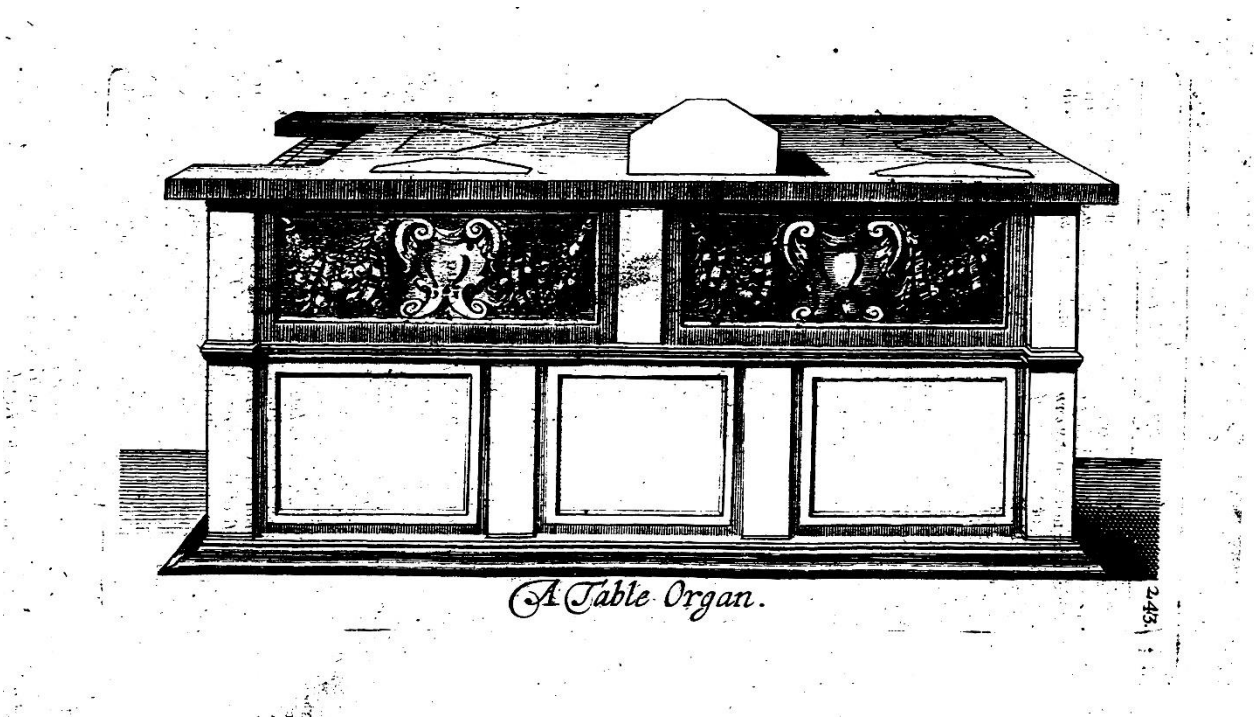
EARLY MUSIC PERFORMER



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COVER: illustration of a table organ from Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument, or A Remembrancer of the Best Practical Musick* (London, 1676), 243.

Editorial

The use of keyboard instruments to accompany ensembles in the seventeenth century can be studied from a wide range of types of sources, from treatises describing how to realise a bass line, to scores and score-like notations that seem to have been used by keyboard players. It is tempting to assume that most players would have preferred a figured *basso seguinte* part, which provided a complete bass and enough figures to ensure correct realisation of the chords while avoiding the inconvenience of many page turns, but in fact the notational formats used were diverse. They included unfigured bass parts, skeleton scores and in some cases full scores from which they were expected to devise a suitable accompaniment extemporaneously.[1] In seventeenth-century England, the principles for interpreting bass parts at a keyboard instrument were described in Matthew Locke's short treatise, 'General Rules for Playing on a Continued Bass', published in his anthology of keyboard pieces, *Melothesia: or, Certain General Rules for Playing upon a Continued-Bass with a Choice Collection of Lessons for the Harpsichord and Organ of All Sorts* (London, 1673). This provided rules for the chordal realisation of commonplace bass patterns and cadences, and consisted, according to Locke, of 'All that's Teachable, as to matter of Ayr; the rest intirely depending on his [i.e. the scholar's] own Ingenuity, Observation, and Study'. However, in much instrumental and vocal music, especially with imitative textures, the expectation was that keyboard players would produce a part that not only filled out the harmony but also participated fully in the contrapuntal fabric, either through part-doubling or by inventing further counterpoints to enrich the texture. They would do this by reading from a full score or a reduction resembling an intabulation, adopting practices similar to those for concerted and multi-choir music where scores and score-like tablatures were used by musical directors.[2]

Building on previous work examining the function of the organ in seventeenth-century English consort music, David Force's article in the present issue of *EMP*, provides further evidence of the keyboard player's central role. He draws upon the organological evidence as well as a fresh look at some of the manuscript sources to build a convincing picture of the leading position of organs and organists in domestic contexts. The shadowing of contrapuntal lines undoubtedly would have had a supporting function appreciated by some of the amateurs who played consorts in private homes. On the other hand, the similarity of some keyboard parts to intabulations meant that keyboard players were often the only performers with access to a complete or near-complete score. They were well placed not only to create their own parts extemporaneously but also to shape the interpretation of the whole ensemble in various ways, including tempi, repeat schemes and dynamics.

Thanks are due to Loren Ludwig for assistance with the present issue.

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October 2021
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[1] For a summary focussed on Italian unfigured basses, see Thérèse de Goede-Klinkhamer, '"Del suonare sopra il basso": Concerning the Realization of Early Seventeenth-Century Italian Unfigured Basses', *Performance Practice Review*, 10 (1997) (<https://scholarship.claremont.edu/ppr/vol10/iss1/8>).

[2] See Peter Holman, '"Evenly, Softly, and Sweetly Acchording to All": The Organ Accompaniment of English Consort Music', *John Jenkins and His Time*, ed. Andrew Ashbee and Peter Holman (Oxford, 1996), 353–82. For organ parts in vocal music, see Rebecca Herissone, *'To fill, forbear, or adorne': The Organ Accompaniment of Restoration Sacred Music* (Aldershot, 2006). For a recent consideration of the practical functions of scores and score-like tablatures, see Jeffery T. Kite-Powell, 'Notating—Accompanying—Conducting: Intabulation Usage in the Levoča Manuscripts', *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music*, 27/1 (2021) (<https://sscm-jscm.org/jscm-issues/volume-27-no-1/notating-accompanying-conducting/>).

'Loud or soft as you like best': 'Humouring' the L'Estrange Manuscripts on the Consort Organ

David Force

Unlike players of the lute, flute or viol, seventeenth-century English organists had no treatise or manual to assist them in their study of the instrument until the publication of Locke's preface to *Melothesia* in 1673, and even that consisted of just ten short rules, being '*All that's Teachable* … the rest intirely depending on [the player's] own Ingenuity, Observation, and Study.'[1] Part of the reason for this lacuna was that the organ, even in a domestic context, was often regarded as an instrument for the professional and was less frequently taken up by amateur players than were other domestic instruments.[2] Wealthy seventeenth-century households frequently employed organists among the professional musicians hired to provide their music: among them were John Hingeston with the Cliffords of Skipton Castle, Richard Cobb with the Bourchiers of Tawstock, Richard Mico with the Petres of Ingatestone, George Jeffreys with the Hattons of Kirby Hall, and many others besides. When only a single professional could be afforded, he was, more often than not, a keyboard player. Organists were usually apprenticed to one another within a tight professional network, and there was thus no real need for a treatise for amateurs. Present-day organists may yet discover, however, a number of clues to performance practice dotted among the writings of a number of contemporary figures such as Thomas Mace, Roger North, Christopher Simpson and Thomas Robinson, from which they may glean some insight.[3] There are also some indications among manuscript sources that can illuminate the subject, and it is to one of the most interesting extant sets of domestic consort music, compiled by the L'Estrange family of Hunstanton Hall, Norfolk, that this article turns to investigate what we can learn from it about the use of the organ in the string consort repertoire. We are particularly fortunate in this case in that we know a good deal about the musicians who compiled the sources, and we also still have the organ on which they played them, which itself can reveal much helpful information.[4]

