instrument which can be shown to be in England during the period of the virginalists, the alterations and changes to Queen Elizabeth's Virginal are of particular interest. Made by Giovanni Baffo of Venice, and almost certainly a diplomatic gift, it is clear that the instrument was in regular use from the time of its arrival in England until the 1680s or 1690s at the least.<sup>9</sup> The instrument also provides positive proof that such instruments in royal households were actually used rather than being for display purposes (or even immediately moved to storage upon arrival),

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8 There is no detailed book dedicated to Italian early stringed keyboard instruments which discusses the characteristics of the various instrument making centers. It was only the publication of Denzil Wraight's PhD dissertation 'The Stringing of Italian Keyboard Instruments, c. 1500 – c. 1650', 2 vols., Queen's University of Belfast, 1997, that provided the accurate identification of many falsely-signed or attributed examples that allow a proper study of the different styles of construction. There have been many articles on individual Italian-made instruments and makers in journals such as *The Galpin Society Journal*. Perhaps the best book providing an overview is Edward Kottick, *A History of the Harpsichord* (Bloomington, 2016). From examinations of instruments with firm attributions it can be seen that most instruments (certainly before 1700) were made of cypress, the exception being earlier Neapolitan instruments which tended to have maple cases. Based on both the number of makers from the various centers listed in Boalch, *Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord* (see n. 1), and surviving examples Venice had more identified makers in the 16th century than the rest of Italy combined. These instruments are almost invariably of cypress (for both the case and the soundboard).

9 The identification of Baffo as the maker was first made and published by Nanke Schellmann, 'Queen Elizabeth's virginal scribbles, scratches and sgraffito', in: *Conservation Journal* (Autumn 2002, Issue 42), <[https://www.vam.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/177375/19995\\_file.pdf?srsId=AfmBOoom4TiouNjz6flZ2dcmYgLog68QoJBS78cNf3xAWTJlki4HZRO](https://www.vam.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/177375/19995_file.pdf?srsId=AfmBOoom4TiouNjz6flZ2dcmYgLog68QoJBS78cNf3xAWTJlki4HZRO)> (accessed on 29 August 2024). The changes to the instrument in its period of historical use are described in Howard Schott, *Catalogue of Musical Instruments* [at the Victoria and Albert Museum]. Vol. I: *Keyboard Instruments* (London 1985), 30.

and it can be concluded that it was expected for instruments to be in a usable condition – in this sense meaning that the instrument could be played upon by anyone at court without difficulties such as needing to negotiate a short-octave arrangement. The alteration of instruments to allow their practical use was more important than preserving them as received, and it was probably standard practice for the ‘Keeper, tuner and maker of instruments to the King’ (who was Edmund Schetts at the time when Queen Elizabeth’s Virginal arrived in England) to make any required alterations as soon as possible after an instrument’s arrival, and probably before going on public display.<sup>10</sup> The changes that the instrument has undergone were only minimally intrusive, and are easy to follow.

The virginal arrived in England sometime between when it was made in 1594, and the death of Elizabeth in 1603. It was probably made specifically as a gift for her, so arriving in England in 1594 or 1595 is most likely. The decoration on the front of the virginal appears to have been carried out in Venice, and for many years the instrument was attributed to Floriani, based on the similarity of decoration between signed Floriani instruments and Queen Elizabeth’s Virginal.<sup>11</sup> Its initial state had the typical Venetian compass, C/E-f<sup>3</sup>, with an f<sup>2</sup> string length of 268 mm (365 mm c<sup>2</sup> string length). These string lengths, using iron treble strings, are such that the instrument would be tuned to the lowest of the standard pitch levels in Venice, the *tuono chorista* (c. A 410 Hz). Although the pitch level is essentially fine for English music (although we can have no idea what the initial desired use of the instrument might have been), the compass with the short octave was musically limiting in England.

The lack of familiarity with a short octave in England is perhaps best illustrated by considering the correspondence around the desired purchase by Francis Windebank of a Ruckers harpsichord in 1637. The entire correspondence and an excellent interpretation of the events surrounding it can be found in an article by Paula Woods, published in the *Galpin Society Journal*.<sup>12</sup> In short, Windebank desired to get an Antwerp-made harpsichord, having heard they were excellent instruments, and arranged for Balthasar Gerbier to procure it on his behalf. When the instrument arrived it was found to have a short octave, and, as such, was not suitable for its intended purpose (since the family were only familiar with a chromatic bass). Clearly, at least in the amateur domestic circles inhabited by Windebank and his family, a short

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10 The phrase ‘public display’ is probably a misnomer here. In practice it would be putting the instrument in a particular room where it might be played. It must be assumed that not all instruments (even those in playable condition) were publicly accessible.

11 See, for example, the virginal by Floriani now at the Grassi Museum, Leipzig, Inv. no. 33.

12 Paula Woods, ‘The Gerbier-Windebank Letters: Two Ruckers Harpsichords in England’, in *GJSJ* 54 (2001), 76–89.

octave was so unfamiliar that there had been no consideration that the purchased instrument might be arranged in that way rather than having a chromatic bass.<sup>13</sup>

By remarking the keyboard of Queen Elizabeth's Virginal (possibly utilising the original touchplates) while retaining the keyframe to a second state with a C-c<sup>3</sup>,d<sup>3</sup> compass it gave a fully chromatic compass from C, while the highest string was plucked by a d<sup>3</sup> key rather than the original f<sup>3</sup>. In effect this acts to shorten the scale, since the strings played by each note are all shorter than originally. The top note was three semitones shorter and (with the exception of some short octave notes in the bass) the other strings are a major third shorter. To explain that clearly – the top note was changed from f<sup>3</sup> to d<sup>3</sup>, which meant that the overall pitch of the instrument was raised from c. A 410 Hz to c. A 473 Hz. This A 473 Hz pitch is English *quire pitch*, and the majority of surviving English plucked-keyboard instruments made before 1685 were at that pitch, so it is most likely that was the intended pitch of the virginal with its new keyboard. The tuning of the top string remained the same, and the great majority of the other strings were tuned down a semitone.

It would also have been possible for the person who altered the virginal to use a C,D-c<sup>3</sup> compass at the same *quire pitch*, but then the C<sup>#</sup> would be missing in the bass, at a time when it would commonly be tuned to AA, as standard with English-made virginals. In any case, only four strings would need to be replaced from the original.<sup>14</sup> The other strings would not be changed at all, and the use of iron strings in the treble of English keyboard instruments was standard until c. 1685.

In around 1685–90 the virginal was altered again, changing the C-c<sup>3</sup>,d<sup>3</sup> keyboard to GG/BB-c<sup>3</sup>, which resulted in the string lengths being even shorter. By this period it was common in Italy to make the change from C/E-f<sup>3</sup> to GG/BB-c<sup>3</sup>, coupled with restringing the instrument with brass wire. The overall effect on Queen Elizabeth's Virginal was to drop the pitch to c. A 425 Hz, which was increasingly common at that time, eventually becoming standard in 18th-century England. The GG/BB-c<sup>3</sup> compass was the usual compass in the earliest English bentside spinets, most often using brass treble stringing, from c. 1685.<sup>15</sup>

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13 It should be pointed out that in the second half of the 17th century England increasingly used what is commonly thought of as a GG/BB short octave. However, this should be thought of as simply adding a BB key (tuned to GG) rather than as suddenly moving from a chromatic to a short-octave bass. From the late 16th century English instruments would be tuned with the C<sup>#</sup> key tuned to AA (as later found in the GG/BB short octave), and the Eb key was tuned as that note in England throughout, rather than as a BB as found in continental short-octave instruments.

14 These are the three notes of the original short octave (C/E, D/F<sup>#</sup>, E/G<sup>#</sup>), and the original F.

15 The first appearance of a GG/BB short octave in England is a virginal by Thomas White, probably built in 1644 (the third figure has been altered, but can be ascribed that date based on the decorator). After 1650 more surviving instruments have a GG/BB short octave rather than a chromatic bass from C.

So, as far as Queen Elizabeth's Virginal goes, the changes are well documented,<sup>16</sup> and each change results a perfect instrument in terms of compass, stringing material, and pitch for England at the time of the respective changes. The required alterations also involve nothing more than a new keyboard or keylevers – there is no need to move the bridge at any stage. Whereas the first alteration would have only required four strings in the bass to be altered, the whole instrument would have been restrung at the second change.

Although it is clear – and there is plenty of evidence – that English-made organs were commonly built with a C- $a^2$  chromatic compass, a smaller F- $a^2$  compass – all that was needed to cover a choir's vocal range – was also used.<sup>17</sup> It would be foolish to suggest that all keyboard instruments of the period needed, or were regularly built with, a C- $a^2$  compass in England, just as makers in Venice built a variety of compasses, even (in the case of Domenico) having a surviving instrument with a F,G,A- $g^2,a^2$  compass in the 1560s, having built with a larger C/E- $f^3$  compass as early as 1533.<sup>18</sup>

It is perhaps important to give a brief overview of pitch standards in 16th-century England. There were two basic pitch levels. One was for secular instruments, and became known as *consort pitch*. This pitch was approximately A 403 Hz, which is about one-and-a-half semitones below modern pitch. The second level was for vocal music, in particular music for the church, and is referred to as *quire pitch*. This was at a level of approximately A 473 Hz, that is about one-and-a-half semitones above modern pitch. There was also *organ pitch*, which is a transposition of *quire pitch*, rather than a separate pitch level in its own right.<sup>19</sup> The compass needed for *quire pitch* was F to  $a^2$ , but from at least the start of the 16th century, larger organs were built with a larger C to  $a^2$  compass, but were transposing, so that the C of the keyboard produced *quire pitch* F, and the organ notes C to  $e^2$  covered the full vocal range. Of course, by later in the 16th century keyboard instruments would often be built with compasses descending to C as standard, as composers such as John Redford and Thomas Tallis would commonly write instrumental keyboard works descending that low. However,

16 See Schott, *Catalogue of Musical Instruments* (see n. 9), 30.

17 Full discussion of both English organ pitch levels and compass (from both surviving instruments and historical documents can be found in Dominic Gwynn, 'Organ Pitch in Seventeenth Century England', in: *Journal of the British Institute of Organ Studies* 9 (1985), 65–78, and in Stephen Bicknell, *The History of the English Organ* (Cambridge, 1999).

18 Grassi Museum, Leipzig, Inv. No. 67. The instrument has been authenticated (both for the correct maker and the compass) by Wraight, 'The Stringing of Italian Keyboard Instruments' (see n. 8), ii, 142, with his number W96.

19 The various pitch standards in 16th-century England are fully covered in Bruce Haynes, *A History of Performing Pitch: The Story of 'A'* (Lanham, MD/Oxford, 2002), 86–96. *Organ pitch* is a fourth away from *quire pitch* – when the organist plays the C key the resulting pitch is *quire pitch* F. In this way the longest pipe length needs to be only 5' long rather than 8' long if the instrument was made for *quire pitch*.

one would never expect to find an instrument at *organ pitch* which only descended to F. It was only starting in the middle years of the 17th century that the intermediate pitch levels – A 425 Hz and A 450 Hz – began to be used, no doubt initially to allow tone transposition from the two 16th-century pitch standards.

It is possible that the cypress instruments in the inventory of Henry VIII would have had essentially identical alterations. Even if we can be reasonably certain that Venice was the likely place of manufacture of the instruments, there were several different designs. One common type – perhaps the best known – had a 1 x 8' 1 x 4' registration and similar string lengths to Queen Elizabeth's Virginal. Examples of this model include instruments by Alessandro Trasuntino (1530, 1531, and 1538), Vito Trasuntino (1572 and 1573), and the 1585 Bonafinis harpsichord in Brussels.<sup>20</sup> Other instruments are found with a  $f^2$  string length of 235 mm, implying they were tuned a tone higher. Often these instruments had only a single 8' register (Domenicus Pisaurensis 1533 and c. 1570), although the common 1 x 8' 1 x 4' registration is also found (Vito Transuntino 1560, Fransiscus Patavinus 1561 and 1564, and Domenicus Pisaurensis 1563–70), or even a 2 x 8' registration (Domenicus Pisaurensis 1570, as well as instruments by Alessandro Trasuntino c. 1545 and Domenicus Pisaurensis 1554. These latter two instruments could even be designed to play a semitone higher).

Although there is no evidence of the instrument ever being in England, the 1531 Alessandro Trasuntino harpsichord (or an instrument like it) could have had the same changes as Queen Elizabeth's Virginal. Most (if not almost all) 16th century Venetian harpsichords appear to have gone from the original state to one similar to that as finally used in Queen Elizabeth's Virginal, that is from a C/E- $f^3$  compass and iron stringing to a GG/BB- $c^3$  compass with brass strings. In many instances there is also a change of nut position to take pitch into account, and in almost all cases the 1 x 8' 1 x 4' registration is changed to 2 x 8'. If they were in England the second phase of Queen Elizabeth's Virginal – that of a C- $c^3, d^3$  compass, would allow the instrument to play at *quire pitch* with iron strings. Another theoretical possibility would be to have a keyboard with a GG,AA- $a^2$  compass, playing at *organ pitch*. Using the string lengths of the 1531 Trasuntino harpsichord at the Royal College of Music as an example, altering the compass to GG,AA- $a^2$  would give a  $c^2$  string length of 229 mm, or 9", which is the theoretical string length required for English *organ pitch*.

At first sight this might appear an extraordinary change to make, but that is viewed through the perspective of modern eyes. However if a player is an organist – especially in the 16th century – he would probably be more familiar with instruments with a C- $a^2$  compass at organ pitch. With either proposed compass there are extra notes on the keyboard (and these could always have a cover made so they do not

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20 This instrument, now part of a claviorgan was previously thought of (and listed) as Bertolotti, and appears as such in Russell, *The Harpsichord and Clavichord* (see n. 1), Plate 8.

distract the player if needed), and it is entirely possible that organists were more comfortable with instruments that play at organ pitch.

Although less obviously foreign, there are various keyboard instruments in the inventories which might have been built in the southern part of Italy (Naples and Sicily), or in the southern Netherlands (Antwerp). The issue with trying to make a firm attribution to either of those areas is that it relies on a description of the wood and decoration. These various references to ‘[...] woode vernissshed yellowe [...]’ or ‘[...] vernissshed yellowe and painted all ouer with redde rabeske woorke [...]’<sup>21</sup> can be shown to match instruments and/or paintings from the continent. The yellow varnished wood is almost certainly maple, which was the most commonly used case material in each of the above centres. Although Antwerp and southern Italy are separated by a large distance, both places were Spanish dominions from the start of the 16th century, and the various similarities noticed when examining instruments from both places strongly shows that the makers knew, and were influenced by, the traditions of each other.

Restricting ourselves to the first 60 or so years of the 16th century, the two (Naples and Antwerp) instrument making traditions have the essentially universal use of maple for the case, as well as the very frequent use of dovetail joints, even on comparatively thin pieces. There are some differences as well. The surviving instruments (or the comparatively large number of instruments included in paintings) show that Antwerp seems to have mostly made virginals and octave clavichords during this period, whereas Naples appears to have most made harpsichords, although both high pitched virginals and clavichords were also produced. Unlike the Antwerp instruments, the high-pitched Neapolitan instruments do not appear to be at octave pitch, but rather at a fourth or fifth above the basic pitch standards. The maple was sometimes heavily flamed, and the exteriors were often painted with arabesque (‘rabeske’) motifs. Although the clavichords often had lids, the virginals were thin cased with a separate outer case, as is typical in Italian instruments. It is not until the latter part of the century that thicker-cased instruments of poplar were made. In southern Italy, on the other hand, the maple cases were left undecorated, although all instruments seem to require an outer case. Unlike Antwerp there are no surviving virginals at normal pitch, although one octave virginal exists. The well-known clavichords are at high – but not octave – pitch with a raised soundboard to the right of the keys (whereas the Antwerp instruments have the keys above the soundboard and a high bridge). The most common surviving instruments are harpsichords, though it appears there was no typical model.

The majority of the surviving Neapolitan harpsichords have a C/E-c<sup>3</sup> compass, and the c<sup>2</sup> string lengths range from 277 mm, to c. 300 mm, a range that covers a little more than a semitone. The instruments have less flexibility when it comes to

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21 Martin, ‘The English Virginal’ (see n. 3), i, 285–8.

converting them to a suitable compass and pitch for use in England given they have only 45, rather than 50 notes. One option is to simply retune the short octave chromatically to include the  $F-a^2$  range. The longer-scaled instruments will work well if restrung with iron treble stringing, and could also manage to be tuned to *consort pitch* (A 403 Hz) with the brass wire, particularly if the scale was not longer than 295 mm at  $c^2$ . The issue of such an approach is that the  $F-a^2$  compass works fine for intabulations of vocal music at the correct pitch, but not all keyboard music will fit within that compass – hence the need for organ pitch with keyboards extending down to C in the first place. The other approach – one which is more invasive – would be to alter the compass to be  $C-g^2, a^2$ .<sup>22</sup> The string lengths are shortened as a result of this approach.

Two Neapolitan instruments housed at the National Music Museum, demonstrate how this might be done, even though both are essentially in original condition. In both cases a speculative  $C-g^2, a^2$  compass has been assumed, meaning the only structural change the instruments require is a new keyboard. The harpsichord (with a 280 mm string length for  $c^2$ ) appears to have been originally designed for brass stringing at about one semitone below modern pitch. With a new compass and iron stringing in the treble the  $c^2$  string is 223 mm, almost identical to the theoretical string length for a  $c^2$  string length at English *organ pitch*.<sup>23</sup> The octave virginal, almost certainly from the same workshop as the harpsichord was probably originally intended to also be strung with brass treble stringing. Whether as an accident as a result of the almost straight bridge and nut sections, or made deliberately for a pitch a semitone lower than the common Neapolitan pitch standard, the instrument probably plays at a pitch of approximately A 370 Hz. The highest stressed (closest to breaking point) string is  $c^2$ , which is 161½ mm long (equivalent to 323 mm for an 8' pitch) would become the  $g^{\#1}$  with the  $C-g^2, a^2$  compass.<sup>24</sup> This is the equivalent of 128 mm for  $c^2$ , which would allow the instrument to play at a semitone lower than *quire pitch* with the same brass strings as on the original (excluding several in the bass where there is the short octave which would need to be restrung).<sup>25</sup> This pitch standard was known in England from at least c. 1600 onwards.

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22 It would also be possible to use a  $C, D-a^2$  compass if the  $g^{\#2}$  was felt more important musically to retain than the low  $C^{\#}$ .

23 As shown earlier, the string should theoretically be 9", which is 228½ mm. The actual difference amounts to less than half a semitone.

24 Because this is the highest stressed string there is no point in giving the string lengths for the 'c' or 'f' strings with the altered compass.

25 The calculations involved here should be explained for clarity. It is not clear if English instruments had a standard string length to frequency relationship for brass treble strings as they did for iron. However, if it is assumed that they used the same safety margin as in instruments from other schools with a known string length and pitch (in this case Hamburg which had a 285 mm string tuned to  $c^2$  at a pitch of 408 Hz (142.5 mm for  $c^3$ ), it can be

One instrument from this tradition that is perhaps worthy of a little more consideration is an unsigned instrument in the Royal College of Music, London, commonly known as RCM175. This instrument is Neapolitan in style, having all of the characteristics of the earlier instruments as just discussed here, but was probably made in the period between 1580 and 1610. There has been much published discussion about the instrument's original state in which even the original number of keys is not clear. It was generally accepted to have been built with 48 keys, until research by Grant O'Brien argued that it was 50 keys. His arguments led towards a virtual reconstruction which had a C/E-c<sup>3</sup> compass, but with five split accidentals for D/F<sup>#</sup>, E/G<sup>#</sup>, d<sup>#1</sup>/e<sup>b1</sup>, g<sup>#1</sup>/a<sup>b1</sup>, and d<sup>#2</sup>/e<sup>b2</sup> (but not the expected enharmonically-split keys in the tenor region).<sup>26</sup> A more recent study of this instrument by Denzil Wraight, at the instigation of the present author in which he addresses all previous research (including his own) assisted by high quality photographs taken specifically for this purpose shows that the present 50-note registers have been cut from the original single register, confirming the 50 note compass.<sup>27</sup> Previous research by Wraight has shown the existence of marks on the soundboard which indicate the bridge has been moved from an earlier position along its full length (rather than just in the treble as had previously been argued).<sup>28</sup> These marks on the baseboard show that the enharmonic compass was not correct as each mark was separated by 12 notes (except in the bass), and according to the marks the original compass was C/E-f<sup>3</sup>, the most common compass in the 16th century. Based on the original bridge pin marks as found on the soundboard and the original nut position (as marked on the baseboard) the original string lengths can be determined. The original string length for f<sup>3</sup> is 134 mm, for c<sup>3</sup> is 175 mm, and for f<sup>2</sup> is 250 mm. These give equivalent lengths for c<sup>2</sup> of 357, 350, and 333 mm respectively.

Although there is no evidence to support the suggestion that the instrument was in England during the historical period (and, in fact, the mouldings on the replacement nut suggests the work was done in Florence in the period c. 1730), the present state of the instrument, having a C,D-c<sup>3</sup> (50 note) compass, with 2 x 8' registers, would be ideal for a harpsichord in England in the late-16th or the 17th centuries.

The C,D-c<sup>3</sup> compass is essentially the same as found in surviving English-made instruments from the period c. 1570 to around 1650. The English instruments included the C<sup>#</sup>, which would almost invariably be tuned to AA, though the organ part of the Theewes claviorgan never had pipes for that note, no doubt due to the extra length

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calculated that a string 128 mm long will reach a pitch 185 cents higher, which converts to a pitch of A 454 Hz.

26 See Grant O'Brien, 'The Single-Manual Italian Harpsichord in the Royal College of Music, London, Cat. No. 175: An Organological Analysis', in: *GSJ* 62 (2009), 55–99.

27 It should be pointed out that although O'Brien argued for a 50 note compass he did not believe the present register was original, without stating his reasoning.

28 Wraight, 'The Stringing of Italian Keyboard Instruments' (see n. 8), ii, 337.

those low-tuned pipes would require. Whereas the long original treble string lengths would not allow the instrument to play at even the lowest Neapolitan pitch levels with brass wire, this pitch level might be attainable with iron treble stringing (despite there being no other evidence of iron treble stringing in Naples or the surrounding area).

The alterations to the instrument, in which the compass has been changed to have  $d^3$  as its highest note, and both the bridge and nut being moved to reduce the string lengths has now resulted in lengths of 111 mm for  $d^3$ , 129 mm for  $c^3$ , 195 mm for  $f^2$  and 255 mm for  $c^2$ , which give the equivalent  $c^2$  string lengths of  $248\frac{1}{2}$ , 258, 260, and 255 mm respectively. Taking the longest of these lengths (260 mm) as the basis, the harpsichord could comfortably play at a pitch around A 440 Hz - A 450 Hz with brass treble strings.<sup>29</sup> As previously mentioned, a pitch standard of A 448 Hz was known in England from c. 1600, and there are surviving 17th century plucked keyboard instruments built for that pitch standard.<sup>30</sup> It should be noted, however, that brass treble stringing was not used in England until c. 1670-1680, albeit English makers would have been familiar with it both from some Italian instruments, and the wire would have been available as it was used on citterns, bandoras, and orpharions.

As shown, some Italian instruments are – as to be expected – easier to convert to a usable English compass and pitch than others. Further, the requirements in mid 16th-century England were rather different than those of 100 or so years later. That said, all of the alterations (whether those that actually happened to instruments, or changes in the abstract that could happen) are comparatively simple with the exception of the real changes that took place to RCM175. In fact, many Italian instruments had greater changes to keep the instruments up-to-date in Italy. These types of changes could obviously be carried out in England as well, but have generally not been discussed here since once larger changes are being considered the options become larger and more speculative. But of the less complicated changes, it can be shown that Queen Elizabeth's Virginal – the only Italian instrument that can positively be shown to have been in England in the period up to 1650 – was altered twice in its history to keep it usable for English musicians of the respective periods, and that other 16th-century Italian instruments could also – usually be simply making a new keyboard and some minor restringing – could also be converted to English requirements of the 16th and 17th centuries.

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29 The present author has strung a number of clavichords with a 260 mm  $c^2$  string length to A 460 Hz without any noticeable problem of excessive string breaking.

30 Three surviving English virginals were built for this pitch level, the earliest being the 1661 James White instrument (formerly in Bunratty Castle, Ireland).

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# Stringed Keyboard Instruments at the Courts of the Austrian Habsburgs in the Sixteenth Century – the ‘Italian Perspective’

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Markus Grassl

## Introduction

For several decades, musicological research has collected a wealth of individual, often quite detailed information about keyboard instruments and keyboard players at the courts of the Austrian Habsburgs in the early modern period. Besides studies on specific musicians, particularly those who are also known as composers,<sup>1</sup> it has been primarily the extensive investigation into the institutional history of the Habsburg chapels that has revealed numerous biographical data about keyboard players active within this context.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, organological studies have led to a considerable

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- 1 Cf. for example the studies on Jacobus Buus, Annibale Padovano or Charles Luython: Walter Breitner, *Jacob Buus als Motettenkomponist*, Wiener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikwissenschaft 6 (Tutzing, 1977); Luigi Collarile, “Un gran valent’uomo, & famoso sonatore di Organo”. Annibale Padovano tra Venezia e Graz’, in: *L’Organo* 51 (2019), 13–113; Carmelo P. Comberiati, ‘Carl Luython at the Court of Emperor Rudolf II: Biography and His Polyphonic Settings of the Mass’, in: *Music from the Middle Ages through the Twentieth Century: Essays in Honor of Gwynn McPeck*, ed. Carmelo P. Comberiati and Matthew Steel (New York, 1988), 130–48, and the contributions in: *Carl Luython 1620/2020*, ed. Association for Central European Cultural Studies, *Clavibus unitis* 10 (2021), online: <[https://www.acecs.cz/index.php?f\\_idx=4&f\\_cu=cu\\_2021\\_10](https://www.acecs.cz/index.php?f_idx=4&f_cu=cu_2021_10)> (accessed on 30 July 2024).
  - 2 In the first place it is necessary to mention the extended monographs by Walter Senn, *Musik und Theater am Hof zu Innsbruck. Geschichte der Hofkapelle vom 15. Jahrhundert bis zu deren Auflösung im Jahre 1748* (Innsbruck, 1954), Othmar Wessely, *Arnold von Bruck. Leben und Umwelt. Mit Beiträgen zur Musikgeschichte des Hofes Ferdinands I. von 1527 bis 1545*, Habilitationsschrift University of Vienna, 1958, online: <<http://www.dtoe.at/Publikationen/Onlinepub.php>> (accessed on 30 July 2024), Hellmut Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker am Grazer Habsburgerhof der Erzherzöge Karl und Ferdinand von Innerösterreich (1564–1619)* (Mainz, 1967), and Walter Pass, *Musik und Musiker am Hof Maximilians II.*, Wiener

knowledge of early keyboard instruments in the realm of Habsburg Austria. While the initial focus of this research was on instruments with a certain degree of renown, such as the organ in St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague, the Ebert-organ in Innsbruck or Charles Luython's *Clavicymbalum Vniversale*,<sup>3</sup> recent research has yielded a much more comprehensive picture.<sup>4</sup> Despite these advances, one shortcoming, however, remains to be noted: A significant proportion of the information is scattered across a vast corpus of scholarly literature, where it is often presented in isolation – in other words: The relationship between the data has only been marginally explored, let alone placed in the broader context of the different areas of cultural or musical history.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, an examination of the keyboard culture at the Habsburg courts from an 'Italian perspective' may offer a more coherent historiographical approach. The present article will examine aspects of the Italian influence and cross-relations with Italy as a point of departure for investigating the question of whether general developments of the keyboard culture at the Austrian courts can be identified and contextualised in terms of political, cultural and music history.

## A Multitude of Courts

The history of the Habsburg courts in the 16th century is inextricably linked to the eventful history of the dynasty itself. A first major turning point occurred with the death of Emperor Maximilian I in 1519. His heirs, Maximilian's grandsons Charles V and Ferdinand I, agreed a division of power (that eventually led to the separation of the Spanish and Austrian line of the Habsburgs): Charles, who had succeeded his

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Veröffentlichungen zur Musikwissenschaft 20 (Tutzing, 1980). For the numerous more specialised articles see the references in the appendix to this paper.

- 3 Cf. Albert Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hof-Musikkapelle in Wien von 1543–1619 (II. Teil)', in: *StMw* 7 (1920), 102–42, at 107–18; (III. Teil), in: *StMw* 8 (1921), 176–206, at 204–6; Rudolf Quoika, 'Die Prager Kaiserorgel', in: *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch* 36 (1952), 35–46; Pass, *Musik und Musiker* (see n. 2), 305–11; Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 59–61; Egon Krauss, *Die Ebert-Orgel in der Hofkirche zu Innsbruck (1558)*, ed. from the estate by Markus Spielmann (Innsbruck, 1989); Adolf Koczirz, 'Zur Geschichte des Luython'schen Klavizimbels', in: *SIMG* 9 (1907/08), 565–70.
- 4 This line of inquiry has been epitomised in the substantial volume *Das österreichische Cembalo. 600 Jahre Cembalobau in Österreich*, ed. Alfons Huber (Tutzing, 2001).
- 5 A first attempt in this direction has been undertaken in: Markus Grassl, 'Instrumentalisten und Instrumentalmusik am kaiserlichen Hof von 1527 bis 1612. Fakten – Hypothesen – Fragen', in: *Die Wiener Hofmusikkapelle III. Gibt es einen Stil der Hofmusikkapelle?*, ed. Hartmut Krones, Theophil Antonicek and Elisabeth Theresia Fritz-Hilscher (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar, 2011), 109–48. However, this study focuses only on the Imperial court and on instrumental music in general, therefore it does not provide a detailed investigation into keyboard music.

grandfather as emperor, acquired control over Spain and Burgundy, his younger brother Ferdinand, meanwhile, assumed the regency in the Austrian 'hereditary lands', i.e. the central European territories of the Habsburgs. In addition, Ferdinand was proclaimed king of Bohemia and Hungary, following the acquisition of these territories by the Habsburgs in 1526/27. Concomitantly, Ferdinand established a courtly household, which also comprised a chapel. Although Ferdinand and, as a consequence, his court were initially quite itinerant, Vienna increasingly developed into the principal residence from about 1530 onwards. Following the death of Ferdinand in 1564, who had also become emperor in 1558 after Charles' abdication, the realm was divided between his three sons. Hence, in addition to the Vienna-based and since 1583 Prague-based court of the head of the Austrian Habsburgs, who reigned in Lower and Upper Austria and was the incumbent of the imperial as well as the Bohemian and Hungarian throne, two further permanent and full-fledged courtly households were established. One was located in Graz, the capital of Inner Austria, a complex of territories including Styria, Carinthia, Carniola and neighbouring regions in today's Italy and Slovenia. The other one was situated in Innsbruck, the capital of the Tyrolean lands and the 'Vorlande' (i.e. the Habsburg possessions, which were mainly located in what is now south-western Germany).<sup>6</sup> Tab. 1 provides a list of the rulers who presided over these dominions. Recent research has increasingly demonstrated that the wives of the Habsburg rulers often exercised a pivotal influence in the realm of artistic patronage, particularly with regard to the importation of cultural artefacts and traditions from their respective

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6 For a thorough up-to-date survey of the Austrian courts in early modern times, their political background, organisation and structure see Michael Hochedlinger, Petr Mat'a and Thomas Winkelbauer (eds.), *Verwaltungsgeschichte der Habsburgermonarchie in der Frühen Neuzeit. Band 1: Hof und Dynastie, Kaiser und Reich, Zentralverwaltungen, Kriegswesen und landesfürstliches Finanzwesen*, 2 vols. (Vienna, 2019). An excellent survey of the music at the Imperial court in the 16th century, based on the current state of research, is provided by Jonas Pfohl, 'The Court Chapels of the Austrian Line (I): From Emperor Ferdinand I to Emperor Matthias', in: *A Companion to Music at the Habsburg Courts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Andrew H. Weaver (Leiden/Boston, 2021), 131–75. For an overview of the music at the courts of Inner Austria and Tyrol see the respective contributions in the same volume (Lawrence Bennett, Steven Saunders and Andrew H. Weaver, 'The Court Chapels of the Austrian Line (II): From Archduke Charles II to Emperor Leopold I', 179–219; Pecknold, 'The Court Chapels of the Tyrolean Line: From Archduke Ferdinand II to Archduke Ferdinand Charles', 220–52), Hellmut Federhofer, 'Musik am Grazer Habsburgerhof der Erzherzöge Karl II. und Ferdinand (1564–1619)', in: *ÖMZ* 15 (1970), 585–95, Walter Pass, 'Zur städtischen, kirchlichen und höfischen Musikkultur in Tirol in der nachmaximilianeischen Zeit', in: *Musikgeschichte Tirols. Vol. 1: Von den Anfängen bis zur Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Kurt Drexel and Monika Fink (Innsbruck, 2001), 653–67, and Peter Tschmuck, 'Sozioökonomische und kulturelle Rahmenbedingungen der höfischen Musikpflege in Innsbruck im späten 16. und im frühen 17. Jahrhundert', in: *Musikgeschichte Tirols. Vol. 2: Von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zum Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Kurt Drexel and Monika Fink (Innsbruck, 2004), 9–38.

homelands to the Austrian courts. Accordingly, the table includes those spouses who were particularly instrumental in fostering connections and the cultural exchange with Italy.

<b>Emperors</b> (itinerant/Vienna/Prague)	<b>Inner Austria</b> (Graz)	<b>Tyrol and 'Vorlande'</b> (Innsbruck)
Maximilian I (1493–1519) ∞ Bianca Maria Sforza		
Ferdinand I (1521/22–64)		
Maximilian II (1564–76)	Charles II (1564–90) ∞ Maria of Bavaria	Ferdinand II (1564–95) ∞ Anna Caterina Gonzaga
Rudolf II (1576–1612)		
	Ferdinand II (1590–1619)	

**Tab. 1:** Regents of the Austrian Habsburgs during the 16th century

The number of Habsburg courts was further increased by the custom of providing the consorts and, from a certain age, the children of the ruler with their own courtly households. The composition and size of these *Nebenhofstaaten* ('satellite courts') varied considerably, depending on the age of the prince or princess, his or her official status and the occasion in question.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless it is typical for such courts to include, if at all, merely the nucleus of a chapel comprising a few clerics and no singers or organists.<sup>8</sup> In examining the keyboard culture under the Austrian Habsburgs, it is evident that the primary focus has to be on the courts of the reigning members of the dynasty.

7 For example, when the children of Ferdinand I were given their own household in the late 1530's, these included only a core chapel consisting of two clerics without any musicians (Pass, *Musik und Musiker* [see n. 2], 340–1). In contrast, when the 17-year-old Maximilian [II] joined his uncle Charles V in 1544 on a campaign against France, he was accompanied by an entourage of more than 50 people including two trumpeters and, once again, a small chapel of three clerics, but again no musicians (ibid., 341–2; the source, a roster from May 1544, is available on: <<https://www.archivinformationssystem.at/detail.aspx?ID=4016028>> [accessed on 21 July 2014]).

8 There are only few exceptions. In 1547, and from 1551 onwards, Peter Strapp and Guilelmus Formellis respectively, are documented as organists of Archduke Maximilian [II] (for bibliographical references see the entries on Strapp and Formellis in App., tab. 1.1.). When he came to power in 1564, Maximilian II retained Formellis, who thus became the organist of the Imperial chapel. In addition to Strapp, only two other keyboard players are known to have served an Archduke without subsequently becoming the employee of a reigning prince. Firstly, an otherwise unknown organist named 'Johannes N.', is documented as a member of the retinue of Archduke Matthias, the younger brother and, from 1612,

## Italian Instruments at the Austrian Courts

Current research indicates that there were eleven stringed keyboard instruments of probable or proven Italian origin that were in possession or use at the Habsburg courts during the 16th century. At present, only one of these instruments is known to exist, a *spinettino*, i.e. an octave spinet. This was formerly part of the collection of instruments and works of art assembled by Ferdinand II of Tyrol at his castle in Ambras, near Innsbruck. It is currently kept in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Fig. 1).<sup>9</sup>



**Fig. 1:** *Spinettino* (Italy, second half of the 16th century), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna [KHM], Inv. no. SAM 121, <<http://www.khm.at/de/object/84815/>> (accessed on 27 August 2024).

successor of Emperor Rudolf II, during the Imperial Diet of 1594; see Peter Fleischmann, *Kurtze vnd eigentliche Beschreibung des zu Regensburg in disem 94. Jar gehaltenen Reichstag* (Regensburg: Andreas Burger, 1594) (VD 16 F 1626), fol. Jj ii', online: <<https://onb.digital/result/10A71E8B>> (accessed on 24 July 2024); see also Gerhard Pietzsch, 'Zur Musikkapelle Kaiser Rudolfs II.', in: *ZfMw* 16 (1934), 171–6, at 172. Secondly, Hans Giersner is listed as 'camer organist' in a roster from before 1608, which records the household of Matthias during a journey to Innsbruck. Giersner also served at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna until his death in 1626. The roster (in HHStA OMeA SR 184–74) was discovered by Bernhard Rainer, 'Tam Vocibus quam Instrumentis – Instrumentalisten und vokal-instrumentales Musizieren am Hof von Kaiser Matthias', in: *AML* 94 (2022), 20–47, at 22.

- 9 For more information on this instrument with a compass of C/E–c<sup>3</sup>, a case of cypress and an inner/outer construction, see Julius Schlosser, *Die Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente. Beschreibendes Verzeichnis* (Vienna, 1920), 74; Victor Luithlen, *Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien. Katalog der Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente. I. Teil. Saitenklaviere* (Vienna, 1966), 19; Rudolf Hopfner, *Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien. Masterpieces of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, A Brief Guide to the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien 1* (Vienna, 2019), 44–5, and the entry BMO-2112 in: *Boalch-Mould Online: A Research Database of Harpsichords and Clavichords and Their Makers, 1440–1925*, ed. John Watson, <<https://www.boalch.org/References/StaticView/HomePage>> (accessed on 24 August 2024).

In all other cases the evidence is derived from contemporary written sources, such as inventories, letters, account books, etc., which explicitly mention a ‘clavichord’, a ‘spinet’, a harpsichord, or more generically, an ‘instrument’ – a term, which in the German context of the time refers to a stringed keyboard instrument of any kind.<sup>10</sup> Tab. 2 provides a concise overview of these sources, summarising their content.

no.	date, place		archival / bibliographical reference
1	1506, Innsbruck	Bianca Maria Sforza asks Isabella d'Este to send her a 'clavicordio'	RI XIV, 5,2, N. 25891 [letter]
2	1561, Innsbruck	'instrument' from Venice ordered for Archduchesses Magdalena, Margaret and Barbara (daughters of Ferdinand I)	TLA Oö. Kammer, Raitbücher 1561 [account book]
3	1571, Vienna	payment for the delivery of a 'Clavicordium' sent by Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara (husband of Barbara of Austria, daughter of Ferdinand I)	FHKA HZAB 25 [account book]
4	1575, Vienna	payment for the delivery of a 'Clavicordio' from Milano	FHKA HZAB 29 [account book]
5	1579, Innsbruck	payment to 'Ciacono', a monk in Rome, for purchasing an 'instrument'	Senn, <i>Musik und Theater</i> (see n. 2), 164
6	1580, Innsbruck	acquisition of a 'venedigisch doppelt Clavizimbel', i.e. a harpsichord by Isepo Gurletta extended into a claviorganum by Andreas Andre Casletanus in Brixen	TLA Kunstsachen I 710 [remittances, payments, letters]
7	1560s–80s, Vienna/Prague	'Clavicymbalum Vniversale' in possession of Charles Luython	M. Praetorius, <i>Syntagma musicum</i> , vol. ii, 1619

10 Alfons Huber, 'Cembalo', in: *oeml* (2002), <<https://dx.doi.org/10.1553/0x0001cac4>> (accessed on 24 August 2024). Significantly, inventories drawn up at the Innsbruck court in 1619 and 1665 list all stringed keyboard instruments, including clavichords, under the heading 'instrumenta'; Franz Waldner, 'Zwei Inventarien aus dem XVI. und XVII. Jahrhundert über hinterlassene Musikinstrumente und Musikalien am Innsbrucker Hof', in: *StMw* 4 (1916), 128–47, at 131–2; Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 340–1. Michael Praetorius also states, that in Germany 'Spinetta', 'Virginal' and 'Clavicymbal' 'generically as well as individually are called *instrument*' ('Instrument in Specie, vel peculiariter sic dictum'; translation of this and all other quotations from the original sources by the author). *Syntagmatis musici tomus secundus. De organographia* (Wolfenbüttel: Elias Holwein, 1619) (VD17 12:703304G), 62, <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb10527678>> (accessed on 28 July 2024).

8	before 1590, Graz	'ein [...] lang instrument mit mössing und stählen saiten', sent by the Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara (husband of Barbara of Austria, daughter of Ferdinand I)	HHStA UR Familienurkunden 1446 [inventory 1590]
9	before 1596, Innsbruck	'ain alts groß einfachs Instrument, von Anthoni Bondemppo herrierendt'	Senn, <i>Musik und Theater</i> (see n. 2), 141 [inventory 1619]
10	c. 1600, Innsbruck	'einfaches Spinetl Thiorbata' by Donato (?) Ondeï, Bergamo	TLA Inventare A 1/25 [inventory 1665]

**Tab. 2:** Stringed keyboard instruments from Italy at the courts of the Austrian Habsburgs mentioned in written sources.

As can be seen in Tab. 2, the sources, in particular the inventories, sometimes include certain additional hints on individual features of the instruments. One relatively common reference is to the instrument as either 'einfach' ('single') or 'doppelt' ('double'). Whereas Walter Senn surmised this to be a reference to the number of manuals,<sup>11</sup> other scholars suggest that 'einfach' or 'doppelt' may indicate the number of choirs, i.e. registers.<sup>12</sup> However, the most plausible interpretation is that 'doppelt' refers to an instrument combining a harpsichord and an organ, i.e. a *claviorganum*. This is not only suggested by the 'venedigisch doppelt Clavizimbel' documented in Innsbruck (no. 6), an instrument that was demonstrably a harpsichord subsequently equipped with pipes. Moreover, it is attested by an invoice from an organ builder to the Upper Austrian monastery of Kremsmünster in 1598, which mentions a 'toppelt Instrument' as a keyboard instrument with both strings and pipes.<sup>13</sup> Other information occasionally found in inventories or account books relates to the size of the instruments by

11 Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 164.

12 Gerhard Stradner, 'Saitenklaviere in österreichischen Inventaren', in: *Das österreichische Cembalo. 600 Jahre Cembalobau in Österreich*, ed. Alfons Huber (Tutzing, 2001), 331. Denzil Wraight also suspects, that 'cembalo doppio', a term, which surfaces sometimes in Italian sources of the 16th century, means an instrument with two eight-foot registers. See Denzil Wraight, 'The Stringing of Italian Keyboard Instruments, c. 1500 – c. 1650', 2 vols., PhD diss., Queen's University of Belfast, 1997, i, 158.

13 'Verzeichnis Was [...] ich Friedrich Wegner [...] an ainem toppleten Instrument, darbei ein Regal vnnd octava Pfeifenwerkh ist, renoviert vnnd gebessert habe. [...] Erstlich [...] toppelt Instrument von neuem besait [...] item das Pfeifwerck vnnd ganz Instrument umb ein Terz nieder gestim, die Ladt von neuem ventilirt [...]': ('account of what I, Friedrich Wegner, have renovated and improved in a "double instrument" which includes a regal and an octava stop. Firstly [I have] put new strings on, tuned the pipes and the whole instrument down a third, equipped the windchest with new valves'). Altman Kellner, *Musikgeschichte des Stiftes Kremsmünster* (Kassel/Basel 1956), 143–4.

characterising them as 'lang' ('long') or 'groß' ('large') or, conversely, as 'klein' ('small') or by using a diminutive (such as 'Spinett', i.e. small spinet). It seems likely that the former terms refer to a wing-shaped harpsichord or an instrument at eight-foot pitch, while, in contrast, 'spinett' most probably refers to an *ottavino*. In some cases, however, the meaning of such additional characterisations is open to question. As already noted by Wraight, it is unclear, what a 16th or early 17th-century writer of a court inventory might have had in mind when speaking of 'thiorbato' (no. 10).<sup>14</sup> Equally difficult to interpret, but particularly interesting, is the description of an instrument documented at the court of Inner Austria (no. 8). The full entry reads: 'ein ander lang instrument mit mössing und stählen saiten, darauf man laut und still schlagen kann; irer furstlich durchlaucht etc. vom herzogen zw Ferära überschickt worden'<sup>15</sup> ('another long instrument with brass and iron strings, on which one can play loudly and softly; had been sent to his Excellency [Charles of Inner Austria] by the Duke of Ferrara [Alfonso II d'Este]'). Remarkably, evidence of keyboard instruments labelled as *istromenti pian e forte* appear repeatedly in late 16th-century sources from the court in Ferrara,<sup>16</sup> the very place from which the instrument in Graz had come from. Some of these instruments are further characterised by the remark 'a due registri' or 'col'orghano disotto' ('with the organ below'), i.e. they had two registers or were claviorgans respectively. At first glance, this could be taken as an explanation for why these instruments were perceived as capable of sounding both loud and softly. However, since other keyboard instruments are simply called 'istromento a due registri' or 'istromento con l'orghano disotto' without any further remark, one wonders whether the phrase 'piano e forte' signalled a special type of instrument, perhaps, as Pollens suggests, an instrument with some kind of hammer action.<sup>17</sup>

Three instruments require further comment on their provenance and dating. First, the prominent *Clavicymbalum Vniversale*, one of today's organological 'favourites' from the Renaissance Habsburg orbit (no. 7 in Tab. 2). As is well known, this chromatic harpsichord, famously described by Michael Praetorius,<sup>18</sup> was for some years in the possession of Charles Luython, who served at the court of Rudolf II from 1576. Despite Praetorius' claim of Vienna and the period around 1590 as the place and date of its origin, recent scholarship agrees that the instrument dates from the time of Ferdinand I and most probably came from Italy, where the development of such chromatic or

14 Ibid., ii, 309.

15 Cit. Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker* (see n. 2), 283.

16 These sources, the correspondence of the organist Hippolito Cricca and an inventory drawn up after the death of Alfonso II d'Este in 1598, were discovered by Stewart Pollens, *A History of Stringed Keyboard Instruments* (Cambridge, 2022), 172–6.

17 Ibid., 176.

18 *Syntagmatis musici tomus secundus* (see n. 10), 63–6.

enharmonic keyboard instruments had originated.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, as already suggested by Adolf Koczirz and recently corroborated by Christopher Stembridge, Jacobus Buus, who was court organist to Ferdinand I from 1550/51 to 1564 following his tenure at San Marco in Venice, may have been involved in the purchase or even in the construction of the *Clavicymbalum Vniversale*.<sup>20</sup>

More difficult to date is the 'einfaches Spinett Thiorbato' (no. 10). It is registered in an inventory drawn up in Innsbruck in 1665 (after the extinction of the Tyrolean branch of the Habsburgs and the subsequent dissolution of the Innsbruck court).<sup>21</sup> The entry also reports that the spinet 'was made in Venice by Ondeo' ('so in Venedig von dem Ondeo gemacht worden'). Senn and Stradner believed that this instrument was the same as the one referred to in a later inventory of 1741, drawn up in connection with the re-establishment of a court household in Innsbruck, as 'ain anderes großes Instrument mit einem Clavier, welche [...] mit denen Worthen Hieronymus Undeus, Donati filius, Anno 1632 bemerkt ist' ('another large instrument with one manual which is labeled with the words Hieronymus Undeus, son of Donato, in the year 1632').<sup>22</sup> However, as Denzil Wraight rightly points out, these two instruments cannot be identified as the same, 'since a "spinet!" [small spinet] can hardly have been a "großes Instrument"'.<sup>23</sup> Hence, it is equally possible that the instrument in the 1665 inventory, with its attribution only to 'Ondeo', was built by Girolamo's (Hieronymus') father, Donato Ondei, and thus dates from the period, when Donato, who died in 1623, was active, i.e. around 1600.<sup>24</sup>

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- 19 Martin Kirnbauer, 'Carl Luython and the "Clavicymbalum Vniversale seu perfectum": Finding Its Historical and Musical Context', in: *Clavibus unitis* 10/3 (2021), 99–112, <[https://www.acecs.cz/index.php?f\\_id=4&f\\_cu=cu\\_2021\\_10](https://www.acecs.cz/index.php?f_id=4&f_cu=cu_2021_10)> (accessed on 24 August 2024); Christopher Stembridge, 'The *Cimbalo cromatico* and Other Italian Keyboard Instruments with Nineteen or More Divisions to the Octave (Surviving Specimens and Documentary Evidence)', in: *PPR* 6 (1993), 33–59, <<https://scholarship.claremont.edu/ppr/vol6/iss1/>> (accessed on 10 Oct. 2025). Cf. also Pollens, *A History of Stringed Keyboard Instruments* (see n. 16), 198–203, and Collarile, "Un gran valent'huomo" (see n. 1), 68–9, on Venice as a center for this type of keyboard instruments.
- 20 Koczirz, 'Zur Geschichte des Luython'schen Klavizimbels' (see n. 3), 569; Stembridge, 'The *Cimbalo cromatico*' (see n. 19), 41.
- 21 'Inventarium über die von Erzherzog Siegmund Franz hinterlassenen Musikalien anno 1665'. The document was first edited by Waldner, 'Zwei Inventarien' (see n. 10), 130–47, and subsequently analysed and compared to other Innsbruck inventories by Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 334–46.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 340; Stradner, 'Saitenklaviere' (see n. 12), 334.
- 23 Wraight, 'The Stringing of Italian Keyboard Instruments' (see n. 12), ii, 309.
- 24 On Donato Ondeo see *Boalch-Mould Online*, <<https://www.boalch.org/instruments/makerprofile/699>> (accessed on 24 August 2024), his extant instruments are described in: Donald H. Boalch, *Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord 1440–1840*, 3rd ed. by Charles Mould (Oxford, 1995), 667–8; Wraight, 'The Stringing of Italian Keyboard Instruments' (see

One instrument can only be tentatively included among the Italian keyboard instruments in the Austrian courts. A 1619 inventory of the estate of Karl von Burgau (1560–1618), a son of Ferdinand II of Tyrol from hismorganatic marriage to Philippine Welser, mentions ‘ain alts groß ainfachs Instrument, von Anthoni Bondemppo herrierendt’ (‘an old, large, single instrument, stemming from Antonio Bontempo’).<sup>25</sup> Born in Brescia, Giovanni Antonio Bontempo is known to have been appointed to the Innsbruck court sometime before 1566. Apparently an extremely versatile musician, he served in Innsbruck as cornetto player, trumpeter and lutenist, replaced the court organist for a time around 1590, and was also active as an instrument maker. Bontempo retired after the death of Ferdinand II in 1596 and finally died in 1607.<sup>26</sup> In the absence of more detailed information, no exact date can be determined for the keyboard instrument recorded in 1619, although the remark ‘old’ points towards a relatively early date, presumably still in the 16th century. It is therefore impossible to establish whether the instrument was built before Bontempo came to Tyrol, or to what extent it exhibited Italian features, if it had already been made in Innsbruck.

It can be assumed that the eleven instruments for which there is evidence constitute only a part of all stringed keyboard instruments of Italian provenance present at the Austrian Habsburg courts. It is impossible, however, to determine the exact number of all keyboard instruments and, therefore the percentage that the eleven instruments constitute. One of the main problems is that the extant inventories in one way or another only provide incomplete information. From the imperial court, only early 17th-century inventories have survived, and these are limited to the objects stored in Rudolf II’s ‘Kunstammer’ (cabinet of curiosities).<sup>27</sup> A 1577 inventory of the

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n. 12), 305–9. On Girolamo (Hieronymus) Ondei cf. Stefano Toffolo, *Antichi strumenti veneziani. 1500–1800: Quattri secoli di liuteria e cembalaria* (Venice, 1987), 166–7. The 1665 inventory mentions two further instruments of Italian provenance: ‘ein dopplets Instrument mit 2 Clavirn’ by ‘Caesar de Pollastris von Ferrara’ and ‘ein anders Instrument mit 3 Registern [...], so der Doppo von Florenz gemacht’. Waldner, ‘Zwei Inventarien’ (see n. 10), 131–2. Apart from that, nothing is known about these builders (cf. the entries in *Boalch-Mould Online* [see n. 9], which only restate the informations provided by Waldner). It is therefore impossible to date these instruments exactly. However, their features – two manuals and three registers respectively – point towards the 17th century.

25 Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 141; Stradner, ‘Saitenklaviere’ (see n. 12), 330.

26 For the literature on Bontempo see the entry in App., tab. 3.1. Most scholars concur that 1556 was the year in which Bontempo’s tenure in Innsbruck began. This, however, is based on a remark in a petition by Bontempo in 1596, in which he requests a generous pension in light of his 40 years of arduous service (see Senn, *Musik und Theater* [see n. 2], 141). Obviously, statements of this kind should be approached with caution.

27 The entries in these documents from 1619, 1621, and 1648 that refer to musical instruments have been published by Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller, ‘Musikinstrumente in der Prager Kunstammer Kaiser Rudolfs II. um 1600’, in: *Festschrift Heinz Becker zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Jürgen Schläder (Laaber, 1982), 332–41, at 337–9.

Graz court lists only the instruments used by the string and wind players, hence not a single keyboard instrument.<sup>28</sup> A second catalogue drawn up after the death of Charles of Inner Austria in 1590 mentions only four keyboard instruments<sup>29</sup> (one of which is the instrument sent by Alfonso d'Este), which clearly casts doubt on the completeness of the record. In fact, the existence of further keyboard instruments at the court of Inner Austria during the 16th and early 17th centuries is confirmed by another inventory, registering the rich 'Kunst- und Schatzkammer' assembled by Charles of Inner Austria and his wife Maria of Bavaria. Six 'instruments' are mentioned in this source,<sup>30</sup>

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- 28 Edited in: Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker* (see n. 2), 281–2. The interpretation of this inventory requires the organisational structure of the court music to be taken into account. The document covers only the instruments for which the 'obrist musicus', at that time Simone Gatto, was responsible. The 'obrist musicus' oversaw the wind and string players who – according to a traditional scheme which applied to all Habsburg courts – reported to the 'Hofmarstallamt' ('court stable office') under the direction of the 'Oberststallmeister' (hence, the 1577 inventory bears the signature of this official). In contrast, the chapel, which also included the organists, was a separate organisation subordinated to the 'Obersthofmeister'. It aligns with this basic institutional arrangement of the court music that the 1577 inventory lists only instruments such as trombones, trumpets, flutes, various other wind and some 'geigen' and viols. Consequently, this source does not allow any conclusions about the number or the significance of keyboard instruments at the Graz court, let alone Collarile's claim that '[a]lla corte di Graz, la musica per strumento da tasto non sembra riscuotesse particolare interesse'; Collarile, "Un gran valent'huomo" (see n. 1), 75.
- 29 HHStA Hausarchiv, Hofakten des Ministeriums des Inneren 5-1 (first copy), UR Familienurkunden 1446 (second copy). Large parts of the inventory which catalogues the whole estate of Charles of Inner Austria were edited by Heinrich Zimerman (ed.), 'Urkunden, Acten und Regesten aus dem Archiv des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren (Fortsetzung)', in: *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 7 (1888), xvii–lxxxiv. Extracts of the passages recording musical instruments were published by Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker* (see n. 2), 283–9, and cited by Stradner, 'Saitenklaviere' (see n. 12), 339. Julius Schlosser, *Die Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente. Beschreibendes Verzeichnis* (Vienna, 1920), 19–20, conflates the inventories of 1577 und 1590 and omits a passage mentioning three of the four keyboard instruments (which leads to incorrect information about the number of the instruments in the most recent discussion of these sources by Collarile, "Un gran valent'huomo" [see n. 1], 75).
- 30 HHStA Familienurkunden 1737. Ed. in Joseph Wastler, 'Zur Geschichte der Schatz-, Kunst- und Rüstkammer in der k.k. Burg zu Grätz', pt. 4, in: *Mittheilungen der k.k. Central-Commission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Kunst und historischen Denkmale*, N.F. 6 (1880), xcvi–xcvii. Although the document covers items from the 16th century, it is usually overlooked in the literature on the music at the Habsburg courts of the Renaissance, presumably because it dates from 1668. On the history of Charles' and Maria's collection, which remained in Graz after the death of Maria in 1608 and even after the dissolution of the Inner Austrian court in 1619, and which was inventoried as late as 1668, see Susanne König-Lein, 'Die Grazer Kunstkammer unter Maria von Bayern, Erzherzogin von Innerösterreich (1551–1608) – ein Überblick', in: *Frühneuzeit-Info* 25 (2014), 67–82.

four of which, according to the description given in the document, appear to have been organs or claviorgans. The Innsbruck inventory, drawn up after the death of Ferdinand II of Tyrol in 1596 and documenting Ferdinand's vast and precious collection,<sup>31</sup> lists sixteen stringed keyboard instruments (as well as several organs of various types). It therefore appears to be comprehensive, but lacks any indication of the provenance of these objects.

## Acquiring Instruments

Despite these limitations, the data, when placed in a broader context, allow for some general observations. Three points in particular stand out, the first of which concerns the motives for acquiring Italian instruments and the manner in which this was achieved.