Hunstanton Hall, near King's Lynn in Norfolk, was the principal residence of Sir Hamon L'Estrange (1583–1654), MP for Norfolk and a staunch Royalist, together with his sons Nicholas (1604–51), Hamon (1605–60) and Roger (1616–1704).[5] As musicians, the L'Estranges were gentlemen amateurs, one of many aristocratic families who practised instrumental consort music for pleasure. Alice, the wife of the elder Hamon, kept detailed accounts for the household from *c.*1610–1654,[6] which include numerous entries from 1611 onwards for outlay on instruments, viol strings, bows, music and music lessons.[7] The L'Estranges also amassed a large collection of books and manuscripts, including a significant number of music scores and part-books.[8] Sir Hamon's sons began their musical education at home, and pursued it further at Eton College, Cambridge University, and Lincoln's Inn.[9] It is Sir Nicholas's activity that is most evident in the acquisition of the music manuscript collection, made through his connections with other local households and associates in London,[10] but Nicholas's younger brother Roger also cultivated a widespread network of musical contacts. Roger North described him as 'an expert viollist',[11] and the sets of divisions that he added in manuscript to a copy of the 1659 edition of Simpson's *The Division-Violist* suggest that he possessed an impressive technique.[12] As a patron of the arts Roger held considerable influence: he promoted the violin virtuosi Thomas Balthzar and Nicola Matteis, wrote prefaces to the 1665 edition of

The Division-Viol and to the 1678 edition of Simpson's *Compendium of Practical Musick*, supported the music meetings of Thomas Britton and was the dedicatee of several published collections by Banister, Lowe and Locke among others, not least among them the latter's *Melothesia*.[13] The activities and associations of the two L'Estrange brothers thus connected the remote Norfolk house closely to contemporary musical activity in London at the court, in the theatre and in the music societies.

In common with many gentry households at this period, the L'Estranges employed a resident professional to enhance their music-making. References in the accounts to 'Brewer' begin in 1627, and by the mid 1630s Thomas Brewer was listed as teaching Nicholas's younger siblings to sing and play the viol. Nicholas referred to him as his 'Mus[ic]: servant',[14] and he appears to be the 'Hand B' copyist with whom Nicholas initially collaborated on the L'Estrange manuscripts.[15] Born in 1611, Brewer was educated at Christ's Hospital where he learned the viol before serving an apprenticeship to Thomas Warner.[16] He was recorded as a singing master at Christ's Hospital in 1638 but was dismissed in early 1642 because he had married against the regulations of the institution, and he appears soon after to have returned to Hunstanton.[17] Brewer's collections of catches and glees were published by Hilton and Playford,[18] and his works for viol consort and organ are preserved in both the Oxford Music School manuscripts in the Bodleian Library and Oxford sources in the Marsh Library, Dublin.[19] Brewer's credentials as a keyboard player are not firmly established, but his role as the L'Estrange's sole musician prior to 1644 makes it very probable that he possessed a keyboard facility. He was joined at Hunstanton in around 1644 by the composer, violist and lutenist John Jenkins.[20] It seems likely that Jenkins had previously been employed at the nearby residence of the Derham family at West Dereham, Norfolk, and he also contributed a significant body of material to the L'Estrange music manuscripts, much of which was copied or cross-referenced from the Derhams' own collection. Six of the extant L'Estrange manuscripts are wholly or partly in Jenkins's hand, and there is evidence to suggest that Jenkins's eight sets of Ayres for two trebles, two basses and organ date from his time at Hunstanton.[21] Andrew Ashbee also considered that 'most, if not all' of Jenkins's many fantasia-suites were composed for use by the L'Estrange household.[22]

In 1630 Alice L'Estrange recorded the outlay of £11 'for a payer of Organs' within the context of a substantial re-furnishing of the house to mark the grant of a baronetcy to Nicholas in 1629.[23] A comparison with the prices of other consort organs recorded prior to the civil wars reveals that this sum is by far the lowest known for such an instrument, being, for example, exactly half the amount paid for the very similar 'Dean Bargrave' organ that was made for the Deanery at Canterbury the previous year.[24] This suggests either that the £11 was only a part payment, or that the instrument was purchased second-hand.[25] If the latter, the organ could be of an earlier date than 1630: some of its features suggest an element of experimentation in its construction, which may indicate either an early example of its maker's output or a transitional design.[26] The organ is a consort instrument of the table variety, meaning that it stands on an open frame with the bellows housed at the very top of the case. Like most seventeenth-century consort organs, it has pipework entirely made of wood and voiced in a very particular manner to provide a harmonic profile carefully designed to complement and blend with the sound of stringed instruments.[27] The maker of the organ is unknown, but the distinctive perspective *trompe l'oeil* design of the façade closely resembles that found on a surviving organ signed and dated by Christianus Smith in 1643. The organ was sold to the USA in 1957 and is now housed at St Luke's Church, Smithfield, Virginia, a late seventeenth-century building that forms the centrepiece of a complex of museums recording British colonial history in America (Illus. 1).[28]

Illus. 1. The Hunstanton organ now at Historic St Luke's, Smithfield, Virginia, USA
(Photo kindly provided by St. Luke's Historic Church & Museum of Smithfield, Virginia)

Left side stops:	Principal Bass [4ft C–b]	Right side stops:	Principal Treble [4ft c'–c''']
	Fifteenth Bass [2ft C–b]		Fifteenth Treble [2ft c'–c''']
	Stop Diapason Treble [8ft c'–c''']		
	Open Flute [8ft c–c''']		
	Stop Diapason Bass [8ft C–B]		

Compass C AA D – c'''

Table 1. Specification of the Hunstanton organ (nomenclature as per the paper stop labels)

The specification is typical of many consort organs and includes an 8ft Stopped Diapason, a 4ft Principal and a 2ft Fifteenth. All three of these stops are divided at b/c', meaning that a different registration may be selected for the left and right hands. There is also an 8ft Open Flute (actually an Open Diapason in construction)[29] provided from c (Table 1).

Much of the L'Estrange repertoire involved the organ. Three of the surviving manuscripts from the household are organ sources and a further three sets of part-books contain works for which the organ is specified in concordant sources but for which the L'Estrange organ book is now missing (Table 2). The works that Jenkins wrote during his time at Hunstanton (the eight sets of Ayres for two trebles, two basses and organ, and the fantasia-suites for one or two trebles and organ) do not survive in L'Estrange sources but seem very likely to have been played at the house.

Source	Scribe(s)	Contents Tr=treble A= altus T=tenor B=bass Vn=violin O=organ [ ]=missing part
GB-Lbl, Add. MS 23779	John Jenkins Nicholas L'Estrange Hand B (?Brewer)	Compressed score and organ part for the two sets of Coprario fantasia-suites, copied 1640s, Vn B O and Vn Vn B O
GB-Lbl, Add. MS 31428	John Jenkins	Score of 21 fantasias for Tr Tr B, 1640s
GB-Och, Mus. 1005	John Jenkins	Score of 122 two-part (Tr B) and 84 three-part airs (Tr Tr B), 1644–5
String parts with a missing organ part:		
GB-Lbl, Add. MSS 39550–4	Anon Hand B (?Brewer) Nicholas L'Estrange	Works by for Tr Tr A T B [B O], copied 1630s
GB-Lcm, MS 921	Nicholas L'Estrange John Jenkins Hand B (?Brewer)	Works by Jenkins for Tr [B O] and B [B O], copied 1640–*c.*1655
GB-Lcm, MS 1145	Nicholas L'Estrange John Jenkins Hand B (?Brewer)	Incomplete set of Tr A T partbooks; includes Coprario's fantasias for Tr A T [T B O], copied *c.*1630–40

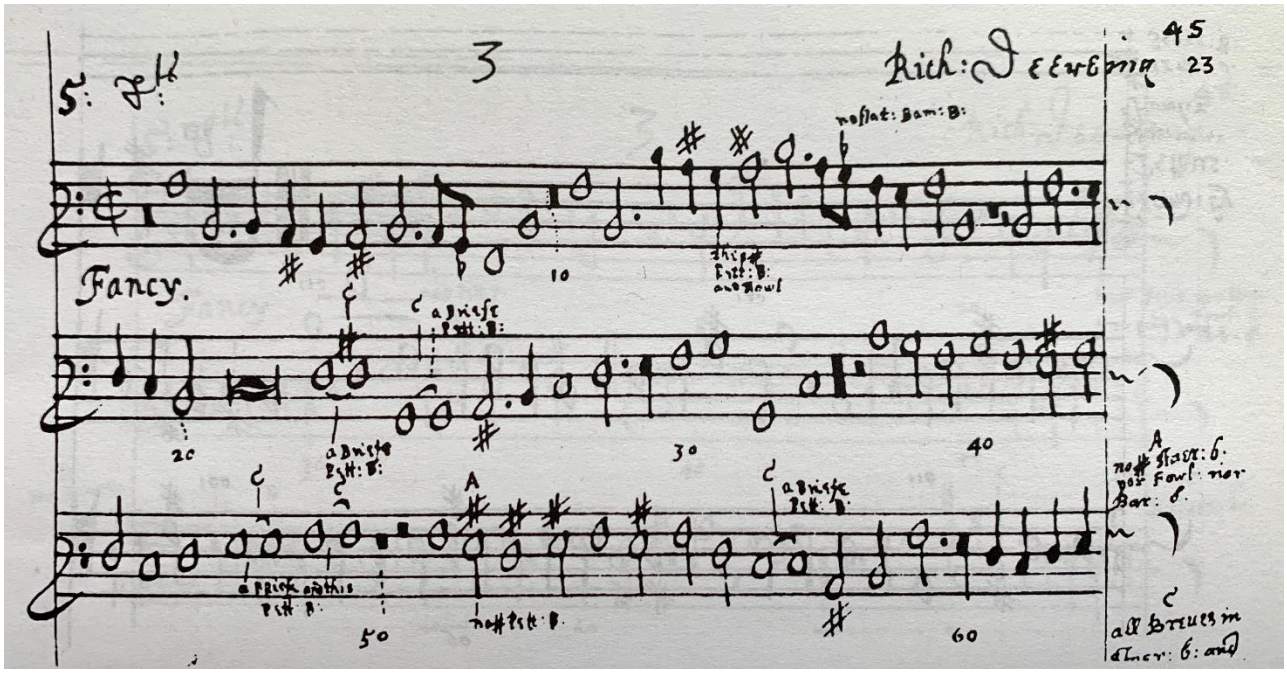
Table 2: Organ sources from the L'Estrange manuscripts

GB-Lbl, Add. MS 23779 contains an organ part by Jenkins to the Coprario fantasia-suites: although Jenkins was not noted as a keyboard player, his organ part follows the typical practice of the time by consisting mostly of a three-part texture comprising a *basso seguente* together with a top line that largely follows the upper treble part and an inner part that bridges the textural gap between the treble and bass viols. For the fantasia movements, the organ follows the English keyboard convention of providing a polyphonic texture with much independent material that, along with solo preludes and interludes, makes the organ an indispensable part of the ensemble. Much of this independent material lies within the middle strand of the organ part, which thus adds a fourth line to the texture. Jenkins followed much the same model for the organ part to his own fantasia-suites although the original Hunstanton manuscripts for these do not survive.[30] In Jenkins's works, the top organ line often ascends above the highest treble viol part, adding further to the depth of the texture. GB-Lbl, Add. MS 31428 and Christ Church, Oxford (Och), Mus. 1005 are autograph scores by Jenkins; although they consist of five-line instrumental staves (as opposed to six-line keyboard staves), scores such as these were often used by organists as the basis of a keyboard part:[31] having an overview of all the parts enabled them to support the other players, or, as Roger North put it, 'a thro-base part may best be played from the score; and if there were nothing else to recommend it but the capacity of a nicer waiting on the parts then displayed, by seeing their movement, it's enough'.[32] This was especially useful in a domestic context where the players included amateurs who would benefit particularly from assistance from the organ doubling or helping their part.

London College of Music (Lcm), MS 921 comprises works in which the organ is specified in the title (although the L'Estrange organ book has not survived), and over half of the works in the incomplete set GB-Lbl, Add. MSS 39550–4 also have concordances in contemporary organ books, suggesting that an organ book probably existed for this set too. There is also a book of two-part arrangements of masque tunes (GB-Lbl, Add. MS 10444) that could have been augmented by an improvised keyboard part in performance to fill out the texture: English organists were often expected to realise unfigured basses, a process made more easy in this case by the relatively straightforward harmony of the music. Improvisation was an everyday requirement for the consort organist and the realisation of inner parts to works such as these was a common practice.[33] More richly scored

works such as those in GB-Lbl, Add. MSS 39550–4 usually had correspondingly denser-textured organ parts to support the viols (six, in this instance); four voices in the organ part was most usual in such cases (sometimes more if the overall texture was largely homophonic), but there would be less polyphonic independence for the organ so as not to cloud the overall texture. Such works are less common in the L'Estrange manuscripts and most involve just two or three viols, no doubt reflecting the personnel most often available to play them at Hunstanton.

Two features of these manuscripts are of especial interest. The first is the meticulous way in which Sir Nicholas, aided by Brewer and Jenkins, checked and annotated his copies against manuscripts borrowed from elsewhere, presumably in the search for the most accurate version of the music (Illus. 2).[34]



Illus. 2: Manuscript annotations in the hand of Sir Nicholas L'Estrange
(© British Library Board, GB-Lbl, Add. MS 39554, p. 45)

This process illustrates the ordered and methodical mindset that also prompted the second unusual feature, namely the detailed and prescriptive instructions for the 'humouring', or expressive interpretation, of the music contained within them. Such markings are exceedingly rare in consort sources of this period, and although their importance has been recognised for many years, their significance has hitherto been considered only in relation to viols. The L'Estrange repertoire is one of great diversity encompassing all the main types of genre for string consort and organ, including polyphonic fantasias and in nomines as well as madrigal arrangements and homophonic dance-based works, and these provided the organist with great scope to adjust his approach in differing contexts. Given that many (indeed, most) of the markings occur in those particular manuscripts from which the organist would have played, it is worth considering how they can contribute to our understanding of the role of the organ and organist within the wider context of our present knowledge of this aspect of performance practice drawn from other sources.[35]

Readers previously unfamiliar with these manuscripts may be guided towards the work of Jane Troy Johnson, who first described their annotations in detail.[36] Many of the markings are in the hand of Sir Nicholas himself; they include suggestions for structuring the movements with repeats, tempo and dynamic directions, and even some suggestions for the characterful interpretation of some movements.[37] Och, Mus. 1005, for example, is a score that includes 84 dance-based movements corresponding exactly to two (of an original three) extant partbooks (Newberry Library (US-Cn), MS VM 1.A18J52c). The works contained within are described as 'of Mr Jenkins his new composing in 1644'. Many of the movements consist of three strains, and a typical direction for repeats

instructs 'I and 2d strai[n]: twice apeece then the Tripl[e]: thrice'. Dynamics are indicated by 'LO' (loud) and 'SO' (soft) below the stave, with dotted lines joining the annotations to the note to which they first apply. Most dynamic changes occur at the beginning or mid-point of strains, but occasionally the change is intended to occur part-way through a long note, in which case an arrow meticulously indicates the exact point at which this is required. In other instances, the dynamics are specified in detailed prefatory notes, such as:[38]

> I and 2d straine twice over, then the Triple twice, the Repet soft (unrepeated the first time) Repeat lowd at last. The I halfe of the Triple but slow. play it but twice. as it is Humourd. then Repeat lowd at last.