Conspicuously, almost all evidence for Italian keyboard instruments at the Austrian courts dates from the second half of the 16th century. The only exception is a letter from Bianca Maria Sforza, the second wife of Maximilian I, written on 26 January 1506 in Innsbruck, Bianca Maria's place of residence at that time.<sup>32</sup> In this letter, addressed to her aunt Isabella d'Este, Bianca Maria asked for a 'clavicordio', because there was none 'in queste bande'. It is an open question as to whether this actually means that there was no clavichord at all available at the court in Innsbruck.<sup>33</sup> It seems equally possible and even more plausible, that Bianca Maria simply did not have such an instrument at her permanent personal disposal or at the disposal of her private household. At the same time, however, Bianca Maria's request is typical of her

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31 'Inventari Weylund der Fr. Drt. Erzherzog Ferdinannden Zu Ossterreich etc. [...] Varnussen Unnd *mobilien*', KHM Vienna, ms. KK 6652. A critical online-edition including a facsimile, ed. by Veronika Sandbichler and Thomas Kuster (Vienna, 2023), is now available on: <<https://repository.khm.at/viewer/Nachlassinventar/Ferdinand/1596/>>. A fair copy of this manuscript, made immediately after the completion of the inventory, is now kept in the Austrian National Library, Cod. 8228, <<http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/AC13953785>>. A reliable summary of the entries referring to musical instruments is provided by Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 166–71, while the studies by Waldner, 'Zwei Inventarien' (see n. 10), 129–30, and Stradner, 'Saitenklaviere' (see n. 12), 330–4, quote these sources only selectively.

32 The original letter is kept in Mantua, AS AGonz E/II/2, busta 429, no. 6, and reported in: RI XIV, 5,2, N. 25891, Sabine Weiss, *Die vergessene Kaiserin. Bianca Maria Sforza, Kaiser Maximilians zweite Gemahlin* (Innsbruck, 2010), 153–4, Nicole Schwindt, *Maximilians Lieder. Weltliche Musik in deutschen Landen um 1500* (Kassel/Stuttgart, 2018), 75.

33 There is evidence that a clavichord was purchased by the Innsbruck court in 1484 for use by Catherine of Saxony, the second wife of Archduke Sigismund of Tyrol; see Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 8. Although there is no documentation about the later whereabouts of this instrument, it cannot be ruled out that it was still present in Innsbruck during the time of Bianca Maria.

endeavours to maintain as close a relationship as possible with her homeland. For example, she preferred to surround herself with ladies-in-waiting and servants from Italy, engaged an Italian solo singer, and cultivated Italian dancing.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, while Bianca Maria Sforza's request for a clavichord appears to have resulted from a specific personal, local and cultural situation, the far greater number of Italian instruments acquired by the Austrian courts during the second half of the century reflects a general trend: the intensification of the relationship between the Habsburgs and the northern Italian city-states and their culture. This development began around the middle of the century and took place on several levels. First, in the realm of political and dynastic relations. Between 1649 and the beginning of the 17th century, no less than five Habsburg Archduchesses and one Archduke, Ferdinand II of Tyrol, got married to members of the d'Este, the Medici and, above all, the Gonzaga families.<sup>35</sup> In parallel with the strengthening of the dynastic ties, the inclination of the Austrian courts toward Italian culture in general, and Italian music in particular grew steadily. As has been repeatedly discussed in the literature, especially on the courts of Tyrol and Inner Austria, the result was a significant increase in the employment of musicians born or trained in Italy and in the reception of Italian repertoire.<sup>36</sup> This trend towards an 'Italianisation' of court music also affected, albeit only partially, the acquisition of instruments. On the one hand, it can be assumed that the numerous Italian string and wind players who were recruited by the Austrian courts from the mid 16th century onwards used instruments which they had brought with them from their native regions in the first place.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, there is also evidence that the Habsburg courts increasingly drew on imports from Cremona, Brescia, Padua, Venice

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34 Daniela Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza (1472-1510). Herrschaftliche Handlungsspielräume einer Königin vor dem Hintergrund von Hof, Familie und Dynastie', PhD diss., University of Innsbruck, 2015, esp. 79-89, 96-8; Weiss, *Die vergessene Kaiserin* (see n. 32), 136-49; Schwindt, *Maximilians Lieder* (see n. 32), 73-6.

35 Besides Ferdinand of Tyrol, whose (second) wife was Anna Caterina Gonzaga, two daughters of Emperor Ferdinand I were married to Gonzagas, Catherine to Francesco III in 1549, and Eleonora to Guglielmo Gonzaga in 1561. A third daughter of Ferdinand I, Barbara, married Alfonso II d'Este in 1565, and a fourth, Johanna, married Francesco I de' Medici in the same year. Finally, Maria Magdalena, a daughter of Charles of Inner Austria, became the wife of Cosimo II de' Medici in 1608.

36 This development was already described in 1934 in a fairly thorough overview by Alfred Einstein: 'Italienische Musik und italienische Musiker am Kaiserhof und an den erzhertzoglichen Höfen in Innsbruck und Graz', in: *StMw* 21 (1934), 3-52. Since then it has been the subject of extensive research. See the monographs by Federhofer and Senn (see n. 2), the chapters by Bennett e.a., Pecknold, Federhofer, and Peter Tschmuck (see n. 6) and the literature mentioned below.

37 Gerhard Stradner, 'Die Klangwelt der Musikinstrumente in Prag um 1600', in: *Prag um 1600. Kunst und Kultur am Hofe Kaiser Rudolfs II. Ausstellung Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien*, ed. Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 2 vols. (Freren, 1988), ii, 28-31, at 28.

or Milano when procuring new string and woodwind instruments such as violins, viols, flutes and cornets. On the other hand, it seems that brass instruments, for example, continued to be bought exclusively from makers in Austria and southern Germany.<sup>38</sup> A similar 'mixed picture' emerges for stringed keyboard instruments. In several cases the sources, mostly account books, state the name of the makers, and with the exception of Ondeo and Bontempo (Tab. 2, No. 9 and 10), all of them were evidently active in the German-speaking territories.<sup>39</sup> The same is true for the (more numerous) instrument makers known to have supplied organs to the Habsburg courts.<sup>40</sup> Given the fact that organ and harpsichord building were one and the same profession at this time, it can be assumed that the demand for stringed keyboard instruments at the Austrian courts was still largely met by the production in the Habsburg dominions and neighbouring German regions. However, as the investigations summarised in Tab. 2 have shown, this supply was significantly supplemented by imports from Italy.

Occasionally instruments were sent directly from Italian courts to their Austrian counterparts, presumably as gifts from the respective ruler in connection with the newly established dynastic ties. This appears to have been the case when Alfonso II d'Este sent two instruments to the Habsburg courts: a clavichord to Vienna in 1571 (Tab. 2, no. 3),<sup>41</sup> and, as noted above, the keyboard instrument, which could be played loudly and softly, to Graz. More often, however, the Habsburg households seem to have acquired Italian instruments in other ways. There is evidence that Italian court musicians in Habsburg service from time to time were sent to their native country for

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38 Cf. the entries in account books from Innsbruck, reported by Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 165–6, and the items in the inventory of Ferdinand of Tyrol's estate from 1596 (see n. 30).

39 Hans Gartner, Anton Meidting, Anton Neuknecht, Josua Pock, Servatius Rorif, Leopold Sonderspieß, Georg Wagger. See Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 161–2, 164–7; Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker* (see n. 2), 247–8; Pass, *Musik und Musiker* (see n. 2), 305–11. On Pock and Rorif see also Rudolf Hopfner, 'Biographische Anmerkungen zu Herstellern von Cembali im österreichischen Raum', in: *Das österreichische Cembalo. 600 Jahre Cembalobau in Österreich*, ed. Alfons Huber (Tutzing, 2001), 461–96, at 479–80, 485–7, on Sonderspieß: Richard Schaal, 'Biographische Quellen zu Wiener Musikern und Instrumentenmachern', in: *StMw* 26 (1964), 194–212, at 208–9.

40 We know of only two Italian organs at Austrian courts in the 16th century. The first, an organ, previously in possession of a monastery in Trent, was presented as a gift to Ferdinand of Tyrol by a priest named Macharius de Spello (see Senn, *Musik und Theater* [see n. 2], 164); the second is the famous *organo di legno* in the 'Silver chapel' in Innsbruck. As for the exact origin of this instrument, which has not yet been definitively clarified, see Gerardus De Swerts, Pier Paolo Donati and Reinhard Böllmann, 'Organo di legno – Überlegungen zu Typus und Provenienz des Innsbrucker Instruments', in: *Die Orgeln der Hofkirche in Innsbruck. Teil 2: Die italienische Orgel in der Silbernen Kapelle*, ed. Kurt Estermann (Innsbruck, 2019), 160–9.

41 FHKA Hofzahlamtsbücher 25 (1971), fol. 679<sup>v</sup>; see Pass, *Musik und Musiker* (see n. 2), 315.

the very purpose of purchasing instruments there.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, the sources, mostly account books, which record the costs of these ‘shopping trips’, usually do not specify the type of instrument in question. However, especially when undertaken by organists, these journeys were probably also aimed at the procurement of keyboard instrument. This might have been the case, for example, when Annibale Padovano was sent to Venice in 1566, 1570 and 1573 by his employer Charles of Inner Austria to buy instruments.<sup>43</sup>

## A Variety of Types and Sounds

In 1580 Ferdinand of Tyrol commissioned the conversion of a Venetian harpsichord into a claviorgan. The process can be reconstructed in considerable detail on the basis of several accounts – payments and remittances to the instrument makers and artisans involved as well as letters from Ferdinand himself, who seems to have taken a personal interest in the process. From these sources we learn that the harpsichord was built by the otherwise unknown Iseppo Gurletta in Venice and purchased on Ferdinand’s behalf by a musician named Zingrello from Trento. It was then taken to Brixen, where it was equipped with both reed and flue stops by the organist and organ builder Andreas Andre, called Casletanus. In addition, it was given a lavishly decorated case with paintings and carved figures, before it was finally dispatched to Innsbruck.<sup>44</sup>

Recent research has clearly shown that by the end of the 15th century claviorgans had become quite popular in certain regions. These included in particular the court of the ‘Catholic Monarchs’ Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, as well as the

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42 Several of these cases are reported in: Franz Waldner, ‘Nachrichten über die Musikpflege am Hofe zu Innsbruck unter Erzherzog Ferdinand von 1567–1595’, in: *MfMG* 36 (1904), 143–92, at 152; Smijers, ‘Die kaiserliche Hof-Musikkapelle (III. Teil)’ (see n. 3), 196; Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 165–6; Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker* (see n. 2), 58, 75, 80, 84–5; Pass, *Musik und Musiker* (see n. 2), 180 and 208; Hanna Schäffer, ‘Maria von Bayern und die Musik. Musik-Mäzenatentum am bayrischen und am innerösterreichischen Hof’, in: *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereines für Steiermark* 83 (1992), 205–72, at 240, 247–8. Recent research has revealed the extensive network of agents, courtiers, ambassadors and other intermediaries who assisted Ferdinand of Tyrol in collecting art works from all over Europe. See Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, ‘Treasures for Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol: Italy, Portugal, Spain and the Ambras Castle *Kunstkammer*’, in: *Archduke Ferdinand II of Austria: A Second-Born Son*, ed. Sylva Dobalová and Jaroslava Hausenblasová (Vienna, 2021), 431–46. Gschwend (*ibid.*, 435–6, 440–1, 443–4) also discusses the background of the acquisition of several music prints (including works by Andrea Gabrieli and Tomás Luis de Victoria). A comparable systematic and thorough investigation into the acquisition of musical instruments has yet to be conducted.

43 Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker* (see n. 2), 103–4, 106–7; Collarile, ‘“Un gran valent’huomo”’ (see n. 1), 32, 36.

44 Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 164–5.

aristocratic and ecclesiastical circles associated with these rulers.<sup>45</sup> Whether the conspicuous Spanish fondness for 'claviorganos' fuelled the interest of the Habsburgs (who eventually inherited the Castilian and Aragonese throne in the early 16th century) in this type of instrument, is impossible to prove, but is not unlikely. In any case, it is certain that the claviorgan had spread to the Habsburg court by the early 1490s at the latest. In 1492 a delegation of envoys from Venice witnessed a performance on a claviorgan by court musicians of Maximilian I. According to the report of one of the envoys,<sup>46</sup> this type of instrument was still unfamiliar to the Venetians, which shows that it was not yet widely known in all parts of Italy. A few years later, in the first version of the *Triumphzug*, an impressive series of pictures produced to glorify Maximilian, Maximilian's renowned organist Paul Hofhaimer is depicted playing an instrument which most likely is a claviorgan.<sup>47</sup>

The claviorgan commissioned by Ferdinand of Tyrol in 1580 is just one of several examples which demonstrate, that the Habsburgs' predilection for combination instruments continued unabated throughout the 16th century (and even beyond). The Innsbruck inventory of 1596 lists no less than five claviorgans alongside eleven stringed keyboard instruments and four organs. As mentioned above, up to four of the six 'instruments' documented in the 1668 inventory of the court of Inner Austria might have been claviorgans. Equally, three of the four extant keyboard instruments from the Habsburg Renaissance courts also represent this type of instrument.<sup>48</sup>

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45 The relevant findings are summarised in Tess Knighton, 'Instruments, Instrumental Music and Instrumentalists: Traditions and Transitions', in: *Companion to Music in the Age of the Catholic Monarchs*, ed. Tess Knighton (Leiden/Boston, 2017), 97–144, at 134–6.

46 The source was first published by Henry Simonsfeld, 'Ein venezianischer Reisebericht über Süddeutschland, die Ostschweiz und Oberitalien aus dem Jahre 1492', in: *Zeitschrift für Kulturgeschichte* N.F. 2 (1895), 241–83, at 267–8, and has since been occasionally commented on in the literature. Cf. only recently Eleanor Smith, 'The Claviorgan: Not for Amateurs!?', in: *Keyboard Perspectives* 8 (2015), 133–54, at 134–5. The musicians who played at the event in 1492 cannot be identified, but the account explicitly states that they belonged to Maximilian's court musicians.

47 Alfons Huber, 'Text- und Bildquellen zu frühen Cembalobau in Österreich', in: *Das österreichische Cembalo. 600 Jahre Cembalobau in Österreich*, ed. Alfons Huber (Tutzing, 2001), 89–113, at 101. A reproduction of the miniature is available on: <<http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/AC14007412>> (accessed on 15 Sept. 2024).

48 These are the 'Ambraser Claviorganum' built most probably by Servatius Rorif c. 1565–69 (KHM, Inv. no. SAM A 132), the instrument combining a spinettino and a regal by Anton Meidting from 1587 (KHM, Inv. no. SAM 119), and the *claviorganum* by Josua Pock, Innsbruck 1591 (Museum Carolino Augusteum, Salzburg, Inv. no. B 13/6). For basic information and further literature on these well-known instruments see Alfons Huber, 'Österreichische Kielklaviere', in: *Das österreichische Cembalo. 600 Jahre Cembalobau in Österreich*, ed. Alfons Huber (Tutzing, 2001), 497–542, at 498–502, and <<http://www.khm.at/de/object/96367/>>, <<http://www.khm.at/de/object/84813/>> (accessed on 24 August 2024).

Ferdinand's involvement in the construction and decoration of the 'doppelt Clavizimbel' and the artistic, technical and therefore financial effort invested in it, not only points to the ongoing interest of the Austrian rulers in claviorgans in general. It also points to the specific cultural significance of combination instruments in courtly and aristocratic circles of the 16th and 17th centuries. As recent research has demonstrated, the high value placed on these instruments corresponded to their function of representing the elevated social and cultural status of their owner.<sup>49</sup> In addition, when richly decorated and given a sumptuous exterior, these instruments, which could also be regarded as a sophisticated technical apparatus, showed a proximity to the exquisite and rare objects typically collected by Renaissance princes in their cabinets of curiosities.

Another connection between the claviorgan and a more general feature of the keyboard culture at the Austrian courts has so far received little scholarly attention. Obviously, one of the main fascinations of these instruments was their ability to produce a variety of sounds (it was precisely this characteristic that so astonished the Venetian envoys when they encountered the claviorgan at Maximilian's residence in 1492). There are a number of indications that such a sonic diversity – either integrated into a single (combination) instrument or achieved by the use of individual instruments of different kinds and, therefore different timbres – was sought after at the Habsburg courts. Three aspects are particularly worth mentioning in this context: 1. The later version of Maximilian's Triumphzug (consisting of woodcuts based on the watercolours of the first version) shows Hofhaimer virtually surrounded by several different instruments: a positive, a *clavicytherium* and one or two further instrument, which cannot be identified with certainty, but which could be either a regal and another *clavicytherium* or a combination of the two instruments, i.e. a claviorgan.<sup>50</sup> Since the very aim of the *Triumphzug* was to glorify Maximilian by depicting his entourage in utmost magnificence and splendour, the function of an array of different instruments and instrumental colours as a means of princely representation becomes clear. That the range of types of keyboard instruments and sonorities to be associated with Maximilian's court was even broader is attested by another iconographical source: the equally famous woodcut 'Maximilian attending mass' by Hans Weiditz,<sup>51</sup> in

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49 Smith, 'The Claviorgan' (see n. 46); Elly M. Langford, 'Before Obsolescence: Cultural Roles of Combination Keyboards in Europe, 1490–1892', MA thesis, University of Melbourne, 2019, <<http://hdl.handle.net/11343/235592>> (accessed on 26 August 2024).

50 Rolf Dammann, 'Die Musik im Triumphzug Kaiser Maximilians I.', in: *AfMw* 31 (1974), 245–89, at 276; Schwindt, *Maximilians Lieder* (see n. 32), 145; cf. also Huber, 'Text- und Bildquellen' (see n. 47), 100–1.

51 Schwindt, *Maximilians Lieder* (see n. 32), 116–18; the picture is available online: <<http://images.zeno.org/Kunstwerke/1/big/HL31487a.jpg>> (accessed on 15 Sept. 2024).

which Hofhaimer can be seen playing the specific type of organ labelled by Praetorius as 'Apfelregal'.<sup>52</sup>

2. In 1569 the organist and organ maker Servatius Rorif provided an instrument for Ferdinand of Tyrol which is described in a letter from Rorif as comprising 'Saiten, Harpfen, Pfeifen, Sagkpfeyfen, Voglgesang, Tremulant und andern vil mer Stimwerk, das also zusammen 18 Register hat'<sup>53</sup> ('strings, harps, pipes, bagpipe, birdsong, tremulant and other "voices", in sum 18 registers'), i.e., besides 'normal' harpsichord and organ stops it obviously contained actions producing special sound effects. According to Rudolf Hopfner,<sup>54</sup> this instrument is identical with the extant 'Ambraser Claviorganum' (now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, Inv. no. SAM A 132). Furthermore, an entry in the 1596 inventory of Ferdinand's estate seems to refer to the same instrument, likewise pointing out its peculiarity: 'ain instrument, so ain real und posidif ist, darauf der fröschdanz und voglgesang und andere mer register' ('an instrument which is a regal and a positive and on which the frog's dance, birdsong and other stops [can be found]').<sup>55</sup> Hopfner ventures a connection between the motto 'Sic transit gloria mundi' on the 'Ambraser Claviorganum' and the motto of Ferdinand of Tyrol's father, Emperor Ferdinand I, 'Fiat iustitia aut pereat mundus',<sup>56</sup> thus ostentatiously associating the prince with the instrument and consequently with its sound effects. In any case, what is certainly significant is how the relationship between Ferdinand and Rorif, who was eventually engaged at the Innsbruck court in 1566, was established. In 1561 Ferdinand of Tyrol came across an instrument which Rorif, based in Augsburg at that time, had built for Ferdinand I. Whether this was an organ or a claviorgan, cannot be determined, but the instrument seems to have been rather small and to have contained a number of registers.<sup>57</sup> Ferdinand of Tyrol subsequently commissioned Rorif to construct a similar instrument for him, which eventually turned out to be more richly decorated and to be equipped 'with the same stops and not one less' than the one belonging to the emperor.<sup>58</sup> Several remarks in a letter, in which

52 Praetorius, *Syntagmatis musici tomus secundus* (see n. 10), 148.

53 Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 87.

54 'Servatius Rorif. Anmerkungen zum "Ambraser Claviorganum" und seinem möglichen Erbauer', in: *Das österreichische Cembalo. 600 Jahre Cembalobau in Österreich*, ed. Alfons Huber (Tutzing, 2001), 241–5.

55 See n. 31.

56 Hopfner, 'Servatius Rorif' (see n. 54), 241. Of course, 'Sic transit gloria mundi' was one of the most common harpsichord mottoes in the 16th and 17th centuries. See Thomas McGeary, 'Harpsichord Mottoes', in: *JAMIS* 7 (1981), 5–35, at 31–2.

57 It is described as 'schönes, zierliches und künstliches Instrument mit vielen Registern' ('a beautiful, daintily and artful instrument with many registers'). Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 84.

58 'es seie vil geschmeidiger und hipscher mit alabastern Figuren und dergleichen äußerlichen Figuren zugericht dann das die röm. kunigl. Majestet [...] hat. So hab sollchs auch alle Register

Rorif offered to deliver the instrument himself in order to explain ‘alle Geheim und Griffe’ (‘all secrets and “handles” [stops?]’), suggest that it contained certain unusual features. Moreover, the intention to obtain an instrument that was not inferior to the emperor’s in terms of ingenuity and variety of sounds suggests the value such objects had in the representation of princely splendour.

3. The range of keyboard instruments, which were exceptional for their construction and correspondingly their sound, even went beyond those associated with Hofhaimer or produced by Rorif. In particular, the Austrian courts possessed *Glasglockenklaviere*, in which the keys operated glass bells struck by clappers,<sup>59</sup> as well as *Geigenwerke*, a type of keyboard instrument developed by the Nuremberg organist Hans Haiden, in which the strings were bowed by means of a rotating wheel, enabling a sustained sound and the variation of the dynamics.<sup>60</sup> Finally, the sources mention further instruments of a special nature in one way or another: a claviorgan with what appears to be three manuals (‘ain instrument mit saiten und pfeifwerk, darauf drei personen zugleich schlagen können’ – ‘an instrument with strings and pipes, which three persons can play simultaneously’),<sup>61</sup> and an ‘Instrument [das] von sich einen glöckhll Khläng [gibt]: obenher mit 2 Paspälg belegt’ (‘an instrument producing the sound of bells; with two bellows on it’), and – in case it contained a special kind of action, as mentioned above – the ‘piano e forte’-instrument sent by Alfonso II d’Este.

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wie daßelbige und nit ains weniger’ (‘it is more preciously and beautifully arranged with alabaster figures than that of his Majesty, the Roman king [Ferdinand I.]. And it has the same stops and not one less’). *Ibid.*, 84–5. Hopfner, ‘Biographische Anmerkungen’ (see n. 39), 485.

59 Cf. the ‘instrument von lauterrn glas’ in the collection of Emperor Rudolf II (see Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller, ‘Musikinstrumente in der Prager Kunstkammer Kaiser Rudolfs II. um 1600’, in: *Festschrift Heinz Becker zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Jürgen Schläder [Laaber, 1982], 332–41, at 335 and 337) and the ‘instrument von glaswerch’ mentioned in the Innsbruck inventory of 1596 (see n. 31), which still is extant: KHM SAM, Inv. no. 124, <<http://www.khm.at/de/object/84818/>> (accessed on 24 August 2024). See Wilfried Seipel (ed.), *Für Aug’ und Ohr. Musik in Kunst- und Wunderkammern*. [Exposition] *Kunsthistorisches Museum, Schloß Ambras, 7. Juli bis 31. Oktober 1999* (Vienna, 1999), 154.

60 John Henry van der Meer, ‘Gestrichene Saitenklaviere’, in: *BJbHM* 13 (1989), 141–81, at 143–52. According to a list of sales of *Geigenwerke* compiled by Hans Haiden’s son David, two such instruments were purchased by Emperor Rudolf II and one each by Ferdinand II of Tyrol, his successor Maximilian III ‘der Deutschmeister’ and Emperor Matthias (ibid., 148). Several entries in inventories from the Austrian courts seem to refer to these *Geigenwerke*: ‘ein Flügel mit einem geigen-Werck’ and ‘ein huelzernes instrument wie ein spinnrädlt mit saitenwerk’ (‘a wooden instrument like a spinning wheel with strings’) in the inventory of Rudolf II’s collection (Niemöller, ‘Musikinstrumente’ [see n. 58], 335, 338–9), ‘ein instrument [...] so mit radlen und Ledersticklein den Sätten Khläng gibt’ (‘an instrument which produces a full sound with wheels and pieces of leather’) in the Graz inventory of 1668 (Wastler [ed.], ‘Zur Geschichte’ [see n. 30], xcvi). Leather straps propelling the wheels were part of Haiden’s construction; see van der Meer, ‘Gestrichene Saitenklaviere’, 146.

61 Niemöller, ‘Musikinstrumente’ (see n. 59), 337.

## Keyboard Playing Habsburgs

In 1561 a Venetian ‘instrument’ was purchased for the use of three daughters of Emperor Ferdinand I (Tab. 2, no. 2). This is only one example of a large number of documents, which attest to the playing of keyboard instruments especially by female members of the dynasty. Tab. 3 lists the names of all women of the Habsburg family for whom we have such evidence – in most cases information about keyboard instruments that were acquired by or for them, or about extra payments to court organists for teaching them.

Margaret of Austria (1480–1530)	daughter of Maximilian I and Mary of Burgundy	taught by Govard Nepotis
Bianca Maria Sforza [?] (1472–1510)	wife of Maximilian I	instrument [see Tab. 2, no. 1]
Eleanor of Austria (1498–1558)	daughters of Philip the Fair, granddaughters of Maximilian I	taught by Herry Bredemers; instrument
Isabella of Austria (1501–26)		taught by H. Bredemers; instrument
Mary of Hungary (1505–58)		taught by H. Bredemers and Hans Sattler; instrument
Anna of Bohemia and Hungary (1503–47)		taught by Wilhelm Hofhaimer
Maria of Austria (1528–1603)	wife of Maximilian II	taught by Antonio de Cabezón and Francisco de Soto
Anna of Austria (1528–90)		taught by Hans Schächinger d.J.; instrument
Magdalena of Austria (1532–90)		
Catherine of Austria (1533–72)		
Eleonor of Austria (1534–94)	daughters of Ferdinand I and Anna of Bohemia and Hungary	taught by Nikolaus Stockhammer, Gilles Ellco and Wilhelm Hurlacher; instrument [Tab. 2, no. 2]
Margaret of Austria (1536–67)		
Barbara of Austria (1539–72)		
Helena of Austria (1543–74)		
Johanna of Austria (1547–78)		
Anna of Austria, Queen of Spain (1549–80)	daughter of Maximilian II	taught by Guilelmus Formellis

Maria of Bavaria (1551–1608)	wife of Charles II of Inner Austria	taught by H. Schächinger d.J. and Annibale Padovano
Anna Caterina Gonzaga (1566–1621) [?]	wife of Ferdinand II of Tyrol	
Maria of Austria (1584–1649)	daughters of Ferdinand II of Tyrol and Anna Caterina Gonzaga	instrument
Anna of Tyrol (1585–1618)		
Maria Christina of Austria (1574–1621)		
Eleonor of Austria (1582–1620)	daughters of Charles II of Inner Austria and Maria of Bavaria	instrument
Margaret of Austria (1584–1611)		

**Tab. 3:** Female members of the Habsburg dynasty documented as keyboard players

The apparently strong tradition of keyboard playing princesses and archduchesses can be traced back to the Burgundian ancestors of the Habsburgs in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Already Mary of Burgundy (1457–82), the first wife of Maximilian I, was taught the ‘clavicordion’ by the Burgundian chapel organist Pierre Beurse.<sup>62</sup> Against this background, it is not surprising that Mary’s and Maximilian’s daughter Margaret of Austria also learned to play the clavichord under the guidance of Beurse’s successor Govard Nepotis.<sup>63</sup> Later, as Governor of the Netherlands from 1506, Margaret raised the children of her late brother Philip the Fair at her court in Mechelen and ensured that they all were taught to play the ‘manicordion’, i.e. the clavichord,<sup>64</sup> by her organist Henri Bredemers.<sup>65</sup> Since then, a continuous tradition of teaching the Habsburg archduchesses to play the keyboard can be observed throughout the 16th century. Although this corresponds to a certain extent to a general trend, in that the musical education of the children, and the daughters in particular, had become

62 Edmond Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-bas avant le XIX siècle*, vol. 3 (Brussels, 1875), 214, vol. 7: *Les musiciens néerlandais en Espagne* (Brussels, 1885), 196–7; Martin Picker, *The Chanson Albums of Marguerite of Austria: MSS 228 and 11239 of the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*, Brussels (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1965), 15.

63 Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-bas* (see n. 62), vol. 3, 214, vol. 7, 198–9, Picker, *The Chanson Albums* (see n. 62), 15.

64 On ‘manicordion’ as a common term for the clavichord, particularly in French-speaking areas, see Bernard Brauchli, *The Clavichord* (Cambridge, 1998), 50–2, 130–1.

65 See the documents published in: André Joseph Ghislain Le Glay (ed.), *Correspondance de l'empereur Maximilian Ier et de Marguerite d'Autriche*, vol. 1, Paris 1839, 395; Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-bas* (see n. 62), vol. 7, 201–5, 218–19; Georges van Doorslaer,

common among the aristocracy throughout Europe by this time,<sup>66</sup> some specific aspects deserve to be highlighted.

Firstly, it can be assumed that the practice of female keyboard playing at the Austrian courts received an additional impetus from several foreign princesses who married into the dynasty, not least those who came from Italy or otherwise had an Italian background. As has been extensively discussed in recent literature, it was in Italy, where the idea of making music as part of (female) courtly behaviour and virtue gained momentum, as early as the 15th century, and was further strengthened from the beginning of the 16th century, not least in the wake of treatises such as Baldassare Castiglione extremely influential *Libro del cortegiano*, and where, concomitantly, the musical training and activity of noblewomen became customary.<sup>67</sup>

In the absence of explicit documentation, it remains uncertain, whether Bianca Maria Sforza and Anna Caterina Gonzaga were active als keyboard players themselves. However, there is a certain likelihood that they were. Both grew up at courts strongly influenced by humanist ideas, which had developed into flourishing musical centres during the Renaissance, suggesting the possibility of a corresponding thorough training of the princesses.<sup>68</sup> There is also ample evidence of Anna Caterina Gonzaga's interest in music after her marriage to Ferdinand of Tyrol, not least through her extensive musical patronage, which she continued to exercise even as a widow.<sup>69</sup> In any case, Bianca Maria Sforza's request for a clavichord to be sent from Ferrara – whether for her own use or that of a member of her entourage – indicates that the cultural transfer she brought about from Italy also had an impact on keyboard culture. Concerning Anna Caterina Gonzaga, it has been established that she borrowed an 'instrument' from a local organist for the use of her daughters Maria of

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'Herry Bredemers, organiste et maître de musique, 1472–1522', in: *Annales de l'Académie Royale d'Archéologie de Belgique* 66 (1915), 209–56, at 223–8; Picker, *The Chanson Albums* (see n. 62), 49–50. Of Philipp the Fair's daughters, Eleanor of Austria, later the wife of King Francis I of France, has particularly attracted the attention of scholars as a keyboard player, not least because of the assumption that several portraits showing young women at the clavichord might depict Eleanor; see Brauchli, *The Clavichord* (see n. 64), 77–80. However, as Christelle Cazaux, *La musique à la cour de François Ier* (Paris, 2002), 59, points out, this assumption is purely hypothetical.

66 For the German-speaking countries see the detailed study by Linda Maria Koldau, *Frauen – Musik – Kultur. Ein Handbuch zum deutschen Sprachgebiet der Frühen Neuzeit* (Cologne/Weimar/Vienna, 2005).

67 Cf. only Laurie Stras, *Women and Music in Sixteenth-Century Ferrara* (Cambridge, 2018), esp. 55–74, and the literature cited there.

68 On the culture at the court of Milan as background for Bianca Maria's education cf. Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza' (see n. 34), 23–35; on

69 Cf. Koldau, *Frauen – Musik – Kultur* (see n. 66), 67–8, for a summary of Anna Catarina's musical patronage.

Austria and Anna of Tyrol during a period of residence in Baden in 1606.<sup>70</sup> The most striking example of a keyboard-playing female member of the Habsburg family, who was also strongly Italian-influenced, is, however, Maria of Bavaria.<sup>71</sup> The later wife of Charles of Inner Austria was raised at the notoriously Italianate court of her father Albrecht V. of Bavaria, who, along with many other Italian instrumentalists, employed such renowned musicians as Andrea Gabrieli, Ivo de Vento and Gioseffo Guami as organists in the 1560's and 70's.<sup>72</sup> In Munich Maria was taught by the court organist Hans Schächinger d.J. (who previously had served at the Innsbruck court). Following her marriage in 1571 she moved to Graz, where she cultivated a vital musical patronage by facilitating the exchange of repertoires with other musical centres, procuring instruments and recruiting musicians. Furthermore, she herself remained musically active, continuing her keyboard playing under the guidance of Annibale Padovano.<sup>73</sup>

In 1561 an episode occurred at the Innsbruck court<sup>74</sup> which is significant in two respects. Gilles Ellcom who stood in for the ill Nikolaus Stockhammer as court organist and therefore teacher of Ferdinand I's daughters, demanded a pay rise announcing that he would otherwise resign. The archduchesses, who obviously wanted to keep Ellcom, supported his request, which the emperor eventually granted. This attests to the women's agency, i.e. their interest as well as capacity to influence their own

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70 Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 198. This episode is likely the basis for the information sometimes found in the literature, which suggests Anna Caterina Gonzaga and her daughters 'played clavichord together' ('gemeinsam [...] Klavichord spielen'; Elena Taddei, *Anna Caterina Gonzaga [1566–1621]. Erzherzogin von Österreich, Landesfürstin von Tirol und Klosterstiftertin [Innsbruck/Wien, 2021]*, 63; Monika E. Wallas, 'Anna Catherina Gonzaga. Leben und Wirken der zweiten Gemahlin Erzherzog Ferdinands II.', MPhil thesis, University of Innsbruck, 1990, 79) – a claim that cannot be substantiated as such.

71 Hanna Schäffer, 'Maria von Bayern und die Musik. Musik-Mäzenatentum am bayrischen und am innerösterreichischen Hof', in: *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereines für Steiermark* 83 (1992), 205–72. For a concise survey of Maria Anna's profound relationship with music cf. Koldau, *Frauen – Musik – Kultur* (see n. 66), 69–79.

72 Cf. Bernhard Rainer, *Instrumentalisten und instrumentale Praxis am Hof Albrechts V. von Bayern 1550–1579*, *Musikkontext* 16 (Vienna, 2021), 36–8, who argues that Andrea Gabrieli probably joined the Munich chapel as early as 1559/60 and stayed there until 1566.

73 Against this background, it is not surprising that the daughters of Maria and Charles also learned to play keyboard instruments. In 1574 Eleanor and Margret were provided with an 'instrument' made by the renowned Viennese organ builder Leopold Sonderspieß (Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker* [see n. 2], 247); according to the inventory of 1590, Maria Christina had a 'clavicimole mit dreÿ Registern' (presumably a harpsichord) in her room. See Zimmerman (ed.), 'Urkunden, Acten und Regesten' (see n. 29), xxxi; Collarile, "Un gran valent'huomo" (see n. 1), 75, assumes Maria of Bavaria to have been the possessor of this instrument. However, the entry in the inventory refers to the 'young Archduchess Maria' ('in der jungen fürstin Erzherzogin Maria zimmer'), i.e., to Maria Christina.

74 Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 54–5

musical education.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, the reasons given for Ellcom's support provide a rare insight into the teaching programme of aristocratic pupils at the keyboard. As Ferdinand's daughters told him, Ellcom had just started to teach them tablature notation which promised to make them less likely to forget what they had learned.<sup>76</sup> Thus, it can be concluded that keyboard playing was initially taught as 'unwritten practice', even to (female) amateurs (this, incidentally, is consistent with the many 16th-century paintings which depict women playing a keyboard instrument without notated music).

In contrast to the large number of female members of the dynasty, there is very little evidence of male Habsburgs as keyboard players before the 17th century. The only reliable documentation relates to Charles V, who is known to have received keyboard instruction alongside his sisters at the court of his aunt Margaret in Mechelen, and to have had a clavichord brought to him towards the end of his life (whether for his own use or that of musicians performing for him in a private setting, is unknown).<sup>77</sup> Apart from Charles, the only (male) Habsburg who is said to have learned to play keyboard instruments is Maximilian I. However, since this information stems from the autobiographical chivalric novel *Weißkunig*, which is of a propagandistic and therefore partly fictional nature, it must of course be treated with caution.<sup>78</sup> At the same time,

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75 A similar event took place three years later after Ferdinand I's death. His daughters Magdalena, Margaret and Barbara were concerned that Ellcom's and Stockhammer's successor Wilhelm Hurlacher might be dismissed by the new ruler, Ferdinand of Tyrol, and once again successfully championed his continued employment. Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 55.

76 '[Ellcom hat] sy mit sonderm underthenigisten Vließ gelernt und sei yetzt in Übung und am Werch, [sie] in der Tabulatur auch zu underweisen, also [...] kunftig des, so sy begriffen, umb sovil desto weniger vergessen kündten, dann da er yetzt von dannen gelassen werden solle [...], dessen, so sy bisher gelernt, gleich wiederumben vergessen mechten und umsonst sein.' ('Ellcom has taught them with particular subservient diligence and is now about to teach them the tablature, so that they forget less of what they have learnt in the future; If he were to leave now, they would immediately forget what they had learnt so far and their training would have been in vain'). *Ibid.*, 55.

77 Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-bas* (see n. 62), vol. 7, 198–202; van Doorslaer, 'Herry Bredemers' (see n. 65), 223–7; Picker, *The Chanson Albums* (see n. 62), 23; Christian Kahl, 'Lehrjahre eines Kaisers – Stationen der Persönlichkeitsentwicklung Karls V. (1500–1558), PhD diss., University of Trier, 2008, 151–3; Mary Tiffany Ferer, *Music and Ceremony at the Court of Charles V: The 'Capilla Flamenca' and the Art of Political Promotion* (Woodbridge, 2012), 43–4.

78 Moreover, the two versions of the text differ in the relevant passage. Whereas the draft claims, that the *Weißkunig*, i.e. Maximilian, learned 'menigerlay handtspil auff lauten, herpfen, klauikordj' ('playing various instruments such as the lute, the harp and the clavichord'), the corresponding passage of the final version quite unspecifically reads: 'Er lernet [...] saydtenspiel' ('he learned playing instruments'). See Nicole Schwindt, "alle seitten spy-el erlernt". Maximilian I. zwischen inszeniertem und faktischem Musikertum', in: *Fürst und*

it is striking that whenever a keyboard instrument is mentioned in connection with a female member of the Habsburg family, it is without exception a stringed keyboard instrument, predominantly a clavichord. Thus, a distinct ‘gendering’ of the clavichord – and, conversely, of the organ – is recognisable in the sphere of the Austrian courts.

## Italian Professionals

As the example of the keyboard-playing spouses and children of the rulers demonstrates, it would be a gross oversimplification to assume that the musical activities at early modern courts were exclusively performed by professional musicians. In contrast, it can be inferred that also amateurs – in addition to the members of the dynasty, other courtiers, nobles or court servants – participated in the music-making perhaps to a considerable extent. Nevertheless, the scope (and quality) of this mostly informal and thus only sporadically documented musical practice is virtually impossible to be assessed.<sup>79</sup> At the same time, it is evident that professional musicians, including the instrumentalists, played the pivotal role in shaping the courtly musical life, not only as performers and composers,<sup>80</sup> but also as teachers.

Tables 1–3 in the appendix provide a comprehensive list of all known professional keyboard players at the three Austrian courts (the term ‘professional’ is understood to denote musicians who were remunerated for their work). Especially for the more prominent among these musicians, detailed information has been collated in individual studies.<sup>81</sup> In addition, I want to put forward an overarching observation, which is concerned with the more general profile of the musical culture at the Habsburg Renaissance courts.

Conventional wisdom in music historiography suggests that from the 1560’s onwards the courts of Inner Austria and of Tyrol were increasingly oriented towards Italy. This development led to the two courts becoming recognized as ‘main outposts north of the Alps’ for the reception of Italian music.<sup>82</sup> This was due to several reasons: the dynastic connections already mentioned, the strategic location of the Tyrolian and Styrian lands between the Italian peninsula and central Europe, the personal

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*Fürstin als Künstler. Herrschaftliches Künstlertum zwischen Habitus, Norm und Neigung*, ed. Annette C. Cremer, Matthias Müller and Klaus Pietschmann (Berlin, 2018), 261–82, at 274–9.

79 Cf. Grassl, ‘Instrumentalisten und Instrumentalmusik’ (see n. 5), 112–14.

80 In this context, it is noteworthy that during the 16th century, instrumentalists at the Austrian courts, including organists and wind instrument players, began to emerge not only as composers of instrumental music but also as composers of vocal music, in some cases quite prolifically. Cf. *ibid.*, 125, 138–40.

81 See the bibliographical references in the appendix.

82 Bennett e.a., ‘The Court Chapels of the Austrian Line (II)’ (see n. 6), 178.

inclination of the regents<sup>83</sup> and a confessional motivation (among Italians, Protestant attitudes were less to be feared). The reception and cultivation of Italian repertoires and musical practices had an impact on all segments of court music: the chapel, the emerging sphere of 'chamber' music as well as the instrumental music. This process, which entailed an orientation towards musical developments considered as progressive and forward-looking, was driven, of course, by the recruitment of a large number of court musicians with an Italian background, whether they had been born and raised in Italy, had studied there, or had been otherwise active in Italy prior to their relocation to Innsbruck and Graz (see App., tabs. 1–3, where these musicians are highlighted in red). In contrast, the imperial court has been subject to a persistent narrative, which asserts that the courts of Ferdinand I, Maximilian II and Rudolf II remained a bastion of Franco-Flemish music, thereby exhibiting a significantly more conservative character compared to those in Inner Austria and Tyrol. It has certainly been acknowledged that in both Vienna and Prague, the majority of wind and string players were from Italy. However, in the chapel which comprised not only the singers, but also the organists, the Franco-Flemish predominance allegedly remained unchallenged.

Remarkably, as early as 1934, Alfred Einstein observed that, despite their origin in the Netherlands, prominent Franco-Flemish composers active in Vienna and Prague such as Philippe de Monte, the long-time imperial chapel master from 1568 to 1603, and Jacob Regnart, vice-chapel master from 1579 to 1582, 'already belonged to Italian music by education, formation, inclination and the bulk of their œuvre' ('nach Erziehung, Bildung, Neigung und der Hauptmasse ihres Lebenswerks der italienischen Musik längst selber angehören').<sup>84</sup> Einstein's insight implicitly draws attention to the necessity of avoiding an essentialist misconception which is obviously rooted in nationalist ideology and which equates the mere fact of origin or birthplace of a person with his or her cultural disposition. Notwithstanding, such notions have continued to impinge on music historiography,<sup>85</sup> with the effect that the view of

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83 Charles of Inner Austria and Ferdinand II of Tyrol had gained firsthand experience of Italian music during visits to Florence, Mantua, Ferrara and Venice in 1569 and in 1549, 1561 and 1579 respectively. The encounter with these brilliant musical centres left a formative impression on the Archdukes. See Václav Bůžek, *Ferdinand von Tirol zwischen Prag und Innsbruck. Der Adel aus den böhmischen Ländern auf dem Weg zu den Höfen der ersten Habsburger* (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar, 2009), 83–5, 158–9; Koldau, *Frauen – Musik – Kultur* (see n. 66), 570–2; Peter Diemer, 'Vergnügungsfahrt mit Hindernissen. Erzherzog Ferdinands Reise nach Venedig, Ferrara und Mantua im Frühjahr 1579', in: *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 66 (1984), 249–314; Federhofer, *Musikpflege und Musiker* (see n. 2), 27–8.

84 Einstein, 'Italienische Musik' (see n. 36), 3.

85 Cf. Hellmut Federhofer, 'Die Niederländer an den Habsburgerhöfen in Österreich', in: *Anzeiger der phil.-hist. Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1956, Nr. 7 (Vienna, 1956), 102–20, at 114. Federhofer states, patently resorting to an essentialist notion: 'among the Austrian chapels of the Habsburgs the Imperial court chapel held

the imperial chapel as a Franco-Flemish dominated institution, which proved to be impervious to Italian influence until the early 17th century, has left its mark even in recent literature.<sup>86</sup>

On the other hand, the research conducted by Michaela Žáčková Rossi, Robert Lindell and others over the past two decades has both broadened and deepened our understanding of Italian music and musicians at the court, especially during the reign of Rudolf II., indicating that the 'Italianate element' was more pronounced than previously assumed. These studies highlighted the relatively large number of musicians from Italy who were connected to the court (although not always as permanent members of the staff), their closer geographical origin (primarily from Udine, Brescia and Cremona), their family networks,<sup>87</sup> the extent, to which Italian culture and music was transmitted and cultivated in Prague and the Czech Crown Lands during the latter

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on to "Netherlandishness" most tenaciously and for the longest time' ('[...] die kaiserliche Hofkapelle [hielt] unter allen österreichischen Habsburgerkapellen am zähesten und längsten am Niederländertum fest').

- 86 Cf. e.g. the statement of Elisabeth Th. Hilscher, 'Habsburg, Biographie, Die österreichische Linie 1521-1619: Ferdinand I. bis Matthias', in: *MGG Online* (2016), <<https://www-1imgg-2online-1com-1004790t10428.han.onb.ac.at/mgg/stable/532306>> (accessed on 15 Dec. 2024): 'die Hofmusik [blieb] am kaiserlichen Hof Rudolphs II. [...] und seines Bruders und Nachfolgers Matthias [...] frankoflämisch geprägt, wurde jedoch zunehmend maniert und koppelte sich von den neuen Entwicklungen in Italien ab' ('the music at the court of Rudolf II and his brother and successor Matthias remained Franco-Flemish, increasingly developed mannerist traits and detached itself from the new developments in Italy'). This view even resonates in studies on specific topics. It is significant, for example, that the survey of Venetian influence on the Habsburg court music by Beth L. Glixon, Jeffrey Kurtzman, and Steven Saunders, 'Musical Connections between the Austrian Habsburgs and Venice in the Late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in: *A Companion to Music at the Habsburg Courts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Andrew H. Weaver (Leiden/Boston, 2021), 534-70, does not address the Imperial court until the first half of the 17th century.
- 87 See in particular Michaela Žáčková Rossi, 'I musici dell'area padana alla corte di Rodolfo II (1576-1612)', in: *Barroco padano 4. Atti del XII Convegno internazionale sulla musica italiana nei secoli XVII-XVIII. Brescia, 14-16 luglio 2003*, ed. Alberto Colzani, Andrea Luppi and Maurizio Padoan (Como, 2006), 207-22; eadem, 'Da Udine a Praga. La crescente fortuna dei musicisti friulani alla corte imperiale di Rodolfo II', in: *Alessandro Orologio (1551-1633), musico friulano e il suo tempo. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi Pordenone, Udine, S. Giorgio della Richinvelda, 15-17 ottobre 2004*, ed. Franco Colussi (Udine, 2008), 266-76; eadem, 'Provenienza dei musicisti e rapporti di parentela alla corte dell'imperatore Rodolfo II d'Asburgo (1576-1612)', in: *Renaissance Music in the Slavic World*, ed. Marco Gurrieri and Vasco Zara (Turnhout, 2019), 87-98. Cf. also Clemente Lunelli, 'Notizie di alcuni musicisti a Praga nel cinquecento. Dagli atti di un nataio di Trento', in: *Atti dell'accademia roveretana degli agiati. Contributi della classe di scienze filosoficostoriche e di lettere*, Estratto degli anni accademici 220-223, Serie IV, 1970-73 (Calliano, 1975), 137-42.

half of the 16th century, i.e. within the sphere of Rudolf II's court,<sup>88</sup> and, finally, the significant role Italianate music and/or compositions by Italian musicians played in shaping the sacred and secular vocal repertoire at the imperial court, including genres such as the madrigal and the canzonetta.<sup>89</sup>

I would argue that a similar situation exists in regard to keyboard music. It is evident that almost all organists of the imperial chapel up to the 17th century were natives to the Low Countries or to German-speaking regions, as repeatedly has been stated in the literature. However, when taking into consideration the individual biographies of these musicians, it becomes apparent that some of them had a distinctly strong Italian background. It is important to note that Jacob Buus served as the second organist of San Marco for a period of ten years prior to his appointment at the Viennese court in 1550/51.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, Charles Luython left his Flemish homeland at the age of nine to become a choirboy at the court of Maximilian II, before he was sent to study in Italy in 1571 and eventually re-entered the imperial chapel in 1576<sup>91</sup> (to speak of Luython as 'Flemish' musician, therefore, proves to be at least misleading). Equally, the Nuremberg-born Jacob Hassler, imperial 'cammer organist' from 1602 onwards, had studied in Italy, probably with Giovanni Gabrieli, a close associate of his elder brother Hans Leo.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, in 1596 Liberale Zanchi, a musician born and presumably trained in Treviso, then part of the Republic of Venice, was appointed chapel organist. As a result, around 1600 most of the organist positions at the imperial court

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88 Scott Edwards, 'Repertory Migration in the Czech Crown Lands, 1570–1630', PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2012.

89 Christof Stadelmann, 'Italienische Komponisten am Kaiserhof Rudolfs II. in Prag', in: *Mittel-europäische Aspekte des Orgelbaus und der geistlichen Musik in Prag und den böhmischen Ländern. Konferenzbericht Prag 2000*, ed. Jaromír Cerný (Sinzig, 2002), 223–33; Marco Mangani, 'I madrigali di Carlo e Giovanni Paolo Ardesi: Un contributo cremonese alla produzione musicale della corte rodolfina', in: *Intorno a Monteverdi*, ed. Maria Caraci Vela and Rodobaldo Tibaldi (Lucca, 1999), 423–57; Žáčková Rossi, 'Da Udine a Praga' (see n. 87); Edwards, 'Repertory Migration' (see n. 88), 94–141. See also the excellent summary by Pfohl, 'The Court Chapels of the Austrian Line (I)' (see n. 6), 161–6.

90 See the biographical informations on Buus in Breitner, *Jacob Buus* (see n. 1), 16–23, and the literature mentioned in App., tab. 1.1.

91 The most recent survey of Luython's biography is Nicholas Johnson, 'Musica Caelestia: Hermetic Philosophy, Astronomy, and Music at the Court of Rudolf II', PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2012, 159–62; cf. in addition the literature mentioned in App., tab. 1.1.

92 On Hassler's stay in Italy see Markus Grassl, *Die in Orgeltabulaturen überlieferten Instrumentalwerke Jacob Hasslers und ihre stilistischen Grundlagen. Studien zur Instrumentalmusik des 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhunderts*, Wiener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikwissenschaft 29 (Tutzing, 1990), 3–5.

were held by musicians from Italy or by those who had spent a considerable amount of time there.<sup>93</sup>

In contrast with vocal polyphony, the stylistic classification of the keyboard music at the imperial court faces the challenge of a comparatively limited source base. No extant 16th-century manuscript or print with keyboard music is known, which can be definitively linked to the court.<sup>94</sup> The only court organist before the last quarter of the 16th century, from whom compositions have been transmitted, is Jacobus Buus. The available information does not include any specific information regarding Buus' compositional or performance activities as a member of the imperial chapel. However, since his publications of *recercari* predate his tenure in Vienna, it can be posited that the genre of the imitative keyboard *ricercar* – which denotes a then quite modern genre of Italian origin – had already reached the imperial court by around the middle of the century. If works by later court organists are extant at all, their number is rather small (which no doubt also reflects the still largely improvisational nature of keyboard music at the time).<sup>95</sup> The music that has survived, i.e. the *ricercars*, *fantasias*, *canzonas* and *toccatas* by Luython, J. Hassler or Zanchi, manifest a clear proximity to Italian

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93 Nothing is known about the origin and training of Rudolf II's other organists, except that Christoph Strauß and Thomas Podenstain likely came from a German-speaking area and Caspar Raickenroy from the Netherlands.

94 The only source of keyboard music that seems to reflect the repertoire of the Habsburg courts of the late 16th and early 17th centuries, is the voluminous *Minorite Codex A-Wm* ms. XIV.714, which can be dated to around 1630. In addition to an international repertoire of impressive breadth the manuscript conspicuously contains a wealth of works by composers active at the Austrian courts, both intabulated vocal compositions and original keyboard pieces. In particular, the *Minorite Codex* transmits – as *Unica* – all known keyboard works by Zanchi and the majority of keyboard music by Luython. However, since nothing precise is known about provenance and scribe(s), the manuscript's connection with the Habsburg courts also remains unclear. See the contribution of Mario Aschauer on this source in this volume and the literature cited there.

95 No works by Formellis, van Mulen, van Winde, Perger, Lemmens, Podenstain or Raickenroy are known. The only musician of the late 16th and early 17th centuries who had connections with the court and left a considerable body of keyboard music is Hans Leo Hassler. However, it is doubtful whether Hassler, who was appointed 'hofdiener von haus aus' in 1602 and served Rudolf II as agent for commercial transactions and as maker of mechanical musical instruments, was ever musically active at the court itself (Hartmut Krones, 'Die Beziehungen der Brüder Haßler zu Kaiser Rudolf dem II. und zu Prag', in: *Die Musik der Deutschen im Osten und ihre Wechselwirkung mit den Nachbarn. Bericht über den Kongreß Köln 1992*, ed. Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller and Helmut Loos, *Deutsche Musik im Osten* 6 [Bonn, 1994], 375–81). Therefore, it remains unclear to what extent Hassler's keyboard works were part of the court's repertoire.

keyboard music of the late 16th century, particularly Venetian, both in terms of genre and compositional style.<sup>96</sup>

For a long time, musicological research on the court of the Habsburg Emperors focused only on those professional musicians, who were formally employed and assigned to one of the traditional organisational units of court music, notably the chapel. As a result, these musicians are comparatively well documented, as they are mentioned quite frequently in sources such as rosters or account books. However, this approach fails to provide a comprehensive representation of the multifaceted nature of courtly musical culture. As the example of keyboard playing members of the Habsburg family demonstrates, there were areas of courtly music culture, that are only scarcely or indirectly documented and/or left a trace only in scattered sources of various kinds. Another case in point is the so-called chamber music, a more intimate and sophisticated kind of music-making that emerged in the second half of the 16th century at the Habsburg courts including the imperial household. As revealed by Robert Lindell and others, a chamber music ensemble appears to have been established in Vienna around 1570, some of whose members were not employed on a long-term basis and therefore do not surface in the regular personnel lists, or (at least initially) only appear 'hidden' in the court documents as they were subsumed there under the traditional organisational units of the chapel or the 'trumpeters'.<sup>97</sup>

Three aspects of the imperial chamber music, which rapidly acquired a high reputation,<sup>98</sup> are of particular interest:

1. Chamber music provided a framework within which women found an opportunity to develop a professional musical activity (whereas positions in the chapel, still considered primarily as a sacred institution, and in the paramilitary trumpet corps exclusively

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96 All three also wrote and published Italian vocal music, Luython and J. Hassler each one book of madrigals in 1582 and 1601 respectively, Zanchi three madrigal books between 1595 and 1603.

97 On this issue, see Robert Lindell, 'Filippo, Stefano and Martha: New Findings on Chamber Music at the Imperial Court in the Second Half of the 16th Century', in: *Trasmissione e ricezione delle forme di cultura musicale. Atti del XIV Congresso della Società Internazionale di Musicologia*. Bologna, 1987, ed. Angelo Pompilio, 3 vols. (Turin, 1990), iii, 869–75; Grassl, 'Instrumentalisten und Instrumentalmusik' (see n. 5), 129–31. Cf. also Pfohl, 'The Court Chapels of the Austrian Line (I)' (see n. 6), 154–5.

98 As evidenced by an often quoted letter from Albrecht V of Bavaria dated 18 Nov. 1573, which reads: 'Der Orlando [di Lasso] gibt aus, der kayser hab ein so costliche camer music, die man mitt Zungen nitt khünde aussprechen, noch mitt den Oren genug vernemen oder mitt sinnen begreifen' ('Orlando di Lasso reports that the Emperor has a chamber music which is so excellent that it cannot be described with the tongue, nor can the ears ever hear enough of it, nor can it be grasped with the senses'). See Adolf Sandberger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der bayerischen Hofkapelle unter Orlando di Lasso. Drittes Buch: Dokumente* (Leipzig, 1895), 311.

could be obtained by men). Thanks to thorough research by Robert Lindell<sup>99</sup> we know of a singer, keyboardist and lutenist named 'Marta', whom several sources from the 1570's attest to have been a highly praised member of the imperial chamber music. Most probably, Marta was the same person as the 'young woman from Mechelen' who was brought to Vienna in 1570 by Philippe de Monte and who is described as a singer and an excellent performer on the virginal.<sup>100</sup> Marta was not the only female musician present at the court of Emperor Maximilian II. Indeed, Maximilian's musical entourage appears to have included an entire ensemble comprising several female singers. This is evident by the repeated ordering of pieces for three sopranos and bass from the Roman composer Stefano Rossetti (who himself had stayed at the court of Maximilian II several times between 1571 and 1573).<sup>101</sup> In addition, there were other (at least) attempts to recruit women: In the late 1560's Maximilian, who was evidently very committed to the development of his chamber music ensemble, attempted to attract the renowned singer and lutenist Virginia Vagnoli to Vienna (albeit without success).<sup>102</sup> A few years later, in 1574, Rossetti recommended to the Emperor a young female lutenist he had found in Rome, pointing out that she is not only a fine player, but 'would [also] form a good ensemble with Marta' (whether she actually went to Vienna is unknown).<sup>103</sup>

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99 Robert Lindell, 'Marta gentil che'l cor m'ha morto. Eine unbekannte Kammermusikerin am Hof Maximilians II.', in: *MusAu* 7 (1987), 59–68; idem, 'Filippo, Stefano and Martha' (see n. 97).