Tempo indications include 'very lively', 'Lively time', 'slow Time' and 'DR' (drag), whilst others include relative tempi such as 'Slow measure, betwixt galliard and coranto time.' The overall impression is one of players who were adding a wide range of colour, variety and contrast to the music in a very exact and carefully thought through manner. It is easy to see how such expressive effects could be achieved on viols, but what of the organ? With such detail in evidence, it is very unfortunate that L'Estrange's comments regarding the 'Through Basse' have been struck through so darkly as to be illegible. Nevertheless, it is significant to note that, whilst the score, Och, Mus. 1005, is liberally adorned with annotations, the associated Newberry partbooks contain only a very few dynamic indications, up to a maximum of three per movement. The implication is that the responsibility for direction of the expressive content of the music lay primarily in the hands of the organist rather than the string players.[39] Prior to the arrival of Jenkins, Thomas Brewer was the sole professional musician in the household and would have had responsibility for the organisation of most aspects of the music. This is in line with the evidence relating to the role of other professional domestic organists, many of whom led the ensembles in their households even when playing alongside their employers and social superiors.[40]

Contemporary observers provide confirmation of this practice: Roger North, for example, wrote that, 'in many parts each must conforme, so that some are not loud when others soft', and that 'this must be declared by the master',[41] which idea was echoed by Mace's recommendation that 'the *Organ* stands us in stead of a *Holding, Uniting-Constant-Friend*; and is as a *Touch-stone*, to try the certainty of *All Things*; especially the *Well-keeping* the *Instruments* in *Tune* &c.'[42] In terms of directing the tempo, North wrote that 'in solemne consorts, it would scarce be possible to proceed without some one director of the time; who is comonly the composer or some that knows the composition, and with a proper agency of the hand shews not onely the gross down and up strokes, but the very subdevisions also.'[43] Mace also observed, in relation to the organ, that the '*Performers Themselves* … cannot well Perform, without a *Distinct Perceivance Thereof*'.[44] Such comments suggest the organ's central role in binding the homogeneity of the ensemble. This is probably why works of this kind were invariably referred to in contemporary sources as consorts '*to* the organ' rather than merely 'with' or 'and' the organ. There are interesting challenges implicit in this relationship to the present-day balance of roles between string players and organists in consorts, in which the latter now tend to follow the lead of the former. The organ is often placed behind the viols, whose players are thus out of eye-line with the organist. In modern performance contexts the viols usually face outwards towards the audience, whereas in seventeenth-century domestic contexts the viols would have been grouped introspectively around the organ, the music being principally for the benefit of the players rather than any auditors who may have been present.

Despite their small size, consort organs were capable of producing a wide range of sonorities and dynamic shades for consort playing. The registrational possibilities for the L'Estrange's organ are given in Table 3, here just using the 8ft and 4ft stops, though it is possible in practice that the 2ft Fifteenth was employed too, which would extend the dynamic permutations yet further.[45]

• = stop drawn o = stop off

	B	Tr	B	Tr	B	Tr	B	Tr	B	Tr	B	Tr	B	Tr
Principal 4ft	o	o	•	•	o	o	o	•	o	•	•	•	•	•
Open Flute 8ft		o		o		•		o		•		o		•
Stopped Diapason 8ft	•	•	o	o	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	

Table 3: Useful registrational combinations for the Hunstanton organ 8ft and 4ft stops

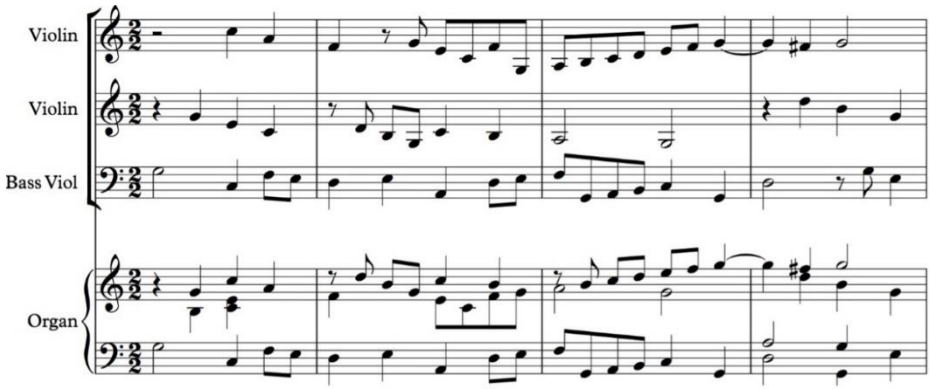
Even with this restriction to 8ft and 4ft stops, it may readily be seen that a range of dynamic and tonal nuances is achievable, comprising both divided and full-compass registrations. A particular feature of the voicing of the consort organ's wooden pipework was the manner in which the upperwork blended with the 8ft Stopped Diapason in such a way as to enhance the harmonic content of the chorus without adding substantially to the overall dynamic output of the instrument.[46] This allowed a variety of dynamic shading to be provided without overwhelming the sound of the strings in ensembles. This is one of many ways in which the consort organ contrasts with the typical modern continuo organ, which, being designed for use in a variety of general-purpose roles, usually employs ranks of pipes that are of noticeably greater dynamic output as they ascend in pitch. The 4ft and 2ft stops on such organs, which often use brighter-sounding metal pipes, are generally too assertive to balance with a viol consort, requiring the player of necessity to limit registration to the 8ft flute alone (resulting in what the viol player Annette Otterstedt once described as the effect of a 'gently purring muted cow').[47] Such organs prevent the organist from employing any other colour or variety. By contrast, due to the particular voicing of their instruments, seventeenth-century consort organists were able to use the full range of their stops and effect dynamic changes without fear of overwhelming the strings. Thomas Brewer thus had the ability to apply a variety of tonal effects to differing areas of the repertoire, where we might imagine that the slower-moving polyphonic works may have benefitted from the richness of the combined 8ft stops and the lighter, faster dance-based works may have employed the brighter 4ft and 2ft ranks. He would also have been able to execute the dynamic contrasts called for by the annotations through the addition and subtraction of stops during the piece.

Illus. 3. Smithfield organ stop knobs, left side. (Photo kindly provided by St. Luke's Historic Church & Museum of Smithfield, Virginia)

Such a practice was achievable through dexterous manipulation of the stop controls: as Roger North described it in his essay *Of Soft and Loud,* '… organs and espinetts doe not so well soften by degrees [as stringed instruments do]; but with a skillful hand and variety of stops, [the instrument] performes it tolerably.'[48] The stop

controls on the majority of the extant consort organs are vertical metal levers which are mounted immediately to the left and right of the keyboard, enabling the organist to manipulate them quickly without taking the hands far from the keys.[49] Two or more levers can be operated simultaneously, and those most likely to be added or subtracted (upperwork and the treble halves of divided stops) are placed on the right, allowing the left hand to continue playing whilst changes are effected. The Hunstanton organ, being an early example, has stop knobs connected directly to the soundboard sliders emerging from the sides of the organ: they are obscured from the player by the case doors when open, so would have been operated by an assistant, possibly the person operating the rear-mounted bellows (Illus. 3). Such a person had an important role to play not just in changing the registration correctly, but also in ensuring that the ebb and flow of the wind supply enhanced rather than disrupted the natural phrasing of the music (this being, in the age of the electric wind blower, another lost art of performance on the organ). The draw of the stop knobs is very short (ranging from 5mm–8mm), such that changes can be effected very quickly. The knobs for the trebles of the Principal and Fifteenth are placed together on one side of the case, which would suggest that these were the stops that were most frequently added and subtracted. This would have allowed emphasis to be given to, or withdrawn from, the melodic line in the treble-and-bass textured works, or when the organ came to the fore in solo passages.

The ability to select either or both of the treble and bass ranges of the stops could also be used to make up for imbalances in the consort. The treble viols are the least assertive in output, and their part in the upper reaches of the musical texture could thus be enhanced by the treble half of the 4ft, or by the treble-compass Open Flute stop, and perhaps even by the treble of the 2ft Fifteenth. Jenkins's desire to emphasise the treble is demonstrated by the way that he doubled the violin parts at the octave in his organ part to the Coprario fantasia-suites in Lbl Add. MS 23779 (Ex. 1). Coprario's suites were written for the violins of the ensemble known as 'Coperarios Musique' at the court of Prince Charles, but there is no indication that any of the L'Estrange musicians played the violin and the effect of playing the upper parts on treble viols instead would have been a less assertive sound. The organ would have helped here by providing this kind of melodic doubling. It is important to remember that on a modern organ the effect of adding higher-pitched stops often adds too much to the overall dynamic level, but on the more subtle consort organ the effect of adding them is a brightening of the sound rather than a significant loudening.