100 The entry in the court account book of 1570 reads: 'ainer jungfrawen von Mecheln außm Niderlandt, die treflich auf dem virginal schlagen und sonst auch wohl singen und musicieren khan' (a 'young woman from Mechelen in the Low Countries who can play the virginal excellently and can also sing and perform on other instruments'); Smijers, 'Die kaiserliche Hof-Musikkapelle (II. Teil)' (see n. 3), 105. Marta may also have been the Marta Ordelwring, who was married to Mauro Sinibaldi in her first marriage and Carlo Ardesi in her second.

101 Robert Lindell, 'New Findings on Music at the Court of Maximilian II,' in: *Kaiser Maximilian II. Kultur und Politik im 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Friedrich Edelmayer and Alfred Kohler, Wiener Beiträge zur Geschichte der Neuzeit 19 (Vienna/Munich, 1992), 231–45, at 237, 243; idem, 'Stefano Rossetti at the Imperial Court,' in: *Musicologia Humana: Studies in Honor of Warren and Ursula Kirkendale*, ed. Siegfried Gmeinwieser, David Hiley and Jörg Riedlbauer (Florence, 1994), 157–81, at 162–3, 174, 177. An additional hint at the existence of such an ensemble is found in a 1574 letter from the Ferrarese ambassador to Vienna to Duke Alfonso d'Este which mentions, albeit only in passing, that there were young women singing at the court of the Emperor. See Elio Durante and Anna Martellotti, *Cronistoria del concerto delle dame principalissime di Margherita Gonzaga d'Este* (Florence, 1989), 53–4, 131–2. The relevant passages of this letter had already been quoted in: Angelo Solerti, *Ferrara e la corte Estense nella seconda metà del secolo decimosesto* (Città di Castello, 1891), lxxi.

102 Franco Piperno, 'Diplomacy and Musical Patronage: Virginia, Guidubaldo II, Massimiliano II, "Lo streggino" and Others,' in: *EMH* 18 (1999), 259–79.

103 '[...] che farebbe buon conserto con la Marta'. See Lindell, 'Stefano Rossetti' (see n. 101), 163–4, the quotation (from a letter of Rossetti to Maximilian II.) at 178.

2. The efforts to engage Virginia Vagnoli and the Roman lutenist are noteworthy for one further reason: the preponderance of Italian singers and instrumentalists within the imperial chamber music ensemble. This is exemplified by the cornetto players Luigi Zanobi and Giovanni Domenico Cappa, the string players Alberto, Giovanni Paolo and Carlo Ardesi and Mauro Sinibaldi, the bass Alvigio Felice, the composer and organist Stefano Rossetti and Liberale Zanchi who is occasionally referred to as ‘camer organist’ in court documents between 1605 and 1613.<sup>104</sup> Of course, there were also keyboard players serving as ‘camer organist’, who were not of Italian descent – Luython from 1576 to 1582, Jacob Hassler from 1602 to 1613. But, as mentioned before, both had close ties to Italy and Italian music; perhaps it was this Italian background that made them particularly qualified for the assignment as chamber musician.

3. There is some evidence that (plucked) keyboard instruments played an important role in the chamber music performed at the courts of Maximilian II and Rudolf II. Firstly, the expertise of the ‘young woman from Mecheln’ (Marta) as stressed in the court documents and apparently crucial to her recruitment was her skill in playing the ‘virginal’. Secondly, the establishment of the specific position of ‘chamber organist’ (in addition to the conventional ‘chapel organist’) implies a range of duties that the other organists alone were unable to fulfill. Furthermore, conclusions can be drawn from what is known about the repertoire of the imperial chamber music: In 1574 Maximilian II asked Rossetti (who repeatedly supplied the court with compositions during the 1570’s) to send pieces scored for three sopranos and bass together with a keyboard part in which ‘you [Rossetti] should include all the voices which are necessary to supplement with what is missing in the other books [i.e. vocal parts]’.<sup>105</sup> One year later the Emperor requested Rossetti to provide a book with intabulations of works Rossetti had recently sent, ‘so that it can serve the person who plays the keyboard’.<sup>106</sup> Of course, it cannot be ruled out that these intabulations were intended for a solo performance of the pieces. However, it is equally plausible, and perhaps even more likely, that they were intended to facilitate a performance with vocal voices accompanied by a keyboard, as it is clearly suggested in Maximilian’s first request. In

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104 For further informations and literature on these musicians see Grassl, ‘Instrumentalisten und Instrumentalmusik’ (see n. 5), 142–7; Michaela Žáčková Rossi, *The Musicians at the Court of Rudolf II: The Musical Entourage of Rudolf II (1576–1612) Reconstructed from the Imperial Account Ledgers* (Prague, 2017), passim.

105 ‘[...] un libro para la persona que tocare el Instrumento e nel qual [pongais] todas las boces q[ue] fueren nescessarias para suplir las q[ue] falzaren en los otros libros’ (HHStA, Hausarchiv, Sammelband Konv. 2, Kart. 1, fol. 303<sup>v</sup>). Cf. Lindell, ‘Stefano Rossetti’ (see n. 101), 177.

106 ‘un otro [libro] por sí en q[ue] pongais en tablatura todas las pieças [...] de la manera q[ue] esmenester para q[ue] syrva a la persona q[ue] tocare el Clavo’ (HHStA, Hausarchiv, Sammelband Konv. 2, Kart. 1, fol. 330<sup>v</sup>). Cf. Lindell, ‘New Findings’ (see n. 101), 238, 245; idem, ‘Stefano Rossetti’ (see n. 101), 179.

addition, Marta's dual role as both singer and a keyboard player, along with the fact that she and a lutenist were considered to form a well-matched duo, points towards singing supported by a chordal instrument.

It has been known for some time that Ferdinand of Tyrol established an Italianate chamber music ensemble at his Innsbruck court in the 1570s, composed mainly of musicians from Venice and Milan including female singers (and which, incidentally, was also supplied with pieces for three sopranos by Rossetti).<sup>107</sup> The evidence cited suggests a parallel development at the imperial court, possibly in reciprocal influence with Innsbruck, but in any case following the example of northern Italian courts. Especially at the court of the d'Este in Ferrara, with whom the Habsburgs had a closer relationship and from where, as mentioned, they received several keyboard instruments, a tradition of 'singing ladies' developed from the middle of the 16th century onwards. This tradition also included solo singing accompanied by a keyboard instrument, and culminated in the famous *concerto delle donne* from 1580 onwards.<sup>108</sup> As a result, this undoubtedly means that the imperial court also engaged with the latest trends in modern Italian music.

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107 Senn, *Musik und Theater* (see n. 2), 150–3; cf. also Koldau, *Frauen – Musik – Kultur* (see n. 66), 569–72.

108 See Anthony Newcomb, *The Madrigal at Ferrara, 1579–1597*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1980), i, 7–19, and in greater detail Stras, *Women and Music* (see n. 67), 143–216.

## Appendix

### Keyboard players at the courts of the Austrian Habsburgs during the 16th century

The references only cover the literature specifically addressing the relationship of the musicians to the Habsburg courts. For the sake of better clarity, references are given only by author and year of publication. Full citations can be found in the bibliography. Articles in the standard lexicons (NNG, MGG<sup>2</sup>, *oeml*) are only mentioned if they contain specific information that goes beyond the listed studies. Additionally, archival sources not yet covered in the literature are cited.

Italicised dates refer to the earliest or latest documentation available, i.e. they do not exclude preceding or subsequent periods of service.

Of the various spellings of the names, only the most common is given.

Red letters indicate musicians who were born or trained or worked (at least for some time) in Italy.

#### 1. Keyboard players at the imperial court

(Maximilian I [1493–1519] – Ferdinand I [1522–64] – Maximilian II [1564–76] – Rudolf II [1576–1612])

Table 1.1. is the expanded and corrected version of an earlier list published in: Markus Grassl, 'Instrumentalisten und Instrumentalmusik am kaiserlichen Hof von 1527 bis 1612. Fakten – Hypothesen – Fragen', in: *Die Wiener Hofmusikkapelle III. Gibt es einen Stil der Hofmusikkapelle?*, ed. Hartmut Krones, Theophil Antonicek and Elisabeth Theresia Fritz-Hilscher (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar, 2011), 109–48, at 141–7.

##### 1.1. Chapel and Chamber Organists

years of service	name	references
1490–1519	Paul Hofhaimer	cf. only COFFEY (2021)
? – 1496	Jakob Kellergraf	RI XIV,2 n. 4556; WALDNER (1897/98), 24–5; MOSER (1929), 20; SENN (1954), 28, 45; SCHWINDT (2018), 278.
1501–04	Benedikt Sef(f)linger	RI XIV,3,2 n. 15024; RI XIV,3,2 n. 15711; RI XIV,4,1 n. 15861; SENN (1954), 45; BIBA (1999), 223.
1506	Melchior Wurmser	RI XIV, 5 n. 23822; SCHWINDT (2018), 278.
1504–09	<b>Gregor Accot</b> (Ackhert)	RI XIV,4,1 n. 18287; WALDNER (1897/98), 37–8, 42, 44, 46–7; SCHWEIGER (1931/32), 372; WESSELY (1955), 205–6; BIBA (1999), 223; SCHWINDT (2018), 278.

1510–25	Hans Sattler	WALDNER (1897/98), 47–8, 57, 58, 60, 62, 64; SENN (1954), 43, 45, 47, 50; BIBA (1999), 223; SCHWINDT (2018), 62, 75, 145, 278.
1508–19	Jörg (Georg) Baumhackl	HIRZEL (1908/09), 155, 157; KOCZIRZ (1930/31), 532; REICHERT (1954), 110; SENN (1954), 33, 38; BIBA (1999), 223; SCHWINDT (2018), 278. [Baumhackl later served as singer in the chapel of Ferdinand I, where he is documented in 1527; WESSELY (1958), 160].
1527	[?] Melle	HIRZEL (1908/09), 154; WESSELY (1958), 228, 391.
1529–45	Hans Grafendorfer	HIRZEL (1908/09), 157; SMIJERS I (1919), 142; FEDERHOFER ('Biographische Beiträge', 1952), 44; SENN (1954), 44; WESSELY (1958), 228–33, 396–402.
1546–64	Christoph Khräll	A-Wn Cod. 14363 (chapel roster 1560); HHStA OMeA SR 183/45 (chapel roster 1563); SMIJERS I (1919), 142, 152, 165, 174; SMIJERS III (1921), 192–3; WESSELY (1958), 233, 406, 408, 410, 412, 416, 417, 420, 423, 426, 429, 433; PIETZSCH (1960), 24; BREITNER (1977), 21, 148.
1547–48	Peter Strapp	SMIJERS IV (1922), 70–1; PASS (1980), 160, 343, 344; PFOHL (2022), 43.
1550/51–64	Jacob Buus	A-Wn Cod. 14363 (chapel roster 1560); HHStA OMeA SR 183/45 (chapel roster 1563); SMIJERS I (1919), 142, 152; SMIJERS II (1920), 121–2; WESSELY (1958), 412, 415, 417, 420, 423, 426, 429, 431, 433; BREITNER (1977), 20–3, 144–51; ONGARO (1986), 138.
(1551–)1564–82	Guilelmus Formellis	VANDER STRAETEN V (1880), 104; SMIJERS I (1919), 145, 147, 153–4, 175; SMIJERS II (1920), 137–8; FEDERHOFER (1950), 180; PASS (1980), 160–2, 349, 353, 355, 363, 367, 372, 381, 389; COMBERIATI (1987), 202; HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 163, 391; HINDRICHs (2002), 198–9; GRÖBL/HAUPT (2006/07), Reg. 317, 659; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), 10–11, 76; PFOHL (2022), 44–5, 48. [Most authors give 1553/54 as the year in which Formelli's service started; however, he appears in the chapel rosters as early as 1551; see PASS (1980), 349.]
1565–85	Wilhelm van Mulen	['nebenorganist'; served also as singer since at least 1560 and from 1585 to 1598.] HHStA RHR Passbriefe 11–3–81; VANDER STRAETEN V (1880), 106; SMIJERS I (1919), 145, 147, 167–8; SMIJERS IV (1922), 54–5; DOORSLAER (1930/31), 486, 488; DOORSLAER (1933), 150, 156; PASS (1980), 164, 357, 360, 362, 366, 379, 388; HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 162, 388; HINDRICHs (2002), 196–7; ROSENBERG (2003), 47; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), 24–5, 131–2.

1570–94	Paul van Winde	VANDER STRAETEN V (1880), 104–6; SMIJERS I (1919), 145, 147, 154; SMIJERS IV (1922), 77–80; KOCZIRZ (1913), 302; DOORSLAER (1930); DOORSLAER (1930/31), 485, 489; DOORSLAER (1933), 150, 158; LUNELLI (1975), 142; PASS (1980), 162–3, 381, 389; COMBERIATI (1987), 202; HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 163, 391; ROSENBERG (2003), 87; GRÖBL/HAUPT (2006/07), Reg. 57, 93, 315, 477, 789, 1198, 1255; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2016), 159, 161; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), 36–7, 183–4. [Some authors give 1596 as the end of van Winde's service; however, as already DOORSLAER (1930) has shown, van Winde left the court in 1594.]
1573–75	Hans Perger	[in 1574 also documented as 'instrumentist' (= chamber musician?)] SMIJERS I (1919), 145 [who erroneously gives 1576 as the end of Perger's tenure]; PASS (1980), 163–4, 381; COMBERIATI (1987), 199.
1576–1612	Carl Luython	[1566 choirboy, 1576 singer, 1576 chamber musician (organist), 1582 chapel organist, 1603 court composer] SMIJERS I (1919), 146–7, 149, 156, 186; SMIJERS III (1921), 196–206; DOORSLAER (1930/31), 485, 488; DOORSLAER (1933), 150; COMBERIATI (1987), 62–77; COMBERIATI (1988); HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 161, 380, 391; ROSENBERG (2003), 85–7; GRÖBL/HAUPT (2006/07), Reg. 181, 371, 1081; JOHNSON (2012), 159–62; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2016), 159; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), xiv, xxv, xxxii, 20–1, 114–16.
1585–99	Hans Lemmens (Lampert)	['instrumentist', since 1591 'extraordinari' organist] SMIJERS I (1919), 147; DOORSLAER (1933), 150, 155; COMBERIATI (1987), 39; ROSENBERG (2003), 83–4 [who erroneously gives 1594 as the start of Lemmens' tenure]; HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 391; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), 16–17, 108.
1596–1612	Libérale Zanchi	KOCZIRZ (1913), 303; SMIJERS I (1919), 147, 149, 156, 186; SMIJERS IV (1922), 80; HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 391; STADELMANN (2002), 231–2; ROSENBERG (2003), 87–8; GRASSL (2009), 68–71; JOHNSON (2012), 261–2; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2016), 161; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), 36–7, 187.
1600–19	Thomas Podenstein	KOCZIRZ (1913), 298; SMIJERS I (1919), 151, 157; SMIJERS IV (1922), 58–9; LINK (1996), 90–2; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), xviii, 26–7, 142; RAINER (2022), 23–4, 30–1, 39, 42.
1601–19	Christoph Strauß	SMIJERS I (1919), 151, 157, 172, 173, 182; SMIJERS IV (1922), 72–3; GEIRINGER (1930/31); FEDERHOFER (1967), 248; LINDELL ('Music at the Court', 1990), 293; LINK (1996), 42–5; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), xviii, 32–3, 173; RAINER (2022), 23–4, 31–2, 39, 42.

1602–13(14?)	Jacob Hassler	HHStA Jud. Ant. 35; SMIJERS I (1919), 149; SMIJERS III (1921), 183–4; SCHMID (1941), 90–3; COMBERIATI (1987), 210; KRONES (1988), 30–35; GRASSL (1990), 9–13; KRONES (1994); HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 381; ROSENBERG (2003), 83; JOHNSON (2012), 304–5; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2016), 159, 161; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), 12–13, 90; MGG <sup>2</sup> .
1607–12	Caspar Raickenroy	SMIJERS I (1919), 149, 186; COMBERIATI (1987), 210; HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 391; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), 26–7, 146.
1619	Matthias Platzer	SMIJERS I (1919), 151; LINK (1996), 92–3

## 1.2. Other keyboard players in imperial service

years of service	name	references
1570– ?	Marta	[= Marta Ordelwring ?, married: Sinibaldi, since 1591: Ardesi] LINDELL (1987); LUNELLI (1975), 138, 141–2; LINDELL ('Fillipo, Stefano e Marta', 1990); LINDELL ('Wedding', 1990), 257; LINDELL (1992); LINDELL ('Stefano Rossetti', 1994); ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2019), 95.
c. 1570–80	Stefano Rossetti	[chamber musician, keyboardist] HHStA RHR Passbriefe 14-2-25; LINDELL (1987); LINDELL ('Fillipo, Stefano e Marta', 1990); LINDELL (1992); LINDELL ('Stefano Rossetti', 1994); ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2006), 212.
1602–12	Hans Leo Hassler	['Hofdiener von haus aus'] SMIJERS III (1921) 176–83; SCHMID (1941); KRONES (1994); HAUSENBLASOVÁ (2002), 267; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2016), 159–61; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), xxx, 12–13, 90.
1604	Francesco Turini	[choirboy, also serving as organist] FHKA SuS Pers ORH 3843; SMIJERS I (1919), 150; LINDELL ('Music and patronage', 1994), 267; ŽÁČKOVÁ ROSSI (2017), 33, 203; NNG; MGG <sup>2</sup> .

## 1.3. Organists of St James in Innsbruck, also serving at the court of Ferdinand I

years of service	name	references
1525–40	Wilhelm Hofhaimer	WALDNER (1904), 144–5; SENN (1954), 50–1.
1541–49	Hans Schächinger	WALDNER (1904), 146–7; SENN (1954), 50–1; SENN (1973).

1549–58, 60–61	Nikolaus Stockhammer	WALDNER (1904), 147; SENN (1954), 52.
1558–59	Gilles Ellcom	WALDNER (1904), 147–8; SENN (1954), 54.
1561–81	Wilhelm Hurlacher	WALDNER (1904), 148–9, 163–4; SENN (1954), 55, 183–5; FEDERHOFER (1967), 241; LINDELL (1992), 235; TSCHMUCK (2001), 66, 107; GRATL (2012), 53–4.

## 2. Keyboard players at the court of Inner Austria in Graz (Charles II [1564–90] – Ferdinand II of Inner Austria [1590–1619])

### 2.1. Chapel Organists

years of service	name	references
1564–72	Abraham Strauss	WALLNER (1912), 80, 82; FEDERHOFER (1967), 136–7; GRÖBL/HAUPT (2006/07), Reg. 103; HAUPT/WIED (2010), 188; <i>oeml.</i>
1571–74/75	<b>Mambrianus Gallo</b>	WALLNER (1912), 83; FEDERHOFER (1954), 404–5; FEDERHOFER (1967), 79.
1579–90, 1594/95–96	<b>Annibale Perini</b>	FEDERHOFER (1953), 227–8, 230–1, 233; FEDERHOFER (1953/1996), 239–42, 246–8; FEDERHOFER (1954); FEDERHOFER (1955), 170–1, 174, 223; FEDERHOFER (1967), 116–18; SEIFERT (2017), 55.
1582–90	<b>Francesco Rovigo</b>	FEDERHOFER (1953), 230–1; FEDERHOFER (1954), 402, 405; SENN (1954), 92–3, 131, 134; FEDERHOFER (1967), 125–8; FINK 1977.
c. 1589–1615/16	Hans Khuretín	[also serving as singer] FEDERHOFER (1953), 233; FEDERHOFER (1967), 92–3.
1590–1600	Ruprecht Steuber	FEDERHOFER (1953), 233; FEDERHOFER (1953/1996), 243–6; FEDERHOFER (1954), 405; FEDERHOFER (1955), 170; FEDERHOFER (1967), 211–2.
1602–05	<b>Francesco Stivori</b>	FEDERHOFER (1955), 171–2, 175, 203; FEDERHOFER (1967), 213–15; KOKOLE (2016), 52–3; SEIFERT (2017), 56.
1606–28	<b>Alessandro Tadei</b>	FEDERHOFER (“Tadei”, 1952); FEDERHOFER (1955); FEDERHOFER (1967), 216–18; SINNICCO (1992); KOKOLE (2016), 52–3; SEIFERT (2017), 56.
1607–25	<b>Alessandro Bontempo</b>	FEDERHOFER (1955), esp. 218–19; FEDERHOFER (1967), 149–50; ROTTENSTEINER (2006), 165–6; SEIFERT (2017), 57.

## 2.2. Other Keyboard Players

years of service	name	references
1565–75	<b>Annibale Padovano</b>	[1565 ‘musicus’, 1567 ‘obrister Musicus der Instrumentalisten’, 1570 chapel master] cf. only FEDERHOFER (1967), 103–10; COLLARILE (2019).
1586–1620	<b>Ambrosio Bontempo</b>	[court dance master, esp. in the years before 1602 also active as organist] FEDERHOFER (1967), 60–2; ROTTENSTEINER (2002); ROTTENSTEINER (2006).
1602	Georg Graf	[city organist, also active at the court] FEDERHOFER (1951/1996), 132; FEDERHOFER (1967), 239.

## 3. Keyboard players at the court of Tyrol in Innsbruck (Ferdinand II of Tyrol [1564–96])

### 3.1. Court Organists

years of service	name	references
1566–87	Servatius Rorif	[c. 1566–68, 1583–87 ‘musicus’ and trumpeter] WALDNER (1904), 149, 164–6; SENN (1954), 84–92; LAMBRECHT (1986); HOPFNER, ‘Servatius Rorif’ (2001); TSCHMUCK (2001), passim; TSCHMUCK (2004), 28–9.
1587–89 (90/91?)	<b>Joan Tomaso Tribiolo</b>	WALDNER (1904), 192; SENN (1954), 93, 152; PASS (1980), 204, 335; TSCHMUCK (2001), 65, 175, 359, 363.
1591–93/95	<b>Claudio Bramieri</b>	WALDNER (1904), 167; SENN (1954), 93–4; TSCHMUCK (2001), 59, 65, 91, 109, 138, 359; HAUPT/WIED (2010), 217.
c. 1590–96	<b>Giovanni Antonio Bontempo</b>	[organist substitute; 1566–96 also ‘musicus’, lutenist, trumpet and cornetto player.] WALDNER (1904), 188–9; SENN (1954), 93, 140–1; TSCHMUCK (2001), passim; TSCHMUCK (2004), 29.

### 3.2. Organists of St James in Innsbruck, also serving at the court

years of service	name	references
1561–81	Wilhelm Hurlacher	see above 1.3.
1582–88	Hans Praschler	WALDNER (1904), 166–7; SENN (1954), 186; TSCHMUCK (2001), 143.
1588–92	Servatius Rorif	see above 3.1.
1592–98	<b>Otto Servatius Rorif</b>	WALDNER (1904), 166; SENN (1954), 91–2, 186; TSCHMUCK (2001), 66, 140, 143

### 3.3. Other documented keyboard players

years of service	name	references
1570	a 'singer and instrumental-ist from the Netherlands'	SENN (1954), 151; PECKNOLD (2021), 229–30.
1594–96	<b>Isabella Istrana</b>	SENN (1954), 151; PECKNOLD (2021), 229–30; KOLDAU ( <i>AfMw</i> 2005), 236–7.

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# Sofonisba Anguissola at the Keyboard: Performance of Transgressive Musical Knowledge and Artistic Skill\*

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Jane Hatter

In 1609 the Venetian printer Evangelista Deuchino published a compendium by Pietro Paolo di Ribera (c. 1550–1609), a Spanish-born canon living and working in Venice.<sup>1</sup> On the title page Ribera claimed that the volume included accounts of 845 notable and famous women, embracing both ancients and moderns in a wide variety of disciplines. Among this impressive compendium we find one of the first summaries of the life and impact of Sofonisba Anguissola (c. 1539–1625/26).<sup>2</sup> Ribera's subtitle for her entry states that he will write 'on the noble Sofonisba of Cremona, musician, scholar, and above all rarest painter.'<sup>3</sup> Although her exposé is in the category of artists – and she is primarily remembered for her work in this area both by Ribera and modern scholars – this heading also highlights her status as a member of the nobility and two other areas of accomplishment that qualified her to be listed among the women in the

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- 1 The volume was dedicated to Valeria Bonomi, a nun and the abbess of a monastery in Trieste. Pietro Paolo di Ribera, *Le Glorie immortali de' trionfi, et heroiche imprese d'ottocento quarantacinque donne illustri antiche e modern, dotate di conditione, e scienze segnalate* (Venice: Evangelista Deuchino, 1609), online: <<http://data.onb.ac.at/rep/105EF692>> (accessed on 26 August 2024).
- 2 Sofonisba's entry is no. 454, but the end of the numbers is at 495, so it seems that Ribera fell well short of his lofty goal. It is unclear why the title claims such a higher number, but Ribera died in 1609, perhaps before he could complete all the entries that he intended to include.
- 3 'Di Sofonisma nobile Cremonesa, Musica, Letterata, e sopra tutto rarissima Pittrice', p. 313. Unlike many of the other accounts in his book, which are limited to a sentence or two, Sofonisba's is almost four pages long. It also stands out because Ribera does not cite other authors when he writes about Sofonisba, indicating that he composed this entry from his own knowledge and experience rather than from another published source as he did with entries for other women. Whether or not the information he provides is completely accurate, this record is an interesting perspective on how Sofonisba was perceived during her lifetime.

book – letters and music.<sup>4</sup> What does it mean that Ribera, as her close contemporary, lists music as her first meritorious characteristic and that her aristocratic identity prefaces all of her accomplishments? Like Sofonisba he had access to both the Italian and Spanish elite social contexts.<sup>5</sup> Had he perhaps heard her perform in Italy or spoken with those who had visited the Spanish court during her years living there as a courtly lady of the late Queen Isabel de Valois (1545–1568)?

Ribera's summary of her merits might easily serve as a caption for one of Sofonisba's youthful self-portraits, especially the one currently housed in Naples at the Museo di Capodimonte (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1:** Sofonisba Anguissola, *Autoritratto alla spinetta* (1554/55), oil on canvas, Naples, Museo di Capodimonte, Inv. no. Q358, <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Autoritratto\\_alla\\_spinetta,\\_Sofonisba\\_Anguissola\\_001.JPG?uselang=it](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Autoritratto_alla_spinetta,_Sofonisba_Anguissola_001.JPG?uselang=it)> (accessed on 24 August 2024).

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- 4 She is also mentioned on p. 335 on a separate list headed by Tarquinia Molza of ‘women of great valor in various profession who still live in this century with great honor’ (‘Donne di gran valor in varie professioni, che con grande honore di questo secolo vivono ancora’). Coming at the very end, this second entry for Sofonisba refers the reader to the previous account, but music is again noted as one of her accomplishments, while her noble status has been overlooked. ‘Sofonisma [sic] Cremonesa, oltre che è Musica, e buona letterata, e eccellentissima nella pittura; come sopradicemmo largamente.’ Cap. 14 cart. 457. (If not stated otherwise, all translations of quotations from the original sources are by the author).
- 5 I will use Sofonisba’s first name to identify her throughout this essay for clarity, since she used and was referred to by different family names throughout her life. Her first name was consistent.

One of three extant musical self-portraits, this painting shows her gazing confidently out at the viewer from her seat at the keyboard in the modest yet refined attire and secluded space of a minor aristocratic girl.<sup>6</sup> Despite contemporary accounts of her musical accomplishments and her own self-portraits at the keyboard, modern scholars have struggled to appreciate Sofonisba's musicality because unlike Ribera, we cannot listen in on the music made during a Spanish courtly gathering or talk to others who had accessed those privileged spaces. Unlike her extant paintings and drawings, musical performance is ephemeral, especially the often non-notated traditions of dances and song arrangements that were integral to the musical self-presentation of noble women and girls.<sup>7</sup> Although recent art historians have been keen to rescue Sofonisba the painter and grant her a position among the noted 'professional' female creators of 16th-century art, scholars tend to dismiss the question of her musical accomplishments and to see music primarily as a theme aligning her with a few other female artists who left similar musical self-portraits.<sup>8</sup> However, identifying these paintings simply as evidence that she participated in a trope used by others – including Catharina Van Hemessen (1528–after 1583), Lavinia Fontana (1552–1614), and Artemisia Gentileschi (1593–1653), all members of the artisan class and daughters of professional painters – lacks contextual nuance and can be misleading. While these class differences may seem subtle to us with our historical distance, the elision into an artistic trope does not take into consideration the way that music would have

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6 There is also one in the Spencer Collection at Althorp Park (Fig. 5) and another that seems to be an 18th-century copy in Chichester, Goodwood House.

7 For excellent and detailed discussions of the ways that women presented themselves through courtly song and dance, see Judith Bryce, 'Performing for Strangers: Women, Dance, and Music in Quattrocento Florence', in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (2001), 1074–107, and Chapters 2 and 3 of Laurie Stras's book *Women and Music in Sixteenth-Century Ferrara* (Cambridge, 2018). For a general overview of the role of dance at court, see Jennifer Nevile, 'Dance' in: *Early Modern Court Culture*, ed. Erin Griffey (London, 2021), 478–93.

8 For example, Maria Kusche states that Sofonisba lived '[u]nos dieciséis años en España como profesora en pintura de la reina y admiradísima pintura de la corte', while also acknowledging that she did not receive any direct compensation for her activities as an artist. Maria Kusche, 'Sofonisba Anguissola en España: Retratista en la Corte de Felipe II Junto a Alonso Sánchez Coello y Jorge de la Rúa', in: *Archivo Español de Arte* 62 (1989), 391–420, at 392–3. Except for Linda Austern, Samantha Chang, and Maria Luisa Baldassari, scholars have tended to ignore Sofonisba's musical accomplishments. Linda Phyllis Austern, 'Portrait of the Artist as (Female) Musician', in: *Musical Voices of Early Modern Women*, ed. Thomasin LaMay (Ashgate, 2007), 15–59; Maria Luisa Baldassari, 'Le mani di Cecilia: Hand Position and Fingering on Keyboards in Italian Iconographical Sources of the Renaissance', in: *Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt: The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), 136–66, <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/mdwp003-le-mani-di-cecilia/>> (accessed on 30 August 2024); and Samantha Chang, 'Musical Self-Portraits by Garofalo, Anguissola, and Fontana', in: *Music and Visual Culture in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Chriscinda Henry and Tim Shephard (New York/London, 2023), 71–90.

functioned differently in Sofonisba's daily life as an aristocratic woman seeking membership as a peer in an elite court. These other female artists did not come from the same elevated social status as Sofonisba, even if they also aspired to income and stability from courtly connections. For example, Catharina van Hemessen was married to a professional organist and while they both served Maria of Austria and traveled to Spain with her, they were clearly employees rather than peers.<sup>9</sup> Lavinia Fontana lived and produced work in the urban contexts of Bologna and then Rome after 1603. While she married a minor aristocrat who was also an art student of her father, her marriage contract makes it very clear that she was expected to continue her trade as a source of income, keeping her squarely in the professional artisan category.<sup>10</sup> For both of these artistic middle-class women music was proof of refinement, part of what made them worthy of employment at court, or in the case of Fontana, aristocratic marriage. Artemisia Gentileschi was also the daughter of a professional painter and depicted herself as a musician at times, but her public persona was significantly different from the other female artists discussed here as a result of a very public rape trial she endured in Rome as a teenager.<sup>11</sup>

Although they were active a little later in the century, the musical ladies of the Este court are better equivalents to Sofonisba than the daughters of professional visual artists. Although they have long been seen as the first professional ensemble of female musicians, in part because they were believed to be from non-noble families, the research of Elio Durante, Anna Martellotti and Laurie Stras has shown that all three of the women recruited for the inner-circle of Margherita Gonzaga were born into noble status. Like Sofonisba's position as a lady-in-waiting at the Spanish court, the primary duty of Laura Peverara, Livia d'Arco, and Anna Guarini, was to elevate

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9 Céline Talon, 'Catharina Van Hemessen's Self-Portrait. The Woman Who Took Saint Luke's Palette', in: *Women Artists and Patrons in the Netherlands, 1500–1700*, ed. Elizabeth Sutton (Amsterdam, 2019), 27–53.

10 See the first chapter of Caroline Murphy, *Lavinia Fontana: A Painter and her Patrons in Sixteenth-Century Bologna* (New Haven, 2003), 13–48.

11 After the accused rapist was found guilty, Artemisia married a Florentine painter and moved away from her family. Letters reveal that at least in the early part of her career her husband was actively engaged in her long-term sexual relationship with the family's noble patron who was also the father of some of her children. While a recent and controversial exhibition in Genoa in 2023 – *Artemisia Gentileschi: Courage and Passion* – seems to have gone too far, sensationalizing the impact of sexual violence on her creative process, for better or worse, it must be acknowledged that the public nature of her rape would have had a long-term impact on her life and opportunities. For a thoughtful discussion of these topics, see the two articles by Elizabeth Cohen, 'The Trials of Artemisia Gentileschi: A Rape as History', in: *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 31 (2000), 47–75, and 'More Trials for Artemisia Gentileschi: Her Life, Love and Letters in 1620', in: *Patronage, Gender and the Arts in Early Modern Italy: Essays in Honor of Carolyn Valone*, ed. Katherine McIver and Cynthia Stolphans (New York, 2015), 249–91.

the musical practice within the young duchess's household.<sup>12</sup> Their noble status should not be considered to diminish their musical skills and accomplishments, but it did cause challenges for when and where they could decorously display these skills. In fact, as a noble woman, musicality was a more socially acceptable activity for Sofonisba than the menial and potentially messy tasks associated with painting and drawing. I would like to propose that Sofonisba deftly used decorous music, both the visual trope and the actual practice, as a tool to help her transgress her contradictory identities as a noble woman and a highly skilled painter. This transgressive use of musical knowledge to justify her performance of painterly excellence was integral and necessary to the deft management of her social/professional persona.

### Negotiating Self-Presentation

To understand Sofonisba's complex persona, it would be useful to summarize what is firmly established about her biography. Sometime between about 1535 and 1540 Sofonisba was born in Cremona to the socially higher-ranking Bianca Ponzoni and the older Amilcare Anguissola, a well-educated minor aristocrat, himself acknowledged but born out of wedlock, who traded in manuscripts, books, and paper but struggled financially.<sup>13</sup> The couple had six daughters and one son, all of whom were provided with extensive opportunities for education, regardless of gender. Along with her younger sister Elena, Sofonisba began her formal artistic training in 1546 with Bernardino Campi and later with Bernardino Gatti.<sup>14</sup> Campi, a professional painter from a local family of goldsmiths, seems to have welcomed the sisters into his home, in a modified sort of apprenticeship.<sup>15</sup> In a letter written fifteen years later, Sofonisba demonstrates that in addition to respecting him as a teacher, she had developed fond relationships with Campi's wife, sister, and mother, women who probably acted as

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12 See Chapter 6 of Laurie Stras, *Women and Music in Sixteenth-Century Ferrara* (Cambridge, 2018).

13 Ribera, *Le Glorie immortali* (see n. 1), 313.

14 Alessandro Lamo, *Discorso [...] intorno alla scoltvra, et pittvra [...] fatte dall'Eccell. [...] M. Bernardino Campo* (Cremona: Christoforo Draconi, 1584), 37–44, <<http://data.onb.ac.at/rep/10B0B519>> (accessed on 26 August 2024).

15 In his tract on Bernardino Campi, biographer Alessandro Lamo states that Amilcare Anguissola 'alluogò ambedue in casa di Barnardino'. Cremona was not a large city, so it seems possible that this just means that they would have come regularly into the Campi home for lessons. *Discorso*, 37–8. Less is known about Gatti because he was not the subject of Lamo's tract.

chaperones for the young girls during their lessons and who may have supervised their care if they did live with the family for an extended time.<sup>16</sup>

The hard-up Amilcare's motivation for educating his many daughters was probably to prepare them for life at court in the hope that their higher level of courtly skills would result in a superior position with a reduced dowry.<sup>17</sup> The development of special abilities and knowledge for girls was usually organized around their class and potential for marriage. Published in 1574, the two interlocutors of Book 3 of Stefano Guazzo's *La civil conversatione* propose that,

[Annibale:] If the father means to marry his daughter to a courtier, he must send her to a court in the service of some great Lady, and she must know how to read, to write, to discourse, to sing, to play on instruments, to dance, and to be able to perform all that which a lady of the court must be able to do [...] Guazzo: I have seen poor young women in the Queen's court by this means married to great Gentlemen, without one penny of a dowry given by their Father.<sup>18</sup>

Of the three accomplishments noted by Ribera in his entry on Sofonisba—music, literature and painting—only painting is not highlighted by Guazzo as a requirement for a girl's courtly education. While Sofonisba labored in her courtly education and artistic practice, her father spent his efforts sending out her drawings and paintings, accompanied by his own letters modestly proclaiming her excellence, to artists including Michelangelo, and nobles like Ercole II d'Este, people who might be able to help him secure a placement at a court for his daughter. Michael Cole has pointed out that Sofonisba also alluded to or named her father in many of her early self-portraits, articulating 'a reciprocal relationship between father and daughter, in which

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16 She greets his wife at the beginning and end of her letter of 21 October 1561 to Campi with salutations to his whole family, 'e con questo fine me li raccomando, e li bacio la mano, cosi alla sua carissima ed onoratissima consorte da me molto amata, ed alla sua madre Sig. Barbara, e sua sorella Sig. Francisca, ed a suo padre Sig. Pietro.' Kusche, 'Sofonisba Anguissola en España' (see n. 8), 402.

17 Education might also indicate that he could have been preparing them for life as a nun, where a convent dowry might be reduced for girls with skills in music, illumination or painting, and writing.

18 'se'l padre haurà destinate i[n] corte alla servitù d'alcuna Prencipessa, bisogna, che cominci ad ammaestrarle in quelle cose, che sono atte ad acquistar la gratia della patrona, & à procurare, che leggano, scrivano, di scorrano, cantino, sonino, & ballino, & facciano acconciamente tutto ciò, che adorna le donne di palazzo [...]. Hò vedute presso la Reina alcune povere damigelle [...] che sono divenute mogli de principali Cavalieri della Francia, senza che i padri habbiano loro dato un danaio in dote.' Stefano Guazzo, *La civil conversatione* (Brescia: Tomaso Bozzola, 1574), fol. 159<sup>v</sup>-160<sup>r</sup>, <<https://books.google.it/books?id=xX-sPAAAAQAAJ&hl=de&pg=PA7-IA1-v=onepage&q&f=false>> (accessed on 2 Sept. 2024).

she performed, and he showed, or showed off, her performance.<sup>19</sup> In this period she created many self-portraits, group portraits of her family in various activities, and portraits of their Italian social peers, both adults and children. The bulk of her known extant work is from this period of her life, when she was most motivated to sign her works as evidence of her abilities.

By 1559 their labor had paid off and Sofonisba left Italy to accept a generous position as a lady-in-waiting to the new Spanish queen, Isabel de Valois (1545–1568), the third wife of King Philip II (1527–1598). After Isabel's early death in 1568, Sofonisba continued to serve in the court until 1574 as an attendant and teacher to Isabel's young daughters.<sup>20</sup> Although officially she was a noble courtier during her many years in Spain, she tutored royal family members in the visual arts, especially Isabel, and created portraits. Soon after Isabel's wedding and Sofonisba's arrival, Girolamo Neri reported to the Duke of Mantua that '[t]his queen [Isabel] shows herself to have intelligence and very good talent. She has begun to paint, and one says Sofonisba Cremonese, who is the one who teaches her, is her great favorite.'<sup>21</sup> Rather than direct payment for her artistic activities, which was often quantified in contracts for male artists at the time, Sofonisba's family received a yearly stipend, and she was listed with the other ladies of the Queen where she was provided with the same resources – 100 ducats a year as well as a personal servant and a groom for her horse.<sup>22</sup> When Sofonisba had time outside her direct daily activities as a member of Isabel's entourage, she also made portraits of her patrons and other members of the court, which she sometimes sent to illustrious figures, including the Pope.<sup>23</sup> There are financial records that indicate that Sofonisba's portraits, sometimes specifically the faces, were copied by the official court painters, but unlike these male painters Sofonisba herself did not receive

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19 Michael W. Cole, *Sofonisba's Lesson: A Renaissance Artist and Her Work* (Princeton, 2019), 32.

20 Maria Kusche, 'Sofonisba Anguissola: Her Life and Works', in: *Sofonisba Anguissola: A Renaissance Woman*, ed. Sylvia Ferino-Pagden and Maria Kusche (Washington D.C., 1995), 26–103, at 72.

21 'Essa regina si mostra d'aver ingegno e di bonissima intragna, ella ha cominciato a dipingere et dice la Sofonisba Cremonense che é quella le insegna et é molto favorita sua.' Letter from 18 February 1560, reproduced in Maria Kusche, 'Sofonisba Anguissola en España' (see n. 8), 397.

22 While musicians often held ambiguous positions in a court and were rewarded through gifts or material support, artists usually did not have the same sort of social access and were more likely to be paid directly for their products. For a comparison of their different status, see Evelyn Welch, 'Painting as Performance in the Italian Renaissance Court', in: *Artists and Court: Image-making and Identity, 1300–1550*, ed. Stephen J. Campbell (Boston, 2004), 19–32.

23 Her letter makes it clear that they were in direct communication about the painting. Filipp Balducci, *Notizie de' professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua*, vol. 2 (Florence, 1846), 628–9.

payment for these.<sup>24</sup> Some early biographers indicated that she received precious gifts, including jewelry, in recognition for her extraordinary skills. Usually she did not sign the paintings she created at the Spanish court and seems to have conformed somewhat to Spanish painterly style and tastes, so art historians struggle to identify the paintings she created during this period and they certainly seem to be fewer in number than during her previous period in Italy.

Even though Isabel left a large dowry and yearly allowance for Sofonisba in her will, the king struggled to find a socially appropriate match, given that Sofonisba wanted to return to Italy to be closer to her family, where the King had less direct influence. Eventually she had to compromise and moved to Sicily to marry Don Fabrizio de Moncada, the second son of an important Sicilian noble of Italian-Spanish lineage. However, the Moncada family was not fully supportive, probably because of her less prestigious lineage, so her social and financial positions were insecure. When Don Fabrizio died within five years, she took the opportunity to sail back to the Italian peninsula with her brother. She made the savvy choice to marry the Genoese captain of the ship she was on, Orazio Lomellini.<sup>25</sup> Although they might seem poorly matched because he was significantly younger than Sofonisba and of a lower social rank than her first husband, with his shipping business and mobility, Orazio was able to travel regularly to Palermo to maintain the yearly allowance promised to Sofonisba by the Spanish king, which was drawn from the taxes of that city. This financial dependence on Palermo may also explain why, even though the couple resided in northern Italy where their social and cultural connections primarily were from their marriage in 1579, they returned in 1615 to Sicily for their retirement.<sup>26</sup> Despite the fact that some of her early biographers claim that she continued to produce paintings during her married years, there are only two works that can be firmly identified from this lengthy period.<sup>27</sup> It seems likely that Sofonisba spent her later years as a royally-connected great lady, who was renowned for her artistic knowledge and skill. She did not pursue an active career as a painter because that would have been inappropriate to her status as a former lady-in-waiting to a Spanish queen. She could not afford to compromise the annual income that her elevated social status provided for her and her family.<sup>28</sup>

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24 Archivo de Simancas, C.M. la época, leg. 1109, cit. in Kusche, 'Sofonisba Anguissola en España' (see n. 8), 410.

25 While this is usually presented as a spur of the moment choice by Sofonisba, it seems likely that she already knew and trusted Orazio as a conduit to communicate with her family in Italy. The compromised propriety and hence forced marriage might have been a calculated decision on her part, one that allowed her to avoid the complex negotiations with the Spanish court that would have had to happen otherwise.

26 Kusche, 'Sofonisba Anguissola en España' (see n. 8), 96.

27 Cole, *Sofonisba's Lesson* (see n. 19), 139.

28 The taint of professionalism was warned against by Castiglione and others, and can be seen in the behavior of skilled noble musicians, including the famous tension between Lord

## Picturing the Girl

Uniquely, when we look at the overall output of Sofonisba Anguissola, we are primarily considering the activities of an adolescent.<sup>29</sup> In the life of a 16th-century female aristocrat, adolescence was a more public period than adult life as a wife and possibly a mother. In the introduction to their edited collection *The Youth of Early Modern Women*, Elizabeth S. Cohen and Margaret Reeves describe this period as a ‘fluid time’ that ‘brought some danger; it was easy for girls to go astray or to become prey to exploitative adults. Yet young women’s physical, economic and social transformations could also accompany the acquisition of fuller self-knowledge and a greater measure of agency and decision making.’<sup>30</sup> Cohen and Reeves have also pointed out that until a woman married and became sexually active, she was still in many ways considered a youth or adolescent, no matter her age.<sup>31</sup> Although we do not know her exact age, in her self-portraits Sofonisba proclaims her identity as a ‘virgo’, ‘filia’, and ‘puella’ in the inscriptions. She seems to have extended this creative, adolescent period significantly, probably into her thirties, by remaining unmarried while serving the youthful bride of the Spanish court.<sup>32</sup> When she was considered a young woman, Sofonisba could study and practice music, painting and other creative pursuits, but because of her status as an aristocrat she had limited mobility to use those skills for any kind of direct financial gain. She also had to be extremely careful about how she advertised her abilities, especially the manual skills associated with painting.

During her first period of activity, from about 1550 to 1559 in Italy, she created an extensive series of self-portraits, with 24 extant and possibly as many as 40 paintings of various sizes, shapes, media, and themes (Tab. 1).

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Giulio Cesare Brancaccio and Duke Alfonso II d’Este that ultimately led Brancaccio to leave Ferrara. See Richard Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer: Giulio Cesare Brancaccio and the Performance of Identity in the Late Renaissance* (Aldershot, 2007), 239–51.

29 This is very different from Fontana and Gentileschi, who continued to paint after marriage and throughout their lives.

30 ‘Introduction’, in: *The Youth of Early Modern Women* (Amsterdam, 2019), 12.

31 For the Italian context specifically see *ibid.*, 15.

32 Her exact date of birth is not known and age estimates range widely. She probably wasn’t in her 40s at the time of her marriage because the annual income documents indicate that it was believed she might have children.

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Paintings that are verifiable and recent scholars have consulted:

- Signed self-portraits = 5
  - Unsigned self-portraits accepted by scholars = 13
  - Self-portraits attributed but contested by some = 6
- Extant possible self-portraits = 24

Unverifiable self-portraits listed in inventories or catalogues:

- No illustrated documentation since 1600 = 4
  - Listed in 19th-century sources = 12
  - Mentioned in 16th-18th-century sources = 5
- Unverifiable = 21
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**Tab. 1:** Self-portraits by Sofonisba Anguissola

Analyzing the 24 extant works as a group reveals how she used a few interrelated conceptual themes, including music, to navigate and make the most of her opportunities. Most depict her in somber attire, four include her father's name, three feature an easel and mahlstick as her painterly tools, two show her looking scholarly with a book, and finally, three include a musical element. In the decades before and contemporary to Sofonisba, noble women were regularly painted with books of various kinds and sometimes those books feature music notations.<sup>33</sup> Two of the earliest and most securely attributable self-portraits emphasize Sofonisba's propriety and nobility with text. The one in Boston (Fig. 2) is a small oval of 8.3 by 6.4 centimeters, while the version in Vienna (Fig. 3) is about 20 by 14. The small size made them portable and easy to send as gifts. In a letter to Amilcare from July 1559, Annibale Caro wrote that 'there is nothing I desire more than an image of the artist herself, so that in a single work I can exhibit two marvels, one the art, the other the artist.'<sup>34</sup> As discussed previously, there is evidence that many of these self-portraits were created to be sent by her father to well-connected aristocrats, including the Este, Medici, and those linked with the Spanish Habsburgs who ruled Cremona in the mid-sixteenth century. In addition to the convenience of using herself as subject, these works essentially constituted a self-promotion campaign and show the careful curation of a public persona, as noted by Michael Cole, in a joint effort between Sofonisba and her father.

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33 For example, in her portrait by Pontormo, Maria Salviati is shown holding a little prayer book and Lucrezia Panciatichi was depicted with a similar book by Bronzino around the same time (both are now in the Uffizi: Inv. no. 1890, 3565, <<https://catalogo.uffizi.it/it/29/ricerca/detailedcd/1185096/>>, Inv. no. 1890, 736, <<https://catalogo.uffizi.it/it/29/ricerca/detailedcd/1185046/>>). A few examples of noble women with music books include Francesco Ubertini's portrait of a woman from the 1540s that is at the Getty, <<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/103RE1>>, and Giovanni Antonio Fasolo's depiction of female children of the Valmarana family from about 1553, <<https://www.museicivicicivenza.it/it/mcp/opera.php/10022>> (all accessed on 26 August 2024).

34 In Baldinucci, *Notizie* (see n. 23), 625.



**Fig. 2:** Sofonisba Anguissola, *Self-Portrait* (c. 1556), oil (?) on parchment, 8.3 x 6.4 cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Inv. no. 60.155, <<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/33656>> (accessed on 24 August 2024).



**Fig. 3:** Sofonisba Anguissola, *Self-Portrait* (1554), 19.5 x 14.5 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Gemäldegalerie, Inv. no. 285, <<http://www.khm.at/de/object/66/>> (accessed on 24 August 2024).

She must have been deeply aware that these images, as much as they demonstrated her painterly skill, also put her person on display, especially as they could circulate – and paintings of women *did* circulate. For instance, in 1498 Isabella d'Este wrote directly to Cecilia Gallerani, mistress of Ludovico Sforza, Isabella's brother-in-law, asking for the loan of Cecilia's portrait by Leonardo da Vinci from years before.<sup>35</sup> Although she lived half a century before Sofonisba, Cecilia was born into a similar social rank and at a similarly young age she began, as Lodovico's adolescent mistress and the noble mother of his son, to negotiate for the benefit and advancement of her orphaned siblings.<sup>36</sup> Through their adolescent daughters, the Anguissola family had different means to attain a similar goal of financial stability and improved status. In the inscriptions on these paintings, Sofonisba asserts her own authorship along with her nobility and propriety. Around the edge of a medallion featuring a cypher of her father's name, an inscription proclaims that this image was 'painted from a mirror with her own hand by the virgin Sofonisba Anguissola at Cremona' ('Sophonisba Angussola virgo ipsius manu ex speculo depicta Cremonae', Fig. 2). In the panel in Vienna, the text in the book reads 'The virgin Sophonisba Anguissola made this herself in 1554' ('Sophonisba Angussola Virgo seipsam fecit 1554', Fig. 3). More than just a clever place for her to write a signature, the presence of the book itself emphasizes her elite status as literate, the second quality noted by Ribera in his compendium of great women.

## Transgressive Skill

In contrast, two other categories of self-portrait are connected by the fact that they advertise Sofonisba's technical proficiency and aesthetic wit by showing her in the act of creation – musical and artistic. Other authors have noted that Catharina Van Hemessen had previously used similar configurations in two of her paintings believed to be self-portraits by some scholars.<sup>37</sup> However, for the paintings at the easel, both female artists drew on a tradition of male painters depicting themselves as St. Luke, as well as the trope of Pliny's Marcia, often shown in the act of creating her own

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35 Ludovico was married to Isabella's sister, Beatrice d'Este, and Cecilia was his mistress before and during their marriage.

36 Timothy McCall, 'The Girl as Mistress in Renaissance Italy: Gender and Power in Leonardo da Vinci's Portrait of Cecilia Gallerani', in: *Gender & History* (early view, 2023), <<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0424.12696>> (accessed on 27 August 2024).

37 Catherine King, 'Looking a Sight: Sixteenth-Century Portraits of Woman Artists', in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 58 (1995), 381–406, and Talon, 'Catharina Van Hemessen's Self-Portrait' (see n. 9). Also of interest in regards to van Hemessen is Laura Ventura Nieto's contribution to *The Museum of Renaissance Music*, ed. Vincenzo Borghetti and Tim Shephard (Turnhout, 2022), 234–7.

self-portrait.<sup>38</sup> Luke was often considered the patron saint of artists because it was believed that he had created a famous icon of the Virgin and Child from life. Beginning in the 15th century many altar paintings created for artists' guilds featured a self-portrait of the painter as the face of St. Luke. For instance, in the earliest extant example of the genre by Rogier van der Weyden, St. Luke is presented with the features of Rogier himself who is making a quick silver point sketch of Mary and Jesus.<sup>39</sup> Like the painters of the St. Luke guild paintings, Sofonisba's various iterations of the theme show her in the act of creating an image of the Virgin and Child. Her comfort and confidence highlight her technical skill and proficiency with the tools of the trade: mahlstick, paints on palette, and brush at work (one example of this is shown in Fig. 4). In an era when female painters were rare, this painting about painting reinforces her exceptional status and manual dexterity, acting as another affirmation that such self-portraits were by 'her own (skilled) hand'. For a noble girl aspiring to a courtly position, this is a bold statement and another indication that she was seeking recognition for her exceptional skill.



**Fig. 4:** Sofonisba Anguissola, *Self-Portrait at the Easel* (c. 1556), oil on canvas, 65.5 x 59 cm, Muzeum-Zamek, Łańcut.

38 For a nuanced discussion of these overlapping traditions, see *ibid.*, 29–36.

39 James H. Marrow, 'Artistic Identity in Early Netherlandish Painting: The Place of Rogier van der Weyden's St. Luke Drawing the Virgin and Child', in: *Rogier van der Weyden: St. Luke Drawing the Virgin. Selected Essays in Context*, ed. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Turnhout, 1997), 53–60, at 53–4. By the mid-16th-century this was a well established tradition across Europe, as evidenced by Giorgio Vasari's use of a self-portrait for the face of St. Luke in the Chapel of San Luca at Santissima Annunziata in Florence, painted in the 1560s.

Considering this need to stand out but not break with rules of propriety, I argue that Sofonisba's musical self-portraits serve as an important bridge between clearly acceptable courtly activities, like music, and the less mainstream manual skills needed for painting. In his treatise on the education of women, although he is in the act of warning guardians about the moral dangers of musical performance, Giovanni Michele Bruto confirms that 'in the opinion of most people [...] it is a great grace and ornament for a girl of good family, if becoming a great mistress of singing and playing several instruments she shows herself among others to be excellent and famous.'<sup>40</sup> Sofonisba's visual performance of her own musical excellence in her paintings works to offset her potentially socially-questionable identity as a painter. The technical skills she exhibits as a painter through the act of creating them, allowing her to skirt along a boundary and eventually opening the door to other noble female artists, like Irene di Spilimbergo.<sup>41</sup> In addition, Sofonisba's musical paintings pay particular attention to the technical aspects of musical performance and even to instrument maintenance, foregrounding the similarity of musical and artistic manual dexterity.

According to Michael W. Cole's catalogue, where he organizes the works attributed to Sofonisba according to evidence and scholarly accord on their authenticity, there are two paintings that feature her as a musician that are accepted by most scholars as genuine, one at the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples (Fig. 1) and the other in England at Althorp Park (Fig. 5). Cole concludes that a third in the collection of Goodwood House in Chichester is an 18th-century copy of the one at Althorp Park in the Earl Spencer Collection. The painting in Althorp Park is a bit bigger than the Naples image and includes a shadowy second woman in the background (Fig. 5). In each painting Sofonisba depicts herself at the keyboard of an instrument. I believe the instrument she intends to represent in each is an *arpicordo*, a pentagonal spinet or virginal, of the kind that was built in Northern Italy starting in the early 16th century. It is similar to the Venetian example in the Met collection commissioned for Eleanora della Rovere, Duchess of Urbino and daughter of Isabella d'Este (Fig. 6). To my eye, the slightly acute angles of the corners in both paintings seem consistent with the geometry of this type of instrument. Additionally, all three instruments seem to have the same organization of decorative ivory buttons along the edge of the case, with a similar spacing relative

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40 'Pare alla maggior parte, che molto porti di ornamento & di gratia à cara & gentil fanciulla, se ella fra le molte, divenuta dotta maestra del cantare, ò del sonar à vari stromenti si renda famosa & illustre.' *La institutione di una fanciulla nata nobilmente* (Antwerp: Jehan Bellère / Christophe Plantin, 1555), fol. 34<sup>v</sup>-36<sup>r</sup>, <<https://books.google.at/books?id=hv9cAAAACAA-J&hl=de&pg=PP3 - v=onepage&q&f=false>> (accessed on 24 August 2024).

41 For Sofonisba's influence, see ch. 6 of Cole, *Sofonisba's Lesson* (see n. 19). For both Sofonisba and Irene as young noble women, musical and artistic prowess served as complementary courtly characteristics, although for Irene her persona was mostly broadcast posthumously.

to the keyboard – the 3rd button from the right coming just to the decorative board at the right edge of the keyboard.<sup>42</sup>



**Fig. 5:** Sofonisba Anguissola, *Autoritratto alla spinetta* (c. 1559), 81 x 63 cm, Althorp, Earl of Spencer Collection, CC0 1.0, Wikimedia Commons, photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France (accessed on 26 August 2024).



**Fig. 6:** Virginal / arpicordo of Eleanora della Rovere (Italy, 1540), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Acc. no. 53.6a, b, <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503043>> (accessed on 26 August 2024).

<sup>42</sup> Annett Richter also pointed out some of the similarities between the Met instrument and those painted by Sofonisba in her paper given at the 2022 AMS annual meeting in New Orleans, which she graciously shared with me after the conference.

From this point the instruments depicted diverge and the organological information becomes less clear, especially in the Althorp Park portrait. Either Sofonisba had access to two different but similar instruments or she depicted the same instrument but with significantly less attention to detail, or even with a level of unfinish in the painting in England. For example, the instrument shown at Althorp Park is depicted in an unadorned protective outer case, possibly one with its own legs like the one by Alessandro Trasuntino in the Tagliavini Collection (Bologna). We can also see that the instrument in the Naples image sits directly on a table covered with a luxurious green cloth, without a protective case. On the instrument depicted in Althorp Park, the decorative board at the right side of the keyboard, while similar in general shape to the Naples instrument, seems to lack the ornamental black line and is in general less clearly defined. The most egregious error or omission, however, is the lack of tuning pegs in the soundboard, an aspect that is executed beautifully, with extreme detail in the Naples painting. This is my main rationale for believing that the Althorp Park painting remains in an unfinished state, rather than representing a lack of knowledge on the part of the artist.<sup>43</sup> A painter who spent the kind of attention to rendering the metallic but matte finish of the tuning pegs and expressing the energetic tension of the glistening strings wound around them could not have simply failed to notice the pegs for another painted instrument.

At the same time, the Althorp Park instrument demonstrates minute attention to the jackrail, which is in the foreground of the painting, near the now indistinct signature on the outer case. Under the jackrail which is decorated with ivory buttons like the case, a band of red felt protrudes, winding around the strings just on the inside of the bridge, in an arrangement that would dampen the sound. In her recent article on musical instruments included in domestic inventories from late 16th-century Venice, Bláithín Hurley discusses records that mention the presence of both a keyboard instrument in the *portego* or public space of a home along with an ‘arpicordo sordin’ or ‘muted harpsichord’ in the more private spaces, near where the young children were educated and cared for.<sup>44</sup> Such a muted effect would be quite useful as a practice or teaching instrument, especially since when Sofonisba lived in her father’s home, many of her siblings would have been young enough to require an afternoon nap. In addition, the presence of the second older woman, identified as the family governess in the painting of Sofonisba’s sisters playing chess, places this painting in the private domestic spaces of the family home.

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43 Many details of her *Chess Players* (Muzeum Narodowe, Poznań) also remain unfinished, so this is not without precedent to consider she might not have completed all the details of her painting.

44 Bláithín Hurley, ‘Musical Instruments in the Venetian Home: Contextualizing Marietta Robusti’s Self-Portrait’, in: *EM* 51 (2023), 109–15.

In contrast, the Naples painting includes highly accurate renderings of the technical aspects of the Anguissola's more public-facing instrument, from the tuning pegs and the coils of brass wire to the soft texture of the red felt that cushions the stopping of the keys and the rosettes on their fronts. Like her clothing, this is a refined but not an ostentatious instrument, in good working order and ready for performance in the spaces where her family gathered and entertained their peers, some of whom might also desire the gift of a portrait. Other 16th-century Italian women of a similar class were depicted in portraits that emphasized their claims of musical skill as central to their identity. For example, a representation of a young woman in a painting by Bernardino Licinio now in Munich, emphasizes both her status as recently betrothed with the ring on her right forefinger, and her declaration of music literacy with the open partbook in her left hand.<sup>45</sup> Although its notation is no longer clearly legible, the oblong format and ink traces are strongly suggestive of contemporary music sources, both printed and manuscript. Music and love were closely linked, as claims both for the utility of music in improving sanctioned marital intimacy – as demonstrated by a significant number of paintings that show young noble couples making music – and conversely as expression of anxieties over the potential of music to induce improper behavior – demonstrated in another canvas also by Licinio where a young woman at a clavichord is being tempted into an illicit relationship by an older man.<sup>46</sup> In addition to keyboard instruments, noble Italian women could be depicted with a lute or even a lira da braccio, the instrument associated with both Apollo and Orpheus and the quasi-improvisatory recitation of poetry.<sup>47</sup> Sofonisba's musical self-portraits affirm her position as a knowledgeable and desirable young musician, ready to contribute to the cultural and social life of a court.

One of the most persistent doubts raised about Sofonisba's musical ability by art historians is the placement of her hands in relation to the keys. It is unclear exactly

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45 Bernardino Licinio, *Portrait of a Woman* (c. 1520), Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen – Alte Pinakothek München, <<https://www.sammlung.pinakothek.de/en/artwork/Qr4DgNbGpE>> (accessed on 26 August 2024).

46 The frescos created in 1551 by Antonio Fasolo for the Villa Campiglia Negri de Salvi includes an example of music as an activity for noble couples, where two couples make music together, <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Villa\\_Campiglia,\\_Giovanni\\_Antonio\\_Fasolo,\\_affresco\\_01\\_\(Albettone\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Villa_Campiglia,_Giovanni_Antonio_Fasolo,_affresco_01_(Albettone).jpg)> (accessed on 26 August 2024). The Licinio is now at Windsor Castle, <[https://www.rct.uk/collection/search\\_-\\_/3/collection/400008/a-concert](https://www.rct.uk/collection/search_-_/3/collection/400008/a-concert)> (accessed on 26 August 2024). For a few recent discussions of music and the erotic see the seven articles co-edited by Samantha Chang and Tim Shephard titled 'Music, Gender and the Erotic in Italian Visual Culture of the 16th Century' included in Volume 51, Issue 1 of *Early Music* (2023) and Flora Dennis contribution to the volume *Erotic Cultures of Renaissance Italy*.

47 For lute, see Ubertini's portrait of a lady at the Getty, <<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/103RDZ>> (accessed on 20 Sept. 2024), and an unsigned painting of a lady in the Spada Gallery in Rome, includes a woman with a lira da braccio (Room 2, Inv. No. 57).

what they question, but I suspect it is because her hand does not conform to the modern gesture we associate with piano playing, a position required for the heavily weighted keys and hammer actions of steel-framed pianos since the 19th century.<sup>48</sup> Granted that there are certainly some issues with proportion (for example, her hands seem a little too big in relation to her body and head) and the painting is also damaged in the lower left corner, her playing technique is within 16th-century expectations and aligns with both written and visual contemporary examples of keyboard technique. Maria Luisa Baldassari has isolated three distinct traditions of keyboard technique in comparing 16th and 17th-century text sources with a database of images of keyboard players that she has compiled. She and Augusta Campagne have generously tested these through their own performance research and bodily practice.<sup>49</sup> Baldassari identifies the technique in the Althorp Park painting as aligning with what she calls the 'Diruta' position, 'where he [Diruta] suggests keeping the hand at the same height as the wrist.'<sup>50</sup> The much lighter touch of such a small instrument does not require weight to be dropped into the keys from above, negating many questions about the accuracy Sofonisba's depiction of her own keyboarding technique.

Additionally, 16th-century keyboard manuals describe the fingering of quick passages, or diminutions, using only middle fingers, in the motion Sofonisba's right hand seems to be accomplishing as she looks out at us from both canvases.<sup>51</sup> Although Sofonisba's left hand is mostly outside the canvas in Naples and it was damaged when the painting was stretched for a time in a smaller frame, it seems to be a little flatter and more extended, perhaps playing a chord.<sup>52</sup> The position is remarkably similar to Baldassari's Video 5a, showing Augusta Campagne using the 'Santa Maria' position to play a simple aria published by Facoli.<sup>53</sup> The fact that Sofonisba's hands seem a little too big for her body, which possibly can be understood as a flaw in her technique as a painter, might also indicate that her focus was on emphasizing them and their performance, an act made difficult when in reality she was using them to paint that performance. The Althorp Park canvas shows a similar hand placement although the

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48 Cole states that 'the player's proper right hand, with index finger lifted high and thumb pointing to the front of the key, hardly assumes the pose it would use to play.' *Sofonisba's Lesson* (see n. 19), 83.

49 Maria Luisa Baldassari, 'Le mani di Cecilia' (see n. 8). I highly recommend careful study of the videos they have created and linked, for a practical demonstration and an enjoyable musical experience as well.

50 *Ibid.*, 145.

51 Cf. Baldassari's article for a more nuanced discussion of 16th-century fingering technique in theory and practice.

52 It is unclear when this occurred, but the damage extends in straight lines all the way up the canvas on the left side and along the bottom edge. This is difficult to see unless you view it in person.

53 Baldassari, 'Le mani di Cecilia' (see n. 8), 160.

three-quarters length view and different angle allows a more natural placement of her left hand and alignment in the composition. In fact, in this painting we can see that she is playing or about to play a consonant major triad on *A la mi* – clearly an A with the pinky of her left hand, possibly an E with the index finger of the same hand and a c-sharp with the middle finger of her right hand. Could she possibly be including a musical signature – A for Anguissola?

As with all the 16th-century *arpicordi* that I have seen, there is no evidence of a music desk in either painting, and Sofonisba seems to be improvising or playing from memory.<sup>54</sup> Could she be playing her own intabulation of a popular song or variations on a dance theme? As Baldassari states, in the Naples self-portrait ‘the right hand fingers of Anguissola are not relaxed, but raised and bent as if they were about to “hit” the keys, just as in Diruta’s description of the way the *sonatori da balli* play on quilled instruments.’<sup>55</sup> For this repertoire her depicted hand placement, chord in the left with more active diminutions in the right middle fingers, seems both appropriate and accurate, reinforcing the idea that she was claiming to be capable of both playing and possibly creating her own arrangements for the pleasure of her companions in the *portego* of her family home, a skill that could contribute to the daily practice of dancing at a court. In book 3 of his conduct manual for courtiers, Castiglione warns that women ought to avoid ‘those loud and oft-repeated diminutions that show more art than sweetness.’<sup>56</sup> Although he is definitely placing limits on female musicality, in the process he also confirms that women were expected to ornament their performances and that sometimes, maybe even often, they overstepped the bounds of propriety in their enthusiasm to entertain of others and their enjoyment of their own abilities.

Another element of the Naples self-portrait that has not been fully appreciated for its novelty, is Sofonisba’s bold depiction of a tuning hammer.<sup>57</sup> Lying on the table just beyond the keyboard, it is highlighted by the reflective metal of its surfaces against the soft green cloth. Tuning hammers are exceptionally rare in representations of early keyboard instruments, which is ironic because wooden instruments with so many strings and in period temperaments would have required regular, even daily tuning

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54 Is it possible that a music desk might have been outside the field of view in the painting in Naples if it was small, but in any case, written music was not featured.

55 *Ibid.*, 148.

56 ‘ne meno nel cantar, o sonar quelle diminution forti, e replicate, che mostrano piu arte, che dolcezza.’ Baldassarre Castiglione, *The Courtier of Count Baldessar Castilio [...] Done into English by Thomas Hobby*, Book 3 (London, 1588), 347, <[https://archive.org/details/gri\\_33125009488665/page/n349/mode/2up?view=theater](https://archive.org/details/gri_33125009488665/page/n349/mode/2up?view=theater)> (accessed on 20 Sept. 2024).

57 Cole also took note of it but with a different interpretation. See ‘Harmonic Force in Cinquecento Painting’, in: *Animationen/Transgressionen. Das Kunstwerk als Lebewesen*, ed. Ulrich Pfisterer and Anja Zimmermann (Berlin, 2005), 73–94.

and adjustment for different repertoire.<sup>58</sup> In studying music of the 16th through the 18th centuries, historians have often relied on payment records for regular tuning service visits by professional musicians as evidence of female keyboard players in homes or schools. For example, organologist Michael Cole has documented the importance of women in the shift from harpsichords to early pianos through the records of an English keyboard technician.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, Kristine Forney established which students at a girl's school in 16th-century Antwerp were studying keyboard seriously through records of their parents' payments to professionals for instrument maintenance along with their lessons.<sup>60</sup> Although this varies depending on the complexity of the instrument involved, tuning is generally understood as an activity reserved for trained musicians with experiential knowledge and particular theoretical proficiencies.<sup>61</sup> While it is possible that many women tuned their own instruments once they had the necessary training, their activities would have become invisible and private, just like their performances. Like the mahlstick and brushes in her self-portraits of painting, in depicting this tool of the musical trade so accurately, Sofonisba makes corresponding claims about her advanced musical knowledge and technical skill.

Music seems to have been more than just a pastime or social expectation for the young Sofonisba. In addition to the depictions of her as a player in Naples and Althorp Park, another early self-portrait that does not include musical imagery, features a Latin inscription that translates as 'With my songs and my colors, I, the maiden Sophonisba, equaled the Muses and Apelles.'<sup>62</sup> She positions herself to rival both the female masters of the performing arts, including song and dance, and the male master of painting. All these skills would have been essential to gaining and maintaining

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58 In my survey of representations of musicians from the 15th and 16th centuries, I have only come across one other image of a tuning hammer. It is quite different because it is a representation of the liberal art of Music as a woman. Tuning is more often represented as the act of turning the pegs on a lute or viol. For a survey of tuning imagery see François Quiviger, 'The Tuning Figure in Early Modern Art 1350–1700', in: *Music and Visual Culture in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Chriscinda Henry and Tim Shephard (New York/London, 2023), 132–56.

59 Michael Cole, 'Transition from Harpsichord to Pianoforte – the Important Role of Women', in: *Geschichte und Bauweise des Tafelklaviers. 23. Musikinstrumentenbau-Symposium, Michaelstein, 11. bis 13. Oktober 2002*, ed. Boje E. Hans Schmuhl, Michaelsteiner Konferenzberichte 68 (Augsburg, 2006), 43–60.

60 Kristine Forney, 'Nymphes gayes en abry du Laurier: Music Instruction for the Bourgeois Woman', in: *MD* 49 (1995), 151–87.

61 While tuning is not generally discussed in written treatises of the 16th century, Aron touches on it briefly in the final chapter of his *Toscanello de la musica* (3rd edition: Vineggia: Marchio Sessa, 1539), 64, <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb10148090>> (accessed on 24 Sept. 2024).

62 'Musas Appellem aequavi Sophonisba puella Coloribus Fungens carminibusque meis.' The location of this painting is now unknown, but it was formerly in the Federico Zeri collection and is No. 100 in the catalogue of Michael Cole.

her role as a lady-in-waiting at the Spanish court. Isabel's court was known for its liveliness, where she and her ladies together performed comedies, made music, and danced.<sup>63</sup> And indeed, while there is very little direct documentation of Sofonisba's specific activities at the court, one account gives us a sense of her status in that environment and the importance of musical knowledge to her position there. Girolamo Neri, mentioned before, also wrote to the Duke of Mantua about the entertainments after the wedding of Philip II and Isabel on 29 January 1560. He stated that 'His Majesty having said that all should dance, alla gagliarda, nobody wanted to start but Il Signor Ferrante Gonzaga was the first to begin and he went to take that Cremonese woman who paints and who has come to stay with the Queen, and they started the way for many others who danced after them.'<sup>64</sup> Ferrante Gonzaga could be sure that Sofonisba, as a fellow north Italian of the noble class, would be familiar with the version of the gagliarda that he knew. He might even have danced with her before. It was repertoire she played and had certainly learned to dance in the hopes that her father's distribution of her self-portraits would be successful, and that she would be invited to a prominent court. It seems highly unlikely that she would have dared to disappoint the king or queen with her musical skills, having made such confident claims in her three musical self-portraits. Her long tenure in Spain, including time as a tutor to the noble children, indicates that in addition to painting, she did not leave anything to be desired in her courtly accomplishments of literacy and music.

## Conclusion

As a socially acceptable area of excellence for a noble-born girl, music provided an important foil and justification for her transgressive skills in the visual arts. Music and literacy were integral to Sofonisba's social persona and the visual evidence in her self-portraits confirm the skills Ribera attributed to her in his volume. It seems likely from the evidence in her paintings, that during her youthful formation in the home of her father, Sofonisba had access to at least two different instruments – a muted practice instrument and a performance instrument, each of which she depicted differently in her self-portraits at the keyboard. She made strong claims about her own musical and technical excellence through the prominent placement and depiction of the physical and sonic properties of these instruments – from the muting of the

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63 Accounts show that she participated with the other ladies in these entertainments. Kusche, 'Sofonisba Anguissola en España' (see n. 8), 408.

64 'La sera del spozalizio havendo detto S.Mta. che si bailasse alla gagliarda sie essendovi alcuno che desse principio, il Sr. Ferrante Gonzaga fu il primo ch'incominciò, il quale andò a prendere quella Cremonese, che dipinge, ch'è venuta a star con la Regina, et fece la via a molti altri que ballarono depoi.' Quoted in Kusche, 'Sofonisba Anguissola en España' (see n. 8), 397.

strings in the painting at Althorp Park to the gleaming tuning hammer and carefully coiled strings in the version in Naples. And finally, her visual claims of musical knowledge and performance abilities would certainly have been tested and verified as part of her assimilation into the Spanish court, where skills in dance and music along with painting, were expected of her on a day-to-day basis as part of her regular activities as a lady in the Queen's retinue.

In both her musical self-portraits and her courtly activities, Sofonisba transgressed but did not break social boundaries for her gender, class and maiden status, regardless of her more advanced age at the time of her marriage. In her self-portraits at the keyboard, she shows a remarkable prioritization of the technical aspects of playing and instrumental construction over proportion and visual concerns. Her unusual focus on the mundane tuning hammer is an especially singular claim of musical skills that until now has not generally been associated with noble women in the 16th century, despite their documented concern with the instruments in their homes.<sup>65</sup> I recommend that we listen more seriously to Sofonisba's claims of musical skill, since her enduring reputation and extant paintings stand as testaments to her successful performance of the unique qualities of her body, voice, and mind through both artistic and musical excellence.

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# Appearance and Prestige: Phenomena of Keyboard Instrument Decoration in the Sixteenth Century

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Heidelinde Pollerus

Appearance and prestige – two perennially interrelated terms. Where historical keyboard instruments are concerned, ‘appearance’ naturally refers to an object’s purely visual outward effect. However, such appearance is closely related to the meaning and reputation of the object as well as its purpose. This functions on two levels. One is that of the esteem in which the instrument and music are held, which is expressed via suitable artistic means. The other is that of the object’s socio-cultural function as a status symbol and surface for self-representation that serves to bolster its owner’s or commissioner’s reputation. Exploration of the blurred boundaries and connections between appearance and prestige shall constitute the central thread of the investigation here.<sup>1</sup>

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1 The secondary literature on instrument making is extensive, but decoration is often only addressed as an aside. Indispensable for its record of surviving instruments, with each entry containing a brief reference to decoration, is Donald H. Boalch, *Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord 1440–1840*, 3rd ed., ed. by Charles Mould (Oxford, 1995). Alongside numerous studies on individual objects and various fantastic collection catalogues, the following works are among the fundamental literature here: Christoph Rueger, *Musikinstrument und Dekor. Kostbarkeiten europäischer Kulturgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1982); Grant O’Brien, *Ruckers: A Harpsichord and Virginal Building Tradition* (Cambridge, 1990); Thomas Aurelius Belz, *Das Instrument der Dame. Bemalte Kielklaviere aus drei Jahrhunderten* (Bamberg, 1998); Sheridan Germann, *Harpsichord Decoration: A Conspectus, The Historical Harpsichord 4* (Hillsdale, 2002); Franca Falletti, Renato Meucci and Gabriele Rossi-Rognoni (eds.), *Marvels of Sound and Beauty: Italian Baroque Musical Instruments* (Florence, 2007). Recent studies such as the following offer a multidimensional approach to organology, which views musical instruments not only as sound-producing objects, but also as artifacts with specific social and cultural significance and functions: Flora Dennis, ‘Musical Sound and Material Culture’, in: *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Catherine Richardson, Tara Hamling and David Gaimster (London/New York, 2017), 371–82; Emanuela Vai, ‘Fantastic Finials. The Materiality, Decoration and Display of Renaissance Musical Instruments’, in: *Music and Visual Culture in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Chriscinda Henry and

## Pictorial Sources

Generally speaking, sources illustrating the decoration on 16th-century keyboard instruments are scarce. Only during the 17th century did the depictions of instruments in paintings see a sharp increase in quantity and quality, as can be seen in works by Jan Brueghel the Elder and Peter Paul Rubens,<sup>2</sup> Jan Molenaer,<sup>3</sup> Gonzales Coques,<sup>4</sup> Jan Steen,<sup>5</sup> Jan Vermeer,<sup>6</sup> Gabriël Metsu<sup>7</sup> and others. Only relatively few 16th-century panel paintings or engravings can be used as pictorial sources. Instruments are often shown just partially or so unclearly that no conclusions concerning their decoration can be drawn, as is the case in works such as *Saint Cecilia* by Michiel Coxcie, 1569, at the Prado in Madrid, *Allegory of Music or Hearing: Apollo and the Muses on Mount Parnassus* by Paolo Fiammingo, 1580–96 (auctioned at Sotheby's on 9 Dec. 2021), or *The Concert* by Leandro Bassano, c. 1590, at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Among the relevant 16th-century panel paintings is *Lady Playing a Clavichord* by the Master of the Female Half-Lengths. The picture, probably painted in Antwerp around 1530 and now in the National Museum in Poznan, shows a small instrument, which, like many others of its time, has little decoration. The black painted tendril ornamentation with grotesque heads and clover leaves is only found on the sides of the case (Fig. 1). The instrument is depicted in a simple but elegant atmosphere that suggests affluence. The richly decorated goblet protrudes slightly over the edge of the table, symbolizing a sense of impending danger. An underlay of green velvet in connection with musical instruments seems to have been in line with the taste of the 16th century and even later, as numerous panel paintings prove.<sup>8</sup> When compared with the painting *Young Woman Playing a Clavichord* (c. 1530) from the workshop of Jan van Hemessen,<sup>9</sup> the attributes such as the red dress, hairband, necklace, lidded cup, and green velvet prove

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Tim Shephard (New York, 2023), 295–322. An extensive bibliography can be found in the printed version of my dissertation: Heidelinde Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente als kunsthistorische Objekte. Cembalo, Clavichord, Spinett, Virginal* (Graz/Vienna, 2018).

2 *The Sense of Hearing*, 1617/18, Prado, Madrid.

3 *Woman at the Virginal*, c. 1637, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

4 *The Young Scholar and his Wife*, 1640, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Kassel.

5 *Young Woman Playing the Harpsichord*, 1659, National Gallery, London.

6 *The Concert*, 1665/66, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston (until 1990); whereabouts currently unknown.

7 *A Man and a Woman at the Virginal*, c. 1665, National Gallery, London.

8 For example, Sofonisba Anguissola, *Self-Portrait at the Spinnet* (c. 1556, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples). A contemporary description of the *studiolo* of the Roman courtesan Imperia Cognati also mentions the table covered in green velvet, on which musical instruments and sheet music lie. Cf. Vai, 'Fantastic Finials' (see n. 1), 312; Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), 375.

9 Worcester Art Museum, inv. no. 1920.88. <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jan\\_van\\_Hemessen\\_-\\_Young\\_Woman\\_Playing\\_a\\_Clavichord.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jan_van_Hemessen_-_Young_Woman_Playing_a_Clavichord.jpg)> (accessed on 4 August 2025).

to be almost identical. However, in the depiction of the instrument, van Hemessen placed more emphasis on the correct reproduction of the mechanics and the hand position. Apart from a green strip, the decoration of the instrument is only vaguely suggested. This comparison shows that paintings are only of limited use as a source for decoration, as they are always subordinate to the message of the image and/or the painter.



**Fig. 1:** Master of the Female Half-Lengths, *Lady Playing a Clavichord*, 1530, oil/wood, 44 x 31 cm, National Museum in Poznan, FR 442 / Mo 115; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Master\\_of\\_Female\\_Half\\_Lengths\\_Lady.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Master_of_Female_Half_Lengths_Lady.jpg)> (accessed on 4 August 2025).

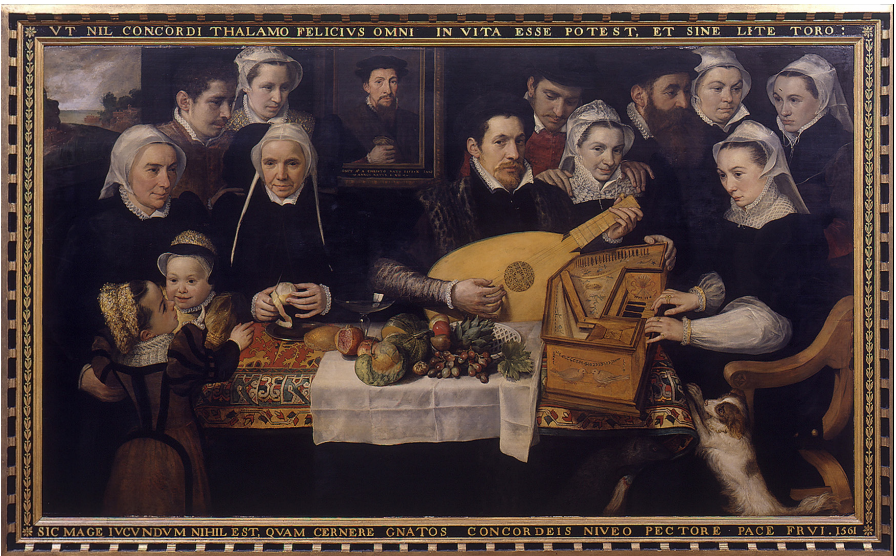
Nevertheless, certain trends can be discerned in some paintings, such as *Girl at the Virginal* by Catharina van Hemessen from 1548, now at the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne (Fig. 2). The daughter of the aforementioned Jan van Hemessen is depicted here as a musician without any further attributes. Only her face and hands emerge from the dark background, together with the light wood of the soundboard. This features a small rose and a barely discernible triangular motif. On the inside of the framed side panel is a Latin motto of religious content. It is particularly interesting that the dolphin pattern typical of Ruckers instruments is inscribed on the wooden case in the manner of a frieze and not – as would become typical later on – printed on paper.<sup>10</sup>

10 For details on the development of the Ruckers paper prints, see Grant O'Brien, *Ruckers* (see n. 1).



**Fig. 2:** Catharina van Hemessen, *Girl at the Virginal*, 1548, oil/wood, 30.5 x 24.3 cm, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne, WRM 0654; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Young\\_woman\\_playing\\_a\\_virginal\\_by\\_Catharina\\_van\\_Hemessen?uselang=de](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Young_woman_playing_a_virginal_by_Catharina_van_Hemessen?uselang=de)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

More elaborate is the decoration of the virginal in the family portrait at the Stadsmuseum Lier by Frans Floris, 1561, which likely shows the Berchem family (Fig. 3). The presumptive man of the house plays the lute, his wife the virginal. The virginal's case bears symbols of love, in particular a pair of doves. The soundboard, featuring a rose and painted with scattered flowers, is a representative example of the Flemish decorative practice that arose during the mid-16th century.



**Fig. 3:** Frans Floris, *Portrait of the Family van Berchem*, 1561, oil/wood, 130 x 227 cm, Stadsmuseum Lier, 0052; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frans\\_Floris\\_002.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frans_Floris_002.jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

The well-known painting *Apollo and the Muses*, c. 1570, by Marten de Vos (Fig. 4) shows a virginal decorated on the inside of its lid with a battle painting that features a multitude of figures. One of the Muses plays on this instrument in the company of her fellow Muses and Apollo. The contrast between the battle scene and this concert of the Muses is further heightened by the motto ‘Musae loco belli’ (‘Muses in place of war’), which is written on the instrument’s case.<sup>11</sup> Later on, this painting even came to serve as a model for the lid painting on a Ruckers instrument of 1619.<sup>12</sup>



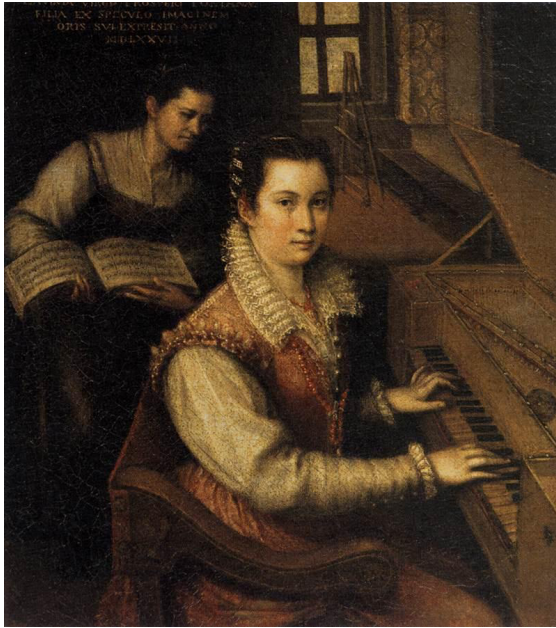
**Fig. 4:** Marten de Vos, *Apollo and the Muses*, c.1570 (?), oil/wood, 44.5 x 63.5 cm, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, 3882; <[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Apollon\\_and\\_the\\_Muses\\_by\\_Marten\\_de\\_Vos\\_\(1570\).jpg](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Apollon_and_the_Muses_by_Marten_de_Vos_(1570).jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

There were multiple painters, both female and male, who showed themselves playing keyboard instruments in their self-portraits. Among these paintings, the one created by Lavinia Fontana in 1577 (Fig. 5) stands out. Her instrument exhibits the typical Italian decorative concept of this era with a rose, wood of a natural appearance with thin black lines that were probably inlays, and ivory buttons on the jackrail and the edges of the case. Here Lavinia presents herself as a self-assured figure. The instrument, the servant, and the other details are accessories that underscore her elegant presence. Although her hands are on the keyboard, their carefully constructed line of

11 Reginald Howard Wilenski, *Flemish Painters 1430–1830*, 2 vols. (London, 1960), i, 143.

12 Now at the Musical Instrument Museum in Brussels, inv. no. 2935. Cf. Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente*, (see n. 1), 201.

sight points to the easel in front of the window in the background. Through the skillful execution of the composition and all the details, she also presents herself as a painter.



**Fig. 5:** Lavinia Fontana, *Self-Portrait at the Clavichord with a Servant*, 1577, oil/canvas, 27 x 23.8 cm, Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Rome, 743; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lavinia\\_Fontana\\_-\\_Self-Portrait\\_at\\_the\\_Spinet\\_-\\_WGA07985.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lavinia_Fontana_-_Self-Portrait_at_the_Spinet_-_WGA07985.jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

These paintings allow only limited conclusions to be drawn concerning the quantity and appearance of the instruments that actually existed in the 16th century, but they do at least show some types of decoration that were already in use by then. The range extends from simple undecorated instruments to elaborate designs with roses on (un)painted soundboards, inlays and applications, the well-known dolphin pattern, phytomorphic ornaments, mottos (i.e. aphorisms), and even lid paintings.

Alongside panel paintings, there also exist further visual sources that can provide clues as to decorative practice during the 16th century such as ecclesiastical and aristocratic furnishings as well as design and architectural drawings. For example, in Federico Zuccherò's drawing *Man at the Claveçin* (Fig. 6), the instrument is depicted as completely undecorated. According to a note written in the painter's own hand, the man at the instrument is the Florentine author and musician Antonio Francesco Doni (1513–74).<sup>13</sup>

13 A reversed exemplar of this drawing is held by the Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 990220.



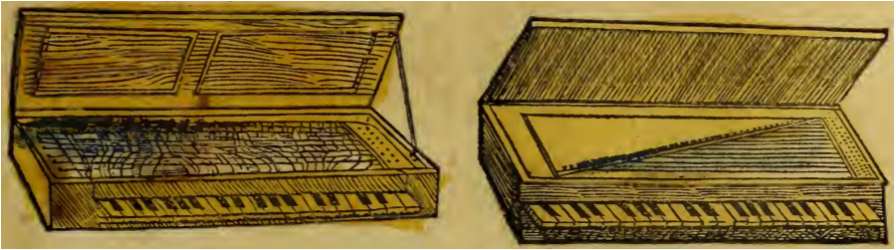
**Fig. 6:** Federico Zuccherò, *Man at the Claveçin*, 1564, pencil, 15.4 x 22 cm, Louvre, Paris, 4576; <<http://arts-graphiques.louvre.fr/detail/oeuvres/5/101833-Un-homme-debout-ecoutant-un-musicien-jouant-du-clavecin-max>> (accessed on 27 February 2025).

Keyboard instruments, being somewhat ‘awkward’ in shape, appear less often than other instruments in music-themed architectural ornaments; however, wood inlays, wall friezes, wall decorations, and the like occasionally do show rather simply decorated examples. One might point here to an intarsia in the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican, 1510, or a frieze at the Casa Giorgione in Castelfranco from 1504 (Fig. 7).



**Fig. 7:** Wall frieze at the Casa Giorgione, 1504, Castelfranco Veneto (Photo: H. Pollerus).

The few illustrations in historical musical treatises, such as Sebastian Virdung's *Musica getutscht und außgezogen*, 1511, are designed to capture the function of the instruments and hence feature hardly any decoration (Fig. 8).



**Fig. 8:** Sebastian Virdung, *Musica getutscht und ausgezogen*, [Basel] [Michael Furter] [1511] (vdm: 3); <<http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB0001444100000000>> (accessed on 27 February 2025).

One of the few surviving 16th-century design drawings for an instrument decoration is a drawing created by an anonymous artist between 1560 and 1570 (Fig. 9). It presents an elaborate concept for a lid decoration, with figures making music and dancing in a distinguished interior. It is not known whether this concept was ever realised, but its strong relationship with music does point to one of the main substantive themes of instrument decoration.



**Fig. 9:** Anon., *People Dancing and Making Music*, c. 1560–70, pen, brown ink and wash/paper, 17.2 x 29.5 cm, National Galleries of Scotland, D665; <<https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/14199/study-lid-harpsichord-people-dancing-and-making-music>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Even if pictorial sources do provide central clues as to decorative practice, it must be borne in mind when assessing them that they likely show only a tiny share of the instruments that existed in the 16th century and that, in general, questions concerning how accurately these images corresponded to reality do remain worthy of discussion.

## Written Sources

Much like pictorial sources, written sources on decoration from the 16th century are scarce and scattered. Archival records, especially contemporaneous inventories, occasionally provide small bits of information regarding certain prominent instruments' visual qualities. For example, the following note can be found in a 1566 inventory of Fugger instruments:

Mer ain schönß langes Instrument, von schönem schwarz Ebano/mit erhep-  
ten helffenbeinen Prustbildtlen. Inwendig unnd/künstlich gemaltem Fueter,  
auch 3 Registern helffenbein/Clavier und vergulden Negelen. Ainer gewaltig-  
gen Resonantz./Ist zu Venedig gemacht p. Franc. Ungaro.<sup>14</sup>

(Further, a beautiful long instrument, made of beautiful black ebony, with raised ivory portraits. Elaborately painted interior decoration, a further three stops, an ivory keyboard, and gilded nails. Tremendous resonance. Made in Venice by Franc. Ungaro.)<sup>15</sup>

Those who compiled inventories usually considered the structural qualities of the instruments more important than their appearance. It is thus that, although the 1590 inventory of the Graz court treasury indicates that four keyboard instruments were present, we learn very little about their external appearance:

Erstlichen ein instrument mit mössingen saiten, etlichen registern [...]; ist  
mit helffenpain eingelegt und mit silberen vergulden auch alebasterbildern  
gezieret. / Mer ein instrument mit mössingen saiten und verborgnen pfeifen  
[...]. / Mer ein ander lang instrument mit mössing und stählen saiten, darauf  
man lauth und still schlagen khan; irer furstlich durchlaucht etc. vom herzo-  
gen zu Ferära überschickht worden [...]. / Ain clavicimole mit dreÿ Registern;  
soll zu hof in der jungen fürstin Erzherzogin Maria zimmer sein.<sup>16</sup>

14 Richard Schaal, 'Die Musikinstrumenten-Sammlung von Raimund Fugger d. J.', in: *AfMw* 21 (1964), 212–16.

15 Author's translation. A different translation can be found in Douglas Alton Smith, 'The Musical Instrument Inventory of Raymund Fugger', in: *GSI* 33 (1980), 36–44, at 40.

16 Heinrich Zimmerman (ed.), 'Urkunden, Acten und Regesten aus dem Archiv des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren (Fortsetzung)', in: *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des*

(‘First, an instrument with brass strings, several stops [...]. It is inlaid with ivory and decorated with silver, gilded, and alabaster pictures. Second, an instrument with brass strings and hidden pipes [...]. Further, another long instrument with brass and steel strings on which one can play loudly and softly; sent to Her Serene Highness etc. by the Duke of Ferrara [...]. A clavimole with three stops; it is said to be at the court in the chamber of the young Princess Archduchess Maria.’)

Of similar character are the brief descriptions in other inventories such as that of the musical instruments at the Royal Palace of Madrid, which lists eleven keyboard instruments with their estimated values and brief notes on their provenance and condition. Mention is made, for example, of a ‘clavicordio of white wood, two yards of length; square: covered with black leather, and in the lid a landscape painting. – Broken’ and a ‘large clavicordio and claviorganos all together with much variation of music, which is played with hands and feet. It was presented to his Majesty by Senor Don Juan of Austria.’<sup>17</sup>

At any rate, inventories do indicate the presence of individual decorative elements. An analysis and comparison of the various inventories would be an eminently rewarding research project, seeing as such sources tell one more than most music-theoretical treatises of the time – which, in fact, hardly mention decoration at all. Perhaps Johann Mattheson’s later opinion already had currency in the 16th century: ‘Die schönste Orgel, ohne Organisten, dient nur zum hinderlichen Zierrath’ (‘The most beautiful organ, without an organist, serves only as a cumbersome decoration’).<sup>18</sup> From the perspective of the visual arts, however, the prevailing values were quite naturally different. In his *Trattato dell’arte della pittura, scultura et architettura*, published in 1584, the painter and art theorist Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo made no move to question whether musical instruments should be decorated. He did, however, insist that instruments not be used as image carriers per se, with the image instead having to serve the musical instrument. Such images, he wrote, should make for ‘accrescimento di dolcezza alla vista, convenienti alla musica’, i.e., enhanced sweetness to the eye such as suits the music.<sup>19</sup> As far as pictorial themes were concerned, he only allowed for those with a direct connection to music – ‘non contengano altro che soggetto di musica’ (‘contain nothing but the subject of music’).<sup>20</sup> Noting that it was common practice to depict a wide variety of subjects such as the conversion of Saul, miracles, or

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*Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses 7* (1888), xvii–lxxxiv, at xxi, xxxi.

17 Martin McLeish, ‘An Inventory of Musical Instruments at the Royal Palace, Madrid, in 1602’, in: *GSMJ* 21 (1968), 108–28, at 121.

18 Johann Mattheson, *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (Hamburg: Christian Herold, 1739), Preface, 20.

19 Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *Trattato dell’arte della pittura, scultura et architettura* (Milan: Paolo Gottardo Pontio, 1584), 346; <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb00104031>> (accessed 4 March 2025).

20 *Ibid.*

battles without any musical references or relevance, Lomazzo asserted that this was to be rejected. Since his recommendations were primarily directed at church organs, he naturally suggested – probably in accordance with the decrees of the Tridentine Council<sup>21</sup> – themes from the Bible and other Christian writings such as Saint Cecilia, David singing the Psalms, choirs of angels, and the like. And if a non-musical subject was chosen, he wrote, music should at least be included in the staffage – an example being angels playing music at the birth of Christ.

According to Lomazzo, these rules also applied to instruments outside of churches, by which he probably meant mainly stringed keyboard instruments. For these, however, also he found other music-related themes to be suitable, especially those from Greco-Roman mythology such as Orpheus, Apollo and the Muses, Amphion, Arion, etc. Inspirations from poetry and history as well as original inventions of the artist were also appropriate. Lomazzo's own suggestion for an 'original invention' adheres to the stipulation of musical relevance and depicts twenty-eight 'uomini eccellenti' including various Flemish and Italian singers, musicians, composers, and visual artists including Adriano Willaert and Leonardo da Vinci.<sup>22</sup> These portraits were meant to represent the 'nove cori della musica à tre à tre, co'suoi instrumenti', being something like a secular version of the nine choirs of angels.<sup>23</sup> Whether this densely packed crowd of artists shown together with an organ, lutes, lyres, viols, harps, citterns, cornetts, and trombones ever actually came to populate an instrument lid is not known.

Although Lomazzo was the only author to explicitly refer to the ornamentation of musical instruments, his recommendations for pictorial themes were by no means his own idiosyncratic ideas but much rather a theoretical distillation of contemporary practice that was also precisely in keeping with general art theory as it pertained to autonomous pictorial works during the Counter-Reformation – with similar recommendations having, for example, been formulated in a 1564 treatise by Giovanni Andrea Gilio da Fabriano, who likewise allowed for 'poetic', 'historical', and 'mixed' themes in addition to religious content.<sup>24</sup>

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21 The Council of Trent (1545–63) and Counter-Reformation policies fundamentally did not allow pagan, classical, or profane elements in religious painting. The depiction of mythological themes was tolerated as 'poetic' painting on a case-by-case basis. Anthony Blunt, *Kunsttheorie in Italien 1450–1600* (Munich, 1984), 79.

22 For an identification of all the individuals, see Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), 204–5.

23 Lomazzo, *Trattato* (see n. 19), 347. Lomazzo himself painted a fresco depicting the *Nine Choirs of Angels* in the Church of San Marco in Milan in 1570. On Lomazzo, see also: Marilena Cassimatis, *Zur Kunsttheorie des Malers Giovanni-Paolo Lomazzo (1538–1600)* (Frankfurt a.M., 1985).

24 Giovanni Andrea Gilio da Fabriano, *Due dialogi* (Camerino: Antonio Gioioso, 1564), quoted in Blunt, *Kunsttheorie* (see n. 21), 79. Gilio was a priest and art theorist of the Counter-Reformation.

Lomazzo's principles also correspond with the tradition of the so-called *decorum*. Artists and theorists discussed and used the term *decorum* not just during the 1500s but indeed from around 1400 to 1800 to denote what was seemly, appropriate, and proper in art. Its meaning depended on the context and period. In the art of the 16th century, part of what it entailed was that the artist always takes into account the location and purpose for which an artwork was being created – whether it was for a church or a palace, for state or private premises. Lomazzo's recommendations of suitable pictorial themes for musical instruments within and outside of sacred spaces arose from precisely that complex of ideas which constituted the *decorum* of his day.<sup>25</sup>

### Preserved Instruments and Instrument Lids as Sources with Limited Informative Value

The most important source concerning the decorative concepts of the 16th century is, of course, that of the preserved instruments themselves. However, it should be emphasised at the outset that even for instruments whose provenance is beyond doubt, the development of their decoration down through the years cannot always be traced. Even the original decorations on an instrument were the result of collaboration between various craftsmen and artists. Naturally, the carved frame and roses required different craftsmen than those responsible for the lid paintings. This resulted in a certain stylistic diversity from the outset, the origins of which are generally difficult to identify. An instrument's original decoration created in this way may have been altered or replaced altogether in subsequent periods due either to structural alterations during *ravalements* or restorations or to changes in taste. And let us also not disregard the matter of forgeries, in which context Franciolini's name looms large.<sup>26</sup>

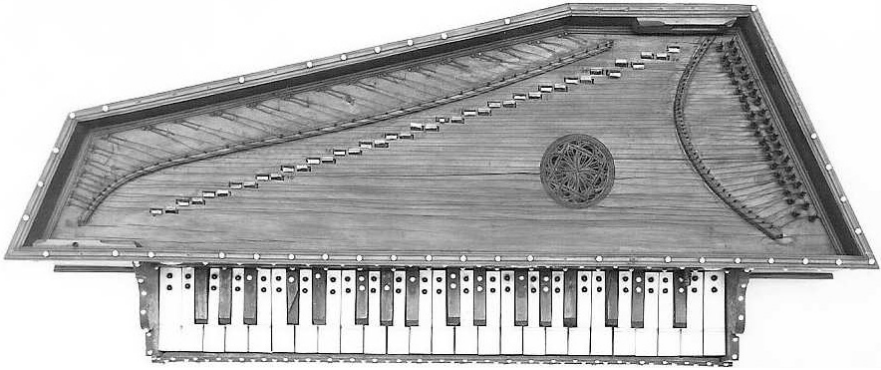
As an example of the chequered history of some instruments, consider one that was originally made as a virginal (1585 or 1587), was converted into a tangent piano in 1717, and possibly passed through Franciolini's hands during the late 19th century. Franciolini may well have added the name of the supposed instrument maker,

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25 Thijs Weststeijn, 'Decorum', in: *Grundbegriffe der Kunstwissenschaft*, ed. Stefan Jordan and Jürgen Müller (Ditzingen, 2018), 88–91.

26 Leopoldo Franciolini (1844–1920) was an Italian antiques dealer specialising in old keyboard instruments who ran a workshop and pursued a large-scale trade in fake instruments in Florence. He 'modified' hundreds of instruments, mainly with assembled decorative elements, in order to fraudulently obtain higher prices. Such instruments are now exhibited in museum collections with corresponding explanations. On Franciolini, see e.g. Edward M. Ripin, *The Instrument Catalogs of Leopoldo Franciolini*, Music indexes and bibliographies 9 (Hackensack, N.J., 1974); Edward L. Kottick, *A History of the Harpsichord* (Bloomington, 2003), 403–5; Gunther Joppig, 'Ein "echter" Franciolini', in: *Antiquitäten-Zeitung* 21 (1999), 814–15.

'Franciscus Bonafinis', himself (Fig. 10).<sup>27</sup> An analysis of 16th-century decorations on the basis of such relics would hardly be meaningful without painstaking, detailed investigation.



**Fig. 10:** Franciscus Bonafinis (?), *Virginal*, converted into a tangent piano, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 89.4.2765; <<http://metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/505225>> (accessed on 27 February 2025).

Just like countless pictorial and written sources, instruments from the 16th century have also been lost to wars, Reformation-era iconoclasm, uprisings, and neglect. Attractive decoration may, however, have saved certain instruments from total loss. Some lids thus survived their instruments, as demonstrated by a number of instrument-less lids now on display in art galleries. One cannot assume that the artistic quality of their decoration allows conclusions to be drawn about the majority of the instruments that originally existed. They were also often reworked in such a way that their original purpose was no longer recognizable. Sometimes this was done by simply cutting them down, as in the case of a lid, probably painted by Girolamo Romanino around 1540, which is now stored – trimmed – like a panel painting at London's National Gallery under the title *Pegasus and the Muses* (Fig. 11). It shows the winged horse Pegasus stamping its hoof on Mount Helicon and giving rise to the spring known as the Hippocrene (Horse's Fountain), a source of artistic inspiration. In the foreground, the muses – accompanied by three gentlemen – play instruments and sing. On the right in the background, the Pieridae are transforming into magpies, as in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, IV 662–78. The clothing and the architecture in the background place this painting in Lombardy during the 1540s and resemble Romanino's murals in the Palazzo Salvadego in Brescia from 1543. On the back of the panel, remnants of a coat of arms are still visible, as was common on the front lids of harpsichords or

<sup>27</sup> Boalch, *Makers* (see n. 1), 20, 250.

virginals. Traces of hinges etc. are missing, as the panel has been trimmed at the top and sides.<sup>28</sup>



**Fig. 11:** Girolamo Romanino, *Pegasus and the Muses*, 1540, oil/wood, 38 x 115.4 cm, National Gallery, London, NG3093; <<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/possibly-by-girolamo-romanino-pegasus-and-the-muses>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

The lid painting *Silenus Gathering Grapes* from the hand of Annibale (and presumably Agostino)<sup>29</sup> Carracci (Figs. 12–14) likewise survived its instrument and was already viewed as a work of art in 1664, as evidenced by its entry in a historical catalogue of works worth seeing in Rome:

Signori Lancellotti. Palazzo alli Coronari. Cortile fregiato di statue, e bassi-rilievi antichi; nel portico di sopra la statua di Diana Efesia, con pitture nelle camere, fra le quali un Cambalo [sic] dipinto a guazzo con Sileno portato a braccia da due fauni di mani di Annibale Carracci.<sup>30</sup>

28 A description of this painting can be found at <<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/possibly-by-girolamo-romanino-pegasus-and-the-muses>> (accessed on 15 Sept. 2024).

29 In the older literature, both parts as well as all prior studies are attributed to Annibale Carracci. In recent years, co-authorship by his brother Agostino (and perhaps even by his cousin Ludovico) is assumed, though the amount of material concerned here is a topic of discussion. Daniele Benati et al. (eds.), *The Drawings of Annibale Carracci* [Catalogue of an exhibition held at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, 26 Sept. 1999 – 9 January 2000] (Washington, 1999); Ann Sutherland Harris, 'Review: The Drawings of Annibale Carracci', in: *Master Drawings* 43 (2005), 512–26; Clovis Withfield, 'Agostino risarcito parte II. Nuovi spunti sul vero ruolo del maggiore dei fratelli Carracci', in: *About Art Online* (2018), <<https://www.aboutartonline.com/agostino-risarcito-parte-2-nuovi-spunti-sul-vero-ruolo-del-maggiore-dei-fratelli-carracci-with-english-text/>> (accessed on 15 Sept. 2024).

30 Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Nota delli musei, librerie, gallerie et ornamenti di statue e pitture ne' palazzo, nelle case e ne' giardini di Roma* (Rome: Deversin and Cesaretti, 1664), 29; <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb11098347>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

('Mr. and Mrs. Lancellotti. Coronari Palace. Courtyard adorned with statues and ancient bas-reliefs; atop the portico a statue of Diana Ephesia; paintings in the rooms, including a harpsichord with Silenus carried by two fauns painted in gouache by Annibale Carracci.')

The lid was even subsequently reworked into a panel painting: an old photograph shows how it had been cut up and mounted to form a rectangle. This modification was reversed in the 20th century, but a narrow intermediate piece between the two young satyrs is now missing as can be seen from the format and a drawing by Carracci (Figs. 14 and 43). Due to these changes, the value of this source is naturally diminished. Like the painting attributed to Lavinia Fontana, *Apollo and the Muses* (1589–1600, unknown private collection), or the painting by Sebastiano Ricci *Venus Surrounded by Nymphes* (1716–20, Louvre, M.I.866), several other harpsichord lids that have been 'completed' into rectangles are likely to be uncovered.



**Fig. 12:** Annibale (and Agostino?) Carracci, *Silenus Gathering Grapes*, part 1, 1597–1600, oil/wood, 54.5 x 88.5 cm, National Gallery London, NG93.1; <<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/annibale-carracci-silenus-gathering-grapes-painting-group-info>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 13:** Annibale (and Agostino?) Carracci, *Silenus Gathering Grapes*, part 2, 1597–1600, oil/wood, 54.5 x 88.5 cm, National Gallery London, NG93.2; <<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/annibale-carracci-young-satyr-gathering-grapes>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 14:** Annibale (and Agostino?) Carracci, *Silenus Gathering Grapes*, 1597–1600, photograph of its reworked state; <<http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/scheda/fotografia/106921/National%20Gallery%252C%20London%25C2%25A0%25E2%2580%2594%25C2%25A0Carracci%20Annibale%20-%20sec.%20XVI%20XVII%20-%20Silenos%20coglie%20grappoli%20d%2527uva>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Rectangular lids did not necessarily have to be trimmed to be considered panel paintings, but their original purpose was concealed by other measures. Consider, for instance, the work *Venetian Dancers with Commedia dell'Arte Troupe* (Fig. 15), found as a painting at the Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum in Aachen. The painting depicts the ‘Parentado’, a dance festival that traditionally took place in Venice in the late 16th century a few days before a wedding. The scene, featuring gondolas and a Commedia dell’Arte troupe, evokes a Venetian atmosphere, but is based on a copperplate engraving by Hendrik Goltzius from 1584, once again highlighting supraregional artistic exchange. A comprehensive restoration project was what first revealed this panel’s original function as a harpsichord’s lid flap. A filled-in hole for the cord, the over-painted ornaments found on the back (much like in the Ruckers harpsichord of 1612, now in Paris at the Musée de la Musique), the poplar panel, traces of the originally glued-on frame and hinges, and last but not least its dimensions are clear indicators. This lid survived due to the high quality of its painting, which was originally thought to be the work of Hieronymus Franken I but is now attributed to his nephew, Hieronymus Franken II.<sup>31</sup>

31 For a very extensive discussion of its renovation and reattribution, see: Thomas Fusenig and Ulrike Villwock, ‘Hieronymus Franckens “Venezianischer Ball” in Aachen. Eine neue Datierung und ihre Folgen’, in: *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 61 (2000), 145–76. Cf. also Thomas



**Fig. 15:** Hieronymus Francken II (?), *Venetian Dancers with Commedia dell'Arte Troupe*, c. 1600, oil/wood, 41.2 x 64.7 cm, Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum Aachen, GK 159; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hieronymus\\_Francken\\_I\\_-\\_Carnival\\_in\\_Venice.jpg#file](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hieronymus_Francken_I_-_Carnival_in_Venice.jpg#file)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

The painting *The Contest between Apollo and Pan* by Bartholomäus Spranger (Fig. 16) is a further example. The museum catalogue and some recent literature<sup>32</sup> describe it as a panel painting, although the description in the museum and an exhibition catalogue<sup>33</sup> indicate its initial purpose as an instrument lid. The theme almost exceeds the given format, which is determined by its original use, due to its mannerist, figurative, and dynamic representation. Also the support (wood), the subject, and the traces of nail holes – presumably from the hinge – clearly indicate the painting's instrumental

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Fusenig and Christine Vogt (eds.), *Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum Aachen. Bestandskatalog der Gemäldegalerie Niederlande von 1550 bis 1800* (Aachen/Munich, 2006), 124–6.

32 Jana Stolzenberger, 'Höfisches Sammeln und internationale Tendenzen der Kunst um 1600', in: *Renaissance – Barock – Aufklärung. Kunst und Kultur vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Daniel Hess and Dagmar Hirschfelder, *Die Schausammlungen des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* 3 (Nuremberg, 2010), 271–84, at 272–3.

33 Sally Metzler, *Bartholomeus Spranger. Splendor and Eroticism in Imperial Prague. The Complete Works* [Catalogue of an exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 4 Nov. 2014 – 1 Feb. 2015] (New York, 2014), 94–5.

origin.<sup>34</sup> However, like other similar objects,<sup>35</sup> this high-quality lid is a source of limited informative value, as too many aspects remain unclear – the client, builder, decorative concept of the entire instrument, etc.



**Fig. 16:** Bartholomäus Spranger, *Contest between Apollo and Pan*, c. 1587, oil/wood, 39.8 x 132.5 cm, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen (on permanent loan to the Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg, Gm 1100); <<https://www.sammlung.pinakothek.de/en/artwork/jpxeyknxJ7>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

## Representation and Projection

Why were instruments decorated? As an ‘upmarket piece of furniture’, a keyboard instrument was particularly well suited as a display object and projection surface. The especially pronounced desire for ornamentation and the need for *representation* documented in the 16th century were certainly motives for decoration. (Here, I use representation [*Repräsentation*] in the specific sense of generating an external effect that befits and projects an elevated socio-economic status.) An ornate instrument most assuredly did not serve only music-making but was also part of the ‘lifestyle’ of some members of the upper class – and, as such, became a prestigious collector’s item. It was accordingly that, in 1554, Sabba da Castiglione’s instructional text for his nephew expressly recommended that he decorate his home with musical instruments ‘come organi, clacimbali [sic], monocordi, salteri, arpe, dolcime- ’ (‘such as organs, harpsichords, clavichords, salterios, harps, *dolcime- ’ as well as plucked, stringed, and wind instruments, ‘perche questi tali instrumenti diletano molto alle orecchie, et ricreano molto gli animi [...] ancora piacciono assai all’occhio, quando sono diligentemente et per mano di eccellenti et ingegniosi maestri lavorati’ (‘for these instruments*

34 See the informations on the Website of Germanisches Nationalmuseum, <<http://objektkatalog.gnm.de/objekt/Gm1100>> (accessed on 15 Sept. 2024).

35 Another possible ‘candidate’ for rediscovery as an instrument lid is the painting on wood *Apollo and the Muses*, attributed to Benvenuto di Giovanni di Meo del Guasta (1436–1518), Detroit Institute of Arts, 31,8 x 106,7 cm, inv. no. 40.128.

greatly delight the ears and restore the soul [...] as well as greatly please the eye if they have been diligently crafted by the hands of excellent and ingenious masters').<sup>36</sup> This text goes on to mention the instrument makers Bastiano da Verona<sup>37</sup> as well as Lorenzo da Pavia Gusanaschi, a friend of Leonardo da Vinci and highly respected at that time, who built a large harpsichord for Pope Leo X in 1514.<sup>38</sup>

It can be assumed that unadorned and plainly painted instruments outnumbered the decorated ones. But a client could, depending on his financial resources, commission decorations that would draw attention to his wealth or deep humanistic knowledge, his modern spirit, or his lifestyle, thus enhancing his image – his *prestige*. Decorating instruments was therefore consistent with the contemporary aristocratic and wealthy bourgeois practice of collecting rare objects and curiosities and displaying them in lavishly decorated display furniture (*Kabinettschränke*) or in 'cabinets of curiosities' (*Kunstkammern* or *Wunderkammern*).