Ex. 1. Coprario: Fantasia from *Fantasia-Suite* no. 4, bars 77–80 (GB-Lbl, Add MS 23779)

The dividing point of the organ's keyboard, like that in other early examples, lies between b and c'. It is significant that, in the organ parts of many of Jenkins's Hunstanton works, the right hand rarely descends below middle-c and the left hand even less frequently ascends above it. Given also that the treble viol parts in consort (as opposed to solo) music also do not often descend below the compass of the third string, tuned to middle-c, the treble half of the divided stops was perfectly placed to double the treble viol parts of consort works, with a contrasting left-hand registration supporting the lower voices. Such a registration would be particularly effective in melody-dominated homophonic textures, including the Lbl, Add. MS 10444 dance repertoire. The lack of the bass to the Open Flute, mirrored in the treble com-

pass of the Open Diapasons in other consort organs, was not the impediment it might at first seem. One obvious advantage was the considerable saving in space that the omission of large open bass pipes afforded in domestic environments, not to mention the lighter weight where portability was required. In practice, the voicing style of the consort organ does not lend itself well to clearly defined tone in the bass, and the basses of 8ft open pipes voiced in this way would speak slowly and indistinctly. Instead, the Stopped Diapason provides a better-articulated bass, even if its tone is somewhat different to that of the open ranks. As Roger North observed, 'It is found that no pipes will make a sufficient base to an organ, but a double viol conjoined supplyes what the faint blast wants, force.'[50] In other words, the strength of the bass viol made up for the lack of weight in the bass of the organ in consort. When one remembers that the treble portion of the organ's stops augmented the tone of the treble viols, we see a kind of symbiotic tonal relationship formed between the organ and the strings in which each complements the qualities of the other.

Once the stronger sound of the violin became more common in consorts beyond the court after the Restoration, the need for reinforcement in the treble receded, and divided stops of this kind became less common. Where they do occur, it is notable that the split is placed between middle-c sharp and d, the latter now corresponding to the violin's D string.[51] The full compass, both treble and bass, of the Hunstanton stops would have been ideal for use in homophonic accompaniments to dance-based movements. There is some evidence that may suggest that the 4ft Principal was sometimes used alone in the early consort organs. Indeed, the oldest surviving example, the *c.*1600 chest organ at Knole House, Kent, originally had two 4ft Principals but no 8ft stop at all. Knole is also the home to the oldest English harpsichord, an instrument of 1623 by John Hasard, and it is possibly no coincidence that this also has an emphasis on 4ft tone with the provision of two choirs at that pitch but only one at 8ft.[52] An advantage of using the Principal on the consort organ, either alone or with an 8ft stop, was that the open pipe tone, designed to blend with and strengthen the strings, was then available throughout the keyboard compass. By contrast, Principal stops on modern continuo organs are often too loud or too bright in tone to be used in this way successfully.[53] Mention of the Sackville's harpsichord at Knole reminds us that alternatives to the organ existed, and although we have no certain evidence that the L'Estranges possessed such an instrument, it seems reasonable to imagine that they did and that in some works it could have provided an alternative to the organ, especially in the lighter, dance-based repertoire. As Thomas Mace recorded in 1676, 'when we would be most *Ayrey, Jocond, Lively,* and *Spruce;* Then we had *Choice,* and *Singular Consorts,* either for 2,3,or 4 *Parts,* but not to the *Organ* (as many (now a days) *Improperly,* and *Unadvisedly* (perform such like *Consorts* with) but to the *Harpsichon*.'[54] Mace's protestation provides evidence that the organ was indeed often used in practice in the lighter dance-based repertoire, even though the percussive, non-sustaining nature of the harpsichord (the 'clink like a touch upon a ketle', as Roger North put it)[55] was often felt to be a better match to rhythmically incisive, homophonic textures. For those players lower down the social scale without the funds to procure an organ, the use of the harpsichord would of course have been a necessity, but where both were available, the manuscript sources are often clear as to which is expected. The manuscripts of the North family at Kirtling Hall in Cambridgeshire, for example, who were also operating in the 1640s, include specific directions for works 'to ye Organ', 'to The Harpsecord' and also 'without ye Organ' when neither was required.[56] It is curious that the meticulous Sir Nicholas L'Estrange left no similar instructions among his annotations – unless his crossed-out notes on the 'Through Basse' once did so.

The annotations in the L'Estrange manuscripts are by no means an exhaustive guide to seventeenth-century consort organ technique, and many of the techniques typically employed by the consort organist go unremarked in them, but we can reasonably assume that these would also have been employed in performance at Hunstanton. Among these techniques we might list the realisation of unfigured basses (as required in the repertoire from GB-Lbl, Add. MS 10444)[57] and the construction of an organ part from a score (such as from GB-Och, Mus. 1005 and GB-Lbl, Add. MS 31428).[58] Improvisation of a polyphonic texture was also an important feature of English keyboard con-

sort playing prior to the Restoration, and it is possible that, as a trained organist, Brewer would have done this in the Coprario fantasia-suites using the compressed score layer of GB-Lbl, Add. MS 23779,[59] even though, as was the case in so many other sources from amateur playing contexts, Jenkins also provided a fully written-out organ part for the benefit of those players not trained in those techniques.[60] What is of particular note in the L'Estrange manuscripts is the way in which the potential for 'humouring' on the Hunstanton organ contrasts with the self-effacing and unvarying way in which the organ is so often used in present-day consort playing. The registrational possibilities of the Hunstanton organ, enhanced by the divided stops and the carefully conceived voicing of the pipework, would have enabled a much greater degree of colour and contrast in consort (without overwhelming the strings) than modern continuo organs do.

The question remains as to whether the practices evident at Hunstanton Hall were typical of pre-Restoration consort playing or whether they were a peculiarity of this particular household. The evidence from manuscript sources from elsewhere does not directly assist us insofar as, unlike today, it was not the practice of seventeenth-century consort musicians to annotate their parts to any great extent, even with such basic markings as bowings or dynamics. This, though, does not mean that they played in an expressionless and unvaried way. Indeed, nearly all the English musical treatises of the period touch on matters relating to 'humour', 'affection', 'relysh' or 'pashionate play',[61] and the complexities of ornamentation or 'gracing' and the expressive potential of improvised genres such as divisions were discussed by many in great detail yet with relatively few additional annotations regarding these aspects of the music ever finding their way on to manuscript pages. Without a specific English treatise on organ playing, it is even more difficult to know to what extent the organ was expected to take its part in this aspect of performance in the wider context, even though there are passing indications in many sources, some of which have been mentioned here, to suggest that it did indeed do so. The L'Estranges may have been unusual in annotating their manuscripts to the extent they did, but they were probably not unusual in introducing variety, contrast and expressive elements into their playing. In the context of a performance practice that was not singularly reliant on notation but employed many elements of spontaneous invention in its rendition of features such as gracing, division playing and the improvisation of keyboard parts, it would be consistent to expect that other expressive devices were introduced in a similarly ad hoc manner in performance. The manner in which the L'Estranges' annotations are distributed among their partbooks reveals that the organ and organist were central in leading this process.

If any doubt remains with regard to the expressive use of keyboards in the L'Estrange household, then a postlude to this investigation is provided by the presence by the time of a 1675 inventory of a 'pedal harpeichon' in the music room along with the organ and viols.[62] The pedal was a type of harpsichord with extra choirs of strings that could be added or subtracted by means of a series of foot pedals, thus allowing dynamic contrasts to be achieved as well as rudimentary *crescendi* and *diminuendi*. Thomas Mace, who also owned such an instrument, said that it added '*Admirable Sweetness and Humour, either for a Private, or Consort use.*'[63] Mace claimed the pedal to be the invention of John Hayward, an instrument maker who, according to Sir John Hawkins, was based in nearby Norwich.[64] The only other known owner of a pedal outside the court[65] was, according to Mace, his former pupil Sir Robert Bolles of Scampton Hall, Lincolnshire, who had two.[66] Mace claimed the pedal was 'of a *Late Invention*' in 1676,[67] but the first record of it actually occurs in 1636:[68] it is probably no coincidence that Roger L'Estrange was at Cambridge University contemporaneously with Thomas Mace and Robert Bolles in the mid 1630s, and the three were quite probably acquainted through their common musical interests.[69] One can easily imagine how the three young men might have enjoyed discovering the newly invented pedal together. The presence of such a rare keyboard instrument as the pedal at Hunstanton – one expressly designed '*to Sound*, either *Soft* or *Loud*' –[70] in conjunction with the detailed expressive annotations of the L'Estrange manuscripts serves to strengthen the hypothesis that the organ would also have been expected to play its full part in the 'humouring' of the music both at Hunstanton and elsewhere.