As Erik Forssman has observed, that era's art of decoration was not an end in itself and cannot be understood in purely material terms; it much rather expressed the attitude of the client and the artisan as well as the dignity of the object.<sup>39</sup> Musical instruments were hence decorated not merely for the purpose of material appreciation and 'prettification' but also in order to lend them dignity and 'elevate' them through exquisite features. This is how it had always been: the Bible describes how King Solomon sent for precious 'Almug wood'<sup>40</sup> from the legendary land of Ophir for the purpose of making musical instruments.<sup>41</sup> Ovid, in turn, tells us in his *Metamorphoses* that the lyre of Apollo was 'richly inlaid with jewels and Indian ivory'.<sup>42</sup> One could easily cite more such quotations. Many, like the one from Sabba da Castiglione above, emphasize the connection between the quality of the instrument and the pleasure it gives to the ears

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36 Sabba da Castiglione, *Ricordi* (Venice: Paolo Gherardi, 1554), Ricordo cix, fol. 51; <<https://books.google.it/books?id=lZBZyV9nZfMC&hl=de&pg=PA1-v=onepage&q&f=false>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

37 A Sebastiano da Verona worked for Cardinal Ippolito I d'Este as a 'M.o de instramenti' from 1508 to 1511. Lewis Lockwood, 'Adrian Willaert and Cardinal Ippolito I d'Este: New Light on Willaert's Early Career in Italy, 1515–21', in: *EMH* 5 (1985), 85–112, at 112.

38 Boalch, *Makers* (see n. 1), 76; William F. Prizer, 'Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia, "Master Instrument-Maker"', in: *EMH* 2 (1982), 87–118 and 120–7, esp. at 89.

39 Erik Forssman, *Column and Ornament* (Cologne, 1956), 13.

40 Possibly plumwood, see: Johann Heinrich Zedler, *Universal-Lexicon*, Supplement 1 (Leipzig/Halle: J.H. Zedler, 1751), entry 'Almuggim-Holz', col. 1133, <<https://www.zedler-lexikon.de/index.html?c=blaettern&seitenzahl=578&bandnummer=s1&view=100&l=de>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

41 1 Kings, 10:11.

42 Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso), *Metamorphosen*, ed. Erich Rösch (Munich, 1952), XI 168, 405. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. David Raeburn (London, 2004), XI 167.

as well as to the eyes and the soul. Marin Mersenne's assertion that 'the eyes should participate in the pleasure of the ears' is likewise well known.<sup>43</sup>

The Italian instruments that survive from this period fulfil this requirement mainly via the quality and beauty of their materials as well as the quantity, refinement, and originality of their ornamental decoration. An example of this is the octave virginal commissioned by Eleonora della Rovere, Duchess of Urbino, and built in Venice in 1540, which is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Fig. 17). The front panel of the instrument advises: 'Riccho son d'oro et riccho son di suono non mi sonar si tu non ha del buono' ('I'm rich in gold and rich in tone; if you lack virtue, leave me alone').<sup>44</sup> Taken together, the opulence of the decoration and the inscription's demand for inner moral integrity satisfy the aims of representation and projection, appearance and prestige.



**Fig. 17:** Anon., *Octavo Virginal*, 1540, Venice, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 53.6a,b; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503043>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

German instruments such as the South German Virginal (Augsburg?), 1595–1605, now at the Berlin Musical Instrument Museum (Fig. 18),<sup>45</sup> likewise demonstrate this

43 Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Sebastien Cramoisy and Pierre Ballard, 1636–37), ii, Livre cinquieme des instrumens à vent, 241, discusses flutes, his statement, however, also applies to other kinds of instruments: '[...] mais on choisit ordinairement du bois d'une belle couleur, & qui reçoit un beau poly, afin que la beauté accompagne la bonté de l'instrument, & que les yeux soient en quelque façon participans du plaisir de l'oreille' ('but usually wood of a beautiful colour is chosen, which can be polished well, so that the beauty accompanies the instrument's quality & the eyes are in some way involved in the pleasure of the ear'); <<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k15111009>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

44 Translation from <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503043>> (accessed on 1 February 2022).

45 Cf. John Henry van der Meer et al., *Kielklaviere, Cembali, Spinette, Virginale. Bestandskatalog des Staatlichen Instituts für Musikforschung, Preußischer Kulturbesitz* (Berlin, 1991), 195–9.

relationship between artisanship, material, and message. The ornamentation itself, with its exceptionally opulent inlays, becomes the subject of the image here: appearing at first glance like parts of a machine, the scrollwork portrays an ancient-seeming and positively surreal-looking city of ruins with pillars, sarcophagi, and other mysterious objects with tufts of stiff grass growing in between. This type of ornamentation was a mannerist development of scrollwork<sup>46</sup> and can be traced back to engraving templates for Lorenz Stöer's somewhat earlier publication *Geometrie et Perspectiva* (Augsburg, 1567) (Fig. 19), hence documenting the relationship between furniture and instrument decoration. At the centre of the lid, an outsized chalice points to a possibly sacred intended use of this instrument, which was once part of a claviorganum. While this particular instrument links a sacred dimension with a humanist reception of antiquity that employs the most modern ornaments, other quite similarly decorated instruments attest more to the need for worldly representation – being built directly into the woodwork of precious cabinets of curiosities and thus quite overtly becoming elements of staged settings.<sup>47</sup>



**Fig. 18:** Anon., *Virginal*, 1595–1605, Augsburg?, Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung, Musikinstrumenten Museum Berlin, 2217; <<https://smb.museum-digital.de/singleimage?resourcenr=582405>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

46 On the characteristics of this style, cf. Forssman, *Column and Ornament* (see n. 39), 116–17. On the change in meaning of ornamentation in the Renaissance in general cf. Clare Lapraik Guest, *The Understanding of Ornament in the Italian Renaissance* (Leiden, 2016).

47 See also the Cabinet Organ, Augsburg, c. 1600, Victoria and Albert Museum, 216:1,2-1879, or the Cabinet with Room Organ, Tirol, 1590–1600, Landesmuseum Württemberg, G29,143, or the Virginal in a Cabinet, Tirol or Augsburg, 1580/90, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum Munich, R 1069, and also the southern German cabinet from the second half of the 16th century held at the Graz Museum, inv. no. 9148-1.



**Fig. 19:** Lorenz Stöer, *Geometria et Perspectiva* (Augsburg: Hans Rogel d. Ä., 1567) (VD16 S 9209), fol. [7]; <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb11216116>> (accessed 4 March 2025).

Even instruments obviously designed as showpieces harbour deeper messages. The so-called Glass Virginal of c. 1600, probably produced in the court workshop of either Ambras or Nuremberg and now at London's Victoria and Albert Museum,<sup>48</sup> is such an instrument, being immediately recognisable as a representational object on account of its decoration with coloured glass, enamel, brass, and so on (Fig. 20). Eighteen small panels of coloured glass depict scenes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in high relief, uniting the decoration beneath the idea of transformation and thus broadcasting the client's humanist education. The visual opulence of the elaborate, high-quality craftsmanship here is, moreover, an expression of the Age of Wonder (*Zeitalter des Staunens*), in which the medieval understanding of materials' appropriateness was overturned. Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) held that every artist should strive to have an artwork be constituted in a manner appropriate to its purpose – for example, to make a saw out of iron and not out of glass, 'though this be a more beautiful material,

48 Extensive description of the object with in part contradictory statements: <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O58892/the-glass-virginal-virginal-unknown/>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

because this very beauty would be an obstacle to the end he has in view.<sup>49</sup> A sound-board covered with glass and spirals of brass wire was unlikely to have fulfilled this requirement. It was much rather designed to evoke the marvelling appreciation of artful imitation that Walther Hermann Ryff formulated in 1547 as follows:

Helffanbein und alle Edle gestein/ werden sie nit durch die höhe der farben  
und künstlich Malen/ höher und werder geachtet gehalten und gezieret?  
Wird nit auch das Goldt so künstlich gemalet/ vil höher dan das rohe Goldt  
geachtet?<sup>50</sup>

(Ivory and all gemstones – are they not held in higher and greater esteem when rendered in quality paints by a skilful artist? Is gold not also, if skilfully painted, thought of more highly than natural gold?).



**Fig. 20:** Anon., *The Glass Virginal*, c. 1600, Victoria and Albert Museum, 402-1872; <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O58892/the-glass-virginal-virginal-unknown/>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

49 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica* 1, 91, 3, quoted in Rosario Assunto, *Die Theorie des Schönen im Mittelalter* (Cologne, 1982), 231.

50 Walther Hermann Ryff (Gualtherus Rivius), *Der furnembsten, notwendigsten, der gantzen Architectur angehörigen Mathematischen und Mechanischen künst eygentlicher Bericht* (Nuremberg: Johann Petreius, 1547) (VD16 R 4001), das dritt buch der newen Perspectiva, fol. i<sup>r</sup>, <<http://data.onb.ac.at/rep/108DD702>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Many lid paintings also combine the two functions of representation and projection. For example, Ioannes Ruckers' double virginal, c. 1600, now at the Museo Civico di Milano (Fig. 21), portrays an idealised scene in which leisure time is spent hunting and boating in contemplative tranquillity.<sup>51</sup> The 'rich and beautiful' present themselves here in a generously proportioned landscape featuring a palace, elements of a formal garden, and 'natural nature' with a deer hunt on the opposite side of the little river. Typical markers of well-being such as the large four-legged wine cooler and the elegant sighthounds are complemented by a virginal richly decorated with an Orpheus scene. The instrument occupies a dominant position in a rose-covered pavilion and is being played by one of the ladies of the pictured group. This painting projects several things at the same time: a high standard of education with the reference to ancient mythology, a longing for 'Arcadia', a love of music, and self-staging as modern, elegant people of their era. In this undoubtedly imagined *veduta*, a perfect moment from that day's ideal world is projected onto the lid of a virginal – which, in turn, conveys that perfect moment to the listener-viewer.



**Fig. 21:** Ioannes Ruckers, *Double Virginal*, c. 1600, Comune di Milano – Museo degli Strumenti Musicali, 595; <<https://g.co/arts/Z5DcBk9cxxgFDrDCA>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

51 For details on the depicted content, cf. Thomas Aurelius Belz, 'Gartendarstellungen auf flämischen Kielinstrumenten', in: *Gärten und Höfe der Rubenszeit*, ed. Ursula Härtling (Munich, 2000), 135–42.

The dual levels of representation and projection on which these paintings operate are particularly clear in Hans Ruckers the Elder's double virginal of 1581, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Fig. 22). The lid painting projects all the topoi of an ideal world.<sup>52</sup> A combination of garden pavilions, an arbour of blooming roses, a Renaissance palace, and a bridge over a little river establishes the congenial setting. Thirty-six people pursue their pleasures, mainly in pairs: music-making, dancing, sport, boating, walking, and outdoor dining. Three uniformed fanfare-players indicate the company's high rank, as do the walled menagerie in the background, the Spanish fashion (with ruff, headdress, and rapier), and the depicted people's conspicuously graceful gestures. Legend has it that this instrument was sent to the New World as a gift from the Spanish King Philip II and his fourth wife, Anne of Austria.<sup>53</sup> However, this version of events has occasionally been doubted by researchers. The gilded medallions with portraits of the royal couple on the nameboard are based on designs by Gianpaolo Poggini (1518–82), whom Philip II had commissioned to redesign the coinage of Flanders in 1557. Their relatively rough casting makes the story of a royal gift to a princess appear dubious.<sup>54</sup> Whatever the case may have been, these portraits are either vehicles of self-representation or acts of homage to the royal couple on the part of their commissioner or simply an attribute of an elite society of the sort pictured on the lid. In addition, the medallions highlight the idealization of couple relationships as depicted in the painting and correspond to the construction of these paired instruments, which 'not only represent the mother-child dualism but also the marital harmony of a man and a woman, with the octave coupling as a parallel to the difference between female and male voices.'<sup>55</sup>

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52 Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), esp. 210–22.

53 Stewart Pollens, 'Flemish Harpsichords and Virginals in the Metropolitan Museum of Art: An Analysis of Early Alterations and Restorations', in: *Metropolitan Museums Journal* 32 (1997), 85–110, at 87.

54 Laurence Libin, 'Remarks on the 1581 Hans Ruckers Virginal at the Metropolitan Museum of Art', in: *Hans Ruckers (+1598): Founder of a Harpsichord Workshop of Universal Importance in Antwerp*, ed. Jeannine Lambrechts-Douillez (Peer, 1998), 77–84.

55 Moritz Kelber, 'Double Virginals', in: *The Museum of Renaissance Music: A History in 100 Exhibits*, ed. Vincenzo Borghetti and Tim Shephard (Turnhout, 2023), 222–5, at 225.

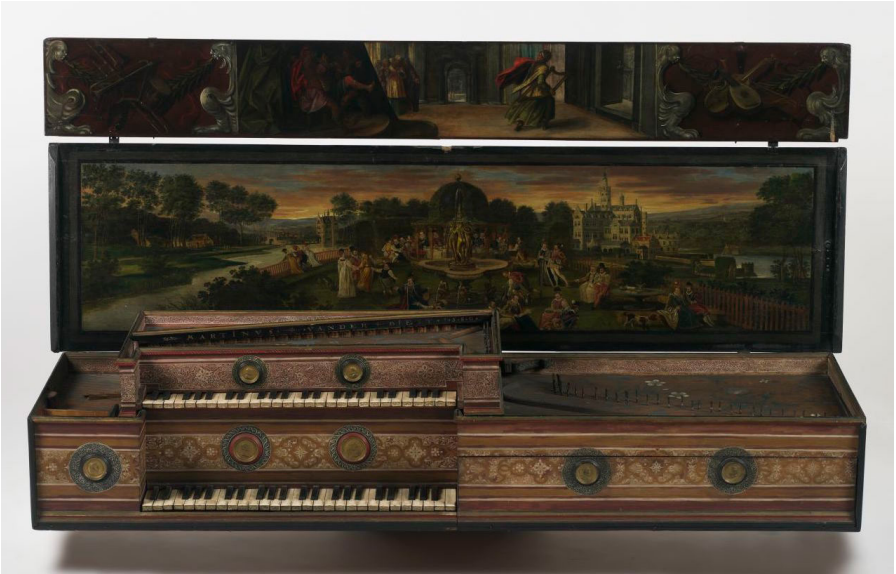


**Fig. 22:** Hans Ruckers the Elder, *Double Virginal*, 1581, Metropolitan Museum of Art New York, 29.90; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503676>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

The decoration on Marten van der Biest's double virginal (Fig. 23) is frequently compared with that of the abovementioned Ruckers instrument.<sup>56</sup> It was probably commissioned by Alessandro Farnese, governor of the Spanish Netherlands. His portrait and those of six other aristocrats including his uncle, Philip II of Spain, are to be found on tokens mounted on the front board and surrounded by elaborate ornamentation. The absence of a portrait of Farnese's wife Maria of Portugal (who had already died in 1578) in combination with both the motto 'Espoir confoirte' ('Hope sustains') on the inside of the lid flap and the painting on the lid, which can be interpreted as a 'garden of love' painting, indicates the decoration's function – which goes far beyond mere representation. The painting on the lid suggests a seemingly free and life-affirming Flemish society, but the biblical theme on the lid flap – *The Obsessed Saul Pursues David*<sup>57</sup> – stems from a religious and spiritual sphere which, of course, still played a determining role in people's lives during the 16th century.

56 Cf. for example Florence Gétreau, 'Vin et musique dans les jardins de plaisir: un thème pour les couvercles de virginales et clavecins anversoises et allemands (1570-1650)', in: *Musique – images – instruments* 19 (2023), 14–16.

57 1 Sam 18:8–16.



**Fig. 23:** Marten van der Biest, *Double Virginal*, 1580, Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg; <<http://objektkatalog.gnm.de/objekt/MI85>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Another facet of Flemish life, the image of the common people indulging in wine, games, and dance, can be found on the virginal by Johannes Grouwels, c. 1580, at the Musical Instruments Museum in Brussels (Fig. 24). This depiction likewise imagines an idealised segment of reality, which cannot have been nearly so light-hearted amidst the upheavals of the Eighty Years' War and the attendant religious and political struggles. The scene, painted in grisaille and rich in detail, clearly depicts the exuberant hustle and bustle on St. George's Day – which, in Flanders and elsewhere, marked the transition from winter to spring and was traditionally celebrated with large fairs. In the background, against a backdrop of typical Flemish buildings, a St. George's ritual can be seen with a performer in the role of the saint fighting against a wooden dragon. The dragon is meant as a symbol of winter and evil. Grouped around a tree in the foreground is a moral admonition concerning various vices that are explored in numerous topoi: drunkenness, gluttony, quarrelsomeness, lust, gambling. Pieter Balten, David Tenier the Younger, and especially Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Pieter Brueghel the Younger, and Jan Brueghel the Elder are known for their bawdy scenes set at St George's Fair. Both the commissioner and the painter of this virginal from 1580 showed that they were familiar with the artistic standards of their time. Detailed depictions of village and patronal festivities were part of the popular genre of peasant and village life in the 16th and 17th centuries and probably hung primarily in the homes of wealthy people. It is in such a context that one must also view this virginal, whose lid painting not only reflects Flemish cultural idiosyncrasies but also unites traditional

content with modern expressivity – for behind this projection of exuberant *joie de vivre*, a moralizing pointed finger lies hidden.



**Fig. 24:** Johannes Grouwels, *Virginal*, c. 1580, Musical Instrument Museum, Brussels, 2929; <<https://carmentis.be/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=106117&viewType=detailView>> (accessed 4 March 2025).

## Epochal Spillover

In my research, I have noticed again and again how certain patterns and motifs frequently form new ‘recompositions’ over the centuries. For this phenomenon, I would like to borrow a term from literature or historiography originally coined by Gregor von Rezzori: *Epochenverschleppung*.<sup>58</sup> By this, he meant the ‘anachronistic spillover of elements of reality specific to one epoch into a following one’. Such elements do not all share the same inertia, with some persisting beyond their time and conveying a certain mood or ambience despite being functionally obsolete. For example, ancient gods and figures from Greco-Roman mythology continue to feature in works of art

<sup>58</sup> Gregor von Rezzori, *Mir auf der Spur* (Munich, 1999), 13.

and entertainment of all kinds today. And in the context of the 16th century, this admixture of ancient and modern ingredients is among the striking phenomena in the realm of decoration. In instrument decoration, as well, the rapid adoption of new artistic innovations – above all scrollwork and strapwork, jewelled ornamentation, and the decorative cartouche – alongside references to the old repertory of forms is likewise remarkable. Moreover, there is evidence that instrument makers adopted even peripheral stylistic developments.

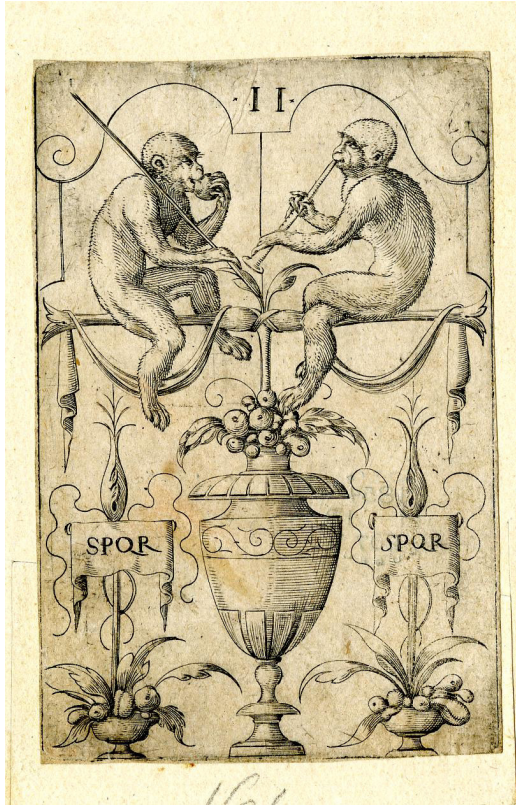
The claviorgan of the Antwerpian instrument maker Lodewijk Theewes, who worked in England beginning in 1579 (Figs. 25-6), is a typical example of such mixing of components from different artistic epochs. The oak case is painted in various colours, with its surface vertically divided by pilasters featuring gilded Ionic capitals – i.e., elements from the repertory of ancient forms. The marbled surfaces, however, are structured quite sculpturally with the newest strapwork and jewelled ornamentation. This new type of illusionistic strapwork with diamond rustication had been developed barely 20 years earlier by Cornelis Floris, disseminated by the Dutch painter Hans Vredeman de Vries, and one occasionally finds it transformed into compartmentalised patterns suggestive of cut jewels. On the inside of the instrument's lid there is likewise a contemporary strapwork cartouche – which, however, contains a scene from the ancient Orpheus myth. Next to it are grotesque motifs and garlands of fruit, which had been incorporated into Renaissance art especially since the rediscovery of the ancient Domus Aurea in Rome at the end of the 15th century. The depictions of monkeys, on the other hand, are borrowed from playing cards designed by the contemporary Nuremberg artist Virgil Solis around 1550 (Fig. 27). It was thus that an individual design was synthesised from elements of different artistic periods, thereby taking into account both the humanistic educational canon and the modern need for representation.



**Fig. 25:** Lodewijk Theewes, *Claviorgan*, 1579, Victoria and Albert Museum, 125EE-1890; <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O60635/the-theewes-claviorgan-claviorgan-theewes-lodewyk/> - image 1> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 26:** Lodewijk Theewes, *Claviorgan*, 1579, Victoria and Albert Museum, 125EE-1890, lid; <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O60635/the-theewes-claviorgan-claviorgan-theewes-lodewyk/> - image 2> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 27:** Virgil Solis, *Playing Cards*, Nuremberg c. 1550, etching/paper, 9.3 x 6 cm, British Museum London, 1854, 1113.207; <[https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P\\_1854-1113-207](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1854-1113-207)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Decoration in the 16th century thus fed on numerous stylistic and textual sources, which were combined on instruments in every conceivable variation. These include elements of Gothic sacred art with trefoils and quatrefoils on the key fronts and rose, for example, as on the harpsichord by Vito Trasuntino from 1560 (Fig. 28), or with arabesques and mauresques from the Islamic style as seen on the virginals by Portalupi 1523 (Fig. 29) and Benedetto Floriani 1571 (Fig. 30); but they also include features from the stylistic repertoire of antiquity and its Renaissance revisions such as the bead and reel, dentils, acanthus leaves, friezes, pilasters, and capitals, as seen on the harpsichord by Giovanni Antonio Baffo in the Victoria and Albert Museum London (Fig. 31).



**Fig. 28:** Vito Trasuntino, *Harpsichord*, 1560, Berlin Musical Instrument Museum, 806 (Photo: H. Pollerus).



**Fig. 29:** Francesco de Portalupi, *Virginal*, 1523, Musée de la Musique Paris, E.3/C.313; <<https://collectionsdumusee.philharmoniedeparis.fr/doc/MUSEE/0130476>> (accessed 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 30:** Benedetto Floriani, *Virginal*, 1571, Grassi Museum, Leipzig, 33 (Photo: H. Pollerus).



**Fig. 31:** Giovanni Antonio Baffo, *Harpsichord*, 1574, Victoria and Albert Museum, 6007:1 to 3-1859; <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O58982/baffo-harpsichord-harpsichord-baffo-giovan-antonio/?carousel-image=2006AY2277>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Techniques ranged from incrustation to trompe l'œil intarsia and from painting to carving, as on an Italian virginal of 1540 (Fig. 32) and the 16th-century Italian virginal at the Musée de la Musique in Paris (Fig. 33). Motifs were geometric, plant-like, and figurative, and all were possessed of a symbolic character – like, for example, the

dolphin, which frequently appears in ornamentation and lid paintings and probably referred to Arion, the legendary singer and poet (7th century BC).<sup>59</sup>



**Fig. 32:** Anon., *Virginal*, 1540, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 53.6a,b; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503043>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 33:** Anon., *Virginal*, 16th century, Musée de la Musique, Paris, E.4; <[https://mimo-international.com/media/CM/IMAGE/CMIM000030589.jpg?\\_ga=2.265543375.1395436086.1658768689-146864436.1616342545](https://mimo-international.com/media/CM/IMAGE/CMIM000030589.jpg?_ga=2.265543375.1395436086.1658768689-146864436.1616342545)> (accessed 4 March 2025).

Modern replicas of historical keyboard instruments are rarely without any traditional decorative elements. And although the individual motifs have largely lost their symbolic power, they continue to project an ‘appearance of dignity and luxury’.<sup>60</sup>

59 For details, see: Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), 233–4.

60 Quotation from Günter Bandmann, ‘Ikonologie des Ornaments und der Dekoration’, in: *Jahrbuch für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* 4 (1958/1959), 232–58, at 247.

## Mottos

*Epochal spillover* can also be discerned in another type of keyboard ornamentation – that of mottos. These draw on past eras, especially antiquity, and were apparently still considered relevant, even though they only partially or minimally correspond to the respective present in terms of both form and content. One example is the virginal by Ioannes Ruckers from 1598 at the Musée de la Musique in Paris (Fig. 34). The motto ‘Dulcisonum reficit tristia corda melos’ (‘A sweet-sounding melody refreshes sorrowful hearts’) was attributed to Eobanus Hessus (1488–1540) in Robert Burton’s 1621 book *The Anatomy of Melancholy*<sup>61</sup> and can be found on at least two further Ruckers instruments.<sup>62</sup> The motto is written in capital letters, clearly reminiscent of the ancient Roman form of writing known as *capitalis monumentalis* – including the typical V for the vowel U.



**Fig. 34:** Ioannes Ruckers, *Virginal*, 1598, Musée de la Musique, Paris, E.979.2.6; <<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:VirginalRuckers.JPG>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

61 Thomas McGeary, ‘Harpsichord Mottoes’, in: *JAMIS* 7 (1981), 5–35.

62 *Virginal* by Hans Ruckers, 1610, Händel-Haus, Halle an der Saale – *Virginal* by Ioannes Ruckers, 1636, Harvard University, Cambridge. Cf. Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), 75.

The inscription of mottos became a widespread feature in the decoration of keyboard instruments during the 16th century and persisted until the mid-17th century. I found a total of 160 instruments with mottos; between them, they bore 110 different mottos (since some appeared more than once). The 16th century accounts for about a third of these, the 17th century for the rest.<sup>63</sup>

This period was also, at least north of the Alps, characterized by the Reformation with its turn away from images and towards the verbal, towards writing. The documented enthusiasm for written and printed aphorisms in everyday life<sup>64</sup> flourished particularly in Antwerp, which, alongside Paris and Venice, was one of the three leading centres of early book printing in the late 15th and 16th centuries. Religious and economic factors as well as the flourishing of emblems as an art form were some of the further reasons why both objects and walls were now frequently inscribed with witty or religious sayings. It was probably due to all of this that mottos became popular:

[...] im sechzehnten Seculo war es sonderlich Mode dass die Standes-Personen und die vom Adel, fast allenthalben [...] auch an [...] Kisten und Kästen ihre Wappen malen ließen. So ließen auch diejenigen, die Liebhaber des Wortes Gottes waren, an die Wände, Türen und überall, Sprüche aus heiliger göttlicher Schrift und Gesetze aus Christlichen Liedern, anschreiben.<sup>65</sup>

(‘[...] in the sixteenth century, it was particularly fashionable for people of rank and nobility to have their coats of arms painted almost everywhere [...] even on [...] boxes and chests. And similarly, those who were lovers of the Word of God had sayings from holy divine scripture and guidance from Christian songs inscribed on walls, doors, and everywhere.’)

Instruments were also frequently decorated with so-called mottos instead of elaborate and hence sometimes costly paintings. Such mottos were aphorisms or devices that often achieve their striking effect without further decoration, though some were also meant to be read in connection with a painting. They were frequently taken from the Bible, especially the Psalms, as well as from other religious writings or from ancient authors. Save for a few exceptions, mottos were inscribed in Latin. This had to do with ecclesiastical tradition as well as with the nascent internationalisation of the instrument trade. Latin was, after all, the early modern period’s lingua franca just as English is in the present day.

63 See *ibid.*, 66–105, which builds upon McGeary, ‘Harpsichord Mottoes’ (see n. 61).

64 See for example Pieter Brueghel the Elder’s famous painting *Netherlandish Proverbs*, 1559, Staatliche Museen Berlin.

65 Julius Bernhard von Rohr, *Einleitung zur Ceremoniel-Wissenschaft der Privat-Personen* (Berlin, 1728), repr. ed. Gotthardt Frühsorge (Weinheim, 1990), 518–19.

The employed mottos convey fundamentally religious or moral messages – prominent among them admonishments concerning vanity or hubris and praise of God. A good example would be ‘Gottes Wort bleibt ewick beistan den Armen als den Reichen’ (‘God’s word offers eternal succour to the poor as well as the rich’), which is found on a 1537 harpsichord by Hans Müller that is now at the Museo Nazionale degli Strumenti Musicali in Rome. There are also riddles and aphorisms related to music such as ‘Io da le piaghe mie forma ricevo’ (‘I am given my form by the blows inflicted upon me’), which is inscribed on the inside of the lid on a 1527 virginal by Franciscus Patavinus at the Brussels Musical Instrument Museum, or ‘Per Aures Ad Animum’ (‘Through The Ears To The Soul’) and ‘Musica Dei Donum’ (‘Music Is A Gift From God’) on a Lodewijk Theewes virginal from around 1570 (Fig. 35).



**Fig. 35:** Lodewijk Theewes, *Virginal*, c. 1570, National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh; currently at Saint Cecilia’s Hall, Edinburgh, 4336; <<https://collections.ed.ac.uk/stcecilias/record/96086>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

The phrase ‘Laudate Dominum’ (‘Praise ye the Lord’) is the one found most frequently – 20 times – on the 16th-century harpsichords in my group of 160. On Jost Karest’s virginal from 1548 (Fig. 36), it is extended to ‘Laudate Dominum in cordis et organo – Laudate eum in symbalis bene sonantibus – Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum in cordis et organo’ (‘Praise the Lord with Strings and Organ – Praise Him with Sweet-Sounding Cymbals – Let Every Living Creature Praise the Lord with Strings and Organs’) from Ps. 150. The saying found most frequently on the examined instruments from the first half of the 17th century is ‘Sic transit gloria mundi’ (‘Thus passes the glory of the

world'), which from the early 15th century onwards was sung at papal coronations to emphasise the transience of earthly greatness. Its 17th-century popularity probably stemmed from a general attitude towards life following the 30 Years' War. The motto appears on only four of the 16th-century instruments, for example on the jackrail of a Flemish octavo virginal from 1572.<sup>66</sup>



**Fig. 36:** Jost Karest, *Virginal*, 1548, Musical Instrument Museum, Brussels, 1587; <<https://www.carmentis.be:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectid=106055&viewType=detailView>> (accessed 4 March 2025).

The magnificent Flemish virginal from 1568 now at London's Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 37) offers a veritable treasure trove of mottos. It bears no fewer than six sayings combined with scrolls, foliage and strapwork, miniature mythological scenes such as Orpheus with the wild beasts, and Duke Wilhelm von Cleve-Jülich-Berg's coat of arms. The overall design unites praise of the Christian God ('Laudate Dominum in chordis et in organo') with an invocation of pagan deities: 'Musica disparium dulcis concordia vocum pello levo placo tristia corda deos' ('Music – the sweet harmony of disparate voices – banishes sorrow, lightens hearts, and pleases the gods.').<sup>67</sup>

66 Veronika Gutmann, *Das Virginal des Andreas Ryff*, *Basler Kostbarkeiten* 12 (Basel, 1991), 18, Fig. 5, <<https://www.hmb.ch/fileadmin/a/hmb/dateien/pdf/basler-kostbarkeiten/HMB-12-Das-Virginal-des-Andreas-Ryff.pdf>> (accessed on 22 Sept. 2024).

67 On the origins of all 110 of these mottos, see: Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), 82 and 85.



**Fig. 37:** Anon., *Virginal*, 1568, Victoria and Albert Museum, 447:1-1896; <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O368610/virginals-unknown/>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

The relationship between such mottos and emblematic art is clearly illustrated by the case of an Italian virginal dating from around 1550 (Fig. 38) whose current attribution to Giovanni Francesco Antegnati, an instrument maker from Brescia, is in question.<sup>68</sup> It bears the Latin motto ‘*Amoris vulnus idem qui sanat fecit*’ (‘The wounds of love can only be healed by the one who made them’), which is taken from Publilius Syrus’ *Sententiae* (1st century B.C.) and was widespread through late antiquity and the Middle Ages. Below it, two hands close upon a black scorpion. Typical of this kind of emblematic motto is the hidden meaning, which was meant to lead to ‘further reflection’ (‘ferneren Nachdenken’).<sup>69</sup> It permits several interpretations: it could have been the emblem of the client.<sup>70</sup> It might have inhabited an erotic context, been intended

68 Howard Schott, Anthony Baines and James Yorke, *Catalogue of Musical Instruments in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1998), 18–19.

69 Johann Heinrich Zedler, *Universal-Lexicon*, vol. 37 (Leipzig/Halle: J.H. Zedler, 1743), entry ‘Sinnbild’, col. 1690, <<https://www.zedler-lexikon.de/index.html?c=blaettern&seitenzahl=858&bandnummer=37&view=100&l=de>> (accessed 4 March 2025).

70 Interestingly, a portrait painted by Raphael in 1502 shows Elisabetta Gonzaga, the Duchess of Urbino, wearing a headband with a scorpion, which is interpreted as a love symbol in

to perform an apotropaic function, or been an astrological reference. But it might also have referred to the mythological story of Telephus, son of Heracles, whose wound from Achilles' spear could, according to the oracle, only be healed by the same spear.<sup>71</sup> Folk medicine likewise offers a possible interpretation in its promise that a scorpion sting could be healed by applying 'scorpion oil' produced by boiling a scorpion in oil: 'Der Scorpion mit seinem Gifft, Er tödt den menschen den er trifft. Sein Oel gefahr und schmerzen nimbt, Heil offtmahls von den Feinden kümbt' ('The scorpion, with its poison, kills the man it strikes. Its oil removes peril and suffering: salvation often comes from one's enemies').<sup>72</sup> Musicians, on the other hand, might be more inclined here to think of the travails of skill acquisition and practise that are then 'cured' by the joy taken in one's facility and the music itself.



**Fig. 38:** Giovanni Francesco Antegnati (?), *Virginal*, c. 1550, Victoria and Albert Museum, 490:1 to 3-1899; <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O58893/virginal-antegnati-giovanni-francesco/>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

the object description but may also have been a reference to the astrological sign Scorpio, which is one of the fruitful signs. Elisabetta Gonzaga was unable to have children due to her husband's sterility. See: Anna Bisceglia, *Portrait of Elisabetta Gonzaga* – object description in the online catalogue of the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, <<https://www.uffizi.it/en/artworks/portrait-eleonora-gonzaga>> (accessed on 6 Oct. 2024)

71 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XII 112 and XIII 171, 303 and 326.

72 See Daniel Meister, *Thesaurus philopoliticus. Politisches Schatzkästlein* [Political Treasure Chest] (1625–31), ed. Fritz Herrmann and Leonhard Kraft (Heidelberg, 1927). This text was originally published by Eberhardt Kieser, Frankfurt 1623. See the 1st booklet of the 1st book, p. 7. Digital copy: <[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel\\_Meisner#/media/Datei:Meisner\\_Brugge.jpg](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Meisner#/media/Datei:Meisner_Brugge.jpg)> (accessed 4 March 2025).

In short, it can be said that the emergence of mottos on instruments exhibits points of contact with emblematic art in terms of form, that it was fed by the reception of ancient and medieval authors in terms of content, and, above all, that it was connected with historical religious and intellectual currents. These factors gave rise to the ‘fashion’ of using sayings as decoration. And, last but not least, financial considerations in the context of a growing sales market surely also contributed to makers offering cheaper decorations such as large-format sayings on rolls of paper in place of expensive paintings by artists.

## Lid Paintings and their Painters

Due to their mostly unusual formats, instrument lids posed a unique challenge to decorators and painters. The spectrum ranged from pure amateurs to well-established artists, some of whom were indeed not of the first rank. But in terms of both content and style, they did frequently take their cue from the artistic elite to the extent that their ability allowed. Such artists almost never signed their work – which is unsurprising, since they hardly ever signed panel paintings to begin with. They were especially loathe to sign lid paintings, however, as these works were unlikely to bolster a fine artist’s reputation. One reason fuelling the reluctance to be associated with such works may have been that with painting having finally been elevated from the *artes mechanicae* to the *artes liberales*, artists did not wish to debase themselves by dabbling in artisanship.<sup>73</sup>

Nevertheless, some painters of lids are known by name. Giorgio Vasari, in his *Vite* (1550), wrote of several prominent painters who had provided organ cases with paintings. He also mentioned Angelo Bronzino in connection with a painting for a harpsichord.<sup>74</sup> And the Flemish painter Carel van Mander, in his *Schilder-Boeck* (1617), mentioned Paul Bril – who ‘began by painting keyboard instrument lids and the like with watercolours, which was what he had to rely upon for his sustenance until his fourteenth year.’<sup>75</sup>

Where 16th-century lids are concerned, nearly all attributions are dubious; only for a few lids that have survived as paintings in museums can they be considered

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73 Johann Konrad Eberlein and Christine Jakobi-Mirwald, *Grundlagen der mittelalterlichen Kunst* (Berlin, 1996), 78.

74 Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite* (Florence, 1568), repr. ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence, 1878–85), vii, 594–5.

75 Carel van Mander, *Das Leben der niederländischen und deutschen Maler (from 1400–1615)*, translation of the 1617 edition [into German] with notes by Hanns Floerke (Wiesbaden, 2000), 362. (The English given here is translated from this German version.) The book was first printed in 1604 by Jacob de Meester at Alkmaar for Passchier van Westbusch, a bookseller in Harlem.

certain. Three fragments of instrument lids painted by Jacopo Robusti Tintoretto have survived, with other early panels of his likewise thought to have possibly had the same original purpose.<sup>76</sup> All three of these paintings fulfil Lomazzo's demand for a contextual reference to music: *Concert of the Muses on Mount Helicon* (private collection, formerly in Neuilly), *The Musical Contest between Apollo and Marsyas* (Labadini Collection, Milan), and *The Contest between the Muses and Pierides* (Fig. 39; Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona). In the last of these, Tintoretto illustrates an episode from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (V 294–678) in which the nine daughters of the Macedonian King Pieros had challenged the Muses to a singing contest. The nymphs, who were called upon to judge, unanimously declared the goddesses – daughters of Zeus – to be the victors, with the Pierides being turned into cawing magpies as punishment for their arrogance. In this painting, the sentence has already been carried out; the Muses with their instruments are foregrounded, while the magpies flutter in the trees behind. This repeats a theme found on multiple lid paintings – that of mortals being chastised for the hubris of seeking to measure themselves with the divine.



**Fig. 39:** Jacopo Robusti Tintoretto, *The Contest between the Muses and Pierides*, c. 1555, oil/wood, 46 x 91 cm, Museo di Castelvecchio Verona, Pallucchini-Rossi Cat. 102; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jacopo\\_tintoretto,\\_contesa\\_tra\\_le\\_muse\\_e\\_le\\_pieridi.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jacopo_tintoretto,_contesa_tra_le_muse_e_le_pieridi.jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

<sup>76</sup> Erasmus Weddigen, 'Jacopo Tintoretto und die Musik', in: *Artibus et Historiae* 5 (1984), no. 10, 67–119, esp. at 77.

Another confirmed artist's name is that of Annibale Carracci, who (probably together with his brother Agostino) painted a harpsichord between 1597 and 1600.<sup>77</sup> The painting *Silenus Picking Grapes*, now recognised as a harpsichord lid, has already been mentioned (cf. Figs. 12–14). The subject – the drunken, corpulent Silenus being hoisted by bearers to reach the grapes hanging from leafy vines – was borrowed from ancient reliefs during the Renaissance and disseminated through engravings such as the one by Albrecht Dürer after Andrea Mantegna (Fig. 40). Annibale Carracci himself produced several variations on the motif during this period such as in his *Tazza Farnese* and the preceding studies, the most complete of which is now at the Metropolitan Museum (Fig. 41), or in the ceiling fresco of the Galleria Farnese in Rome (Fig. 42). Moreover, a pen-and-ink drawing by Carracci of a second scene in which two young satyrs help to pick grapes comes close to the original layout of the right part of the lid (Fig. 43).<sup>78</sup>



**Fig. 40:** Albrecht Dürer after Andrea Mantegna, *Bacchanal with Silenius*, 1494, pen/paper, 29.8 x 43.3 cm, Albertina Museum, Vienna, 3060; <[https://sammlungenonline.albertina.at/?query=-search=/record/objectnumbersearch=\[3060\]&showtype=record](https://sammlungenonline.albertina.at/?query=-search=/record/objectnumbersearch=[3060]&showtype=record)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

77 See Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), 237–8.

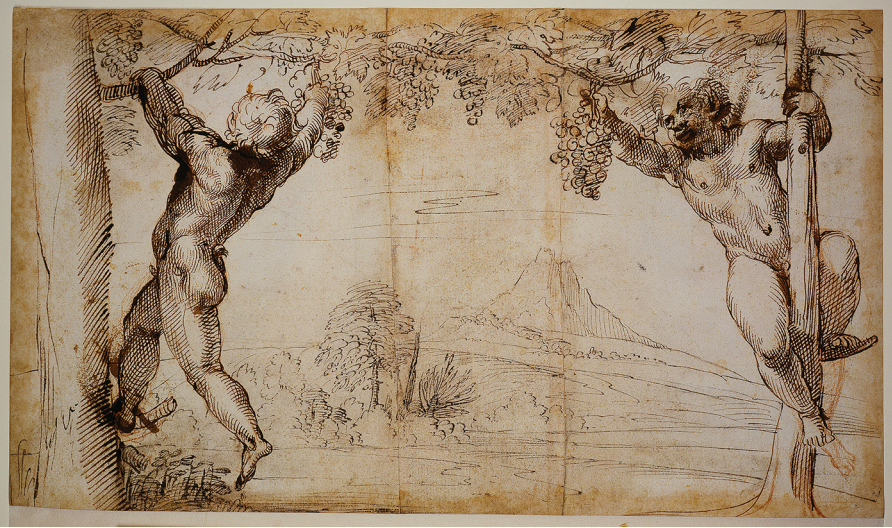
78 On the relationship between the drawing and the lid, see Benati et al. (eds.), *The Drawings* (see n. 29), 227.



**Fig. 41:** Annibale Carracci, *The Drunken Silenus*. Design for the ‘Tazza Farnese’, 1599–1600, ink, washed/paper, 25.6 x 25.5 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1972.133.4; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/338417>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 42:** Annibale Carracci, *Triumphal Procession of Bacchus and Ariadne*, ceiling fresco of the Galleria Farnese, c. 1600, Rome; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rome\\_Palazzo\\_Farnese\\_ceiling\\_Carracci\\_frescos\\_04.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rome_Palazzo_Farnese_ceiling_Carracci_frescos_04.jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 43:** Annibale Carracci, *Two Young Satyrs Picking Grapes*, c. 1597–1600, pen and chalk/paper, 23 x 39.9 cm, Städel Museum, Frankfurt, 4272; <<https://www.staedelmuseum.de/go/ds/4272z>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

For the lid's front flap (Fig. 44), Carracci's preliminary studies have been preserved at the Städel Museum in Frankfurt, the Royal Collection in Windsor, and the Louvre in Paris (Figs. 45–7). Possible models for these studies are an ancient copy of the sculpture *Pan and Daphnis* by Heliodorus and the cameo *Apollo, Marsyas and Olympus* by Dioscurides.<sup>79</sup> Both works (Figs. 48–9), now at the Archaeological Museum of Naples, were in the Farnese Collection at that time. These antiquities were highly prized and inspired several artists: e.g., the sculpture was painted in oil by members of the school of Giulio Romano (Fig. 50), while Sandro Botticelli's portrait of Simonetta Vespucci shows the cameo being worn on a necklace (Fig. 51). Fulvio Orsini, who commissioned the harpsichord designed by Carracci, was a scholar, librarian, and curator of the Farnese collection and had access to its antiquities. Carracci worked on the frescoes in the Galleria Farnese in Rome from 1597 to 1602 and had used that opportunity to study the extensive collection there, drawing inspiration for the harpsichord's design. The front flap depicts a seated Marsyas and the panpipe-playing Olympus in an open

<sup>79</sup> This cameo is also known as the Seal of Nero. It was first mentioned in 1428, when Lorenzo Ghiberti was commissioned to produce a gold setting for it. The cameo indirectly found its way to Lorenzo di Medici's collection in 1487, where it was one of the most highly valued objects. In 1583, it became part of the Farnese collection. On the history and meaning of this object cf. Tim Shephard et al., *Music in the Art of Renaissance Italy 1420–1540* (Turnhout, 2020), 193–5.

landscape. The figure of Marsyas resembles the study at the Louvre known as *Silenus*, whose head in turn was based on the cameo. The double aulos hanging from the tree is likewise borrowed from the cameo. The figure of Olympus, on the other hand, clearly takes its inspiration from the ancient sculpture after Heliodorus; Carracci's red chalk study of it, entitled *Bacchus*, has same characteristic leg posture. And the entirety of the pen-and-ink drawing *Flute-Playing Cupid and Silenus in an Arcadian Landscape*, with its merely implied landscape and cut-off trees, clearly exhibits some connection with the lid painting.



**Fig. 44:** Annibale Carracci, *Marsyas and Olympus*, 1597–1600, oil/wood, 34.4 x 84.2 cm, National Gallery, London, NG94; <<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/annibale-carracci-marsyas-and-olympus>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 45:** Annibale Carracci, *Flute-Playing Cupid and Silenus in an Arcadian landscape*, c. 1597–1600, pen and chalk washed/paper, 10.8 x 23.6 cm, Städel Museum Frankfurt, 642; <<https://www.staedelmuseum.de/go/ds/462z>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 46:** Annibale Carracci, *Bacchus*, chalk/paper, Royal Collection, Windsor, RCIN 901784; <<https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/8/collection/901784>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 47:** Annibale Carracci, *Seated Silenus*, 1595/99, pierre noir/paper, 27.3 x 23.5 cm, Louvre, Paris, 7338r; <<http://arts-graphiques.louvre.fr/detail/oeuvres/3/4256-Silene-assis-max>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 48:** Ancient copy after Heliodorus, *Pan and Daphnis*, c. 100 BC, marble, National Archaeological Museum, Naples, 6329; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ottův\\_slovník%3ADk\\_naučný\\_-\\_obrázek\\_č.\\_2999.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ottův_slovník%3ADk_naučný_-_obrázek_č._2999.JPG)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 49:** Dioskourides, Apollo, Marsyas and Olympus, 1st century BC, carnelian, 4 x 3.4 cm, National Archaeological Museum, Naples, 26051; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seal\\_of\\_Nero.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seal_of_Nero.jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 50:** School of Girolamo Romano, *Pan and Daphnis*, c. 1500–50, oil/wood, 24.8 x 18.7 cm, Old Masters Picture Gallery, Dresden, 104; <<https://skd-online-collection.skd.museum/Details/Index/295152>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 51:** Sandro Botticelli, *Idealised Portrait of a Lady (Portrait of Simonetta Vespucci as Nymph)*, 1480–85, mixed technique/wood, 81.3 x 54 cm, Städel Museum, Frankfurt, 936; <<https://staedelmuseum.de/go/ds/936>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

'Definitively' attributed multiple times but with a complex history is the painting for an instrument lid – or, at least, for an instrument case – themed on the musical contest between Apollo and Marsyas by Angelo (di Cosimo Allori) Bronzino at the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg (Fig. 52).<sup>80</sup> As several written sources document, Bronzino undoubtedly painted such an image for the Duke of Urbino, Guidobaldo II della Rovere, in 1531–32. During the mid-16th century, for example, Giorgio Vasari mentioned a 'cassa d'arpicordo piena di figure, che fu cosa rara' ('arpicordo case covered with figures, which was a rare thing') from Bronzino's hand.<sup>81</sup> And in 1584, Raffaello Borghini described how Bronzino 'dipinse [...] entro una cassa d'Arpicordo la favola d'Apollo, e di Marsia con molte figure, la qual opera é tenuta cosa rarissima' ('painted inside a harpsichord case the myth of Apollo and Marsyas with many figures, a work that is held to be a very rare thing').<sup>82</sup> In 1562, however, Giulio Sanuto made a three-plate engraving (Fig. 53) in which he adapted the composition, replacing the background with a detail from Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving *The Parnassus* after Raphael and naming Correggio as the originator. This engraving was widely used, on account of which Bronzino's authorship was forgotten for a long time. During the 1840s, for example, Jacob Burckhardt saw 'die Innenseite eines "Klavierdeckels" mit der Geschichte des Apoll und Marsyas, angeblich von Coreggio, eher von Bacchiacca' ('the inside of a "clavier lid" with the story of Apollo and Marsyas, supposedly by Coreggio, more likely by Bacchiacca') in a Milanese collection.<sup>83</sup> In 1865, the painting was finally purchased by the Russian Tsar for the Hermitage as a Correggio. It was not until 1913 that Hermann Voss recognised Bronzino's authorship,<sup>84</sup> which was then generally accepted. The two undated red chalk studies for the figures of Midas and Marsyas, now at the Louvre, have also since been attributed to Bronzino (Figs. 54–5).

80 See also the current status after a recent renovation <<https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/what-s-on/d12c3644825adec3d074ad7576e9cb7f?lng=en>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

81 Vasari, *Le Vite* (see n. 74), 594–5. According to Shephard et al., *Music in the Art of Renaissance Italy* (see n. 79), 192, an *arpicordo* is not a harpsichord, but a polygonal virginal.

82 Raffaello Borghini, *Il riposo* (Florence: Giorgio Marescotti, 1584), 534, <<https://archive.org/details/riposodiraffaell00borg/page/n3/mode/2up>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

83 Jacob Burckhardt, *Die Kunst der Renaissance in Italien*, ed. Horst Günther (Frankfurt a.M., 1997), 870.

84 Hermann Voss, 'Über einige Gemälde und Zeichnungen von Meistern aus dem Kreise Michelangelos', in: *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 34 (1913), 297–320.



**Fig. 52:** Angelo Bronzino, *The Flaying of Marsyas*, 1531/32 (?), oil/canvas (transferred from panel), 48 x 119 cm, Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, 250; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angelo\\_Bronzino\\_-\\_Sfida\\_tra\\_apollo\\_e\\_marsia.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angelo_Bronzino_-_Sfida_tra_apollo_e_marsia.jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 53:** Giulio Sanuto after Angelo Bronzino, *Apollo and Marsyas*, 1562, copperplate engraving, 51.5 x 125 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1999-115; <<https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200483956>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

While Bronzino's authorship is now virtually beyond doubt, other questions remain: aside from the painting at the Hermitage, which was transferred from wood to canvas in 1865, there are two other near-identical panels in private collections (Figs. 56–7) that some experts believe are likewise by the master while others do not.<sup>85</sup> Hypotheses of all kinds continue to be put forth, not just concerning their unusual formats (48 x 119 – 82 x 122.5 – 82.5 x 127)<sup>86</sup> and support materials (with one having been transferred to canvas after the wood was damaged, one on walnut, and the third on an unknown type of wood). Discussion is also ongoing about the differences in the background design despite identical execution of the figures right down to their colouring, the uncertain intended use, and – above all – the provenance of two of the three paintings. In any case: the motif would have been ideally suited for instrument decoration, and it picks up on a theme that was, after all, also used on other lids. The composition effects the simultaneous depiction of several episodes from Ovid's ancient tale of the musical contest between Apollo and Marsyas in which Minerva and King Midas act as judges.<sup>87</sup> The contest takes place in the foreground at right, while in the middle and slightly farther back we see Marsyas' subsequent cruel flaying for presuming to challenge Apollo. Yet farther to the left and behind, we see Midas with the donkey's ears given him by Apollo for his foolishness in judging the satyr Marsyas to be superior to Apollo. Minerva, on the other hand, makes the musically and ethically correct judgment based on knowledge and wisdom.<sup>88</sup> On the left in the middle ground, the royal barber consigns Midas's embarrassing secret to the earth. This painting's message lies in the continual conflict between the Apollonian and Dionysian principles,<sup>89</sup> the struggle between intellect and sensuality – and it also embodies a warning to the instrument's player against hubris and a lack of humility towards art.

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85 John T. Spike, 'Rediscovery: Apollo and Marsyas by Bronzino', in: *FMR* 73 (1995), 14–24; Carmen Brambach et al., *The Drawings of Bronzino* (New York, 2010), 98–101; Andrea Emiliani, 'Agnolo di Cosimo, known as Bronzino: The Competition between Apollo and Marsyas', in: *From Sacro to Profano: The Giorgio Baratti Art Collection from Milan*, ed. Daiva Mitruleviciute et al. (Vilnius, 2020), 617; Stephen J. Campbell, 'Bronzino's Fable of Marsyas: Anatomy as Myth', in: *Inner and Outer Body*, ed. Victor Stoichita (Rome, 2012), 173–94.

86 Shephard et al., *Music in the Art of Renaissance Italy* (see n. 79), 192, mention that the painting kept in the Eremitage was altered 'early on' from an 'irregular trapezoid to a regular rectangle'.

87 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VI 382–400 and XI 150–400.

88 For more details, see Shephard et al., *Music in the Art of Renaissance Italy* (see n. 79), 191–205.

89 It is interesting to note that an English manuscript from the 12th century already places instruments in the canonical categories of 'goats and sheep'. See Rueger, *Musikinstrument und Dekor* (see n. 1), 9.



**Fig. 54:** Angelo Bronzino, *Midas*, red chalk study, 25.4 x 18 cm, Louvre, Paris, 5923v; <<http://arts-graphiques.louvre.fr/detail/oeuvres/8/233759-Etude-pour-le-roi-Midas-max>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 55:** Angelo Bronzino, *Marsyas*, red chalk study, 25.4 x 18 cm, Louvre, Paris, 5923r; <<http://arts-graphiques.louvre.fr/detail/oeuvres/7/8299-Jeune-homme-nu-assis-jouant-de-la-flute-de-Pan-et-etude-dun-genou-max>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 56:** Angelo Bronzino (?), *The Contest between Apollo and Marsyas*, 1531/32 (?), oil/wood, 82 x 122.5 cm, private collection, New York; <<http://www.iconos.it/le-metamorfofi-di-ovidio/libro-vi/apollo-e-marsia/immagini/43-apollo-e-marsia/>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 57:** Angelo Bronzino (?), *The Contest between Apollo and Marsyas*, 1531/32 (?), oil/canvas, 82.5 x 127 cm, Collezione Giorgio Baratti; <<https://artrabbit.com/events/timeless-ness-rose-king-galleries>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Lid paintings generally were not original designs by well-known artists; they can, however, often be traced back to 'prominent' panel paintings, drawings, copper engravings, and even sculptures. At the time, there was nothing dishonourable about imitating or referencing other masters' successful works; it was only as the 16th century wore on that original artistic invention began to be prized more highly than the skilful execution of an already canonised rendering of a theme. Today, determining the respective sources of a pictorial invention – which may have been based on strategies ranging from imitation to adaptation and on to the adoption of individual elements from various models in a building-block process – often requires meticulous detective work. In many cases, the decoration is based on models that were a hundred years older or more and themselves often inspired by ancient models.

An example is the pictorial theme of Apollo in 16th-century lid paintings. Apollo is well known as the god of the arts and music and as the leader of the Muses, but also as a merciless punisher. Such depictions are probably inspired by the famous sculpture known as *The Apollo Belvedere*, which was discovered at the end of the 15th century, placed in the Vatican at the beginning of the 16th century, and subsequently made very popular by an engraving from the hand of Marcantonio Raimondi (Fig. 58). This marble figure from the middle of the 2nd century AD is believed to be a replica of a Greek bronze original from around 330 BC. Elements of this statue, such as the chlamys thrown over Apollo's shoulder, are imitated in modern representations of this god, just as he is generally shown – in keeping with the ancient myth – as an androgynous young man.



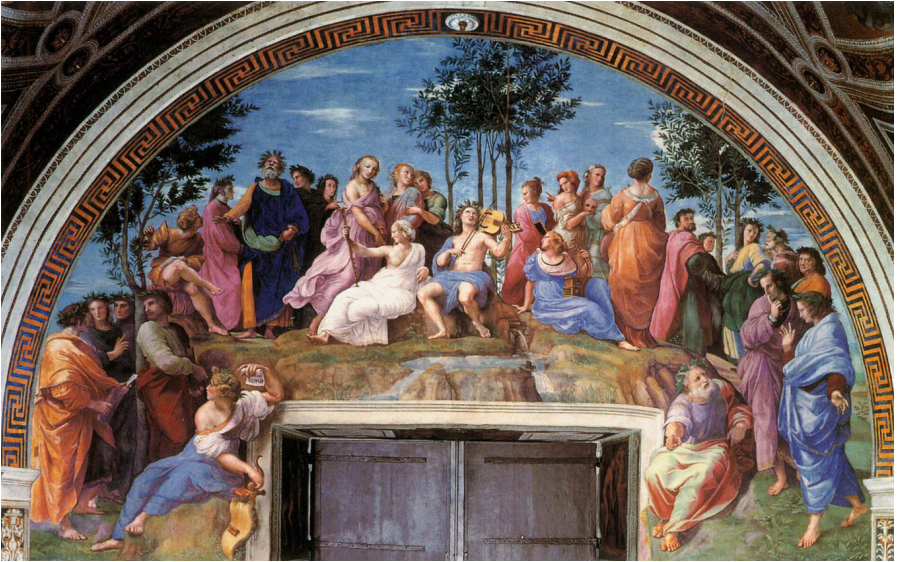
**Fig. 58:** Marcantonio Raimondi, *The Apollo Belvedere*, 1510–27, copperplate engraving, 29.1 x 16.2 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 49.97.114; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/342605>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

A virginal by Dominicus Pisaurensis from 1566, now at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg (Fig. 59), exemplifies this mix-and-match approach. On Mount Parnassus, Apollo strums his lyre surrounded by the nine Muses. The composition is borrowed from Raphael's famous fresco of 1511 in the Vatican (Fig. 60). The central figure of Apollo, however, has its roots in a widely copied engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi from 1517–20 (Fig. 61). Raphael had commissioned Raimondi to engrave his design for the rooms, but Raphael subsequently altered the figure of Apollo.<sup>90</sup> In the Vatican, Apollo is adorned with a laurel wreath and bows a *lira da braccio* with his eyes gazing up towards the heavens. In Raimondi's engraving, Apollo's posture is significantly more twisted, his head is tilted slightly downwards, and he plays a lyre supported on his left thigh. This version is found on the virginal lid, but with the laurel wreath replaced by a halo. The Muses here merely take inspiration from the original design, and Apollo sits at the same height as first among equals.