[1] Matthew Locke, *Melothesia, or, Certain General Rules for Playing upon a Continued-Bass with a Choice Collection of Lessons for the Harpsichord and Organ of All Sorts…* (London, 1673), 8.
[2] For a discussion of domestic organs and organists, see David Force, "'A Holding, Uniting-Constant Friend": the Organ in Seventeenth-Century English Domestic Music', Ph.D. thesis (Open University, 2019).
[3] For such sources see Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument, or a Remembrancer of the best Practical Musick…* (London, 1676); the writings of Roger North on music in *Roger North on Music*, ed. John Wilson (London, 1959); Christopher Simpson, *The Division-Viol or the Art of playing Ex-tempore on a Ground* (London, 1665); Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musick* (London, 1603).
[4] For other articles on these sources, see Pamela Willetts, 'Sir Nicholas Le Strange and John Jenkins', *Music & Letters*, 42 (1961), 30–43; Jane Johnson, 'How to "Humour" John Jenkins's Three-Part Dances: Performance Directions in a Newberry Library MS', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 20 (1967), 197–208; Andrew Ashbee, 'A Further Look at Some of the Le Strange Manuscripts', *Chelys*, 5 (1974) 24–41.
[5] For an account of the L'Estrange household, see Elizabeth Griffiths and Jane Whittle, *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth Century: The World of Alice Le Strange* (Oxford, 2012).
[6] Norfolk Records Office (NRO) LEST P7 (L'Estrange account book 1613–45). See Griffiths and Whittle, *Consumption and Gender*, 28–33.
[7] NRO LEST P6 (L'Estrange account book 1606–21). See Andrew Ashbee, "'My Fiddle is a Bass Viol": Music in the Life of Roger L'Estrange', *Roger L'Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture*, ed. Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch (Aldershot, 2008), 149–66 at 149–51.
[8] For further details of the L'Estrange book collection see Griffiths and Whittle, *Consumption and Gender*, 196–8.
[9] NRO LEST P7. See Ashbee, "'My Fiddle is a Bass Viol"', 151 and Griffiths and Whittle, *Consumption and Gender*, 176–8.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Wilson *Roger North*, 355.
[12] Bodleian Library printed book Mus. 184.c.8.
[13] Ashbee, "'My Fiddle is a Bass Viol"', 155–9.
[14] GB-Lbl Harley MS 6395 (L'Estrange's *Merry Passages and Jeasts,* story no. 578).
[15] The evidence is presented in Ashbee, 'A Further Look', 24–41.
[16] If Brewer served a typical seven-year apprenticeship from the age of 14, he cannot have been available to the L'Estranges on a professional basis until 1633, but he may have had some informal connection with them previously.
[17] Andrew Ashbee, 'The Transmission of Consort Music in Some Seventeenth-Century English Manuscripts', *John Jenkins and his Time: Studies in English Consort Music*, ed. Andrew Ashbee and Peter Holman (Oxford, 1996), 243–70, at 257.
[18] e.g *Catch that Catch Can*, ed. John Hilton (London, 1652; 2nd edition, 1658).
[19] These include 28 dance-based works and six fantasias for four viols and organ, organ parts for the former being found in GB-Ob, MS Mus. Sch. E.346 and for the latter in GB-Ob, MS Mus. Sch. C.100a.
[20] Ashbee, 'A Further Look', 25.
[21] Andrew Ashbee, *The Harmonious Musick of John Jenkins: Volume One: The Fantasias for Viols* (London, 1992), 59–60.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Griffiths and Whittle, *Consumption and Gender*, 226.
[24] James Collier, 'Dean Bargrave's Organ at Canterbury', *Journal of the British Institute of Organ Studies*, 21 (1997), 56–74, at 72.
[25] An unusual set of numbered paper labels glued to the original pipes are in the hand of Sir Nicholas. This suggests that all the pipes were removed at some point after the purchase; this might have been to allow the organ to be re-pitched to match the existing Hunstanton viols. There is evidence on the pipes for a slight cutting down of their length, although it is now impossible to say definitively when this was done.
[26] An organological account of the organ may be found in James Collier and Dominic Gwynn, *The 1630 Consort Organ from Hunstanton Hall, Norfolk, England now in St Luke's Smithfield, Virginia, USA* (Smithfield, 2002). See also the chapters on various aspects of the instrument in *Organ Restoration Considered: Proceeds of a Symposium*, ed. John Watson (Warren, Michigan, 2005).
[27] For a description of these methods, see Dominic Gwynn, 'The sound of the seventeenth century English chamber organ', *Chelys*, 25 (1997), 22–31.
[28] The process of association is documented by Barbara Owen, 'Reflections on a Chamber Organ', *Organ Restoration Considered* ed. Watson.
[29] The label, though early, is written in a different hand to the others and I suspect that the original may have read 'Open Diapason'.
[30] John Jenkins, *Consort Music of Four Parts*, ed. Andrew Ashbee, Musica Britannica, 26 (London, 1969), Preface.
[31] Consort scores were used for a variety of purposes, including aids to composition, transmission scores from which part-books could be copied, or file copies to preserve repertoire, but a considerable number of them show evidence of having been used by organists. See Force, "'A Holding, Uniting-Constant Friend"', 161–5.
[32] *Roger North*, ed. Wilson, 249.
[33] Much of the repertoire of the Lutes, Viols and Voices at court was presented in a treble-and-bass texture that was augmented in performance, and so too was much contemporary masque music; see Peter Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers: The Violin at the English Court 1540–1690* (Oxford, 1993), 187–94. Jenkins himself often left the organ part of his own works as a similar skeletal texture, with just the occasional added detail to assist the organist at points where, for example, the ficta is not obvious.
[34] Sir Nicholas's methodology is discussed in Ashbee, 'A Further Look'.