**Fig. 59:** Dominicus Pisaurensis, *Virginal* 1566, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, MIR 1086 (Photo: H. Pollerus).

90 See <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/345269>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 60:** Raphael, *Parnassus*, Stanze del Vaticano, 1511, fresco, Rome; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parnaso\\_02.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parnaso_02.jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 61:** Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael, *Parnassus*, 1517-20, copperplate engraving, 34.4 x 46.4 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-12.130; <<https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200123922>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Giovanni Baffo's harpsichord from 1574 is a different matter. This instrument was probably once owned by the noble Strozzi family<sup>91</sup> and now is housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 62). It is decorated with a remarkably faithful rendition of a 1557 engraving by Giorgio Ghisi after Luca Penni (1500–56) (Fig. 63). Penni, as a pupil of Raphael, was intimately familiar with the works by the latter, and it is thus that his *Apollo and the Muses* is likewise inspired by the version in the Raphael Rooms shown above in Fig. 60. The cartouche on the harpsichord, framed by grotesques, cannot contain all the details of Penni's original or Ghisi's engraving; however, as in the model, the nine Muses surround Apollo bowing his *lira da braccio*, who occupies an elevated position here as *Musagetes* (literally, leader of the muses). With the image already somewhat crowded, Pegasus only just squeezes into the cartouche.



**Fig. 62:** Giovanni Baffo, *Harpsichord*, 1574, Victoria and Albert Museum, 6007-1859; <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O58982/baffo-harpsichord-harpsichord-baffo-giovanni-antonio/?-carousel-image=2009BY8531>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

91 Dennis, 'Musical Sound and Material Culture' (see n. 1), 376.



**Fig. 63:** Giorgio Ghisi after Luca Penni, *Apollo and the Muses*, c. 1557, copperplate engraving, 33 x 41.5 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 49.95.11; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/367534>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

About a third of the examined instrumental paintings follow Lomazzo's recommendations about choosing a musical theme as do those just discussed. A remarkable constant, however, is that almost all of the depicted scenes take place outdoors. The landscape usually serves merely as a backdrop to the depicted narrative – just as the natural landscape only took on the status of an independent pictorial motif in panel painting at large from the first third of the 16th century onward.<sup>92</sup> For the most part, it was human-cultivated environments and not the natural landscape that formed the setting for the 'actions' of the figures. Gardens and parks as well as real and fictitious *vedute* were preferred for this purpose, since uncultivated nature was still perceived as wild and threatening. For example, the oldest surviving virginal by Hans Rucker (Fig. 64) shows a hunt for two bears that had probably ventured too close to human

<sup>92</sup> Albrecht Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer, and Joachim Patinir are generally viewed as the founders of landscape painting in the early modern period. Cf. Norbert Schneider, *Geschichte der Landschaftsmalerei vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Romantik* (Darmstadt, 1999).

dwelling. Ten men, two of them on horseback, attack the bears with sticks and nine dogs while a woman watches from the safety of a house entrance.



**Fig. 64:** Hans Ruckers, *Virginal*, 1583, Musée de la Musique, Paris, E.986.12; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Virginale\\_%28Musée\\_de\\_la\\_musique,\\_Philharmonie\\_de\\_Paris%29\\_%2816147420450%29.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Virginale_%28Musée_de_la_musique,_Philharmonie_de_Paris%29_%2816147420450%29.jpg)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Landscape generally serves as a foil for the various pictorial themes. For example, the virginal by Bruneto Veronensis from 1564 (Fig. 65) shows an idealised version of tamed nature in the form of geometrically structured garden beds fronting a magnificent palace complex of typically Italianate appearance with a fountain and the obligatory musicians in the stage-like foreground. Here, as so often on instruments of this period, the natural landscape is pushed to the margins and kept in check by clear borders of one sort or another.



**Fig. 65:** Bruneto Veronensis, *Virginal*, 1564, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, MIR 1082; <<http://objektkatalog.gnm.de/objekt/MIR1082>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

It was not until the 17th century that lid paintings with Arcadian-style landscapes à la Poussin and Lorrain appeared in which figures feature only as staffage and the landscape itself constitutes the main theme. The virginal of Donatus de Undeis from as early as 1590 (Fig. 66) already shows a section of an idyllic coastal landscape of this type, with staffage figures playing music between ancient-seeming ruins.



**Fig. 66:** Donatus de Undeis, *Virginal*, 1590, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, MIR 1087; <<http://objektkatalog.gnm.de/objekt/MIR1087>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Bodies of water, be they in the form of fountains, canals, streams, rivers, lakes, or the open sea, are a frequently occurring motif from nature. This should come as no surprise: the fleetingness of the moment, constant change, and motion characterise both water and music, for which reason painters doubtless employed water metaphorically. Seascapes, however, are found only sporadically in the 16th century; a rare example is a clavichord of unknown origin, now in the Musée de la Musique Paris, known as *de Lépante* (Fig. 67). The painting on its lid probably commemorates the Battle of Lepanto (1571), in which the Christian powers of the Mediterranean were victorious against the Ottomans. Numerous prints and paintings – one example of which is the late 16th-century painting *The Battle of Lepanto* at the National Maritime Museum in London (Fig. 68) – immortalised this event and could have served as models for the lid painting.



**Fig. 67:** Anon., *Clavichord*, 16th century, Musée de la Musique, Paris, E.2111; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Clavicorde\\_Lépante.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Clavicorde_Lépante.JPG)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 68:** Anon., *The Battle of Lepanto*, late 16th century, oil/canvas, 127 x 232.4 cm, National Maritime Museum, London, BHC0261; <<https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-11753>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

One also finds Biblical and mythological themes embedded in landscapes. On the 1598 virginal by Alessandro Fabri in the Tagliavini Collection at the Museo di San Colombano in Bologna, one of the figures most symbolic of music, David, is positioned front and centre in an otherwise deserted landscape both as a king and as a psalmist with a harp (Fig. 69). The rocky fortress towering on the horizon could refer to the Castle of Zion and David's prayer of thanksgiving, 2 Samuel 22:1–4: 'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, the God of my rock, [...] my high tower, my refuge, my saviour'. The painting is attributed to the Greek-born painter Belisario Corenzio (1558–after 1646), who was one of the most colourful artistic figures in Naples at the time.<sup>93</sup>

93 Maria Cristina Casali, 'Decorazione', in: John Henry van der Meer and Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini (eds.), *Collezione Tagliavini. Catalogo degli strumenti musicali*, 2 vols. (Bologna, 2007/08), i, 329–30, <<https://digital.fondazioneclarisbo.it/artwork/collezione-tagliavini-catalogo-degli-strumenti-musicali-3>> (accessed 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 69:** Alessandro Fabri, *Rectangular Spinet* (Naples, 1598), Tagliavini Collection, Bologna (Photo: Catalina Vicens, @Museo di San Colombano – Collezione Tagliavini, Genus Bononiae)

In the 16th century, unlike during the 17th, bloody episodes from mythology and the Bible such as the contest between Apollo and Marsyas feature only occasionally. One of the few lid paintings of this kind, on an Italian harpsichord built by Joseph Salodiensis in 1559 (Figs. 70–1), has an interesting history. The extant front flap and main lid of the lost protective case were both cut from older panel paintings and then joined together with hinges. In 1882, the Austrian painter Friedrich Amerling acquired the instrument along with its lid in Venice for his collection, presumably in part due to the attractive decoration.<sup>94</sup> The main lid shows only Apollo's flaying of the Dionysian flute player Marsyas without the preceding musical contest in which Apollo had triumphed. Marsyas' cruel punishment is contrasted with a small peasant dance scene in the background. The competing instruments, the Apollonian lyre and the Dionysian pan-flute, lie symbolically in the foreground. The theme on the front flap has no direct literary connection with that of the main lid: it shows an antique-style scene with women playing music. The anonymous painter probably assembled the pictorial composition here from parts of well-known panel paintings.<sup>95</sup> The posture

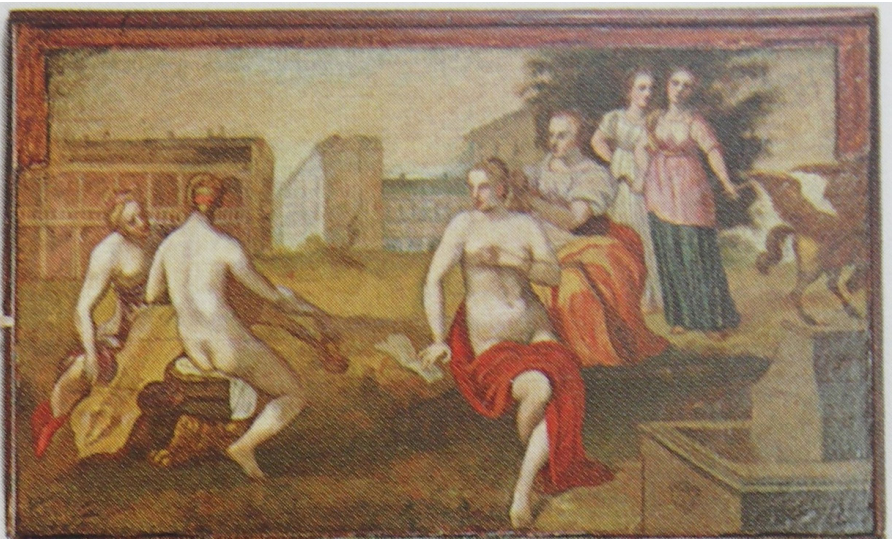
94 Rudolf Hopfner, *Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien. Masterpieces of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments*, A Brief Guide to the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien 1 (Vienna, 2019), 46–7.

95 See Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), 197–8, 340.

and leg position of the unclothed singer in the foreground seem to be modelled on Titian's painting *Sacred and Profane Love* (1515) (Fig. 72), and the two female gamblers pictured at left are quite exact copies of the engraving *Mankind before the Flood* (Fig. 73) by the Flemish painter and engraver Jan Sadeler I. Overall, one is reminded of Tintoretto's *Music-Making Women* (Fig. 74).



**Fig. 70:** Joseph Salodiensis, *Harpsichord*, 1559/80, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, SAM 630 (Photo: H. Pollerus).



**Fig. 71:** Joseph Salodiensis, *Harpsichord*, front cover, 1559/80, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, SAM 630 (Photo: H. Pollerus).



**Fig. 72:** Titian, *Sacred and Profane Love*, 1515, oil/canvas, 118 x 278 cm, Galleria Borghese, Rome, 147; <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tizian\\_029.jpg?uselang=de](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tizian_029.jpg?uselang=de)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 73:** Jan Sadeler I after Dirck Barendsz, *Mankind before the Flood*, 1581-5, coloured copperplate engraving, 34.7 x 44.7 cm, The British Museum, London; <[https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P\\_D-5-61](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_D-5-61)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 74:** Tintoretto, *Music-Making Women*, after 1566, oil/canvas, 142 x 214 cm, Old Masters Picture Gallery, Dresden, 265; <<https://www.skd.museum/programm/alle-macht-der-imagination-tschechische-saison-in-dresden/boehmische-spuren-in-der-gemaeldegalerie-alte-meister/#c32896>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

The lid painting on Lodewijk Grouwels' double virginal (Fig. 75) is probably part of its original decoration. It illustrates the Old Testament story of David's victory in the battle of the Israelites against the Philistines. During the triumphal entry into Jerusalem (with a rather urban setting hence depicted here), David carries Goliath's huge severed head beneath a canopy borne by two slim, elegant ladies; according to 1 Samuel 18:6–7, he was received by 'women [who] came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing [...] with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick.' It is thus that even this painting for an instrument contains at least a secondary musical reference.



**Fig. 75:** Lodewijk Grouwels, *Double Virginal*, 1600, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 89.4.1196; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/501767>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Overall, 16th-century instruments do not exhibit the same variety of pictorial themes as do those from later times. In Italy, where the influence of rediscovered ancient buildings and artworks was omnipresent, the forms and content from ancient pagan mythology naturally predominated, while in the southern Netherlands, the emerging pleasure and garden culture as well as a certain profane cosmopolitanism were reflected in depictions of idealised segments of reality. Even so, the astonishing mobility of artists – and, more importantly, artistic innovations’ widespread dissemination from both Italy and the Netherlands through woodcuts and copperplate engravings – contributed to the supra-regional exchange of more or less canonised pictorial themes and ornaments.

## Soundboard and Rose

Very few original painted soundboards from the 16th century survive, and knowledge of 16th-century soundboard decorators and rose-makers is also quite scant. A number of more extensive studies exist concerning later periods.<sup>96</sup> At least in the 17<sup>th</sup> century,

96 Cf. for example Sheridan Germann, ‘Monsieur Doublet and His Confrères: The Harpsichord Decorators of Paris’, in: *EM* 8 (1980), 435–53; 9 (1981), 192–207.

each Flemish instrument maker worked mainly with one particular painter for the soundboard and the entire decoration, resulting in a personal style and the recognisability of their instruments.<sup>97</sup> The maker's signature then included the decorator's services. This can be presumed to have already been the case with the instruments by Jost Karest, who employed his brother Goosen Karest as a painter in 1538 under an exclusive contract.<sup>98</sup>

Apart from their acoustic function, soundboards and roses are components that allow the transformation of decoration and its interpretation to be observed with particular ease. As is well known, 16th-century Italian cypress soundboards featured surfaces of a natural appearance amidst which elaborate roses, sometimes made of precious materials, worked their effect. An anonymous harpsichord, c.1540, at the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (Figs. 76–7) displays a multi-dimensional rose typical of this type, constructed from a circle and a star, which is set into the soundboard in three tiers and whose ornamental band sits upon it in the manner of a 'lace collar'.



**Fig. 76:** Anon., *Harpsichord*, c. 1540, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, 2000.501, in: Andreas Beurmann, *Historische Tasteninstrumente* (Munich, 2000), p. xx.



**Fig. 77:** Anon., *Harpsichord*, rose, c. 1540, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, 2000.501, in: Andreas Beurmann, *Historische Tasteninstrumente* (Munich, 2000), p. xx.

97 Germann, *Harpsichord Decoration* (see n. 1), 31; O'Brien, *Ruckers* (see n. 1), 149–57.

98 *Ibid.*, 299–300.

Italian cypress soundboards are said to have a wonderful enduring fragrance. In a baroque retelling of an ancient idea, a curious parallel is drawn between scent and sound:

Epicurus meynte, daß aus den Cörpern, die einen Klang erregten, gewisse Cörperlein giengen, welche in unsern Ohren den Schall verursachten, wie es sonst bey den Cörpern geschicht, die einen Geruch von sich geben.<sup>99</sup>

(‘Epicurus was of the opinion that sound-producing bodies emitted certain little corpuscles that caused the sound in our ears, as also happens with bodies that produce a smell.’)

In any case, the notion of scent seems to have played an important role in the design of soundboards. In the southern Netherlands from the middle of the 16th century, for example, soundboards – which, there, were mostly made of spruce – were painted with ‘fragrant’ scattered flowers, fruits, and small animals. A double virginal by Hans Ruckers from 1581 (Fig. 78) shows clearly how this approach differed from the Italian practice.



**Fig. 78:** Hans Ruckers, *Double Virginal*, 1581, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 29.90; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503676>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

99 Johann Heinrich Zedler, *Universal-Lexicon*, vol. 34 (Leipzig/Halle: J.H. Zedler, 1742), entry ‘Schall’, col. 825, <<https://www.zedler-lexikon.de/index.html?c=blaettern&bandnummer=34&seitenzahl=426&dateiformat=1&view=100&supplement=0%27>> (accessed 4 March 2025).

Due to clear formal and iconographic correspondence with Marian and occasionally Christological pictorial elements in other works of art, I propose that soundboard and rose designs be interpreted as allegories of the ‘hortus conclusus.’<sup>100</sup> This pictorial motif of an enclosed garden refers to the Song of Solomon (especially 4:12) in the Old Testament. It is depicted in many famous paintings, always in connection with certain plant elements such as aquilegia, lilies, roses, strawberry blossoms, etc. – which one also finds on soundboards. Hans Ruckers’ virginal from 1583 (Fig. 79) shows a strawberry plant in a typically Marian manner, bearing fruit and blossoms simultaneously. The sides of instrument cases form the walled enclosures characteristic of the ‘enclosed garden’ – and in one anonymous Italian virginal from the 17th century at the Musical Instrument Museum in Brussels,<sup>101</sup> the sides are even designed to resemble a fence entwined with greenery (Fig. 80).



**Fig. 79:** Hans Ruckers, *Virginal*, 1583, Musée de la Musique Paris, E.986.1.2; <[https://mimo-international.com/media/CM/IMAGE/CMIM000023490.jpg?\\_ga=2.221891676.552757129.1659460502-146864436.1616342545](https://mimo-international.com/media/CM/IMAGE/CMIM000023490.jpg?_ga=2.221891676.552757129.1659460502-146864436.1616342545)> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

<sup>100</sup> See Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), 158–60. At the same time, these designs might draw on the well-established tradition of floral motifs as marginal decorations in 16th-century manuscripts.

<sup>101</sup> A clearer illustration can be found in *ibid.*, 190.



**Fig. 80:** Anon., *Virginal*, 17th century, Musical Instrument Museum, Brussels, 1579, in: Heidelinde Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente als kunsthistorische Objekte* (Graz/Vienna, 2018), 190.

The emergence of soundboard painting and instrument mottos in the southern Netherlands at about the same time points to a common background: the pervasion of a certain religious mindset during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. The very fact that soundboard decoration is only barely visible from musicians' and audience's ordinary positions, achieving its overall effect only when seen from above, suggests that in the context of the 'hortus conclusus' this decoration originally may have been intended 'Soli Deo Gloria'.<sup>102</sup> Moreover, Sheridan Germann mentions symbolism as an essential component of Flemish soundboard painting.<sup>103</sup> Since the blossom and its fragrance are only ephemeral, painted flowers offer themselves as a symbol of transience in conjunction with the sound rising from the soundboard. The allegory of the enclosed garden is often complemented by caterpillars, moths, and butterflies as symbols of metamorphosis and as a Christological image of death and resurrection. The birds sometimes seen sitting on branches – of species such as kingfisher, goldfinch, and hoopoe – symbolise the human soul, pointing to the understanding of the soundboard as the soul of the instrument.<sup>104</sup>

102 Also a frequent motto on 17th- and 18th-century instrument lids, see *ibid.*, 98.

103 Germann, *Harpsichord Decoration* (see n. 1), 28–30.

104 Equally, the interior of church buildings has been compared to the soul ('anima') of Christ or the saints and every good Christian ('ogni buon Cristiano'). For this reason, it should be richly and beautifully decorated, even in places that are not visible to church visitors. Cf. Pietro Cataneo Senese, *I quattro primi libri di architettura* (Venice: Figliuoli di Aldo Manuzio, 1554), iii, 38, <<http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000235384&page=1>> (accessed on 4 August 2025).

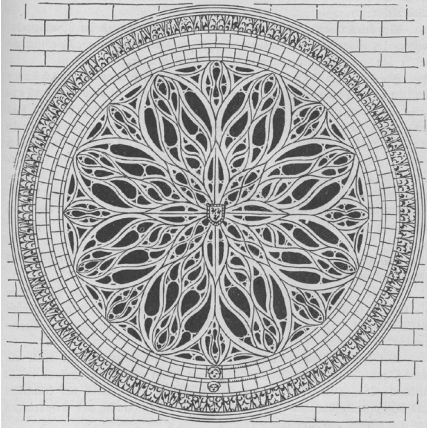
It should be added that in the southern Netherlands during the second half of the 16th century, in parallel with the increased scientific interest in botany and the intensive cultivation of ornamental plants, Antwerp arose as a centre of flower painting. Jan Brueghel the Elder was even famously given the epithet 'Flower Brueghel'. The exotic and precious luxury flowers found on early 17th-century soundboards, especially the tulip, were probably employed more in the interest of representation without any religious connotation. During the 16th century, however, almost all of the flowers displayed on soundboards were simple wild forms.

The visual aesthetics of soundboard rose designs underwent rapid evolution during the 16th century, and although this evolution was not linear, a common thread does run through the many individual creations. I believe that the soundboard rose (German: *Rosette*, Italian: *rosetta*) originally served as a Marian symbol. As early as the 5th century, poets associated the rose mentioned in Song of Songs 2:2 with the Virgin Mary. In the traditions of the medieval cult of Mary, the rose became an important iconographic motif in sacred art – institutionalised, for example, by the Feast of the Rosary, introduced by Pope Pius V in 1572, and by the *Laurentian Litany* approved by Pope Sixtus V in 1587 with its invocation of Mary as the mysterious '*Rosa mystica*'. This association between Mary, the horticultural rose, and the harpsichord rose is underlined by the interpretation of the soundboard as a 'hortus conclusus' in which Mary forms the 'rose' at the centre. The visual similarity between the soundboard rose and the type of rose seen particularly in Gothic cathedrals with 'Notre Dame' in their name likewise supports this interpretation.<sup>105</sup> Compare, for example the rose of a harpsichord made by Dominicus Pisarenus Venetus (Fig. 81) and the rose window at the Cathédrale Notre-Dame d'Amiens (Fig. 82).



**Fig. 81:** Dominicus Pisarenus, *Harpsichord*, rose, 1533, Grassi-Museum Leipzig, 67 (Photo: H. Pollerus).

<sup>105</sup> Georg Streng, *Das Rosettenmotiv in der Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte* (Munich, 1918), 55.



**Fig. 82:** Cathédrale Notre-Dame d'Amiens, 13th century, from: Georg Streng, *Das Rosettenmotiv in der Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte* (Munich, 1918), 47.

Further evidence for this interpretation is the adoption of the motif of the 'Madonna in a wreath of flowers' for the rose designs at the beginning of the 17th century. Developed by Peter Paul Rubens, Henrik van Balen, and Jan Brueghel the Elder shortly after 1600, this type of picture was popular especially in Antwerp. A typical example is the *Madonna and Child in a Wreath of Flowers*, c. 1618 (Fig. 83), a collaboration between Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder. This motif was obviously taken up by Flemish instrument decorators: the initially simple wreath of leaves, which can be seen on the combination instrument by Hans Ruckers from 1594 (Fig. 84), gradually developed into a lush wreath of roses and other flowers with Marian connotations until luxury flowers such as tulips were finally added, as on the harpsichord by Ioannes Ruckers from 1639 in the Victoria and Albert Museum London (Fig. 85). Unlike in the panel paintings, however, the soundboards of early and later Ruckers instruments feature an angel playing the harp in the center of the floral wreath instead of the Madonna. There are probably several reasons for this, including the Ruckers family's desire to downplay their commitment to Catholicism at a time of religious upheaval.<sup>106</sup>

106 Detailed information on the development of the rose into a 'logo' can be found in Pollerus, *Tasteninstrumente* (see n. 1), esp. 163–4.



**Fig. 83:** Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder, *Madonna and Child in a Wreath of Flowers*, c.1618, oil/wood, 185 x 209.8 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich, 331; <<https://www.sammlung.pinakothek.de/de/artwork/QrLW9oV4NO>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



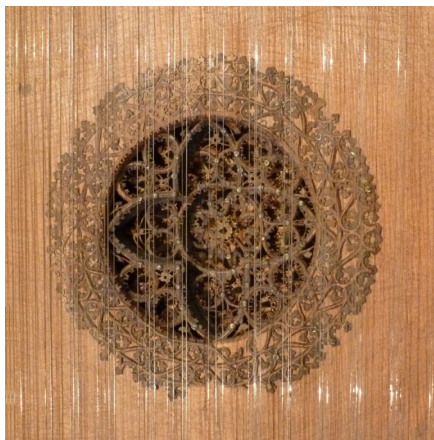
**Fig. 84:** Hans Ruckers, *Combination Instrument*, 1594, Kunstgewerbemuseum Berlin (Köpenick), K 6439 (Photo: H. Pollerus).



**Fig. 85:** Ioannes Ruckers, *Harpsichord*, 1639, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1739–1869; <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O169594/harpsichord-ruckers-ioannes/?carousel-image=2017JX0134>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

Tulip mania,<sup>107</sup> the increasing interest in botany, and – not insignificantly – growing commercialization all contributed to changing conceptions of the rose. It was in the southern Netherlands that the rose design was first developed into a logo, a small advertising space for the instrument maker. While Italian roses had been characterised by elaborate geometric or phytomorphic designs in sometimes precious materials, the design was now rendered two-dimensionally by way of illusionistic painting. An Italian virginal in the Beurmann Collection at the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (Fig. 86) still exhibits a filigree three-dimensional design fashioned from cypress and ebony as well as parchment with an ornamental wreath of late Gothic motifs. On the clavichord of Dominicus Pisaurensis (Fig. 87), the carved ornament in the late-gothic flamboyant style is backed with red fabric and surrounded by pearls. On Hans Ruckers' double virginal from 1581 (Fig. 88), such pearls along with the typical Italian 'lace wreath' are only painted on the soundboard; they surround a filigree but simple geometric rose centre. And on Hans Ruckers' virginal from 1583 (Fig. 89), the rose now contains a metal centre comprising an angel with a harp between the initials of the builder, HR.

107 The rampant trade in tulip bulbs in the Netherlands led to the first documented speculative bubble, which burst in 1637. Jan Breughel the Younger even created several paintings of tulip bulb-trading monkeys as allegories of 'tulipomania'; see the 1640 version at the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem.



**Fig. 86:** Anon., *Virginal*, c. 1580, Beurmann Collection, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, 2000.504 (Photo: H. Pollerus).



**Fig. 87:** Dominicus Pisarenensis, *Clavichord*, 16th century, Musée de la Musique, Paris, E.1608/C.1485; <<https://collectionsdumusee.philharmoniedeparis.fr/collectionsdumusee/doc/MUSEE/0157969/clavicoorde>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 88:** Hans Ruckers, *Double Virginal*, 1581, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 29.90; <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503676>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).



**Fig. 89:** Hans Ruckers, *Virginal*, 1583, Musée de la Musique, Paris, E.986.1.2; <<https://collectionsdumusee.philharmoniedeparis.fr/collectionsdumusee/doc/MUSEE/0130260/virginale-a-la-quinete>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

This conceptual change as well as the shift of the rose's visual function to that of a company logo went hand in hand with the development of small workshops into large manufactories towards the end of the century. The initials of the respective instrument manufacturer, in the 17th century also the full name, combined with a standardised rose centre – usually a sacred figure playing music – to form a representative solution tailored to the producers. Roses thus came to embody commercial expedients with an acoustic function in which the original spiritual meaning did, however, still resonate metaphorically.

## Conclusion

One could summarise that the visual design of keyboard instruments during the 16th century oscillated between representational needs, projections of worldviews and educational standards, enthusiasm for fashionable decoration, and mundane expediency. The expressive means that were employed with both cognitive and sensory impacts in mind were diverse and quite naturally dependent on what was artistically and financially feasible. Commissioners, painters, and artisans joined musicians and the audience at a locus situated between the reception of formal, stylistic, and intellectual topoi from antiquity and the Middle Ages and the simultaneous 'modernisation' of outlooks and expression. Though symbolic and metaphorical portrayals of religious and mythological content did persist in lid paintings and other decorative elements, they were increasingly overlaid by secularisation and commercialisation and/or intended more and more 'poetically'. Decorative elements gradually lost their function as vehicles of spiritual meaning but continued – as they still do today in innumerable copies and replicas – to convey aesthetic and cultural-historical values as 'forms of dignity and luxury'. A precious 'piece of resonant furniture' that appealed to contemporary tastes quite naturally enhanced the prestige of its owner. But through an instrument's appearance, its magnificent aesthetic design, one also accorded the instrument itself a suitable degree of 'esteem' and thereby dignified it as a medium of the *donum dei* that was music. In the theory of art, at least, the decorated instrument was by no means understood merely as a 'sonorous substrate'. It was much rather music, as an instrument's primary purpose, that wielded the most influence over its aesthetic design – over its paintings and mottos, above all, but also over its ornamentation.

(Translation of the article and, unless otherwise stated, quotations from the original sources: Chris Roth)

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# PRESENTATIONS



# The Merulo Toccata in Codex Vienna, Minorite Convent, 714

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Mario Aschauer

It is all but a miracle that the friars of the Vienna Minorite Order have been able to shield the treasures of their music archive against the perils of time for over 400 years. Around 1600, the monastery began to establish itself as an elite musical institution in Vienna.<sup>1</sup> One of its most significant members, Father Alexander Giessel (1694–1766) was most likely a student of imperial court *Capellmeister* Johann Joseph Fux – the highest ranking musician of the Holy Roman Empire at the time – and friends with court organist Gottlieb Muffat.<sup>2</sup> Inspired by Athanasius Kircher’s art and natural science collections, Giessel earned a reputation as compiler of a similar collection of ‘rarities of nature, mussel shells and other growths of the sea, minerals, fossils, marble and rocks, antiquities, antique coins, more recent commemorative coins, copper engravings, artfully cut stones, art and masterworks, etc.’<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, he made perhaps the most important contributions to the monastery’s library and archive of classical keyboard manuscripts, similar to Padre Martini’s collection in Bologna.

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- 1 Friedrich W. Riedel, ‘Die Wiener Minoriten und ihre Musikpflege’, in: *Singende Kirche* 16 (1996), 161–5.
  - 2 Friedrich W. Riedel, ‘Die Musikpflege der Minoriten’, in: *750 Jahre Minoriten in Wien: 1124–1974*, ed. Landulf Honickel (Vienna, 1974), 83–90.
  - 3 Obituary in *Wienerisches Diarium, oder Nachrichten von Staats, vermischten, und gelehrten Neuigkeiten* 49 (18 June 1766), 5–6, <<https://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=wrz&datum=17660618&seite=5&zoom=33>> (accessed on 20 Dec. 2024): ‘Donnerstag den 12. dieses [i.e., 12 June 1766] ist in dem Herrn entschlaffen, der Wohlthätige P. Alexander Giessel, Minoritenordens der österreichischen Provinz, Chorregent in dem Kloster zum H. Kreuz allhier, welcher durch die von ihm mit ungemeiner Mühe und Fleiß gemachte vortreffliche Sammlung von Seltenheiten der Natur, Conchilien, und andern Meergewächsen, Mineralien, Versteinerungen, Marmor und Steinerten, Alterthümern, alten Münzen, neuern Schaufennigen, Kupferstichen, antiken Steinen von eingeschnittener und erhabener Arbeit, Kunst und Meisterstücken etc. welches alles beysammen in dem Klostermuseum zu sehen ist, sich vielen Verdienst und bey der gelehrten Welt Ruhm erworben hat, in dem 73. Jahr seines Alters.’ (Translation by the author).

Among the archive's treasures, now catalogued under call number XIV.714, is a manuscript codex containing more than 500 keyboard pieces. As such, Codex 714 is one of the largest collections of early 17th-century keyboard music. However, its size is only a minor factor in what makes the codex so extraordinary – and mysterious.

We know next to nothing about the provenance of Codex 714. Riedel<sup>4</sup> compiled a first inventory of pieces updated by Hill<sup>5</sup> along with a black and white facsimile, now long out of print. The breadth of keyboard genres ranges from magnificats, hymn variations, and other chant-based organ music to intabulations of secular vocal and ensemble music. While some scholars have called it the product of an anonymous German organist scribe,<sup>6</sup> others have argued for Prague as its place of origin.<sup>7</sup> The fact that the codex contains organ music for both Catholic and Protestant liturgies – making it all but unique among 17th-century keyboard manuscripts – could be explained by Prague's exceptionally ecumenical climate during the Thirty Years' War. On the other hand, like Friedrich W. Riedel has suggested, the extraordinary breadth of repertoire could also be the product of a wide-travelled musician such as Vincenzo Scapitta whose career led him from Italy to Innsbruck, Olomouc, and Warsaw before he fled to Vienna in 1655 and died there a year later.<sup>8</sup> This would explain, beyond the striking denominational diversity of the repertoire, the geographical spread of its composers. Codex 714 is the venue for an unlikely encounter between composers such as Merulo and Frescobaldi from the deep Catholic South and Protestant figure-heads Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck and Samuel Scheidt from the far North of Germany and The Netherlands. At any rate, the pieces in the manuscript that were most likely copied from contemporary prints suggest the first three decades of the 17th century as the codex' period of creation.

Opening the manuscript's ornate heavy leather cover reveals another unusual aspect. The music is notated in a *scala decemlinealis*, a ten-line staff with treble and bass clef, recommended by 16th- and 17th-century music theorists for analytical

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4 Friedrich W. Riedel, *Das Musikarchiv im Minoritenkonvent zu Wien (Katalog des älteren Bestandes vor 1784)*, *Catalogus Musicus I* (Kassel, 1963), 43–72.

5 Robert Hill (ed.), *Vienna, Minoritenkonvent, Klosterbibliothek und Archiv, MS XIV.714, 17th-Century Keyboard Music: Sources Central to the Keyboard Art of the Baroque 24* (New York/London, 1988), xi–xxv.

6 Lydia Schierning, *Die Überlieferung der deutschen Orgel- und Klaviermusik aus der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, *Schriften des Landesinstituts für Musikforschung Kiel 12* (Kassel, 1961), 60–2 and 117–24; and Hill, *Vienna, Minoritenkonvent*, v.

7 Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, *Complete Organ and Keyboard Works*, ed. Siegbert Rampe, vol. 1.2: *Toccatas* (Kassel, 2003), vi–vii.

8 Riedel, 'Die Musikpflege der Minoriten' (see n. 2), 85.

purposes rather than keyboard notation.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, each staff spans the space of the entire double page as another unusual feature.

The existence of Codex 714 has been recognized by music scholars ever since the late 19th century. Since then, most scholarship has been interested in the pieces by individual composers such as Hassler<sup>10</sup> and Sweelinck.<sup>11</sup> Markus Grassl has recognized Codex 714 as singular source for the instrumental music of Liberale Zanchi and Carolus Luython.<sup>12</sup> Siegbert Rampe shows a similar situation for the music of Johann Feldmayr.<sup>13</sup> Also for seven canzonas by Giovanni Valentini Codex 714 constitutes the only source.<sup>14</sup> All of this notwithstanding, more than 90% of the repertoire remains untranscribed and unrecorded. This is particularly true for the great number of anonymous compositions which, traditionally, receive the least scholarly interest.<sup>15</sup>

However, even for a prominent composer such as Claudio Merulo Codex 714 has fascinating aspects in store that have hitherto attracted little attention. This is particularly true for the ‘Tocata .1. toni | Clau: Correg.’ on fols. 87<sup>v</sup>–89<sup>r</sup> that is published as ‘Primo tuono. Toccata Seconda’ in the first book of toccatas printed by Simone Verovio in 1598.<sup>16</sup> For this piece, Codex 714 features a version with significant textual divergencies from the printed version.

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- 9 Mario Aschauer, “‘Study, practice, and a reasonable working method’: Toward a History of Creative Process Pedagogy Between 1500 and 1850”, in: *The Oxford Handbook of the Creative Process in Music*, ed. Nicolas Donin (online ed., Oxford Academic, 8 May 2018), <<https://doi-org.ezproxy.rice.edu/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190636197.013.11>> (accessed on 21 Sept. 2024).
  - 10 Vincent J. Panetta, ‘Hans Leo Hassler and the Keyboard Toccata: Antecedents, Sources, Style’, PhD diss., Harvard University, 1991, 218–50.
  - 11 Pieter Dirksen, *The Keyboard Music of Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck: Its Style, Significance and Influence* (Utrecht, 1997), 68–73.
  - 12 Markus Grassl, ‘Luythons Instrumentalmusik: Anmerkungen zu Autorschaft und Kontext’, in: *Clavibus unitis* 10/3 (2021), 75–98, <[https://www.acecs.cz/media/cu\\_2021\\_10\\_03\\_grassl.pdf](https://www.acecs.cz/media/cu_2021_10_03_grassl.pdf)> (accessed on 20 Dec. 2024); idem, ‘Paralipomena zur Instrumentalmusik im Umkreis Rudolfs II.: Liberale Zanchi und seine Canzonon in A-Wm XIV.714’, in: *Wiener Musikgeschichte. Annäherungen – Analysen – Ausblicke. Festschrift für Hartmut Krones zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Julia Bungardt, Maria Helfgott, Eike Rathgeber and Nikolaus Urbanek (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar, 2009), 67–86.
  - 13 Siegbert Rampe (ed.), *Organ and Keyboard Music at the Salzburg Court 1500–1800* (Kassel, 2005), vi.
  - 14 Siegbert Rampe (ed.), *Organ and Keyboard Music of the Imperial Court Chapel Vienna, 1500–1700: Collection of First Editions* (Kassel, 2006), viii.
  - 15 A selection of *unica* from the Codex is featured on my album *Keyboard Music from Codex Vienna, Minorite Convent, 714* (Aulicus Classics 2022).
  - 16 Claudio Merulo, *Toccate d’intavolatura d’organo [...] libro primo* (Rome: Simone Verovio, 1598), 33–8, <<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/details/bsb00094272>> (accessed on 20 Sept. 2024).

Already Bob Judd in his 1988 dissertation showed that the second volume of the so-called Torino organ tablatures<sup>17</sup> contains two fascinating oddities among the Merulo toccatas it contains:<sup>18</sup> the eighth toccata ('Quarto tuono. Toccata ottava') from the first book and the eighth toccata ('Ottavo tuono. Toccata ottava') from the second book of toccatas<sup>19</sup> each in two versions, here referred to as a and b. While the b-versions, further in the back of the volume, present a text very close to the Verovio prints, the a-versions, more toward the front, show numerous, in part considerable variants from the print. Judd categorizes these variants into eight classes including added or missing ties, different or missing pitches, different rhythms, octave displacement, and different presentation of ornaments. Furthermore, the a-version of the toccata from the first book lacks the lengthy imitative section of the printed version. By the same token, several measures which are not in the printed version were actually inserted. All in all, Judd suggests that the model for the a-versions was 'an exemplar far removed from the print.'<sup>20</sup> His comparative transcription of the a- and b-versions illustrates that, apart from the architectural differences, it is a distinctly more modest style of ornamentation that characterizes the a-versions – or, in other words, the b-versions show a decided 'intensification' of the ornamental vocabulary. Essentially, this refers to the strongly increased use of *biscrome* in the b-versions and their sparing occurrence in the a-versions. Judd concludes, 'it is highly likely that the [a versions] [...] are early versions of toccatas printed at the end of Merulo's life, and comparison with the printed versions allows a revision process to be seen, in which Merulo's primary emendations appear to have been the elaboration of ornamentation and the addition or alteration of imitative sections.'<sup>21</sup>

Curiously, the a-versions in the Torino tablature are part of a group of toccatas ascribed to Merulo for which no printed concordances are known. These pieces show a striking stylistic likeness to the a-versions. This has led Judd to hypothesize that they may, in fact, constitute a group of early toccatas from Merulo's tenure in Venice, 1557–84. They could have been connected to the book of 'Toccate d'Organo' Merulo had announced as 'settimo libro' in his 'Ordine de' libri d'intavolature d'organo, che

17 I-Tn Mss. Giordano 2.

18 Robert Floyd Judd, 'The Use of Notational Formats at the Keyboard: A Study of Printed Sources of Keyboard Music in Spain and Italy c. 1500–1700, Selected Manuscript Sources Including Music by Claudio Merulo, and Contemporary Writings Concerning Notations', 2 vols., PhD diss., University of Oxford, 1989, ii, 238–71, <[https://www.academia.edu/attachments/50221810/download\\_file?st=MTcyMjY5NDI1Miw4MC4xMDkuMjM4LjIwMCwx-MzcxNjE5&s=profile](https://www.academia.edu/attachments/50221810/download_file?st=MTcyMjY5NDI1Miw4MC4xMDkuMjM4LjIwMCwx-MzcxNjE5&s=profile)> (accessed on 15 Oct. 2024).

19 Claudio Merulo, *Toccate d'intavolatura d'organo [...] libro secondo* (Rome: Simone Verovio, 1604), 34–8, <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb00094273>> (accessed on 20 Sept. 2024).

20 Judd, 'The Use of Notational Formats' (see n. 18), 255.

21 *Ibid.*, 270.

promette successivamente dare in luce Claudio Merulo da Correggio' on the back-side of the title page of the 1567 *Ricercari*.<sup>22</sup> In more recent times, Luigi Collarile has argued that the scarcity of *biscrome* in these pieces may, in fact, be evidence in favor of this connection since the edition would have been printed with moveable type and a multitude of 32nd-notes would have constituted an all but insurmountable technical challenge.<sup>23</sup> He also proposed that, therefore, the Torino tablature may, in fact, be evidence in favor of the theory that this early book of toccatas was actually published and that simply no copy of it survives today.<sup>24</sup>

The 'Tocata .1. toni | Clau: Correg:' on fols. 87<sup>v</sup>–89<sup>r</sup> in the Minorite Codex 714 constitutes yet another case of a manuscript text that considerably deviates from the 1598 Verovio print. Already a cursory glance at the transcription (see App.) shows, similar to the Torino tablatures, a more modest use of *biscrome*. However, unlike the Torino tablatures, they are not all but absent. Rather, there are passages where both versions show *biscrome*, sometimes in different rhythmical variants such as in mm. 67–8. In this case both versions use groups of *crome* and *biscrome*, but in reverse order. There are also passages where the Codex 714 version offers a reading with *biscrome* while the print version 'reduces' to *crome* – like the end of m. 19.

Like in the Torino a-versions, Codex 714 seems to prefer bigger note values instead of the remarkable abundance of (unnecessarily) tied notes in the print. Augusta Campagne has suggested<sup>25</sup> that the 'tie chain notation' in the Verovio prints could be reflective of a difference in performance practice between organ and harpsichord as described, for example, by Diruta. In order not to lose 'more than half of the harmony' on the harpsichord, Diruta writes, keys need to be re-struck several times.<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, perhaps the 'tie chain notation' is meant to be played tied on organ, but untied on harpsichord. If this was, indeed, Merulo's intention it seems to have been introduced as part of the preparations for the Verovio prints while the earlier versions make little to no use of it.

The a-versions in the Torino tablatures feature a fascinating difference concerning the imitative sections in 'ricercare style'. The a-version of the toccata in fourth tone omits the imitative passage altogether.<sup>27</sup> In the toccata in eighth tone, mm. 45–50, it

22 Claudio Merulo, *Ricercari d'intavolatura d'organo [...] libro primo* (Venice, 1567).

23 Luigi Collarile, 'Claudio Merulo nell'intavolatura tedesca di Torino: Il problema delle fonti', in: *Organo pleno: Festschrift für Jean-Claude Zehnder zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Luigi Collarile and Alexandra Nigito (Bern, 2007), 89–112, at 103.

24 *Ibid.*, 111.

25 Private communication with Augusta Campagne. A corresponding publication is forthcoming.

26 Girolamo Diruta, *Il Transilvano dialogo sopra il vero modo di sonar organi, & istromenti da penna* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti 1593), 6, <<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/mus-pre1800.100422>> (accessed on 25 Sept. 2024).

27 Judd, 'The Use of Notational Formats' (see n. 18), 243–8.

is retained, but notated in doubled note values.<sup>28</sup> This has led Domen Marinčič to conclude that perhaps a change of tempo was implied in the a-version.<sup>29</sup> In contrast, the Codex 714 version of the toccata in first tone is almost identical with the formal architecture of the print version.

It features the entire imitative section in ‘ricercare style’ in the shorter note values of the print (mm. 75–c. 125). In fact, with m. 62 it even contains one measure of musical material that is not in the print.

Unlike the a-versions of the Torino tablatures the cadences in the Codex 714 version often remain remarkably plain while the Verovio print offers much more ornamented formulas like, for example, in m. 16, 20, 26, 29, etc. It seems, of course, unlikely that the performer of Codex 714 was expected to play the plain versions. The print version, however, makes them more explicit and thus pushes an improvisatory practice more into the realm of a *res facta* of sorts – perhaps resulting from a change of target groups.

In summary, many questions about the Codex 714 version of the toccata remain unanswered. It is probably fair to describe the character of the print version as ‘revised’ or ‘reworked’, but the differences in this category are moderate in number and scope. More importantly, the print appears to make an effort to perhaps put in more concrete terms what the manuscript version leaves open, particularly in terms of cadential ornamentation and adaptation on a specific keyboard instrument. The question whether the publication confers the status of a ‘definitiveness’ upon the Verovio version is difficult to answer. Surely, after the *urtext* revolution of the 20th century we are likely inclined to accept this proposition. However, the existence of the Codex 714 version could also suggest the interpretation that both manuscript and print versions share a common nucleus that they transmit in individual manifestations. In this light, the Verovio version could be understood as *exemplum* for one (of many) possible renditions of Codex 714. After all, it is as a school in elegance and gracefulness that Diruta recommends Merulo’s keyboard works to his readers: ‘Et in somma chi vuol sonarlo con politezza, e leggiadria, studia l’Opere del Signor Claudio, che in quelle trouerà quel che in ciò fa bisogno.’<sup>30</sup>

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28 Ibid., 265–6.

29 Domen Marinčič, “‘Nach seinem selbst gefallen mit der Mensur wexln’: Instances in Sixteenth-Century Keyboard Music Where Ornamentation and Changing Note Values Might Induce the Player to Vary the Beat”, in: *‘Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolutum’: The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), 79–111, at 89–90, <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/mdwp003-ornamentation-note-values/>> (accessed on 22 Sept. 2024).

30 Diruta, *Il Transilvano* (see n. 26), 6.

**Video 1:** 'The Merulo Toccata in Codex Vienna, Minorite Convent, 714'. Mario Aschauer, harpsichord. Harpsichord by Joel Katzman (Amsterdam, 1999) after Alessandro Trasuntino (Venice, 1531).



Click to play.

## Appendix

Claudio Merulo: *Toccata seconda del primo tuono*

Comparative transcription by Mario Aschauer

*Tocata .I. toni*  
Clau. Correg.  
A-Wm XIV.714  
fol. 87v-89r

Musical score for measures 2-5 of 'Tocata .I. toni'. The score is in G major, 3/4 time. It features a treble and bass clef. Measure 2 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 3 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 4 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 5 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left.

*Primo tuono.*  
*Toccata Seconda.*  
RISM AM M 2376, pp. 4-11  
(Roma: Verovio, 1598)

Musical score for measures 6-13 of 'Primo tuono'. The score is in G major, 3/4 time. It features a treble and bass clef. Measure 6 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 7 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 8 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 9 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 10 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 11 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 12 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left. Measure 13 has a whole note chord in the right hand and a half note chord in the left.

This musical score consists of two systems of two staves each, representing a harpsichord piece. The first system covers measures 14 to 17. The second system covers measures 18 to 21. The third system covers measures 22 to 25. The fourth system covers measures 26 to 29. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, various note values (quarter, eighth, sixteenth notes), rests, and dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*. The piece features intricate rhythmic patterns and melodic lines, characteristic of sixteenth-century harpsichord music.

This image displays a musical score for 'The Merulo Toccata' by Aschauer, spanning measures 30 to 47. The score is presented in two systems, each containing two staves (treble and bass clefs). The music is written in a 16th-century style, featuring complex rhythmic patterns and ornamentation. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, and 47 clearly marked. The piece is characterized by its intricate melodic lines and rhythmic complexity, typical of the Merulo style.

This musical score consists of two systems of two staves each, representing a grand staff for harpsichord. The first system covers measures 48 to 51. Measure 48 features a treble staff with a whole rest and a bass staff with a continuous eighth-note pattern. Measure 49 shows the treble staff with a half note and the bass staff with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 50 has a treble staff with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass staff with a half note. Measure 51 shows a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a sixteenth-note pattern. The second system covers measures 52 to 55. Measure 52 has a treble staff with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass staff with a half note. Measure 53 shows a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 54 has a treble staff with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass staff with a half note. Measure 55 shows a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a sixteenth-note pattern. The third system covers measures 56 to 59. Measure 56 has a treble staff with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass staff with a half note. Measure 57 shows a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 58 has a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 59 shows a treble staff with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass staff with a half note. The fourth system covers measures 60 to 63. Measure 60 has a treble staff with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass staff with a half note. Measure 61 shows a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 62 has a treble staff with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass staff with a half note. Measure 63 shows a treble staff with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass staff with a half note. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, notes, and patterns, with measure numbers 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, and 63 clearly marked.

This musical score is a transcription of measures 64 through 82 of 'The Merulo Toccata' by Johann Aschauer. The score is presented in two systems, each with two staves (treble and bass clef). The music is in a 3/4 time signature and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and textures.

**Measure 64:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 65:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 66:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 67:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 68:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 69:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 70:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 71:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 72:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 73:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 74:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 75:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 76:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 77:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 78:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 79:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 80:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 81:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

**Measure 82:** Treble clef has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Bass clef has a half note G2, a quarter note A2, and a half note B2.

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This musical score consists of three systems, each with two staves (treble and bass clef). The measures are numbered 83 through 108. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and accidentals. The piece features a mix of melodic lines and harmonic accompaniment, with some measures showing complex rhythmic patterns and others being more chordal. The overall style is characteristic of 16th-century keyboard music.

83 84 85 86 87 88 89

90 91 92 93 94 95

96 97 98 99 100 101 102

103 104 105 106 107 108

This musical score is a page from a manuscript, containing measures 109 through 128. It is written for two systems of staves, each system consisting of a treble and a bass clef staff. The music is in a single system, with measures 109-114 on the first system, 115-119 on the second, 120-124 on the third, and 125-128 on the fourth. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The piece is in a minor key, as indicated by the flat sign on the first staff of each system. The tempo and meter are not explicitly stated, but the notation suggests a moderate tempo and a common time signature.

Measures 109-114: The first system contains six measures. Measure 109 begins with a treble clef staff containing a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 110 shows a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 111 features a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 112 has a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 113 shows a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 114 has a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3.

Measures 115-119: The second system contains five measures. Measure 115 begins with a treble clef staff containing a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 116 shows a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 117 features a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 118 has a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 119 shows a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3.

Measures 120-124: The third system contains five measures. Measure 120 begins with a treble clef staff containing a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 121 shows a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 122 features a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 123 has a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 124 shows a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3.

Measures 125-128: The fourth system contains four measures. Measure 125 begins with a treble clef staff containing a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 126 shows a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 127 features a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Measure 128 has a treble clef staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, and a bass clef staff with a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3.

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129 130 131 132

133 134 135 136

137 138 139

140 141 142

Musical score for measures 143-146. The score is written for two systems of grand staff (treble and bass clefs). Measure 143 shows a treble clef with a quarter rest and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 144 features a treble clef with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 145 has a treble clef with a quarter note and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 146 shows a treble clef with a quarter note and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern.

Musical score for measures 147-150. The score is written for two systems of grand staff. Measure 147 shows a treble clef with a quarter note and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 148 features a treble clef with a quarter note and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 149 has a treble clef with a quarter note and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 150 shows a treble clef with a quarter note and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern.

Musical score for measures 151-154. The score is written for two systems of grand staff. Measure 151 shows a treble clef with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 152 features a treble clef with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 153 has a treble clef with a quarter note and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 154 shows a treble clef with a quarter note and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern.

Musical score for measures 155-156. The score is written for two systems of grand staff. Measure 155 shows a treble clef with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 156 features a treble clef with a sixteenth-note pattern and a bass clef with a sixteenth-note pattern.

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# ***Bassi ostinati* and Ornamental Formulas in the *Intabolatura nova di varie sorte de balli*, Venice 1551 (I-Bc R.178), and in Similar Contemporary Sources for the Lute**

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Vania Dal Maso

## **Introduction**

The history of Italian keyboard instrument literature is initially linked to tablatures of vocal pieces. This music was conceived and created with different sound destinations in mind than those typically associated with instrumental music. The first autonomous pieces in Italian keyboard music sources that were not derived from pre-existing models are predominantly dances. The earliest known collection of dance music is a manuscript, dated between 1520 and 1550 and currently housed in the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice.<sup>1</sup> In addition to this volume, a number of printed collections have also survived. These are: the *Intabolatura nova di varie sorte de balli da sonare* (Venice: Antonio Gardane, 1551),<sup>2</sup> preserved in the collections of the Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna; *Il secondo libro d'intavolatura di balli d'arpicordo* by Marco Facoli (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1588), currently in the Biblioteca of the Conservatorio Santa Cecilia in Rome; *Il primo libro d'intavolatura di balli d'arpicordo* by Giovanni Maria Radino (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti, 1592), previously in the possession of François-Joseph Fétis and now in the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique.<sup>3</sup>

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1 I-Vnm Ms. it. Cl. IV, n. 1227 (coll. 11699); <<https://www.internetculturale.it/jmms/iccvviewer/iccu.jsp?id=oai%3A193.206.197.121%3A18%3AVE0049%3ACSTOR.247.2202&mode=all&teca=marciana>> (accessed on 10 July 2024). cf. Alexander Silbiger, *Italian Manuscript Sources of 17th Century Keyboard Music* (Ann Arbor, 1980), 12–13; Knud Jeppesen, 'Ein altvenezianisches Tanzbuch', in: *Festschrift Karl Gustav Fellerer zum sechzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. Heinrich Hüschen (Regensburg, 1962), 245–63.

2 RISM 1551<sup>21</sup>, Brown 1551<sub>5</sub>; <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?-path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_R/R178/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?-path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_R/R178/)> (accessed on 10 July 2024).

3 <<https://uurl.kbr.be/1559753>> (accessed on 10 July 2024).

With the exception of Facoli and Radino, which are separated by only four years, the four anthologies are spaced apart chronologically by a few decades and encompass the majority of the 16th century. This is specifically instrumental and idiomatic music which, in spite of its individual features, has been accorded only slight academic consideration. The *Intavoltura nova* has even been described as music for beginners, as can be deduced from the words of Daniel Hertz, in the introduction to the modern edition of the Antonio Gardane collection. Hertz refers to the print as 'a collection put together not from what the virtuoso did play, but under consideration of what the *amateur* could play'.<sup>4</sup> What value, therefore, can these dance anthologies offer?

First of all, these pieces possess an intrinsic value as historical documents, given that this genre of music was rarely written down due to its predominantly extemporaneous nature. Secondly, together with similar collections written for the lute, they assist in contextualising and comprehending not only the strictly musical aspects of emerging forms (such as the *Cara cossa* or *Gamba gagliarda*, which will be addressed subsequently), but also other aspects, both of a theoretical and notational character and of a practical nature connected to performance. The examination of the various versions of pieces with similar titles or identical bass lines can reveal interesting aspects in the evolution of a musical form. The observation of ornamental formulas also brings to light the presence of certain recurring figures that form a sort of vocabulary, as evidenced in the subsequent manuals illustrating the so-called diminutions. Furthermore, the comparison of similar pieces written for different instruments can help us to identify the technical and idiosyncratic attributes inherent to each instrument.

In the first part of this presentation I will describe Antonio Gardane's 1551 edition<sup>5</sup> and attempt to distinguish its principal features. In addition, I will identify some of the ornamental figures that were typical of the period and determine the possible purposes and uses of the edition. In the second part I aim to examine this source in the context of contemporary production. To this end, I will analyse certain pieces sharing the same bass line in comparison with similar lute tablatures.

## Description of the Source

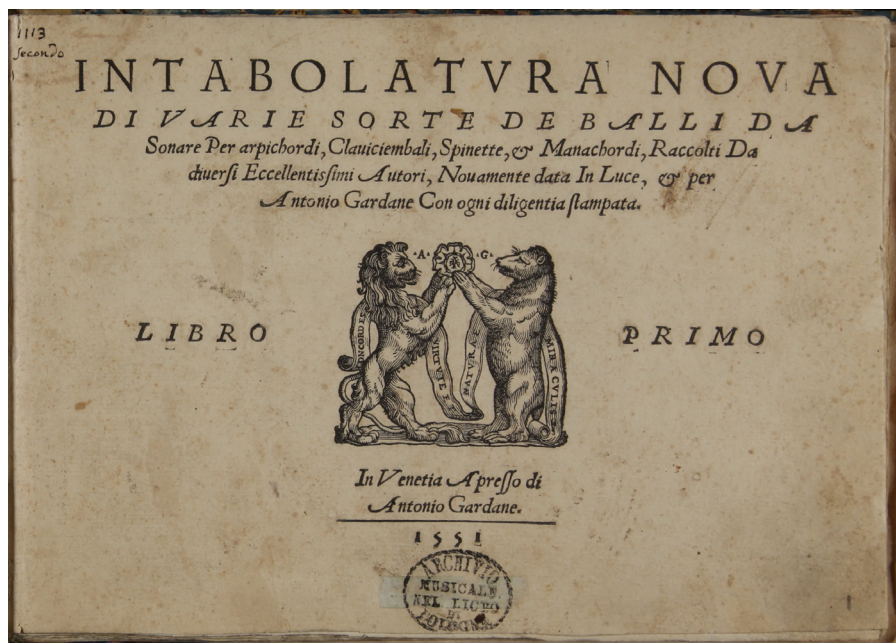
The only known extant copy of the *Intabolutura nova di varie sorte de balli da sonare* is preserved in the Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, catalogued

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4 *Keyboard Dances from the Earlier Sixteenth Century*, ed. Daniel Hertz, CEKM 8 (Rome, 1965), xii.