[35] Readers wishing to explore the topic further may consult Force, "'A Holding, Uniting-Constant Friend'", passim; Peter Holman, "'Evenly, Softly, and Sweetly Acchording to All": The Organ Accompaniment of English Consort Music', *John Jenkins and His Time*, ed. Andrew Ashbee and Peter Holman (Oxford, 1996), 353–82; and Gwynn, 'The sound of the seventeenth century English chamber organ'.
[36] Johnson, 'How to "Humour" John Jenkins's Three-Part Dances'.
[37] Ashbee, 'A Further Look', 24
[38] As Johnson suggests, 'repeat' here was used in the seventeenth-century sense of a reprise of the main section rather than a repeat of the current one: Johnson, 'How to "Humour" John Jenkins's Three-Part Dances', 203
[39] For a description of the musical activity of the L'Estrange household, see Ashbee, "'My Fiddle is a Bass Viol'".
[40] See Force, "'A Holding, Uniting-Constant Friend'", 176–86.
[41] *Roger North*, ed. Wilson, 219.
[42] Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 242. For a discussion of Mace's own writing on expression, see Wendy Hancock, 'Thomas Mace and a sense of "humour": the case for expression in 17th-century English instrumental music', *Viola da Gamba Society Journal*, 6 (2013), 1–33.
[43] *Roger North*, ed. Wilson, 105.
[44] Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 242.
[45] These are the combinations that would be most musically useful, as opposed to all that are possible. The layout of the stops is diagrammatical only.
[46] Gwynn, 'The sound of the seventeenth century English chamber organ', 25.
[47] Annette Otterstedt trans. Hans Reiner, *The Viol: History of an Instrument* (Kassell, 2002), 120.
[48] *Roger North*, ed. Wilson, 218.
[49] This contrasts with the typical church organ arrangement, where the stops are deployed by knobs ranged to the sides of the music desk that require a substantial movement to bring them on and off.
[50] *Roger North*, ed. Wilson, 274.
[51] Force, "'A Holding, Uniting-Constant Friend'", 30, Table 1.6.
[52] For a description of the instrumemt, see John Koster, 'The Importance of the Early English Harpsichord', *Galpin Society Journal*, 33 (1980), 63. We may note, too, the popularity of 4ft-based continuo instruments on the continent at this time.
[53] Softer 4ft flute stops are rarely found on consort organs; flute tone does not blend so well with strings, and such stops were usually found on consort organs that were mainly associated with use in vocal music.
[54] Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 234.
[55] *Roger North*, ed. Wilson, 248.
[56] These manuscripts were later acquired by the Oxford Music School and remain in that collection: see Margaret Crum, 'The Consort Music from Kirtling Bought for the Oxford Music School from Anthony Wood, 1667', *Chelys*, 4 (1972), 3–10.
[57] For information of this technique see Force, "'A Holding, Uniting-Constant Friend'", 166–70 and Wendy Hancock, 'General Rules for Realising an Unfigured Bass in Seventeenth Century England', *Chelys*, 7 (1977), 69–72.
[58] See Force, "'A Holding, Uniting-Constant Friend'", 161–6 and Holman, "'Evenly, Softly, and Sweetly Acchording to All'", 368–73.
[59] See Gregory Johnston, 'Polyphonic Keyboard Accompaniment in the Early Baroque: An Alternative to Basso Continuo', *Early Music*, 26 (1998), 51–60, 63–4. These works were played at court with Orlando Gibbons as organist in the ensemble known as 'Coperarios Musique' and we find, in the autograph of Gibbons's contemporaneous fantasias for the 'dooble bass' viol written for this group (GB-Och, Mus. 732–5), his own written-in cues that indicate the openings of extra strands of improvised polyphonic texture on the organ. See Holman, "'Evenly, Softly, and Sweetly Acchording to All'", 369.
[60] Holman discusses Jenkins's written-out organ parts in "'Evenly, Softly, and Sweetly Acchording to All'", 379–82.
[61] These examples of such terms are drawn from across the century from Thomas Robinson's *The Schoole of Musick* (1603), Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* (1608), Christopher Simpson's *The Division-violist* (1659) and Mace's *Musick's Mouument* (1676).
[62] GB-Lna, PROB 4/3988.
[63] Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 136. This instrument was not a harpsichord with a pedalboard, as might be supposed from the name: Mace's example had four pedals mounted in an enclosing box, each operated by one side of each foot, and each pedal brought a separate rank of strings into play.
[64] John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 5 vols. (London, 1776), iv, 464.
[65] Hayward was paid on 23 July 1662 for maintaining 'ye Harsicords & pedals' at the court. See *Records of English Court Music*, ed. Andrew Ashbee, vol. 1 (Snodland, 1986), 34, and vol. 5 (Aldershot, 1991), 119.
[66] Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 235.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Sir Francis Kynaston, writing in 1636, recorded that 'This winter there hath been a harpsichorde presented to the king the workman & inventor whereof Mr Howard ought not to be forgotten on wch one may play passionate loud or soft'. GB-Ob, Gough London 225 (MS associated with a copy of Sir Francis Kynaston's *The Constitutions of the Musaeum Minervae* (1636)).
[69] Bolles was patron to Christopher Simpson, whose works *The Division Violist* (1659) and *The Division Viol* (1665) also contain useful indications, *en passant,* to the use of the organ in consort. The Hunstanton connection is strengthened by the fact that the former included a laudatory poem by Jenkins and the latter a preface by Roger L'Estrange.
[70] Mace, *Musick's Monument,* 235

Bigaglia's Chamber Duets on Texts taken from Gesualdo's Madrigals

Michael Talbot

Until the last few years very little has been known about the life of the Venetian monk and composer Diogenio Bigaglia, and his music has largely been *terra incognita* for all except recorder players. I have been able to reveal some new details in a recent article,[1] and if the number of known facts remains sparse, this correlates perfectly with the placid tenor of his existence within a religious community.

To summarize: Bigaglia was born, with the forename Antonio, on the glassmaking Venetian island of Murano on 11 March 1678, a week after Vivaldi. His father Bernardino was a celebrated maker of mirrors. Since there were two older brothers on hand to take over the family business, Antonio was directed towards the religious life, taking his vows at the abbey of San Giorgio Maggiore, on the island of the same name, in 1694. His name in religion became Diogenio (with its variants Diogene and Dionisio). Ordained priest at an unusually young age in 1700, Bigaglia progressed to become Deacon of his community (third in its hierarchy) in 1704 and Prior (assistant to the Abbot) in 1713. He died on 28 or 29 November 1745.

His community tolerated, and even took some pride in, Bigaglia's musical accomplishments, which attracted notice all over Europe. He played the organ, acquired a reputation for learnedness in musical matters and composed fairly prolifically in most major genres apart from opera, which probably remained out of bounds on account of his monastic vocation. His known oeuvre includes oratorios (5), sacred vocal works (nearly 30), chamber cantatas (over 70), solo sonatas (about 20), trio sonatas (4), concertos (3) and chamber duets (13).[2] It is the last category, a brilliant exhibition of his compositional skills, to which the present article is devoted.

The chamber duet

In simple terms, the chamber duet is a direct descendant of the continuo madrigal for two voices and basso continuo as exemplified by Monteverdi's setting of Rinuccini's *Zefiro torna e di soavi accenti*. Exactly as in the polyphonic madrigal of the Renaissance, the text is normally short and follows no prescribed conventions governing line length, rhyme scheme or metre. Nor does it need to have been originally written with a musical setting in mind. The poetic structure normally does not employ repetition of lines or phrases. Accordingly, the most natural musical structure, assuming (as one nearly always can) that a given motif is always used for the same portion of text, is a through-composed one where a series of lines or phrases generates a parallel series of musical passages, each of which is based on at least one motif that brings out and illustrates the text through rhythm and accent, speed of delivery, melodic contour, harmonic content, word-painting or any other relevant factor. In practice, however, this simple linearity rarely occurs outside short, transitional sections. More commonly, lines reappear many times after their initial statement, alternating or overlapping with, and at times accompanying, other lines. Such deliberate repetitiveness – needed to spin out the music to an acceptable length (and, of course, to impress the musical content more firmly on the listener) – allows the composer to create his own patterns organized around the repetition (whether immediate or at a distance) and development of material. As a result, the music becomes liberated from the strict linearity of the poem. The sequence of the initial (but only the initial) appearance of each line of text stays true to the original, and the setting naturally ends with the poem's final words. Otherwise, the composer has a free hand in all matters structural, including the creation of discrete sections or movements that divide up the text into self-contained portions.

What I have just described could be called the madrigalian species of chamber duet. It is the one to which Bigaglia adheres unwaveringly, unusually for the period, in his twelve chamber duets with continuo accompaniment based on texts set much earlier by Gesualdo. Increasingly, composers of duets turned in the later decades of the seventeenth century to a formal model based on purpose-written verse

closely resembling that used for chamber cantatas. Their texts introduced new features (including multi-stanza structure, variety of metre and rhyme scheme, alternation of recitative and aria and regular use of da capo form for the latter) that had the effect of assimilating duets to their 'solo' counterparts. True, there are many instances of hybridization between the madrigalian and cantata-derived species in the duets of major contributors to the genre such as Steffani, Benedetto Marcello, Giovanni Bononcini, Clari and Handel (the last two composers showing more resistance than the others to the adoption of the new features), but the ascendancy of the second type in the eighteenth-century chamber duet repertoire is undeniable.[3] Later on, a third species arose (to this variety belongs Bigaglia's only other known vocal duet, the orchestrally accompanied *O mi sferzi o mi spaventi*),[4] which resembles an operatic duet in da capo form. But this single-movement kind of chamber duet never took firm root.

Whatever their structural characteristics, most chamber duets occupy an unusually flexible position with regard to poetic voice. Their genre is not 'dramatic' in the narrow seventeenth- and eighteenth-century understanding of that word, for the two singers are not usually individually identified *personae*.[5] At times – for example, when they sing extended homophonic passages in thirds or sixths – they come across almost as amplifications of a single voice: a chorus, in fact. But when they sing different texts or respond to one another with the same text, they mimic genuine dialogue, and their interaction becomes quasi-dramatic. One of the particular beauties of the genre is the constant shifting between one and two poetic voices, so that monologue and dialogue shade seamlessly, but also unpredictably, into and out of one another.