5 On Antonio Gardane (later 'Gardano') see Mary S. Lewis, *Antonio Gardano. Venetian Music Printer 1538–1569. A Descriptive Bibliography and Historical Study*, 3 vols. (New York, 1988–2005).

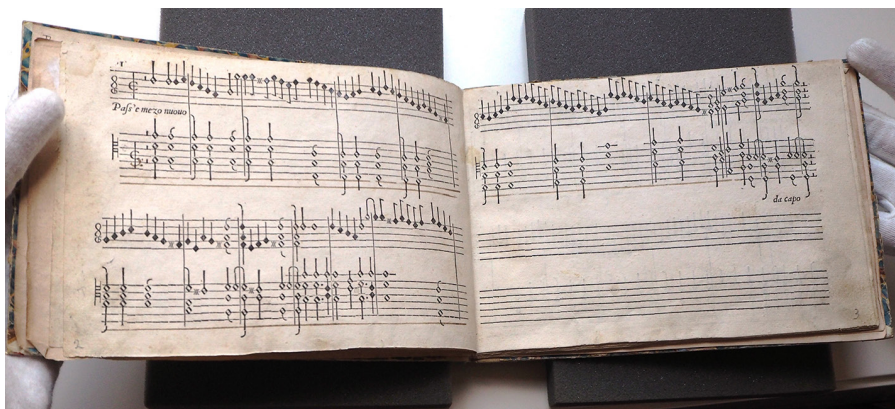
under the call number R.178. In the *Catalogo della biblioteca del liceo musicale di Bologna*, edited by Gaetano Gaspari, the *Intabolatura nova* is described as a 'very rare short work of great importance for the history of music, presenting a sample of the dance music in fashion in the mid-sixteenth century'.<sup>6</sup>



**Fig. 1:** Title-page of the *Intabolatura nova* (Venice, 1551) (© Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, <<http://www.museibologna.it/musica>>).

The volume, in oblong quarto format, consists of twenty-six sheets numbered on the verso-side only. As can be observed in Fig. 2, its size is rather small (appr. 15 x 22cm). The absence of both a dedication and a preface, precludes the possibility of deriving either information on the contents or advice on performance. The terms 'arpichordi, Clauiciembali, Spinette, & Manachordi' mentioned on the title-page (Fig. 1), refer to the typical stringed keyboard instruments that were widespread during the period in question. The phrase 'Libro primo' suggests that the publisher anticipated the publication of additional books. Of these, however, there is no trace. The book is presented in a notation on two staves in the form customarily used in Italy for keyboard music, i.e. the so-called 'intabolatura' (Fig. 2).

6 'Operetta rarissima e di grande importanza per la Storia Musicale, avendosi un saggio della musica da ballo in voga nella metà del decimosesto secolo.' Gaetano Gaspari, *Catalogo della biblioteca del liceo musicale di Bologna*, 5 vols. (Bologna, 1905), iv: *Pratica*, 27.



**Fig. 2:** 'Paſſ'e mezzo nuovo' from the *Intabolutura nova* (Venice, 1551), fols. 1<sup>r</sup>-2<sup>r</sup> (© Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, <<http://www.museibologna.it/musica>>).

## Contents and Titles

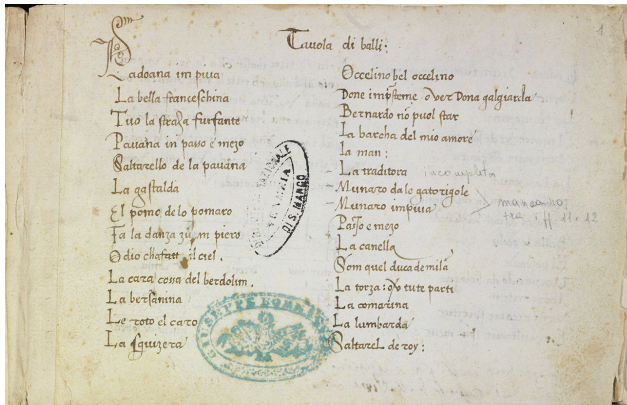
In the table of contents at the end of the collection, the *Tavola delli balli*, the number of dances is indicated as being twenty-five; below this, the titles of the individual pieces are listed, accompanied by their corresponding number. The title of each piece provides a definition of the dance type (which appear in the following order: *paſſ'e mezzo nuovo*, *gagliarda*, *pavana*, *paſſ'e mezzo antico*, *saltarello*). In most cases an additional title is provided (for example: 'Cathacchio', 'L'herba fresca', 'Gamba').

<i>TAVOLA</i>		<i>Delli Balli</i>	Numero	25
<i>Paſſ'e mezzo nuovo primo</i>	1	<i>Paſſ'e mezzo antico primo</i>	14	
<i>Paſſ'e mezzo nuovo ſecondo</i>	2	<i>Paſſ'e mezzo antico ſecondo</i>	15	
<i>Paſſ'e mezzo nuovo terzo</i>	3	<i>Paſſ'e mezzo antico terzo</i>	16	
<i>Cattacchio gagliarda</i>	4	<i>Montagna gagliarda</i>	17	
<i>L'herba freſca gagliarda</i>	5	<i>La canella gagliarda</i>	18	
<i>Gamba gagliarda</i>	6	<i>Venetiana gagliarda</i>	19	
<i>Le forze d'hercole</i>	7	<i>Saltarello del Re</i>	20	
<i>Tu te parti gagliarda</i>	8	<i>El pouerin gagliarda</i>	21	
<i>Ala ho</i>	9	<i>Gonella gagliarda</i>	22	
<i>Lodſana gagliarda</i>	10	<i>Fantina gagliarda</i>	23	
<i>Meza note gagliarda</i>	11	<i>Comadrina gagliarda</i>	24	
<i>Fuſſi pauana piana</i>	12	<i>Fornetina gagliarda</i>	25	
<i>La uien d'l porto</i>	13			

**Fig. 3:** *Tavola delli balli* of the *Intabolutura nova* (Venice, 1551), fol. 25<sup>r</sup> (© Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, <<http://www.museibologna.it/musica>>).

The pieces bearing the titles ‘Le forze d’hercole’ and ‘A la ho’ lack any explicit indication of the specific dance type. However, an analysis of their characteristics suggests that these may be identified as a *pavana* (‘Le forze d’hercole’) and, presumably, a *saltarello* (‘A la ho’). While for ‘A la ho’ there are no known concordances, ‘Le forze d’hercole’ is also found in other sources. One of these, the *Intabolutura sopra el lauto* by Iulio Abondante (which will be discussed in greater detail later on), serves to confirm that the composition is, in fact, a *pavana* as evidenced from the title in the *Tavola delli balli*: ‘Le forze di ercole Pavana’.

The contents of the *Intabolutura nova* can be summarised as follows: three *pass’e mezo nuovo*, three *pass’e mezo antico*, a *saltarello* (or two, if we count ‘A la ho’), two *pavane*, and fifteen *gagliarde*. Some pieces bearing similar titles are included in Ms. it. Cl. IV, n. 1227 (coll. 11699) of the Biblioteca Marciana of Venice, as one can note in Fig. 4 reproducing the *Tavola di balli* of this manuscript. To be precise, the pieces in the Venetian manuscript that bear titles similar to those of the *Intabolutura nova* are: ‘La torza: ou[er] tu te parti’, ‘La Lodexana’, ‘La canella’, ‘Saltarel de roy’, ‘La comarina’.



**Fig. 4:** *Tavola di balli* in: I-Vnm, Ms. it. Cl. IV, n. 1227 (coll. 11699), fol. 1<sup>r</sup> and fol. 1<sup>r</sup> (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana. Divieto di riproduzione).

The pieces bearing similar titles exhibit a resemblance, though they are not an exact replication. It is also noteworthy that the same bass line (in the first part only) is shared by two pieces that are given different titles: 'La cara cossa del berdolim' in the Venetian manuscript and the 'Gamba gagliarda' in the *Intabolatura nova*. This will be examined in greater detail below. Again, it can be observed that, rather than substantial replication, similarities can be identified between the various pieces. This is due to the fact that all these pieces result from an improvisatory practice, in which pieces are created *ex tempore* based on or using certain common materials (like the bass lines). Hence, all correspondences of titles or musical aspects, though useful, must be treated with caution. In his study *Tempo, gratia e misura. A Study of Fabrizio Caroso's Nobiltà di Dame, 1600*, Martin Paul Maloney states:

One may have misgivings sometimes that relationships may have been too ingeniously traced and that correspondences should rather be seen as similarities, but the aural transmission of the greater part of this by its nature largely fleeting kind of music and the element of improvisation in its performance would encourage conservatism in the materials and structures used, and must be taken into account when considering the many similarities encountered [...].<sup>7</sup>

### **Musical Characteristics of the *varie sorte de balli***

The pieces in the *Intabolatura nova* are simple, with concise melodies, repetitive rhythms and clear structures. The idiomatic character is dependent on two factors: firstly, the chords of the left hand (which also serve as a rhythmic foundation); and secondly, the fast embellishments, divisions and passagework of the right hand. This gives the effect of a melody with accompaniment. From a formal perspective, the overall structure of the individual pieces is symmetrical, comprising semi-phrases of four bars and phrases of eight. The dances in Gardane's print have numerous repeat signs, yet no explicit indication is provided regarding the number of repetitions or of specific variations, if any, that should be employed.

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<sup>7</sup> Martin Paul Maloney, *Tempo, gratia e misura. A Study of Fabrizio Caroso's Nobiltà di Dame, 1600* (Victoria, 2016), 288, <<https://www.monash.edu/arts/music-archive/digital-publications>> (accessed on 10 July 2024).





Fig. 8: Descending passages, as they appear in *Paſſ'e mezo antico terzo*.

It is noteworthy that some of these embellishments are also present in later treatises on diminutions, such as those by Diego Ortiz<sup>8</sup> and Giovanni Luca Conforti.<sup>9</sup> To illustrate, the figuration indicated at A is found in Diego Ortiz' *Tratado de glosas* (Fig. 9) and also in Conforti's treatise, in halved note values, where it is referred to as a 'Mezzo Groppo' (Fig. 10). The figure indicated at A1 bis appears in Diego Ortiz, 'Clausulas en B fa ♯ mi' (Fig. 11).

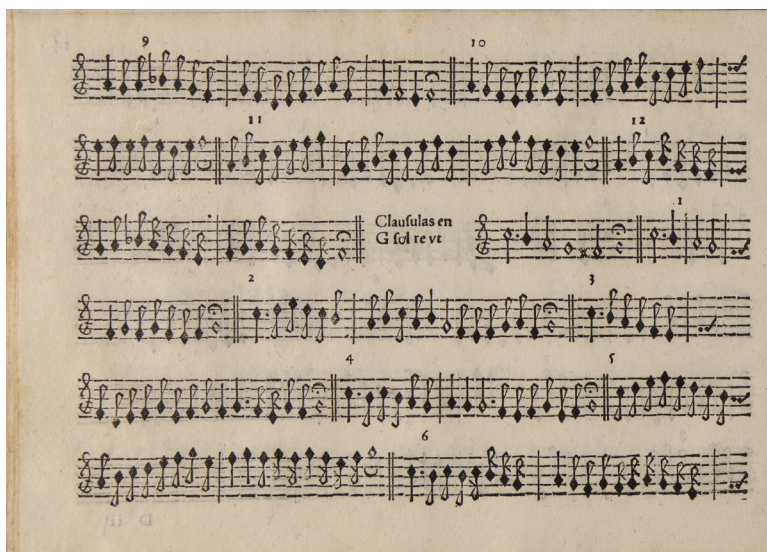
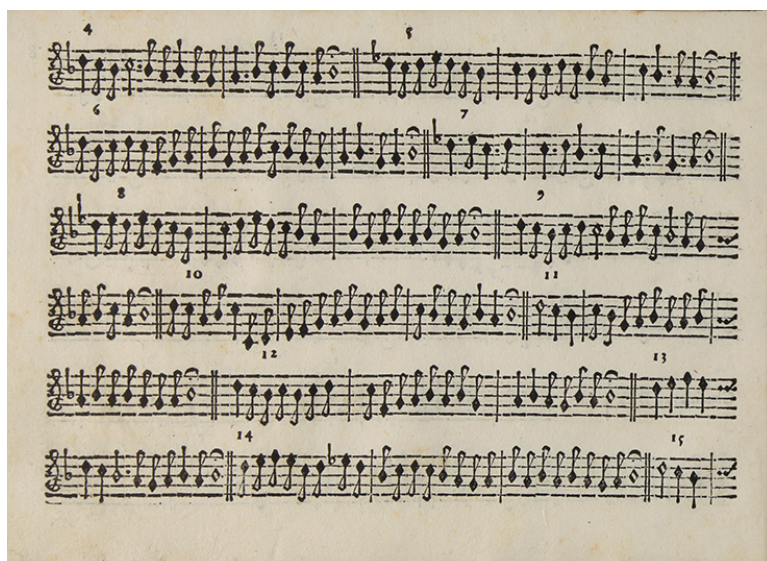


Fig. 9: 'Clausulas en G sol re ut' from *Tratado de glosas* by Diego Ortiz (Rome, 1553), fol. 14<sup>v</sup> (line 4) (© Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, <<http://www.museibologna.it/musica>>).

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- 8 Diego Ortiz, *Tratado de glosas sobre clausulas y otros generos de puntos en la musica de violones / El primo libro [...] nel qual si tratta delle glosse sopra le cadenze & altre sorte de punti in la musica del violone* (Rome: Valerio & Luigi Dorico, 1553), <<http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000037748>> (accessed on 10 July 2024).
- 9 Giovanni Luca Conforto, *Breve et facile maniera d'esercitarsi [...] a far passaggi* (Rome [1593]), <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbc.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_B/B060/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbc.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_B/B060/)> (accessed on 10 July 2024).



**Fig. 10:** 'Mezzo Groppo' from *Breve et facile maniera d'esercitarsi* by Giovanni Luca Conforti (Rome [1593]), fol. 25' (© Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, <<http://www.musei-bologna.it/musica>>).



**Fig. 11:** 'Clausulas en B fa 4 mi' from *Tratado de glosas* by Diego Ortiz (Rome, 1553), fol. 8" (last line).

The appearance of these figures in the treatises serves as evidence of their established usage, thereby enabling contemporary players to employ them in their performances as a means of varying repetitions.

## Bar Lines

Another characteristic of the *Intabolatura nova*, but also (as we shall see) of other sources, is the positioning of the bar lines, which is often unrelated to the metre of the dance. This is particularly evident in the *gagliarde*, where the discrepancy between the implied rhythmic scheme, the metrical indications and the distribution of the bar lines is particularly marked. The function of these vertical lines, as one reads in the treatises, is unrelated to the present-day concept of the distribution of accents. They simply have the function of separating a fixed number of note values and their positioning follows principles different from those of today.

The sense of discomfort that the modern player may perceive when reading these intabulations arises from the habit of considering the bar lines to be means of distributing accents, and not as ways of partitioning quantities subdivided into *case* (chambers) or *caselle* (cells). These aspects have also been remarked on in modern editions. William Oxenbury and Thurston Dart observed that '[w]ith rare exceptions the music is barred regularly with two semibreves to the bar, even in such pieces as galliards which are clearly in triple rhythm.'<sup>10</sup> Friedrich Cerha draws attention to the fact that 'the dances in triple time (galliard and saltarello) are notated in four-beat time, as they were everywhere in Italy until Frescobaldi. [...] It is important for the player to bear in mind that the bar lines are not an indication of metric accentuation.'<sup>11</sup>

On this subject the contemporary treatises refer to durations, times and quantities, and not to accents. The parts comprised between two vertical lines (the *case* or *caselle*) contain a variable number of notes whose overall duration corresponds to a predetermined value. For Girolamo Diruta each *casa* is equal to a breve and must contain two beats (*battute*) or two semibreves: 'to understand better, look at these examples of note against note over a falsobordone in the first mode, intabulated with two beats to the bar (*casa*)'.<sup>12</sup> The content of a *casa* is called *compasso* (measure) or *tempo* (time) by Bartolomeo Lieto: 'and the first thing to do is to set out a set of lines [...] and above them, to make some lines that intersect them, which produce a certain space called a cell (*casella*) [...] so that in every cell one can put a measure (*compasso*)

10 *Intabolatura Nova di Balli* (Venice, 1551), ed. William Oxenbury and Thurston Dart (London, 1965, rev. 1968), 16.

11 *Intabulatura Nova* (Venedig 1551), ed. Friedrich Cerha (Wien/München, 1975), 24: 'Die dreischlägigen Tänze (Gagliarde und Saltarello) sind wie allenthalben in Italien bis zu Frescobaldi herauf im Vierertakt notiert. [...] Für den Spieler ist es wichtig, daß er sich vergegenwärtigt, daß die Taktstriche keinen Hinweis für die metrischen Schwerpunkte liefern.'

12 Girolamo Diruta, *Il Transilvano dialogo sopra il vero modo di sonar organi, & istromenti da penna* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti 1593), fol. 7: 'per maggior intelligentia mirate questi esempi di nota contra nota sopra d'un Falso bordone del primo Tuono intavolato à due battute per casa'; <<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/muspre1800.100422>> (accessed on 29 July 2024).

or time (*tempo*).<sup>13</sup> Vincenzo Galilei, wishing to indicate specific points of intabulated compositions, also uses the term *casa*, by which he means the space between two consecutive vertical lines.<sup>14</sup>

## Keyboard Instruments and/or Lute

By citing the works of Bartolomeo Lieto and Vincenzo Galilei we have entered into the realm of the lute. The sharing of literature among instruments that are musically related in so far as they are ‘perfect’, i.e. suitable for performing polyphony (though dissimilar from the organological point of view), is in particular documented in Spain. In 1557 Luis Venegas de Henestrosa published his *Libro de cifra nueva* (Alcalá de Henares: Juan de Brocar) in which, thanks to a new type of notation that can be adopted by polyphonic instruments such as the ‘tecla, harpa y vihuela’, he effectively creates a common repertoire.<sup>15</sup> This evidence has induced me to consider the interchangeability of keyboard instruments, specifically in relation to the harp and, for Italian music, the lute. Moreover, since, as Christopher Hogwood asserts, ‘these keyboard pieces evolved from the lute repertoire’,<sup>16</sup> it seems fitting to extend the research to the intabulations for lute of a similar nature.

As Robert Floyd Judd points out, the *Intabolutura nova* ‘is analogous to numerous lute books which contain dance sets, and may have been Gardane’s attempt to transfer the evidently-popular lute book repertoire to a keyboard notation.’<sup>17</sup> Already in

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13 Bartolomeo Lieto, *Dialogo quarto di musica* (Naples: Matthio Cancer, 1559), fol. Aiii<sup>v</sup>: ‘e primo si deve ordinare una scala di linee [...] e sopra quelle, farci alcune linee per traverso, le quali producano una certa distanza domandata casella [...] perché in ogni casella se li pone un compasso, o ver tempo’; <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/264659>> (accessed on 10 July 2024). Cf. Dinko Fabris, ‘Lute Tablature Instructions in Italy: A Survey of the Regole from 1507 to 1759’, in: *Performance on Lute, Guitar, and Vihuela: Historical Practice and Modern Interpretation*, ed. Victor Anand Coelho (Cambridge, 1997), 16–46, at 31–2.

14 Vincenzo Galilei, *Fronimo. Dialogo [...] nel quale si contengono le vere e necessarie regole del intavolare la musica nel liuto* (Venice: Girolamo Scotto, 1568), 14, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/257147>> (accessed on 10 July 2024).

15 John Griffiths, ‘Keyboard Tablatures and Imaginary Instrumental Interchange in the Sixteenth Century’, in: ‘*Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt*’: *The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Augusta Campagne and Markus Grassl (Vienna, 2024), 24–41, <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/en/mdwp003-keyboard-tablatures/>> (accessed on 10 July 2024).

16 *Balli per cembalo. 90 Keyboard Pieces from Early Italian Manuscripts*, ed. Christopher Hogwood (London, 2007), x.

17 ‘The Use of Notational Formats at the Keyboard: A Study of Printed Sources of Keyboard Music in Spain and Italy c. 1500–1700, Selected Manuscript Sources Including Music

1546 Gardane had released three prints of lute intabulations of similar content. The one that is particularly striking right from the title-page is the *Intabolatura* by Iulio Abondante,<sup>18</sup> which exclusively contains dances. A significant number of these pieces are concordant with those in Gardane's comparable *Intabolatura* of 1551.

T A V O L A Delli Balli Numero 33			
Pafs'e mezo primo	1	La ispirita Gagliarda	27
Venetiana gagliarda	2	La condrina gagliarda	28
El traditor gagliarda	3	2 z orzi gagliarda	29
La meza notte	4	Quadrin gagliarda	30
El ciel turchin	5	La gasparina gagliarda	31
Lherba fresca prima	6	El burato gagliarda	32
El poverin	7	La canella gagliarda	33
Pafs'e mezo secundo	8	Corneto gagliarda	34
La traditora	9	Tuteparti cor mio caro	35
El picardo gagliarda	10	La ben contenta Paterna	36
Pafs'e mezo terzo	11	Lherba fresca secunda	37
La poverina	12	La ferareja	38
La chara cossa	13	Pafs'e mezo quarto	39
El todesco gagliarda	14	Gagliarda del dito pafs'e mezo	40
Bel fior gagliarda	15	La disperata	41
La fornerina gagliarda	16	Le forze di eroole Paterna	42

Fig. 12: Table of dances of the *Intabolatura* by Iulio Abondante (Venice, 1546), p. [33].

The *Intabolatura* by Domenico Bianchini, on the other hand, is a compilation of pieces of various kinds.<sup>19</sup> Reprinted in 1554 and 1563, it includes not only dances, but also *recercari* and intabulations of vocal pieces of diverse genres.

by Claudio Merulo, and Contemporary Writings Concerning Notations', 2 vols., PhD diss., University of Oxford, 1989, ii, app. A, p. 10, <[https://www.academia.edu/attachments/50221810/download\\_file?st=MTcyMjY5NDI1Miw4MC4xMDkuMjM4LjIwMCwx-MzcxNjE5&s=profile](https://www.academia.edu/attachments/50221810/download_file?st=MTcyMjY5NDI1Miw4MC4xMDkuMjM4LjIwMCwx-MzcxNjE5&s=profile)> (accessed on 30 July 2024).

18 *Intabolatura di Iulio Abondante sopra el lauto de ogni sorte de balli* (Venice: Antonio Gardane, 1546), <[https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL\\_3150023&order=1&view=SINGLE](https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL_3150023&order=1&view=SINGLE)> (accessed on 10 July 2024).

19 *Intabolatura de lauto di Domenico Bianchini ditto Rossetto, di ricercari, motetti, madrigali, canzon francese, napolitane et balli libro primo* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1546), <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/273297>>; <[https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL\\_3844369&order=1&view=SINGLE](https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL_3844369&order=1&view=SINGLE)> (edition of 1563); <<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10867429h?rk=42918;4>> (edition of 1554) (accessed on 10 July 2024).

TAVOLA

CANZON FRANCESE		BALLI			
Aue sanctissima	16	Aupres de vous	6	Pafs'e mezo	8
Recercar primo	1	C'est grand pitie	18	La sua padoana	9
Recercar secondo	2	Il me fuffit	10	Il suo saltarello	10
Recercar terzo	3	Par ton regard	11	Le force d'erculle	11
Recercar quarto	4	Le dur travail	12	Lodejana	12
Recercar quinto	5	Tant que viurai	16	Meza notte	13
Recercar sexto	6			La cara cofa	14
con lei fuffio	7			El lunato	15
O sio potes'i donna	8			santo berulano	17
Vongente dardo	9			Torze saltarello	18
madonna no lo fo napolitana	10				

90832

**Fig. 13:** Table from the *Intabolatura de lauto* by Domenico Bianchini (Venice, 1546), p. 29 (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana. Divieto di riproduzione).

Likewise, Antonio Rotta's *Intabolatura de lauto* is composed not only of dances, but also of *recercari*, motets, madrigals and *canzoni francese*.<sup>20</sup>

TAVOLA

Pafs'e mezo	1	Sal. ditto La fantasia	13	In illo tempore	15
Gagliarda	2	Rose & uole	19	Propter hoc dimittet	16
Padovana	3	Pafs'e mezo alla uilana	20	Sante pazole	17
Pafs'e mezo	4	Sal. cioe Gagliarda	21	Leuati oculos meos	18
Gagliarda	5	Padovana Gagliarda	22	Domnus custodit te	19
Madonna	6	La rocha l'isso	23	In un boschetto	20
Gentil madonna	7	Pafs'e mezo ditto el de	24	Bramo morir	21
Padovana	8	Gagliarda	25	T'anto piu grato e chiaro	22
Pafs'e mezo	9	Gagliarda ditto stradiot	26	In me donni il desio	23
Gagliarda	10	Basso una uoce piu basso	27	Valle	24
Pafs'e mezo	11	Fidels mon dieu	28	Se por ti guardo	25
Gagliarda	12	A qui me doitz ie retirer	29	Recercar primo	26
Padovana	13	Si t'ay ayme legierement	30	Recercar secondo	27
Pafs'e mezo	14	Malheur me suit	31	Recercar terzo	28
Gagliarda	15	Fringotes iemes filletes	32	Recercar quarto	29
Padovana	16	Vnum cole deum	33	Recercar quinto	30
Il saltarello sal.	17	Non ocejor	34	Recercar sexto	31

**Fig. 14:** Table from the *Intabolatura de lauto* by Antonio Rotta (Venice, 1546), fol. 52<sup>v</sup> (© Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, <<http://www.museibologna.it/musica>>).

<sup>20</sup> *Intabolatura de lauto de [...]* Antonio Rotta di *recercari*, motetti, balli, madrigali. *Canzon francese da lui composti & intaboladi [...]*. Libro primo (Venice: Antonio Gardane, 1546), <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb00071964>> (accessed on 10 July 2024).

The following titles of pieces from the *Intabolatura nova* of 1551 are also found in the lute sources described above:

nos. 1–3: *Paß'e mezzo nuovo* – Abondante: no. 1 *Pass'e mezzo primo* and no. 11 *Pass'e mezzo terzo*; Rotta: no. 11 *Pass'e mezzo*

no. 5 *L'herba fresca gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 6 *Lherba fresca prima* and no. 27 *Lherbafresca seconda*

no. 6 *Gamba gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 13 *La chara cossa*; Bianchini: no. 14 *La cara cossa*

no. 7 *Le forze d'hercole* – Abondante: no. 32 *Le forze di ercole Pauana*; Bianchini: no. 11 *Le forze derculle*

no. 8 *Tu te parti gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 25 *Tuteparti cor mio caro*; Bianchini: no. 24 *Torza saltarello*

no. 10 *Lodesana gagliarda* – Bianchini: no. 12 *Lodesana*

no. 11 *Meza note gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 4 *La meza notte*; Bianchini: no. 13 *Meza notte*

nos. 14–16 *Paß'e mezzo antico* – Abondante: no. 8 *Pass'e mezzo secondo* and no. 29 *Pass'e mezzo quarto*; Bianchini: no. 8 *Pass'e mezzo*; Rotta: no. 4 *Pass'e mezzo*

no. 18 *La canella gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 23 *La canella gagliarda*

no. 19 *Venetiana gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 2 *Venetiana gagliarda*

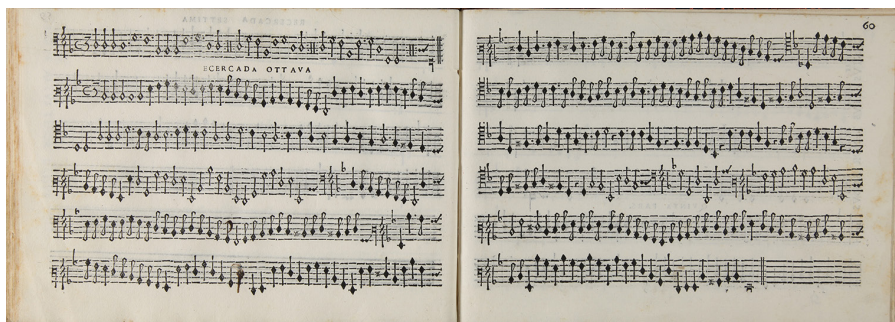
no. 21 *El pouverin gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 7 *El pouverin*

no. 24 *Comadrina gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 18 *La comadrina gagliarda*

no. 25 *Fornerina gagliarda* – Abondante: no. 16 *La fornerina gagliarda*

### A Practical Example: 'La cara cossa' / 'Gamba gagliarda'

In the lute books of Bianchini and Abondante we find two versions of 'La cara cossa' (Fig. 17, 18, Ex. 1, 2), which I have compared with the piece of the same name from the Venetian manuscript (Fig. 16) and the 'Gamba gagliarda' in the *Intabolatura nova* (Fig. 19.) These pieces are based on a bass pattern that is found in many sources and is known by the name of *Cara cossa* or *La gamba*. In his *Tratado de glosas* of 1553, Diego Ortiz inserts some *recercadas* on 'Cantos llanos que en Italia comunmente llaman Tenores', which are repeated as frequently as necessary to allow the soloist to play the variations. Although Ortiz does not indicate the *Tenores* by their names, they are clearly recognisable. The bass line of Ortiz' 'Recercada ottava' corresponds to the bass pattern known as *La cara cossa* or *La gamba*. In its most common form, it consists of a first, longer phrase and two successive semi-phrases, each of which can be repeated. A range of variants can be identified across the different sources.



**Fig. 15:** Bass of the 'Recercada ottava' from *Tratado de glosas* by Diego Ortiz (Rome, 1553), fol. 59<sup>v</sup> (© Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, <<http://www.museibologna.it/musica>>).

In the Venice manuscript the repetition of the first phrase is written out in full, with variations. The two following semi-phrases have repeat signs. Any further variations are left to the performer.



**Fig. 16:** 'La cara cossa', in: I-Vnm Ms. it. Cl. IV, n. 1227 (coll. 11699), fol. 7<sup>v</sup> (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana. Divieto di riproduzione).

Bianchini does not present any variations of the first phrase. According to Franco Fois, the pieces of which the writer of the manuscript proposes only the initial theme in a schematic form are 'to be completed with variations entrusted to the performer's capacity for improvisation'.<sup>21</sup>

21 Franco Fois, *Dominico Bianchini ditto Rossetto. Un friulano musicista e mosaicista nella Venezia del Cinquecento* (Cagliari, 2005), 44: 'temi destinati alla danza da completare con variazioni affidate alla capacità d'improvvisazione dell'esecutore.'



**Fig. 17:** 'La cara cossa', in: *Intabolatura de lauto* by Domenico Bianchini (Venice, 1546), p. 14 (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura - Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana. Divieto di riproduzione).



**Fig. 18:** 'Gagliarda La chara cossa', in: *Intabolatura* by Iulio Abondante (Venice, 1546), p. 13.

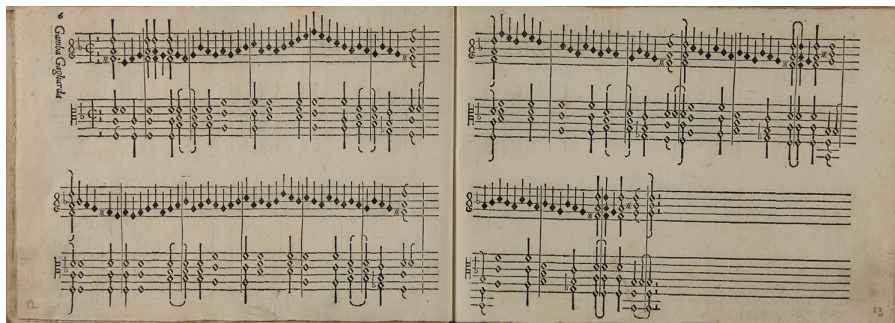
**Ex. 1:** 'La cara cossa', in: *Intabolutura de lauto* by Domenico Bianchini (Venice, 1546). Transcription: Vania dal Maso.

In the 'Gagliarda La chara cossa' by Julio Abondante, we can observe the repetitions written out in a variant form.

The image displays a musical score for a harpsichord piece. It is organized into six systems, each containing a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The music is written in a 3/8 time signature and the key of B-flat major. The first system (measures 1-6) introduces a repeating first phrase. The second system (measures 7-12) continues this phrase. The third system (measures 13-18) shows the beginning of a second, more freely composed part. The fourth system (measures 19-24) continues this second part. The fifth system (measures 25-30) further develops the second part. The sixth system (measures 31-36) concludes the piece. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, accidentals, and dynamic markings such as 'b' and 'f'.

**Ex. 2:** 'Gagliarda La chara cossa', in: *Intabolatura* by Julio Abondante (Venice, 1546). Transcription: Vania dal Maso.

In Gardane's *Intabolatura*, the corresponding piece is called the *Gamba gagliarda*. As in the Venetian manuscript, the varied repetition of the first phrase is written out in full. The second part moves more freely.



**Fig. 19:** ‘Gamba gagliarda’, in: *Intabolatura nova* (Venice 1551), fols. 6<sup>v</sup>-7<sup>r</sup> (© Museo internazionale e biblioteca della musica di Bologna, <<http://www.museibologna.it/musica>>).

## Comparisons With Lute Tablatures: Analogies and Differences

For the purposes of comparing the aforementioned pieces, I have transcribed the lute tablatures into a notation for a keyboard instrument. The following criteria were employed in the transcription:

- In order to align the *finalis* with that of Gardane, I have conjectured a tuning of the lute in D.
- My transcription follows the division by Bianchini of three minims to the bar, according to the metric scheme of the *gagliarda*. To facilitate a comparison I have also done this to Abondante’s *gagliarda*.
- The notes have been distributed between the two hands in accordance with the criteria described by Diruta.<sup>22</sup>
- As is well known, the Italian lute tablature represents the notes to be played simultaneously as if they had the same value, even in cases where they should have different durations. An objective transcription would faithfully present the note values indicated in musical notation, but the result would be lacking in musical sense and cannot be reproduced *sic et simpliciter* in performance on keyboard instruments. In order to reconstruct a coherent musical texture, it is necessary to resort to a type of interpretative transcription that takes into account the technical characteristics of the instrument for which it is written, providing a coherent graphic appearance.

22 Girolamo Diruta, *Seconda parte del Transilvano Dialogo diviso in quattro libri* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti 1609), lib. i, <[http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/\\_D/D019/](http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/viewschedatwbca.asp?path=/cmbm/images/ripro/gaspari/_D/D019/)> (accessed on 30 July 2024).

- In order to provide a better rendering of the musical sense of the pieces, I have also incorporated additions and potential amendments regarding the use of *musica ficta*, in alignment with contemporary music theory.

In the course of comparing sources for the lute of comparable content, certain distinctive features, already identified by some scholars, become apparent. As Robert Judd has remarked, '[t]he transfer of lute genres to the keyboard is also common: keyboard dance music is a direct imitation of similar lute volumes, especially evident in Gardane 1551 [...].'<sup>23</sup> A comparison of Gardane 1551 with the transcriptions, reveals a close connection between lute and keyboard settings: both rely on quick movement in the upper voice and an accompaniment in slower notes. Conversely, the accompaniment assumes a distinct form in the case of keyboard settings, comprising of fifth-octave chords, whereas on the lute it is accompanied by single notes, a consequence of the technical capabilities of the respective instruments. In the aforementioned modern edition of *Balli per cembalo*, Christopher Hogwood, referring to the Venetian manuscript, states:

The earliest arrangements offer a 'blunt' keyboard style with which to reconstitute lute pieces as 'clavier' music [...]; the new style is melodic, homophonic and defiantly 'keyboard', often with a 'stomping bass' in the left hand of octave and fifth which, despite its simplicity, cannot – as sometimes claimed – be designed for children, since the stretch is too big.<sup>24</sup>

## Performance

Before outlining the conclusions I recommend listening to the pieces mentioned above.

The instrument used is a Venetian Renaissance spinet, a copy by Paolo Zerbinatti (2013) after the original built in Venice by Benedetto Floriani in 1571 and preserved in the Musikinstrumentenmuseum der Universität Leipzig. The programme was performed at the Museo San Colombano of Bologna on 27 October 2023 as an integral part of the presentation and was recorded on 1 June 2024 at 51 Recording Studio, Bonavigo/Verona (<http://www.51recordingstudio.it/>).

**Video 1:** 'La cara cossa', in: I-Vnm Ms. it. Cl. IV, n. 1227 (coll. 11699)



Click to play.

<sup>23</sup> Judd, 'The Use of Notational Formats' (see n. 17), i, 81.

<sup>24</sup> *Balli per cembalo*, ed. Christopher Hogwood (see n. 16), ix.

**Video 2:** ‘La cara cossa’ (transcription by Vania Dal Maso), in: *Intabolatura di lauto di Domenico Bianchini* (Venice, 1546)



Click to play.

**Video 3:** ‘Gagliarda La chara cossa’ (transcription by Vania Dal Maso), in: *Intabolatura di Iulio Abondante sopra el lauto* (Venice, 1546)



Click to play.

**Video 4:** ‘Gamba gagliarda’, ‘Cathacchio gagliarda’, ‘Paſ’e mezo nuouo primo, secondo, terzo’, ‘Paſ’e mezo antico primo, secondo, terzo’, in: *Intabolatura nova di varie sorte de balli* (Venice, 1551)



Click to play.



Click to play.



Click to play.



Click to play.

## Conclusions

In the course of this project, a number of questions emerged during the various stages of the research process, including the following:

- Can lute tablatures be useful for keyboard players, and if so, in what manner?
- What are the similarities and differences between pieces written for the lute or keyboard instrument?
- Is this music to be considered functional for the purpose of dance?
- What aspects are left to the performer’s discretion?

In order to respond to these questions, different aspects of the Gardane dances have been considered, such as the chordal progression and corresponding cadences, the metrical movement with the respective note values and consequent ‘accents’ (which are dependent on the value of the note rather than its position within the bar lines). Additionally, the melodic development as a whole has been taken into account.

The observations, presented in a sequential order, could be as follows:

- In cases of doubt, lute tablatures can provide certain solutions regarding repeats. If we compare a piece with the various versions found in the lute tablatures, we can find examples of repetitions. For example, in Bianchini’s ‘La cara cossa’, at the end of b. 8 we find the ritornello sign, while in Abondante’s ‘Gagliarda La chara cossa’, bb. 9–16 are a varied repetition of bb. 1–8. This evidence suggests that the initial eight-bar phrase of a *Cara cossa* or *Gamba* ought to be repeated.

- Moreover, a comparison with the lute intabulations can clarify any uncertainties regarding the placement of the bar lines, which we previously discussed. For example, in Bianchini's version of 'La cara cossa', the bar lines are positioned in accordance with modern criteria, thereby revealing the otherwise concealed metre.
- Comparing pieces based on the same bass, but intended for different sound media, one notes that the organological characteristics of each instrument require the use of appropriate idioms. If one performs the notes represented in lute tablatures literally on the keyboard, one finds a certain inadequacy of musical expression. In Bianchini's 'La cara cossa', for example, in bb. 18–19 and 22–3 the absence of bass becomes particularly pronounced when the piece is performed on a keyboard instrument.
- Performing or listening to music originally conceived for the lute on the harpsichord facilitates a better understanding of the observations made by Robert Floyd Judd, who characterises Gardane's tablature as an 'attempt' 'to transfer the evidently-popular lute book repertoire to a keyboard notation',<sup>25</sup> and Christopher Hogwood's description of the 'new style' as 'melodic, homophonic and defiantly "keyboard", often with a "stomping bass" in the left hand of octave and fifth'.<sup>26</sup>
- The transcription of lute tablature into keyboard notation should not be understood as a simple transfer from one method of notation to another, but should be adapted to align with the characteristics of the target instrument. Accordingly, the initial step in transcribing or adapting a musical piece is to define the duration of each note, thereby establishing the musical texture. To illustrate, one may consider the transcription of Bianchini's 'La cara cossa', bb. 9–10, where the first note, assigned to the left hand, is to be held for the entire bar, whereas in the lute tablature it is represented with the value of a quaver. In addition, it is possible to introduce extemporaneous sounds at the moment of performance. These may be added either as embellishments of the melodic line, or as fifth and octave additions to the bass, as seen in the *Intabolutura nova*.

The evidence presented thus far indicates that there are no insurmountable obstacles to the practical use of this music for dancing purposes. With reference to Bianchini Franco Fois makes the following observation:

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25 Judd, 'The Use of Notational Formats' (see n. 17), ii, app. A, p. 10.

26 *Balli per cembalo*, ed. Christopher Hogwood (see n. 16), ix.

It seems evident in fact that the *Intabolatura* does not propose compositional stylisations by way of dance, but rather ready-made recipes always containing [...] the rhythmic impulse of movement. These themes were conceived for the accompaniment of actual dancing, [...] in a more private sphere either for enjoyment or for the study of steps and choreographic movements.<sup>27</sup>

In this regard William Oxenbury and Thurston Dart are in agreement with Fois. Concerning the *Intabolatura nova*, they specify that ‘There can be no doubt that the whole collection was intended as music for dancing to’.<sup>28</sup>

In his edition of *Balli per Cembalo*, Christopher Hogwood asserts that ‘given the differences between all versions of this music (both rhythmic and harmonic), the player need not be too respectful of the text in performance nor too highbrow about its style.’<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, the performer is at liberty to determine the number of repetitions and the nature of the variations to be incorporated in each repetition. This freedom, however, must be constrained in accordance with the prevailing style and musical idiom of the period. As previously indicated, an examination of the *Intabolatura nova* reveals the presence of recurring *minute* (to use Diruta’s term): formulas that, due to the frequency of their use, form a specific vocabulary. When varying the repetitions I would recommend adopting such models. Finally, for the more experienced performers, I would leave open the possibility of considering these basses as a source of subjects to vary for virtuosos, up to degrees of elaboration such as those of the two *pass’e mezzo* that open the collections – mentioned at the beginning of this article – by Marco Facoli (1588) and by Giovanni Maria Radino (1592).

(Translation of the article and, unless otherwise stated, quotations from the original sources: Hugh Ward-Perkins)

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27 Fois, *Dominico Bianchini* (see n. 21), 89: ‘Pare evidente infatti che l’*Intabolatura* non proponga delle stilizzazioni compositive a mo’ di danza, bensì delle ricette pronte per l’uso contenenti sempre [...] l’impulso ritmico del movimento. Questi temi erano concepiti per l’accompagnamento della danza vera e propria, [...] in una condizione più raccolta per il diletto o per lo studio dei passi e dei movimenti coreografici.’

28 Oxenbury/Dart (eds.), *Intabolatura Nova di Balli* (see n. 10), 16.

29 *Balli per cembalo*, ed. Christopher Hogwood (see n. 16), xi.

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## A Glimpse into the World of Antonio Valente, *cieco Napoletano*

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Paola Erdas

This article offers a glimpse into the world of Antonio Valente, author of the seminal *Intavolatura de cimbalo*, Naples 1576, as well as on the music he wrote and his innovative and unique notation in the history of music.<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 1: Antonio Valente, *Intavolatura de cimbalo* (Naples, 1576), frontispiece.

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1 Antonio Valente, *Intavolatura de cimbalo, recercate, fantasie et canzoni francese desminuite con alcuni tenori, balli et varie sorte de contraponti, libro primo* (Naples: Giosepe Cacchio dall'Aquila, 1576) (RISM A/1 V 33), I-Nn BANC.RARI 1. D 12.

Giulio Cesare Capaccio, Neapolitan gentleman, theologist and erudite scholar, describes the great capital of Southern Italy in *Il Forastiero*, dated 1634:<sup>2</sup>

Maravigliosa è Napoli per gli molti doni della fortuna, per l'opportunità degli stranieri traffici, per la frequenza dell'innumerabile popolo, per lo splendore dell'antica, e potente nobiltà.

(‘Naples is wonderful because of fortune’s many blessings, the opportunities of foreign trade, the multitude of people, and the splendour of the ancient and powerful nobility.’ [translation of this and all other quotations from the original sources by the author])



**Fig. 2:** Giulio Cesare Capaccio, *Il Forastiero* (Naples, 1634), frontispiece.

This lively and cosmopolitan atmosphere is reflected in Valente’s music and, just as the background noise of the city described in the book is still relevant today, Antonio Valente’s works retain their freshness through the centuries.

Antonio Valente was active in Naples at the end of the 16th century. Naples was the capital of the Kingdom of Naples, an Italian territory that was a dependency of the Kingdom of Spain. At that time Naples was second only to Paris in population density and in commercial traffic, a cultural setting that fostered unusual qualities. Valente

2 Giulio Cesare Capaccio, *Il Forastiero*, *Dialogi di Giulio Cesare Capaccio Academico Otioso* (Naples: Gio. Domenico Roncagliolo, 1634), dedication letter, fol. [1<sup>v</sup>]. <<https://www.digitale-sammlung.de/de/view/bsb10052653?page=8,9>> (accessed on 15 July 2024).

was the titular organist of the church of Sant'Angelo a Nilo in piazzetta Nilo, from November 1565 to May 1580. Valente wrote 'Sant'Angelo a Nido' on the frontispiece of his *Intavolatura* instead of 'Sant'Angelo a Nilo', the real name of the church. The most plausible hypothesis for this, is derived from Carlo Celano's description of Naples, published in 1692:<sup>3</sup>

Vogliono molti de' nostri scrittori che in questo luogo anticamente vi fussero state le scuole letterarie, fundate da Federico imperatore [...] e che anco quivi erano l'habitationi de' scolari, perloch  dicono alcuni che havesse il luogo sortito il titolo di Nido.

(‘Many of our writers think that this place was formerly the site of schools of letters founded by Emperor Federico [...] as well as the living quarters of the students, and thus the place was named Nido [nest].’)

The book is now in the Biblioteca Nazionale ‘Vittorio Emanuele III’, the same library in which Valente’s book is kept, and another copy is in the Biblioteca del Conservatorio di San Pietro a Majella.

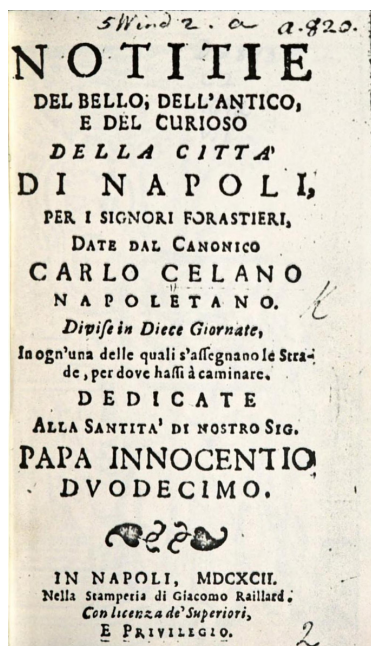
Valente’s salary at this church saw regular increases over the years, eventually doubling what he was originally paid. He benefited from the patronage of Don Geronimo Capece, who was a member of one of the most important Neapolitan families, and was a typical example of a nobleman with a keen interest in the arts.<sup>4</sup> Carlo Celano wrote:

Questo cavaliere fu lo splendore de’ nobili del suo tempo, poich  – oltre l’esercitare perfettamente tutte le attioni cavalleresche, e’l farsi conoscere versato nelle scienze della filosofia, della teologia, nelle facolt  legali e nelle pulite lettere, e particolarmente della poesia – sommamente si diletto della musica, toccando maestrevolmente ogni sorte d’istromento musicale; e, vedendo dipingere e scolpire, anch’egli perfettamente dipinse, e scolpi.

(‘This gentleman was a model of excellence among the nobility. In addition to acts of chivalry and having an aptitude for philosophy, theology, jurisprudence, letters and particularly poetry, he took pleasure in music, playing all kinds of musical instruments, and also learned to paint and sculpt.’)

3 Carlo Celano, *Notitie del bello, dell’antico e del curioso della citt  di Napoli per i signori forastieri date dal canonico Carlo Celano napoletano, divise in dieci giornate. Giornata terza* (Naples: Giacomo Raillard, 1692), 147; modern edition: *Notitie del bello, dell’antico e del curioso della citt  di Napoli [...] Giornata Terza*, eds. Paola Coniglio and Riccardo Prencipe (Naples, 2010), 47, <[https://www.memofonte.it/ricerche/napoli/ -carlo-celano](https://www.memofonte.it/ricerche/napoli/-carlo-celano)> (accessed on 15 July 2024).

4 *Ibid.*, 123–4 (ed., 39).



**Fig. 3:** Carlo Celano, *Notitie del bello, dell'antico e del curioso della città di Napoli* (Naples: Giacomo Raillard, 1692), frontispiece.

Not much information about Valente's life is known,<sup>5</sup> just some details such as a mention in Scipione Cerreto's *Della prattica musica vocale, et strumentale* (Naples, 1601), in which Valente is listed as one of the important musicians of the recent past: 'Sonatori eccellenti d'Organo, della Città di Napoli, che oggi non vivono. [...] Antonio Valente per antichità Napolitano' ('Excellent organ players, of the City of Naples, who are no longer alive: Antonio Valente, Neapolitan by residence').<sup>6</sup> This implies that he

5 Cf. the information on Valente in the articles by Matteo Messori, Art. 'Valente, Antonio', in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 97 (2020), <[https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-valente\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/?search=VALENTE%2C%20Antonio%2F](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-valente_(Dizionario-Biografico)/?search=VALENTE%2C%20Antonio%2F)> (accessed on 29 July 2024), Roland Jackson, Art. 'Valente, Antonio', in: *Grove Music Online*, <<https://doi-10rg-1004737bz01bb.han.onb.ac.at/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.28910>> (accessed on 25 July 2024), and Peter Niedermüller, Art. 'Valente, Antonio', in: *MGG Online*, <<https://www-1mgg-2online-1com-1004790bz01bc.han.onb.ac.at/mgg/stable/23016>> (accessed on 25 July 2024), and furthermore, the comprehensive biographical account in: Diego Cannizzaro, 'Legami tra Spagna e Italia meridionale', in: *RdM* 34 (2011), 185–201, at 193–4.

6 Scipione Cerreto, *Della prattica musica vocale, et strumentale* (Naples: Giovanni Giacomo Carlino, 1601), lib. iii, p. 159, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/463507>> (accessed on 15 July 2024).

was not a Neapolitan by birth, but was adopted by this cosmopolitan city, just as Diego Ortiz of Toledo, or Bartolomeo lo Roy Borgognone of Burgundy.

A further mention appears in a 'bancale', a document issued by a bank which serves as proof of a loan.<sup>7</sup>

Ad Antonio Valente ducati 20. E per lui a Gio Antonio Stefanello cimbalaro dissero per il prezzo de uno zimbalo de 50 tasti le ha venduto declamando essere stato pagato integralmente. A lui contanti. 21 febbraio 1579.

(‘To Antonio Valente 20 ducats. And via him to Gio Antonio Stefanello, harpsichord maker, for the price of a 50-key harpsichord, which he has sold, declaring to have received the full payment, given to him in cash. 21 february 1579.’)

Giovanni Antonio Stefanello or de Stefani or Stefanelli was a very active and rather wealthy harpsichord maker; documents attest to his activity in Naples from 1557 to 1586.

‘Antonio Valente Cieco, the Blind.’ In his preface to the collection Frat’Alberto Mazza, a Dominican friar, illustrates a new notational system which was invented by Valente.<sup>8</sup> It consist of a stylised derivation of the Spanish keyboard tablature in which the numbers from 1 to 27 are used to identify the notes. This preface includes an illustration of a keyboard with a short octave (C/E), with numbers inscribed on each natural key. Additionally, it provides a detailed description that accidental keys are indicated with an X over the numbers. The note values, called *bandiere* (flags), are indicated with the value symbol at the top of the notes in a style analogous to lute tablatures. Notes without any value symbol are a semibreve and are designated as *botta* (beat). Other additional note values, such as dotted notes, are indicated with various symbols. For example, a single dot indicates a double value, two indicate the addition of half the value, three a triple value and so on. The score contains no bars, but only one line that divides the right hand (*D: mano dritta*) and the left hand (*M: mano manca*). Neither a key signature nor a time signature is present. The end of the composition is marked with the word *Finis* (end).

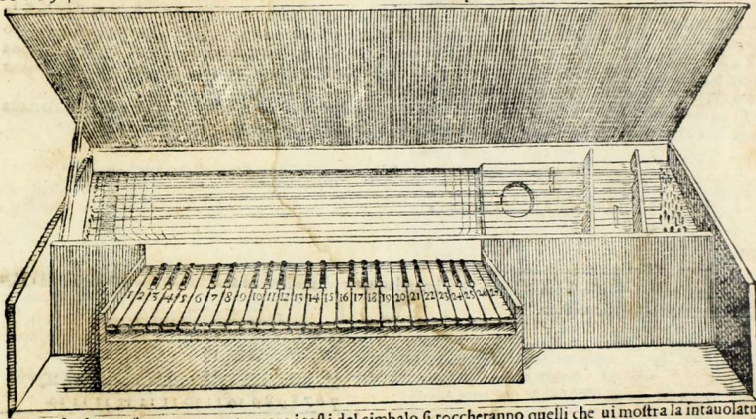
7 Francesco Nocerino, ‘Cembalari a Napoli nel Cinquecento. Nuove fonti e inediti documenti’, in: *Recercare* 15 (2003), 173–88, at 184–5.

8 On Valente’s notational system and in particular its relation to the Spanish keyboard tablature cf. Andrés Cea Galán, ‘La cifra hispana: música, tañedores e instrumentos (siglos XVI–XVIII)’, Doctoral thesis, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2014; Cannizzaro, ‘Legami’ (see n. 5), 194–9; Mario Stefano Tonda, ‘Nuove osservazioni sull’Intavolatura de cimbalo del 1576 di Antonio Valente’, in: *Informazione organistica: Rivista della Fondazione Accademia di Musica Italiana per Organo* 17 (aprile-agosto, 2005), 3–21, at 10–18.



**D**ICONO I Filosofi, che per due cause alcune Scienze, & arti Sogliono esser grate, ò per l'Eccellenza, del soggetto, ò per la facilità & chiarezza di quello, per tãto esser lo la musica una dell'arti già ritrouate, & augmentate, e ridotta in un gran cõpinito da gli atiqui quanto alla parte teorica, e da morderni quanto alla pratica l'eccellenza sua potè esser conosciuta proportionalmente da tutte giunger à quella, appartiene nõ ad un huomo mà à molti, non ad un tempo, mà à diuersi. Ho cõsiderato, e parmi che cosa g' arisissima à molti farei. Se con particolare è nuouo ordine giungessi alla facilità di quella, ò per trouarsi un nuouo modo di facilità, Specialemente intorno la pratica del cimballo, che sempre h' fatto la mia professione, essendomi dunc; occorso tal modo; non hò uoluto tenerlo occulto, ma per gratiararmi à studiosi, comunicarlo, non tanto con offeruanze di parole accomodate, le quali tocca à chi fa professione di lingue, quanto con attende, e à dir chiaramente la nostra intentione di Sorte, che sia cõpresa da tutti, facendo la piú ente noua intauolatura, la forma dela quale è questa.

Prima per maggior facilità, & commodità di quelli, quali uogliono imparare di sonare al cimballo hò uoluto fare questa noua intauolatura in abaco, poi che la musica in altro non è composta, se non in detto abaco, & che ciò sia il uero, non si può accordare forte di consonanza niuna, se prima non si sa la lontananza da vna uoce ad un'altra, & chi di questa mia intauolatura si uorra Seruire per intenderla; Prima, & principalmente bisogna furi uere i numeri sopra de i tasti cioè cominciando dal tasto biancoprimo del basso dalla man manca, & seguitando 1 2 3 4 fin al numero del uicino tasto bianco, come nell'esempio si uede.



Quando dunc; s'haueranno à toccare i tasti del cimballo si toccheranno quelli che ui mostra la intauolatura con li numeri. Però auertite che sono due ordini di numeri fra gli quali ui è una linea, ma quelli di sopra lo non segnati nel principio cõ la D. che denota esser toccati cõ la man dritta, & quelli di sotto son segnati con l'M che denota douersi toccare con la manca, onde quelli tasti si toccheranno con la manca nel cimballo che son segnati nell'intauolatura, & così quelli tocchate con la destra che ui mostra la intauolatura quelli con la D. & quelli con la M.

Però nelli tasti negri si disegneranno nella intauolatura con li semi toni quando sarà necessario batterli, & si

troueranno in questo modo 10 11 13 & così seguitando. 2 3 4 6 20 & tutti, intendendosi uolere toccare quel tasto negro, che stà sopra detto numero doue ritrouerà il detto Semitono, poi che questo segno chiamato il semitono, non serue ad altro se non quando si uol seruire di detti tasti negri

Et quãdo si trouassero in detta intauolatura, li numeri uno sopra l'altro, ò poco, ò assai, che serranno, altro non significa, che bisognano detti tasti esser toccati insieme come si uede nel essemplio de clarãdo, che qlli numeri di basso si dice in man manca, & quelli di sopra in man destra, com'è detto, perche queste righe, che uedete altro non significano, che diuider una mano dall'altra, & quel bastone, che di sopra stã, significa ualere una battuta, nominata semibreue.

Et tutte quelle botte che anderanno sotto il medesimo segno tutte serãno Semibreue, cioè è una battuta l'una, et quando ritrouarete una botte, ò piú simile à questa con una bandera come uedete tutte uagliano mezza battuta l'una, cioè una minima.

21	16	15	15	14	
19	14	12	13	12	14
17	11	10	10	11	
14	8	8	7	9	
12	7	8	6	3	7
10					

Fig. 4: Antonio Valente, *Intauolatura de cimballo* (Naples, 1576), from the preface by Frat'Alberto Mazza, p. iii.

According to Mazza and Valente, this notation is easier: it could be useful to introduce even the most inexperienced beginner to musical literacy and proficiency in a relatively short time. Valente's tablature is different from other number tablatures of this time. His system seems to be a visual simplification used by a man who had a serious eyesight deficit. Today he would probably be called 'visually impaired', but in the 16th century he was considered blind. I asked for medical advice on the basis of the score and the two possible diagnoses were *retinitis pigmentosa* or *evolved glaucoma*. Both diseases are genetic and result in a progressive narrowing of the field of vision, down to the so-called 'tunnel vision' (only frontal vision) and then to full blindness.<sup>9</sup>

Maybe because of his blindness, Antonio Valente's next (and last) publication, the *Versi spirituali sopra tutte le note* was published in a more conventional notation, in open score.<sup>10</sup> In modern times the *Intavolatura* was edited by Charles Jacobs (1973)<sup>11</sup> and Bernard Thomas (1981).<sup>12</sup> These remarkable publications, partly published with editorial criteria now perceived as anachronistic, are followed by an exemplary new modern edition by Maria Luisa Baldassari (2021).<sup>13</sup>

The *Intavolatura* is a compilation of many kinds of 16th century keyboard compositions: we can find *ricercari*, *canzoni desminuite*, one *fantasia* written in a refined and beautiful counterpoint, and a lot of *balli* and *tenori*: variations upon *bassi ostinati*, developed in a way similar to modern pop music: one hand plays a musical accompaniment (in a *chitarra battente* style) with the plain melody and the variations in the other hand.<sup>14</sup>

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- 9 Cf. Paola Erdas, [Liner notes], in: *Antonio Valente (c1520–c1580). Intavolatura de Cimbalo, Napoli 1576*, Paola Erdas (virginal, harpsichord), CD-recording HITASURA HSP005 (2019).
- 10 Antonio Valente, *Versi spirituali sopra tutte le note, con diversi canoni spartiti per sonar ne gli organi, messe, vespere, et altri officii divini* (Naples: Eredi di Mattio Cancer, 1580), <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/907887>> (accessed on 25 July 2024).
- 11 Antonio Valente, *Intavolatura de Cimbalo (Naples 1576)*, ed. Charles Jacobs (Oxford, 1973).
- 12 Antonio Valente, *Ricercars, Chansons and Dances from Intavolatura de Cimbalo 1576*, ed. Bernard Thomas (London, 1980). In addition, complete transcriptions of the *Intavolatura* can be found in two unpublished theses: Joseph A. Burns, 'Neapolitan Keyboard Music from Valente to Frescobaldi', 2 vols., PhD diss. Harvard University, 1953; Mario Stefano Tonda, 'L'intavolatura de cimbalo del 1576 di Antonio Valente e la nuova "notazione in Abaco": studio ed edizione', tesi di laurea, Facoltà di musicologia dell'Università degli studi di Pavia, 2003.
- 13 Maria Luisa Baldassari (ed.), *Antonio Valente. Intavolatura de Cimbalo (Napoli 1576)* (Bologna, 2021).
- 14 On the music of the *Intavolatura* cf. Willy Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music to 1700*, trans. and rev. by Hans Tischler (Bloomington, 1972), 125–7, Joseph Burns, 'Antonio Valente, Neapolitan Keyboard Primitive', in: *JAMS* 12 (1959), 133–43, and the recent publication by Francesco Cera, 'L'intavolatura de cimbalo di Antonio Valente, Napoli 1576: Riflessioni per un lavoro interpretativo', in: *Napoli e l'Europa: Gli strumenti, i costruttori e la musica per organo dal XV al XX secolo. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Battipaglia, 12–14 novembre 2004*, eds. Luigi Sisto and Emanuele Cardi (Battipaglia, 2005), 235–42.



Valente's music is also the ideal material for students: the *balli* and the *tenori* are excellent exercises for the left hand to learn to imitate a jaunty and energetic *chitarra battente*; the contrapuntal pieces like the *recercate* help develop the ability to play the different parts vocally; lastly, the *desminuiti* pieces are useful to practice the art of ornamentation. Valente's music is a good starting point for understanding the Southern Italian School that continues with Mayone and Gesualdo and culminates with Scarlatti.

Valente was a composer who embodies the world of Naples: a diverse, extremely cultured and pleasure-loving capital. His music marks the start of the Baroque era, with a fresh, intriguing style that still has a hint of Renaissance about it. After his death, although his music might have been played rarely, we can read his name in many chronicles, such as in the *Memorie dei compositori di musica del Regno di Napoli* (1840) written by Carlantonio Marchese di Villaròsa.<sup>15</sup>

At the beginning of the 20th century the Sicilian Nino Caravaglios, like Valente Neapolitan by residence, published an essay titled 'Una Nuova "Intavolatura de Cimbalo" di Antonio Valente Cieco' in the *Rivista Musicale Italiana*.<sup>16</sup> Caravaglios was an eclectic musician: the first to conduct in Italy music by Elgar and Mussorgsky, he was also active in the revival of early music. He transcribed the pieces in modern notation in their entirety, hoping that an editor might be interested in publishing them, to no avail.

## Instruments

For the recordings made to present the music of Valente with this paper, I was fortunate to be able to use two antiques instruments, the Virginal Rucellai and the Cembalo Sansevero both in François Badoud collection, Neuchâtel, now in the possession of Mireille Badoud.

### THE VIRGINALE RUCELLAI

For more than four centuries the virginal was kept in the Rucellai Palace, one of the residences of the homonymous family, which, alongside the Medici, was one of the great dynasties of Florence. In the 1980s the palace became a museum and in those years the instrument was bought by a rich businessman and antiquarian who sold it to François Badoud, a fine harpsichord amateur and collector.

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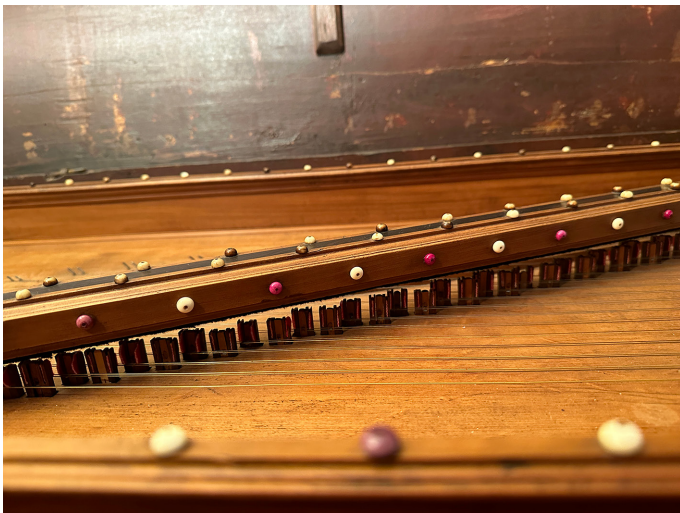
15 Carlantonio Marchese di Villaròsa, *Memorie dei compositori di musica del Regno di Napoli* (Naples: Stamperia Reale, 1840).

16 Nino Caravaglios, 'Una Nuova "Intavolatura de Cimbalo" di Antonio Valente Cieco', in: *RMI* 23 (1916), 491–508.

The instrument was incredibly well conserved and, even before the restoration, it still possessed a magical sound: archaic, soft and powerful at the same time, simply perfect for Antonio Valente. This perfect condition as shown by the extraordinarily beautiful three-layered parchment rose, by the fine wreath of white and red ivory buttons that line the whole border of the instrument, by the jackrail and by the finely carved cornucopias on the edges of the keyboard.



**Fig. 6:** *Virginale Rucellai*, rosetta (Photo: P. Erdas).



**Fig. 7:** *Virginale Rucellai*, ivory decoration (Photo: P. Erdas).

The virginal is inserted into a simple cypress outer case with slots on the bottom that suggest the previous existence of a pedalboard, not uncommon at the time. The nameboard, which features an ivory decoration in the middle and is held in place by ivory nails, bears illegible writing on the reverse side, which has resulted in uncertainty regarding the attribution of the instrument even in the present era. Recently, after the comparison of the mouldings and the cornucopias, Augusto Bonza and Thomas Stainer have suggested that the instrument is an anonymous Neapolitan instrument from the late sixteenth century.

**Video 1:** 'La Romanesca con cinque mutanze', from: Antonio Valente, *Intavolatura de cimbalo* (Naples, 1576), pp. 85–8 [75–8].



Click to play.

### THE CEMBALO SANSEVERO

DISTICHON. / VIVA FUI IN SYLVIS: SUM DIRA EXCISSA SECURI DUM VIXI  
TACUI: MORTUA DULCE CANO



**Fig. 8:** Cembalo Sansevero, nameboard recto (Photo: P. Erdas).

This inscription, written on the front of nameboard, is evidently spurious: it is not well written and the fonts seem anachronistic. On the reverse side, however, the following is inscribed in pen:

*Fatto del celebre Autore Gaetano Carotenuto pegli ... / Sigi Prencipe di Sansevero e Principefsa della [Re]na / An D[omi]ni 1619.*



**Fig. 9:** *Cembalo Sansevero*, nameboard verso (Photo: P. Erdas).

This inscription appears to be executed in a more convincing handwriting but one can see that there are some differences in the two lines, evidently written by two different hands, with different ink. Gaetano Carotenuto was a harpsichord maker active several decades later, from 1688 to 1691.<sup>17</sup> There are two possible reasons for this: either there was another Gaetano Carotenuto active seventy years earlier, or the signature in the top lines is forged, anachronistically attributing it to Gaetano Carotenuto by covering the original name. 1619 is nevertheless a plausible date of construction, or possibly reconstruction.

The instrument is built lightly, with a very acute tail angle and sycamore maple ribs. The removable front board is also made of maple. On either side of the keyboard, there are two blocks made of carved maple each of them representing a cornucopia. The keyboard, of 45 notes, has boxwood key covers for the naturals and walnut for

17 Francesco Nocerino, 'Napoli centro di produzione cembalaria alla luce delle recenti ricerche archivistiche', in: *Fonti d'archivio per la storia della musica e dello spettacolo a Napoli tra il XVI e XVIII secolo*, ed. Paologiovanni Maione (Naples, 2001), 205–26, at 211–12, 214–15.

the chromatics. The key arcades of the diatonic keys have not survived; their traces suggest an elaborate carving – similar to that of the outer part on the crown of the rose – on a blue background. The current restoration by Augusto Bonza has restored the instrument to its original arrangement of a single 8-foot, which, as we have seen in the bank document, was the most widespread type of harpsichord in 16th-century Naples.

A comparative study made by John Koster<sup>18</sup> of the mouldings suggests that the harpsichord is from the same workshop of the set of instruments known as the *maple group*. This includes an Italian harpsichord in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, an ottavino in National Music Museum South Dakota Vermillion (with the same cornucopia as the Sansevero Harpsichord), the clavichord 1540 in Leipzig and a harpsichord from about 1550 in Boston.

**Video 2:** ‘Recercata del primo tono’, from: Antonio Valente, *Intavolatura de cimbalò* (Naples, 1576), pp. 11–15.



Click to play.

These two miraculous instruments were absolutely perfect for Valente’s music: from *balli* to *recercate*, the whole palette of sounds and compositional refinements of the Neapolitan blind man were expressed in the best possible way, taking me, and you, back to a time when Naples shone with art and splendour.

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18 John Koster, ‘A distinctive group of sixteenth-century Italian stringed-keyboard instruments’, paper read at the American Musical Instrument Society’s annual meeting, San Antonio, Texas, May 1992. I would like to thank Augusto Bonza for providing me with information about this paper.

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# Andrea Gabrieli and the Venetian *colorito*

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Sébastien Wonner

Jean-Paul Sartre  
Situations, IV 1964  
Les Temps Modernes 1957

## LE SÉQUESTRE DE VENISE

### LES FOURBERIES DE JACOPO

Rien. Cette vie s'est engloutie. Quelques dates, quelques faits et puis le caquetage des vieux auteurs. Mais ne nous décourageons pas, *Venise nous parle*; cette voix de faux témoin, parfois aiguë, parfois chuchotante, brisée par des silences, c'est sa voix. L'histoire du Tintoret, portrait de l'artiste peint de son vivant par sa ville natale, laisse transparaître une animosité qui ne désarme pas. La Cité des Doges nous fait savoir qu'elle a pris en grippe le plus célèbre de ses fils. Rien n'est dit : on glisse, on suggère, on passe. Cette inflexible haine a l'inconsistance du sable; plus qu'une aversion déclarée, c'est une froideur, une morosité, l'insidieux éparpillement d'un refus. Nous n'en demandons pas plus : Jacopo livre un combat douteux à son adversaire innombrable, s'épuise, meurt vaincu; pour l'essentiel, voilà sa vie. Nous la verrons toute, dans sa nudité sombre, si nous écartons un instant la broussaille de ragots qui encombre l'entrée.

Jacopo naît en 1518; son père est teinturier; aussitôt, Venise nous souffle à l'oreille que tout a très mal commencé : *aux environs de 1530,*

Fig. 1: Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Le séquestré de Venise', in: *Situations IV* (Paris, 1964), 291.

In 1957, Jean-Paul Sartre wrote a long text entitled *The Prisoner of Venice*. The philosopher had a little-known passion for this city and one of its emblematic artists, the painter Tintoretto. Unfortunately, he did not complete the work he had hoped to devote to him. He was more reserved about Titian and Veronese and was sometimes even hard on these two members of the undisputed trio of 16th-century Venetian

painting. His champion was unequivocally ‘the most terrible brain that painting has known’ as Vasari said in his *Lives of the Artists*: Jacopo Robusti, known as Tintoretto, or ‘the little dyer’.



**Fig. 2:** Jacopo Tintoretto or Domenico Tintoretto, *Apollo and the Muses* (c. 1580), Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana, Inv. no. 2014.82, <<https://collections.discovernewfields.org/art/artwork/76671>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).

In Venice, you can't escape painting. It is everywhere, it grabs you and doesn't let you rest. If you pay attention to music, you will notice that both arts are often found in the same places: palaces, churches, *scuole* and elsewhere. Brushes, scissors and sound cannot ignore each other.

Andrea Gabrieli was almost the exact contemporary of Veronese and they certainly collaborated toward the end of the musician's life. On March 3, 1585, a new performance took place: Sophocles' *Oedipus rex* translated into Italian by Orsatto Giustiniani. It was a remarkable event: the choruses were composed by Gabrieli and the performance inaugurated the *Teatro Olimpico* designed by Palladio in Vicenza. Its sumptuous perspective scenery, which still exists, was illuminated by countless oil lamps made of glass. There are also touching drawings of studies for the costumes made by Veronese himself.<sup>1</sup>

1 Cf. Sébastien Wonner, 'Andrea Gabrieli and the Venetian Colorito' [Liner-notes], in: *Andrea Gabrieli. La peine de mon cœur*, Sébastien Wonner (harpsichord), CD-recording L'Encelade ECL 2102 (2023).

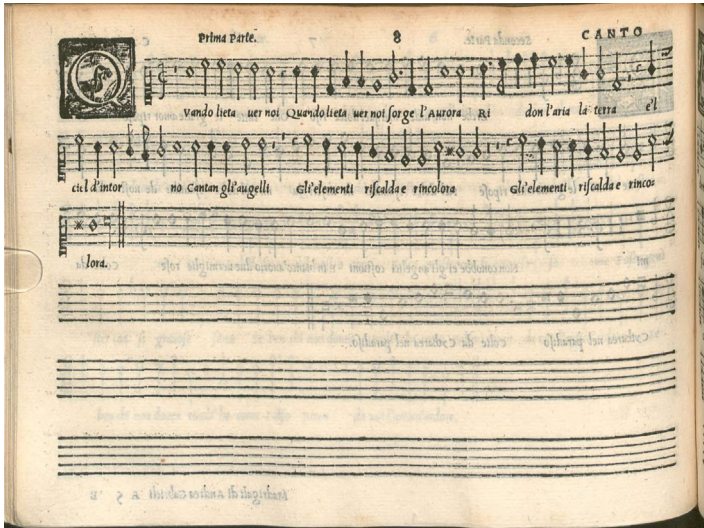


**Fig. 3a and b:** Paolo Veronese, *Costume Studies for Sophocles' 'Oedipus Tyrannus'* (recto and verso) (c. 1584–85), J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Inv. no. 91.GG.3, <<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/103R50>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).

Even though it is difficult to specify the relationships among these artists, our musician lived in a world of poets, humanists and artists. Tintoretto played the lute and had links to not only Gioseffo Zarlino, chapel master of Saint Mark's, but also undoubtedly Gabrieli, one of whose madrigals appears in a painting by Tintoretto.



**Fig. 4:** Jacopo or Domenico Tintoretto, *Female Concert* (after 1566), Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Inv. no. 265, <<https://www.skd.museum/programm/alle-macht-der-imaginatio-tschechische-saison-in-dresden/boehmische-spuren-in-der-gemaeldegalerie-alte-meister/#c32896>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).



**Fig. 5:** 'Quando lieta ver noi', in: Andrea Gabrieli, *Il primo libro de madrigali a cinque voci* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1566), canto partbook, p. 8, <[https://books.google.at/books?id=N5h\\_MW-Ri7wC&printsec=frontcover&hl=de-v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.at/books?id=N5h_MW-Ri7wC&printsec=frontcover&hl=de-v=onepage&q&f=false)> (accessed on 20 July 2024).

Did Gabrieli appreciate the painter's fury, or did he have a stronger inclination towards Titian, the national glory? Was he sensitive to the painter's brushstrokes, sometimes faint and nervous; to the unfinished appearance for which his work was criticized, to his speed of execution, as often dismissed as sloppiness as it was hailed as a proof of genius? We may never know, but there are nevertheless some clues. Our Gabrieli, who was born in the parish of St. Jeremiah and was an organist there, is often referred to as 'Andrea da Cannaregio', the neighborhood where Tintoretto spent much of his life and was buried. Tintoretto's daughter, Marietta, nicknamed La Tintoretta, painted an expressive self-portrait of herself as a musician in front of a harpsichord.



**Fig. 6:** Marietta Robusti, *La Tintoretta, Self-Portrait* (c. 1578), Corridoio Vasariano, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Inv. no. 1890n.1898, <<https://www.uffizi.it/opere/autoritratto-con-madrigale-marietta-robusti>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).

Gabrieli was not, strictly speaking, a 'prisoner of Venice', but his city was in his blood. When he traveled to Munich and befriended the great Orlando di Lasso, musician at Duke of Bavaria's court, Lassus might have given Gabrieli a copy of his song, 'Suzanne un jour', which would become very famous across Europe. Was his keyboard version of this uplifting and moving story composed with one or more of Tintoretto's painted versions in mind? One might well imagine so – but we can also wonder if he preferred Veronese's representations of the story.



**Fig. 7:** Jacopo or Domenico Tintoretto, *Susanna bathing / Susanna and the Elders* (c. 1555/56), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Inv. no. Gemäldegalerie 1530, <<http://www.khm.at/de/object/1564/>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).



**Fig. 8:** Paolo Veronese, *Susanna and the Elders*, Musée du Louvre, Paris, Inv. no. INV 137 MR 388, <<https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010061271>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).

**Audio 1:** 'Canzon deta Suzanne un jour', in: Andrea Gabrieli, *Canzoni alla francese et ricercari ariosi* [...]. *Libro quinto* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1605).

 Click to listen.

In my work to bring this music to life, I confess to having been preoccupied by the question of the Venetian *colorito*. In the great debate between the primacy of drawing (*disegno*) or color, Venice has always been placed in opposition to Florence, which held *il disegno* as the foundation of all pictorial and sculptural achievement through the voice of its greatest chronicler, Giorgio Vasari.<sup>2</sup> Venetian painters prepared their canvases with a brown underpainting, then brought a sense of light to the work using contrasting colors. Sometimes, the great Giorgione even painted directly onto the canvas without a preliminary drawing.

In the mercantile city of Venice, a cosmopolitan gateway to the East, this explosion of chromatic vivacity is amplified by the play of reflections in the Lagoon. One could even go so far as to use the term *chiaroscuro* were it not so inextricably associated with Florence. Faced with the suppleness of musical line and with the physical gestures of an incomparable genius like Gabrieli, it seemed to me that music could not have been external to the energy that the technique of *colorito* brought to art. It would be absurd to think that music would be constrained to the scholastic rigor that we sometimes misleadingly associate with strict counterpoint. There is undoubtedly a dialectical relationship between musical and pictorial flexibility.<sup>3</sup>

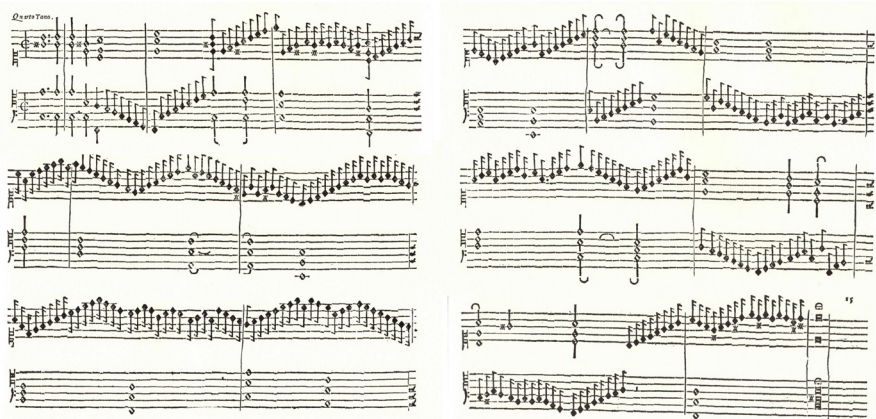


**Fig. 9:** 'Toccata seconda', in: Claudio Merulo, *Toccate d'intavolatura d'organo [...] libro primo* (Rome: Simone Verovio, 1598), pp. 4–6, <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb00094272>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).

2 Cf. *ibid.*

3 Cf. *ibid.*

The movable typeface used for the editions of Gabrieli's keyboard music conditioned the notation of ornaments, which have sometimes been considered stiff and scholastic as a result. But such a conclusion misconstrues a technical and economic constraint of music printing as a defect, seeing it as detrimental to the real implementation of the piece. And yet, we have the counterexample of Gabrieli's contemporary and colleague at San Marco, the organist Claudio Merulo, whose publications benefited from the new technology of copperplate engravings, which gave him complete freedom to write precise ornaments and diminutions. It seems obvious that these two musicians inhabited the same world and that the musical realization of their works, ornamented and softened by improvisation, are surely closer than the appearance of the finished products suggests. I can no longer believe in the old trope of Andrea Gabrieli always being second to Merulo, as though he were the 'boy next door' of the organists of the basilica.



**Fig. 10** '[Intonazione] Quarto Tono', in: Andrea Gabrieli, *Intonazioni d'organo [...] libro primo* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1593), fol 13<sup>v</sup>-15<sup>r</sup>, <<https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-102883>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).

#### Audio 2:



Click to listen.

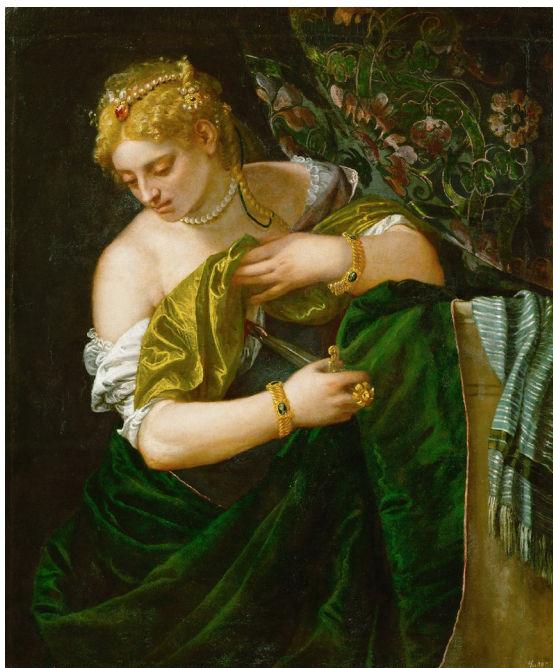
Merulo was unquestionably the theorist Girolamo Diruta's favorite, even though he makes reference to the 'due gran campioni' of San Marco. In his *Transilvano*, Diruta, a former student of Merulo, codifies Merulo's teachings, but he also includes some unflattering statements about the primacy of the organ over plucked instruments like the harpsichord that took me a long time to understand, if not to accept. Why this assumed hierarchy between the organ and the 'strumenti da penna', quilled instruments like the harpsichord, *arpicordo*, and *spinetta*, among others? Above all,

it seems to me that this is symptomatic of the equally inexcusable hierarchy between the guild of musicians (the *sonadori di musica*) and the guild of minstrels (the *sonadori da ballo*), who specialized in dance music but often lacked the ability to read or notate it. With what is surely in some bad faith, Diruta exclusively relates the harpsichord to dance music, even though the facts prove the contrary: Venetian harpsichord making flourished with the production of sumptuous instruments of unparalleled quality by luthiers such as Baffo, Trasuntino, Patavinus, Pisarenensis, etc. Of Gabrieli's six printed collections, the first and one other (lost, but copied in a later manuscript) were expressly intended for the organ and the other four simply specify that they are 'to be played on keyboard instruments' ('per sonar sopra istromenti da tasti'). Expertly constructed harpsichords have been found in palaces and homes – even in the homes of barbers, who had a widely used right to give music concerts, and to teach music.<sup>4</sup>

**Audio 3:** 'Ricerca sopra Martin menoit di Janequin', in: Andrea Gabrieli, *Canzoni alla francese et ricercari ariosi* [...]. *Libro quinto* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1605).



Click to listen.



**Fig. 11:** Paolo Veronese, *Lucretia* (c. 1582/83), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Inv. no. Gemäldegalerie 1561, <<http://www.khm.at/en/object/389/>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).

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4 Cf. *ibid.*

The harpsichord is an instrument that evokes closeness and an intimacy that expresses itself in a world that could not be more different from public performances on the organ. It invites listeners to a privileged place of private enjoyment, where poetic fury can be expressed most naturally: ‘Who will tell the pain of my heart?’ And to say along with Willaert, chapel master of Saint Mark’s, stepping out of the basilica onto the *piazzetta*: ‘Partir da voi vorrei, Tanto son dolci gli ritorni miei’.<sup>5</sup>

**Audio 4:** ‘Ancor che co’l partire. Madrigale a 4. di Cipriano de Rore’, in: Andrea Gabrieli, *Il terzo libro de ricercari* (Venice: Antonio Gardano, 1596), fol. 32<sup>r</sup>–34<sup>r</sup>, <<https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-55399>> (accessed on 20 July 2024).



Click to listen.

(Translation of the article: Philippe Canguilhem)

## References

The Audio examples are also included in the CD *Andrea Gabrieli. La peine de mon cœur – Sébastien Wonner, harpsichord* (L’Encelade 2023). Sound recording by Jean-Michel Olivares, Italian harpsichord by Matthias Griewisch. Special thanks go to Stéphane Breyer, producer.

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5 ‘I wish to part from you, So sweet are my returns.’

# Appendix

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## Programme of the Symposium

'Per Aures ad Animum' – *The Harpsichord in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century II*

Museo San Colombano – Tagliavini Collection, Genus Bononiae (Bologna),  
Conservatorio di Musica Giovan Battista Martini, Genus Bononiae (Bologna)  
in cooperation with

University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (Department of Musicology and  
Performance Studies and Department of Early Music), Museo internazionale e biblio-  
teca della musica (Bologna), HipER Musical Heritage

Bologna, 26 – 29 October 2023

THURSDAY, 26 October

14:00 – 16:00, Museo San Colombano

OPENING

Introduction (Maria Luisa Baldassari /  
Augusta Campagne / Markus Grassl /  
Catalina Vicens)

KEYNOTE LECTURE

Ian Pritchard (Los Angeles): *'Entrano sul Festin  
tutti d'accordo, Con un Luito in tuon dell'Ar-  
picordo': The Arpicordo in Early Modern Venice*

16:30 – 18:00, Conservatorio di Musica

PAPERS

- Martin Kirnbauer (Basel): *Why Build an  
Archicembalo? Attempt at a Response  
according to Nicola Vicentino*
- Luigi Collarile (Basel): *Nicola Vicentino,  
Inventor of New Chromatic-Enharmonic  
Keyboard Instruments*

19:30 – 20:30, Museo San Colombano

GUIDED TOUR

Guided tour of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century antique  
keyboard instruments of the Tagliavini  
Collection by the collection's curator and  
artistic director, Catalina Vicens

FRIDAY, 27 October

9:30 – 12:30, Museo San Colombano

WORKSHOP

Maria Luisa Baldassari (Bologna), Augusta  
Campagne (Vienna), Catalina Vicens (Bologna):  
*Sound and technique in 16<sup>th</sup>-century plucked  
keyboards*

11:00 – 14:00, Museo San Colombano

MASTERCLASS FABIO ANTONIO FALCONE

11:00 – 14:00, Conservatorio di Musica

MASTERCLASS IAN PRITCHARD

15:00 – 16:45, Museo San Colombano

PAPERS

- Vania Dal Maso (Verona): *Bassi ostinati e formule ornamentali nell'Intabolutura nova di varie sorte de balli, Venezia 1551 (I-Bc R.178)*
- Jane Hatter (Salt Lake City): *Transgressive Skills: Musical Knowledge and Performance in the Self-Portraits of Sofonisba Anguissola*
- Edoardo Bellotti (Rochester, NY): *The Rhetoric of Invertible Counterpoint in the Sixteenth Century: Between Keyboard Pedagogy and Performance Practice*

17:00 – 19:30, Museo San Colombano

PRESENTATIONS

- Paola Erdas (Vicenza): *Antonio Valente – Intavolatura de Cimbalo, Napoli 1576 on Rucellai Virginal and Sansevero Harpsichord*
- Sébastien Wonner (Tours): *Andrea Gabrieli and the Venetian Colorito*
- Mario Aschauer (Houston): *The Merulo Toccata in Codex Vienna, Minorite Convent 714*
- Susanne Abed-Navandi (Vienna): *Harpsichord Music by Marco Facoli (1588) as a Source of Inspiration for Performances at Standup Comedy Events of the 21st Century*

SATURDAY, 28 October

9:30 – 12:30, Museo San Colombano

WORKSHOP

Maria Luisa Baldassari (Bologna), Augusta Campagne (Vienna), Catalina Vicens (Bologna): *Sound and technique in 16th-century plucked keyboards*

11:00 – 14:00, Museo San Colombano

MASTERCLASS FABIO ANTONIO FALCONE

11:00 – 14:00, Conservatorio di Musica

MASTERCLASS IAN PRITCHARD

15:30 – 17:15, Museo San Colombano

PAPERS

- Darryl Martin (Vermillion, SD): *From Italy to England – the Changes to Italian Instruments Used by English Players*
- Markus Grassl (Vienna): *Stringed Keyboard Instruments at the Courts of the Austrian Habsburgs in the Sixteenth Century – the 'Italian Perspective'*
- Francesco Nocerino (Naples): *Alessandro Fabri e i suoi allievi. Protagonisti dell'arte 'de zimbararo' a Napoli*

17:30 – 18.30

ROUNDTABLE

Mario Aschauer, Maria Luisa Baldassari, Augusta Campagne, Markus Grassl, Brett Leighton, Ian Pritchard, Catalina Vicens

## Authors

MARIO ASCHAUER is Associate Professor of Music at Sam Houston State University (Huntsville, Texas) where he serves as coordinator of the musicology area and director of the Center for Early Music Research and Performance (CEMRAP). Moreover, he is lecturer of harpsichord and basso continuo at Rice University (Houston, Texas). He holds degrees in conducting, harpsichord performance, and musicology from the Linz Bruckner Conservatory, the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, and the University of Vienna.

Internationally renowned organist and harpsichordist EDOARDO BELLOTTI (†) was a leading expert of Renaissance and Baroque keyboard repertory and improvisation. He combined teaching and performing with musicological research, publishing articles, essays and critical editions of organ music and presenting in international conferences and symposia. He was Associate Professor of Harpsichord and Affiliate Faculty of Musicology at Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester NY.

AUGUSTA CAMPAGNE studied harpsichord and figured bass in Amsterdam and Basel and until recently taught these subjects at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. She completed a PhD in Vienna in 2015. Her research focusses on keyboard accompaniment around 1600 and on music notation and printing in the same period. Her publications include *Simone Verovio: Music printing, intabulations and basso continuo in Rome around 1600* (2018) and *Keyboard accompaniment in Italian music around 1600* (2022) (with Elam Rotem). She has initiated several conferences on the harpsichord in the 16th century and co-edited the resulting publications with Markus Grassl. Besides publishing widely on topics of music around 1600, Augusta has performed and recorded on historical keyboard instruments throughout Europe, North and South America, both as a soloist and as a continuo player.

VANIA DAL MASO is a harpsichordist and scholar based in Italy. A graduate in piano (Padua, 1981), harpsichord (Venice, 1986) and choir music (Padua, 1990), she taught at the Conservatory of Verona. She is the author of *Teoria e Pratica della Musica Italiana del Rinascimento* (Lucca: Libreria musicale italiana, 2017) and combines research into the technique, aesthetics and organological aspects of keyboard instruments and the performance of related repertoires.

PAOLA ERDAS is a Sardinian harpsichordist. After her degree in Venice she studied at the Universität Mozarteum in Salzburg. She combines her performing activities with in-depth musicological studies published by Ut Orpheus Edizioni (Perrine; Lebègue; Cabezón). Her seven solo CDs (Perrine – Venegas – Il Cembalo intorno a Gesualdo

– Lebegue – D'Anglebert – Cabezon – Valente) have mostly been recorded on historical instruments. Paola Erdas teaches harpsichord at the Conservatorio of Vicenza.

MARKUS GRASSL is Professor at the Institute of Musicology and Performance Studies at the mdw – University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. He received his PhD at the University of Vienna in 1990 and completed his habilitation at the mdw in 2010. His research focuses on early instrumental music, the music and musical culture of the French Baroque, and the history of the reception and performance of early music in the 20th century. Among his recent publications are „*Cantare nel gravicembalo*“. *Practices of Ensemble Playing and Accompaniment in Italian Musical Culture c. 1600*, co-edited with Augusta Campagne, Anklaenge 2020/21 (Vienna, 2022), and ‘*Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt*’. *The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, co-edited with Augusta Campagne (Vienna, 2024), <<https://www.mdw.ac.at/mdwpress/en/books-harpsichord/>>.

JANE HATTER is an Associate Professor of musicology at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. Her research examines musical communities in 15th- and 16th-century Europe and intersections between music and visual art. Jane's monograph, *Composing Community in Late Medieval Music* (CUP, 2019), explores what self-reference in music can tell us about bonds shared by musicians with a common pedagogical toolkit and experience. In 2023–24 she completed a year-long residence at Harvard's Villa I Tatti in Florence, where she started work on a new project on visual representations of female musicians in the decades around 1500.

MARTIN KIRNBAUER is head of research and member of the board of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis / FHNW (University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland). Studying musicology at the universities in Erlangen and Basel, he obtained his Ph.D. with a work on a late-medieval songbook in 1998, followed by a ‘Habilitation’ in 2007 on chromatic and enharmonic music in 17th century; since then lecturer for musicology at the University of Basel. From 2004 to 2017 director of the Musicmuseum of the Historical Museum Basel and curator of its collection of musical instruments. Among his current projects is a digital edition of N. Vicentinos famous treatise *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (Rome, 1555) and ‘E-LAUTE – Electronic Linked Annotated Unified Tablature Edition’ (<https://www.fhnw.ch/en/people/prof-dr-martin-kirnbauer>).

DARRYL MARTIN is Conservator at the National Music Museum, University of South Dakota, and also serves as the Program Director for the University's Master of Music in the History of Musical Instruments. Prior to taking that position he had a long career at various institutions on Europe. Following the completion of his PhD at the University of Edinburgh he was curator in Edinburgh and then Copenhagen, before

moving to Gent (Belgium) to a position teaching the making of musical instruments and organology at KASK (Royal Academy of Fine Arts). He started his position at the NMM in late 2022.

FRANCESCO NOCERINO, born in Naples, has, alongside his activity as a teacher, been engaged in extensive archival research aiming above all at shedding light on the history of the musical instruments and their makers. He has also found unpublished music from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries and he also curated exhibitions on early music and musical instruments. The results of his work have been published in numerous essays and conference proceedings on the history, iconography, technology, performance practice, and musical instruments as well as presented in lectures throughout Italy and abroad. He has written entries for *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*.

HEIDELINDE POLLERUS holds a doctorate in art history, museology and history. Her main research interests are the aesthetics of the orthodox icon in avant-garde image concepts, the visual arts and culture of Bukovina in the inter-war period and, in the last twenty years, the decoration of historical keyboard instruments. Two books have been published by Graz University Press: *Der Maler Wladimir Zagorodnikow. 1896–1984, Kursk–Czernowitz–Graz. Von der Ikone zum Graffito* (2005) and *Tasteninstrumente als kunsthistorische Objekte. Cembalo, Clavichord, Spinett, Virginal* (2018).

IAN PRITCHARD, harpsichordist, organist, and musicologist is a specialist in early music and historical keyboard practices. A Fulbright scholar, Ian earned his PhD in musicology from the University of Southern California; his research interests include keyboard music of the late Renaissance and early Baroque, improvisation, notation, compositional process, and performance practice. Ian has released two discs of solo keyboard music and has worked as a continuo player with many leading ensembles in Europe and the United States. Ian is currently based in Los Angeles, where he serves as Chair of Music History and Literature at the Colburn School Conservatory of Music. He also serves as music director of the Los Angeles-based ensemble Tesseract. In 2015 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

SÉBASTIEN WONNER studied harpsichord and organ at the Strasbourg conservatoire. He has performed throughout Europe and in North America. He made some twenty recordings. His recordings of harpsichord works by Sweelinck and Gabrieli have been received with critical acclaim. He is a professor of harpsichord at the conservatoire in Tours where he is currently head of the Early Music department.

## Abstracts

**MARIO ASCHAUER**

### **The Merulo Toccata in Codex Vienna, Minorite Convent 714**

One of the treasures of the Vienna Minorite Convent (A-Wm) is a manuscript codex (XVI.714), created in the first three decades of the 17th century, which contains over 500 pieces for harpsichord and organ. As such, it is one of the largest collections of early 17th-century keyboard music, presenting not only Catholic and Protestant liturgical music, but also serving as a venue for an unlikely encounter between composers such as Claudio Merulo and Girolamo Frescobaldi from the deep Catholic South, and Protestant figureheads Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck and Samuel Scheidt from the far North of Germany and the Netherlands.

Among the many fascinating pieces in the codex is a *Toccata primi toni* by Claudio Merulo, which was also published as No. 2 in the first book of toccate of 1598. Similar to a group of toccate in the Torino *intavolature* (I-Tn, Mss. Giordano 2), Codex 714 singularly transmits a version that differs significantly from the Verovio print. Not only does this version employ considerably less lavish ornamentation, but also the counterpoint is occasionally less polished, and the piece is several measures shorter. The article analyzes the two versions and places the results in the context of the previous work in the field by Robert Judd and Luigi Collarile.

**EDOARDO BELLOTTI**

### **The Rhetoric of Invertible Counterpoint in the Sixteenth Century: Between Keyboard Pedagogy and Performance Practice**

The musical sources, scores and theoretical texts, as well as the original keyboard instruments provide us with a great deal of information on 16th century performance practice. A particular aspect, how music was taught and learned in practice at the keyboard, is awaiting further investigation and forms the topic of this article. Through an analysis of Italian and Spanish sources (Zarlino, Diruta, Banchieri, Cabezon, Ortiz) it is possible to understand and reconstruct the original teaching process, based on the learning and memorization of musical patterns and on the mastery of invertible counterpoint. Meanwhile the same sources reveal the rhetorical structure as an essential background of music composition. This historical pedagogy, very similar to the systems used today to learn a new language, can guide us towards a more creative approach to the repertoire and a fresher historically informed practice.

## AUGUSTA CAMPAGNE

### **Hacking the System II: Notational Conventions in Early Sixteenth Century Italian Keyboard *Intavolature***

It is now common understanding that Italian keyboard *intavolature*, despite using mensural signs, should be considered tablatures. The focus is on the mechanical aspect of playing, on adapting or translating a composition into an idiomatic work for keyboard rather than on the accurate transmission of the composition and its structure. The *intavolatura* notation does not display voice crossings, and includes conventions such as placing stems according to their vertical position in the intabulation or avoiding double stems for unisons. Furthermore, the addition or omission of notes and rests, and the alteration of notes to accommodate diminutions, can obscure the structure of the original composition. Previous research, however, has mainly focused on the period around 1600. In ‘*Universum rei harmonicae concentum absolvunt*’ *The Harpsichord in the Sixteenth Century*, Ian Pritchard examined the conventions of the *intavolatura* notation in manuscripts. In this paper I review the use of notational conventions in *intavolatura* prints from the first half of the sixteenth-century.

An assessment of these prints reveals that the method of intabulating as delineated in the ‘Libro primo’ of Girolamo Diruta’s *Seconda parte del Transilvano Dialogo diviso in quattro libri* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenti, 1609), was well established by the time the first prints of Italian keyboard *intavolatura* notation were produced. As with the manuscripts, there were exceptions in some prints, but these are exceptions to prove the rule and to illustrate the underlying conventions.

## VANIA DAL MASO

### ***Bassi ostinati* and Ornamental Formulas in the *Intabolatura nova di varie sorte de balli*, Venice 1551 (I-Bc R.178), and in Similar Contemporary Sources for the Lute**

The *Intabolatura nova di varie sorte de balli* published in Venice in 1551 by Antonio Gardane deserves careful consideration, as it is the first Italian printed collection to consist entirely of dances: mostly galliards, interspersed with a *pass’e mezzo nuovo* and a *pass’e mezzo antico* (each in three variants), a *saltarello* and two *pavane*.

The article examines the musical aspects of the dances in this set, which are distinguished by their simplicity and immediacy, repetitive rhythms and clear structures. Their idiomatic character manifests itself in the left-hand chords, which fulfil a metrical function, combined with fast flourishes for the right hand, which also feature ornamental formulas found in later sources. These qualities emerge all the more clearly when compared with similar pieces from the lute tablatures of Domenico Bianchini and Iulio Abondante (both published in 1546, again by Gardane): respectively

*La cara cossa* and *Gagliarda La chara cossa*, works similar to the *Gamba Gagliarda* of the *Intabolatura nova*. The performance of these lute pieces on a keyboard instrument (an integral part of the text) helps us not only to identify the formal affinities and the stylistic differences (attributable to the different instrumental idioms), but also to consider the possible uses of this collection.

## PAOLA ERDAS

### **A Glimpse into the World of Antonio Valente, *cieco Napoletano***

The presentation offers a glimpse into the world of Antonio Valente, author of the seminal *Intavolatura de Cimbalo*, Naples 1576, on the music he wrote and his innovative and unique notation in the history of music. Antonio Valente lived in Naples at the end of the 16th century, a cultural setting that fostered unusual qualities. To bring this repertoire to life, I picked two exceptional Neapolitan instruments to use for my CD dedicated to Valente's *Intavolatura*: the Rucellai Virginal and the Sansevero Harpsichord.

Thanks to the sources from the 16th and 17th centuries, we can get a vivid picture of the capital city where Valente produced his music and the kind of instruments he could have played. The Rucellai Virginal and the Sansevero Harpsichord, restored by Thomas Steiner and Augusto Bonza respectively, are the ideal recipients to revive with absolute vividness this repertoire, the living testimony of a golden age of Italian culture in the late 16th century. In order to showcase and perform these two ancient instruments of outstanding historical value and equally extraordinary sound, the video presentation was recorded in Neuchatel, where the two historical instruments are maintained as part of the François Badoud collection.

## MARKUS GRASSL

### **Stringed Keyboard Instruments at the Courts of the Austrian Habsburgs in the Sixteenth Century – the 'Italian Perspective'**

For several decades now, scholarship has collected a wealth of individual, often detailed information on (stringed) keyboard instruments and keyboard players at the courts of the Austrian Habsburgs from the era of Maximilian I up to the time of Rudolf II. However, this information, stemming from quite diverse types of sources, is scattered across the scholarly literature. Therefore, the question is obvious whether and in what respect a more coherent historiographical picture can be achieved. Focussing on the Italian impact and the cross-relations between Italy and the Habsburg courts offers an opportunity to examine to what extent general developments of the

keyboard culture at the Austrian courts can be identified and contextualised in terms of political, musical and cultural history.

The paper first traces the keyboard instruments of Italian origin which were in use at the Habsburg courts and the ways how they reached these courtly establishments. This allows some conclusions to be drawn about the preferences for specific types of keyboard instruments at the Habsburg courts. Based on a comprehensive survey of all known keyboard players at the Austrian courts, be it professionals or (male and in particular female) amateurs, the paper then explores aspects of the social and cultural functions of these instruments, not least in regard to the gendering of keyboard playing and of individual types of keyboard instruments. Finally, it is shown, that an investigation into the keyboard culture at the courts of Maximilian II and Rudolf II reveals a 'modern' Italianate orientation and thus corroborates recent research, which has called into question the long-held assumption of a more 'conservative', franco-flemish-dominated character of the Imperial court music.

## **JANE HATTER**

### **Sofonisba Anguissola at the Keyboard: Performance of Transgressive Musical Knowledge and Artistic Skill**

In two of Sofonisba Anguissola's extant self-portraits she uses musical performance and knowledge to situate herself socially, but a close reading reveals how she subtly transgresses expectations of her musical skills and knowledge. As a young woman seeking advancement for herself and her noble family, Sofonisba tread a precarious path in her early self-portraits. To attract the attention of courtly patrons, she had to exceed expectations of her gender, enticing her elite viewers with her beauty, skill, and visual wit, while remaining a decorous and respectable member of the minor nobility. Like a few other contemporary female painters, she chose to depict the ephemeral act of music-making to demonstrate her painterly skill and intellect, yet as a aristocratic artist her use of music was integral to her self-presentation at court. In both of her musical self-portraits, Sofonisba transgressed but did not break social boundaries, successfully asserting the unique qualities of her body, voice, and mind through depictions of musical engagement.

## **MARTIN KIRNBAUER**

### **Why Should One Build an Archicembalo? An Attempt at a Response According to Nicola Vicentino**

Although a number of authors have already attempted an answer to the question posed in the title (such as P. Barbieri, P. Brink, N. Meeùs, R. Rasch, C. Stembridge,

M. Tiella, D. Wraight and the author of this paper), a convincing answer in the sense of Nicola Vicentino, who is after all the ‘inventore’ of the *archicembalo* and *arciorgano*, is still missing. A four-year research project at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, *Vicentino21*, now provides the basis for an answer in Vicentino’s sense, as the resulting critical edition of his famous treatise *Lantica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (Rome 1555), together with translations and practical exploration, offers a new approach to the text and his intentions. The new reading shows that Vicentino had a very practical and practicable interest – namely the ‘moderna prattica’ already mentioned in the title of his treatise. The ‘antica musica’ also mentioned in the title plays only a minor role in comparison and probably only functioned as a catalyst for Vicentino’s project (at the same time, it shows that Trasuntino’s *clavemusicum omnitonum* of 1606, constructed in a somewhat different way, is a kind of step backwards). Moreover, Vicentino’s introduction of a special notation plays a central role in making his instrument and his music ‘tangible’ in a very literal sense.

## DARRYL MARTIN

### Italian Instruments in England, and Their Adaption for Use

Although Italian-made instruments have been studied in great detail over the past 50 or so years, less attention has been given to the alterations they have been subjected to. In some ways this is surprising – almost no 16th-century Italian harpsichords survive in original condition, although a reasonable number of virginals do. The discussions that do concern the changes to these instruments are often concerning how they were altered to suit musical styles, often a century or so after they were made.

This paper looks at changes that were made to Italian instruments that were specifically exported to England. Unlike almost all other countries, English music required a chromatic bass from the first decades of the sixteenth century.

Although only one Italian instrument can be known to have been in England during the 16th century (Baffo, 1594, known as Queen Elizabeth’s Virginal), there are others that have probably been imported during that time period, and there are records of other instruments being imported as early as the 1530s. By tracing the changes that can be clearly identified in Queen Elizabeth’s Virginal – the first of which probably happened the moment the instrument was received by the royal Court –, it is possible to determine what changes were standard when instruments arrived with a compass that did not immediately suit the requirements of English music.

From the discussion of these changes, it can lead to a consideration of if the sound (timbre) of the instruments, following the changes, was essentially the same as when new, or if the changes created a sound that is identifiably different to unaltered Italian instruments.

## **FRANCESCO NOCERINO**

### **Alessandro Fabri and His Pupils: Protagonists of the Art of the 'Zimbararo' in Naples**

Recently discovered archival documents shed new light on the relationship between the pupils of leading harpsichord builders in Naples in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. In particular, the figure of the court harpsichord and organ builder Alessandro Fabri emerges as the real head of a school, identified as such by the direct testimony of several of his pupils.

Evidence such as the precious Fabri spinet of 1598 in the Tagliavini collection and documents relating to Alessandro Fabri and those who worked in his workshop (including Francesco Beghini, Crisostomo Noci, Paolo Gentile, and Giuseppe Pesce) are examined in order to provide new insights, particularly into Neapolitan harpsichord production at its height.

## **HEIDELINDE POLLERUS**

### **Appearance and Prestige: On Keyboard Instrument Decoration in the Sixteenth Century**

This essay examines selected art historical aspects of the decoration of keyboard instruments in the 16th century. The motivation behind the desired effect of decoration is posited as 'appearance and prestige', which should be understood not only as a means of increasing the material value of the instrument but also as a means to confer dignity and socio-cultural significance. The significance of pictorial and written sources, as well as the testimony of surviving instruments, is discussed. Quotations from contemporary authors offer insight into the perception of meaning and purpose, as well as subjects deemed appropriate for the decoration of musical instruments. Special features of the 16th century are highlighted, such as the practice of decorating with written or printed sayings – so-called mottos – within the context of prevailing intellectual and religious currents. Additionally, it explores the reception of antiquity both in content and form, alongside the adoption of new ornamental styles.

The development of structural elements such as the soundboard and rosette is interpreted within the tension between the religious significance of the time on one hand and the growing economisation on the other, evolving from allegorically charged decorative elements to commercially functional components.

**IAN PRITCHARD**

**Further Notions of Notation: Performance Practice, Composition, and Notational Formats in Neapolitan Keyboard Music ca. 1600**

In an article published near the end of his life, Anthony Newcomb identified how novel formats for printed music – namely, the open score – facilitated a new mode of engagement with musical texts around 1600, specifically a visual engagement that foregrounded ‘examples of musical artifice in the notation on the page’. The music published in this format appealed to an elite audience who valued the ‘the artificioso and esoterica’, with the score becoming a sort of material object that sought to display the entirety of a musical structure, as opposed to being a set of ‘instructions’ used to generate performance. As part of his argument, Newcomb pointed out how this music represented an increase in complexity and notational detail. Among the music Newcomb includes as exemplifying this phenomenon are various prints and manuscripts from the Neapolitan school of Macque, Trabaci, and Mayone. Concomitant to Newcomb’s observation, Neapolitan keyboard music around 1600 proves itself to be incredibly difficult – if not impossible – to perform as exactly notated, often precisely due to the complexity that Newcomb cites. While Newcomb might assume as part of his argument that this music was perhaps not meant to be performed, at least not as its primary notational function, the idea that keyboardists never played this music is belied by extant intabulations as well as indications on the title pages of printed volumes. In addition, recent views would suggest that much of this music was heavily rooted in the unwritten practices of keyboard playing. This is particularly demonstrated by the genre of the *madrigale passeggiato*, one of each of which is found in the four prints attributed to Mayone and Trabaci. These are highly embellished and complex adaptations of madrigals that, despite their notational format, betray clear evidence of the intabulation process as described by Diruta and seen in contemporary intabulations in Italian organ intavolatura. In addition, Newcomb’s argument doesn’t at all address the fundamental problem for the contemporary performer: how does one actually perform this music? In this paper, I argue that, as a corollary to Newcomb’s ‘notion of notation’, we should have every reason to assume that a contemporary keyboardist playing the printed music of Trabaci or Mayone would have facilitated their performance through some sort of intabulatory process. This could entail making a physical intabulation of a piece, or applying the same adaptive and transcriptive techniques spontaneously – a kind of intavolatura alla mente. Logically, this would suggest that the prints highlighted by Newcomb – and in particular those for keyboard – held a dual function, suggesting a fluid notion of ‘the work’ as well as the relationship between notated music and the improvisatory processes that ultimately helped to create it.

**SÉBASTIEN WONNER****Andrea Gabrieli and the Venetian *colorito***

This essay is a musical and scholarly reflection on the interpretation of Andrea Gabrieli's harpsichord music. My aim is to place this composer in the context of the pictorial and poetical world he inhabited in sixteenth-century Venice. Non-musical elements such as the printing constraints of his work and his relationship with literary can guide us in rediscovering the lost gestures and flexibility of his music. Gabrieli knew the city's painters, musicians and poets, and his work was inevitably irrigated and stimulated by this artistic emulation. Even if we have important primary sources such as Girolamo Diruta's *Transilvano*, we still need secondary elements when it comes to making interpretative choices. This essay does not provide definitive solutions, but its aim is to stimulate different ways of playing, depending on the global artistic context. It is connected to the making of a recording devoted to the harpsichord music of Andrea Gabrieli, in an attempt to implement in performance the various proposals made by this reflection.

## Abbreviations

### General abbreviations

anon.	anonymous
app.	appendix
appr.	approximately
ASBN	Archivio Storico del Banco di Napoli
ASN	Archivio di Stato di Napoli
attr.	attributed
b./bb.	bar(s)
bibl.	bibliography
c.	circa
cap.	capitulum
cf.	confer
ch.	chapter
cit.	cited
col./cols.	column(s)
doc./docs.	document(s)
ed., eds.	editor(s)/edited
e.g.	exempli gratia
esp.	especially
et al.	et alia, -i, -ae
ex., exs.	example(s)
f.	and following
facs.	facsimile
fasc.	fascicle
FHKA	Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Vienna
fig., figs.	figure(s)
fl.	floruit
fol./fols.	folio(s)
HHStA	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna
ibid.	ibidem
inv.	inventory
KHM	Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien
lib.	libro/liber
m./mm.	measure/measures
MS	Manuscript
n.	footnote
n.a.	not available
n.d.	no date
no., nos.	number(s)

n. p.	no place
n. pag.	no pagination
n. s.	no signature
p./pp.	page(s)
pt.	part
r.	reign(ed)
repr.	reprint/reprinted
rev.	revised
s.d.	sine dato
tab./tabs.	table(s)
TLA	Tiroler Landesarchiv, Innsbruck
trans.	translated/translation
vol./vols.	volume(s)

### **Bibliographical abbreviations**

AfMw	Archiv für Musikwissenschaft
AMl	Acta musicologica
AnM	Anuario musical
BJbHM	Basler Jahrbuch für historische Musikpraxis
Brown	Howard Mayer Brown, <i>Instrumental Music Printed Before 1600: A Bibliography</i> (Cambridge MA, 1967)
CEKM	Corpus of Early Keyboard Music
CMM	Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae
CSM	Corpus scriptorum de musica
EdM	Das Erbe deutscher Musik
EM	Early Music
EMH	Early Music History
GSJ	The Galpin Society Journal
JAMIS	Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society
JAMS	Journal of the American Musicological Society
JM	Journal of Musicology
JMT	Journal of Music Theory
JRMA	Journal of the Royal Musical Association
MD	Musica Disciplina
Mf	Die Musikforschung
MfMG	Monatshefte für Musik-Geschichte
MGG	<i>Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> , ed. Friedrich Blume, 17 vols. (Kassel, 1949–1986)
MGG <sup>2</sup>	<i>Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> , zweite neubearbeitete Ausgabe, hrsg. von Ludwig Finscher, 29 vols. (Kassel/Stuttgart, 1994–2008)

- MQ The Musical Quarterly
- MusAu Musicologica Austriaca
- New Grove *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, ed. Stanley Sadie, 20 vols. (London, 1980)
- New Grove<sup>2</sup> *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, ed. Stanley Sadie, 29 vols. (London, 2001)
- NJE New Josquin Edition
- NRMI Nuova rivista musicale italiana
- oeml *Oesterreichisches Musiklexikon online*, founded by Rudolf Flotzinger, ed. Barbara Boisits (Vienna, 2002), <<http://www.musiklexikon.ac.at/>>
- ÖMZ Österreichische Musikzeitschrift
- PPR Performance Practice Review
- PRMA Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association
- RBM Revue belge de Musicologie
- RdM Revista de musicología
- RI Regesta Imperii (<http://www.regesta-imperii.de/startseite.html>)
- RIDM Rivista italiana di musicologia
- RISM *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales: B/I: Recueils Imprimés XVIe–XVIIe siècles* (Munich/Duisburg, 1960)
- RMI Rivista Musicale Italiana
- RMI Revue de musicologie
- RRMR Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance
- SIMG Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft
- StMw Studien zur Musikwissenschaft
- TVNM Tijdschrift der Vereeniging voor Noord-Nederlands Muziekgeschiedenis
- VD16 Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts ([www.vd16.de](http://www.vd16.de))
- VD17 Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 17. Jahrhunderts ([www.vd17.de](http://www.vd17.de))
- vdm Verzeichnis deutscher Musikfrühdruce ([www.vdm16.sbg.ac.at](http://www.vdm16.sbg.ac.at))
- ZfMw Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft
- ZGMTH Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie

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