The poetic sources

Table 1 displays the numbering, incipits, literary concordances within Carlo Gesualdo's six books of five-voice madrigals and – where known – authorship of the texts borrowed for Bigaglia's duets. The incipits are lightly modernized as regards the use of capital letters and punctuation marks. From the third column one sees that Bigaglia drew texts from as many as five of the books. Although this is unverifiable, the likelihood is that he possessed, or had access to, the commemorative edition of all six books in stratigraphic score format curated by Simone Molinaro, which was brought out in Naples in 1613, the very year of the composer's death.[6] Some of the borrowed texts form small 'clumps', occurring in adjacent or nearly adjacent madrigals – which is exactly what one would expect in the case of a composer trawling not too systematically through a lengthy collection in search of texts suited to his purposes.

No.	Textual incipit	Literary concordance in Gesualdo's madrigals	Authorship of words
1	Se così dolce è il duolo	Book 2 no. 7	Torquato Tasso
2	Asciugate i begl'occhi	Book 5 no. 14	unknown
3	Se taccio, il duol s'avanza	Book 2 no. 9	Torquato Tasso*
4	Se la mia morte brami	Book 6 no. 1	unknown
5	Hai rotto, sciolto e spento a poco a poco	Book 2 no. 4	unknown
6	Ahi, dispietata e cruda	Book 3 no. 6	unknown
7	Io pur respiro in così gran dolore	Book 6 no. 10	unknown
8	Candido e verde fiore	Book 6 no. 12	unknown
9	Languisco e moro. Ahi, cruda	Book 3 no. 4	unknown
10	Come esser può ch'io viva	Book 1 no. 4	unknown†
11	Tu m'uccidi, o crudele	Book 5 no. 15	unknown
12	Tu piangi, o Filli mia	Book 6 no. 3	unknown
* Gesualdo omits the final tercet (of three) making up Tasso's poem, as does Bigaglia. † The text shares its first line, but nothing more, with a poem by Alessandro Gatti.			

Table 1. First lines and textual concordances of Bigaglia's twelve chamber duets on texts taken from Gesualdo

With one possible exception, mentioned later, Bigaglia's set of duets does not appear to attempt any kind of *hommage* to Gesualdo the musician, notwithstanding the continuing veneration of the latter by some Italians a century later. It was common practice for a composer of

secular vocal music without ready access to new texts (and Bigaglia, living in a monastic community, had fewer such opportunities than most) to scavenge among existing compositions for words to set. If, as seems highly probable, the duets were conceived from the start as a set and written in quick succession, it would have made great sense to look for suitable, stylistically uniform texts in a single, large collection of over 100 madrigals, all of which employ very concise texts easily transferable to the new genre and medium.

The twelve selected texts, which comprise single stanzas of between five and eight lines of mixed *settenario* and *endecasillabo* (the free succession of seven- and eleven-syllable lines that later became the hallmark of recitative verse), are typical and – with the arguable exception of the two by Gesualdo's close friend Tasso – rather undistinguished specimens of the mannerist verse in vogue around 1600. This style takes antithesis and oxymoron to their breaking point: for example, opposing, but also equating, life and death, love and hate, pleasure and pain. Banal though this verse usually is, it affords a composer some welcome opportunities for extravagant word painting and mood expression. Gesualdo himself could well have been the author of some or all of the ten so far unattributed texts set by Bigaglia.

Interestingly, Bigaglia (or whoever prepared the texts for him) took the trouble to make small tweaks to some of the texts, the main aim of which appears to have been to Arcadianize the language so as to bring it into line with the prevalent literary fashion of the early eighteenth century. Thus in duet 3 'Donna bella e crudel' ('Beautiful and cruel lady') mutates into 'Filli bella e crudel' ('Beautiful and cruel Phyllis'), and 'Che l'umiltà vi pieghi' ('That humility will sway you') into 'Che la pietà ti pieghi' ('That pity will sway you'): the courtly environment becomes a rustic one. Such tinkering with a re-used poetic text is ubiquitous in Italian secular vocal music of the time, and sometimes so trivial in effect as almost to defy explanation.

The musical sources

The main source for the twelve duets, and the only complete one, is notated in score on pp. 117–58 of the manuscript 693 in the library of the Conservatoire royal in Brussels. This volume is a binder's collection that also contains duets and cantatas by Astorga, Feroci, Lotti, Benedetto Marcello and Alessandro Scarlatti. It appears, from the style of the handwriting and some notational details, to have been copied out in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century in northern Europe, very possibly England. The unidentified scribe, who was probably a collector rather than a professional music copyist, seems to have intended to reproduce the original as literally as possible, even though here and there he made small errors. There are no void pages between duets, which begin indifferently on odd-numbered and even-numbered pages, exactly as one would expect where works belonging to an existing set are copied consecutively. The numbering, and therefore ordering, of the duets appears to have followed the lost copy text. Titles have the standard wording 'A due del P: D: [Padre Don] Diogenio Bigaglia M: C: [Monaco Cassinense] N:o', followed by the appropriate digit or digits. The numbers for duets 9, 11 and 12 are written in a different hand, perhaps that of someone who wished to remedy their earlier omission. The first known owner of the manuscript is Aristide Farrenc (1794–1865), a Parisian flautist, music publisher, collector and scholar; the posthumous sale catalogue of his music library lists the volume as lot 1279.[7] A small number of pencilled corrections in the volume were possibly made by him.

A second source, which contains duets 1–4 (numbered exactly as in the Brussels source) plus the unnumbered duets 10 and 11, is held by the British Library in another binder's collection (Add. MS 30194, ff. 85–106), forming part of a large group of items purchased from the collector Julian Marshall in 1880–1.[8] The copies are in a different hand from those in Brussels, probably English and possibly, to judge from the handwriting style, of a slightly earlier date (or belonging to an older person). Unlike the Brussels source, this one presents the duets in separate gatherings (or pairs of gatherings), which raises the possibility that the missing duets were indeed copied but have since disappeared. The texts of the Brussels and London copies are remarkably concordant, but many of the small errors that exist are peculiar to one or the other, from which one may cautiously infer that they were copied from the same unknown source.

The final source is a manuscript of duet 3 in the Stifts- och Landsbibliotek in Skara, Sweden (494.12). This is one of four vocal

compositions by Bigaglia in that library that were probably brought back from Venice around 1720 by a Swedish visitor.[9] The duet manuscript is a typical product of a Venetian *copisteria*: professionally written out as regards general appearance but not always accurate.

The music

Comments on Table 2, which presents basic data on the makeup of the duets, will make a good springboard for discussion of their features and qualities. But before that, it will be useful to make a fundamental point about these duets – one that can serve as a prism through which to view every aspect of them. Late-baroque chamber duets are today often described figuratively as 'trio sonatas for voices', an expression that is very apt in relation to their three-part texture, use of imitative counterpoint and length, but insufficient and sometimes misleading in most other respects. Bigaglia is perhaps alone among the exponents of the genre in that his duets, and their organization as a set, actually live up to that formulation across the board. One might even speak of a 'sonata model' for chamber duets peculiar to him that revives the madrigalian model in an updated, recognizably eighteenth-century form. Constantly, one detects parallels in structure and musical language between these duets and Bigaglia's solo and trio sonatas for violin(s) or other treble instrument(s) and continuo, as well as receiving occasional reminders that by origin he was an instrumentalist rather than a singer. This instrumental background sometimes comes out in his word-setting, which, while usually scrupulous about reproducing 'correct' accentuation in the initial form of motifs, often takes great liberties in this regard during their extensions.

No.	Voices*	Key†	Sources‡	Movement 1	Movement 2	Movement 3	Movement 4
1	SA	c^2	Bc, Lbl	3/4, Andante ma non allegro, 1–121	3/8, [Allegro], 122–250		
2	SS	G^0	Bc, Lbl	3/4, Affettuoso, 1–104	3/8, Affettuoso, 105–149	4/2,** [Presto], 150–209	
3	AA	d^0	Bc, Lbl, SK	4/4, Non tanto allegro, 1–46	3/4, Andante, 47–109	4/2, Presto, 110–166	
4	SS	g^1	Bc, Lbl	4/4, Lento, 1–34	12/8, Larghetto, 35–48	4/4, [Allegro], 49–106	
5	AB	F^1	Bc	4/4, Allegro, 1–52	4/4, Largo, 53–65	2/2, [Presto], 66–196	
6	SA	g^1	Bc	3/4, Andante ma non allegro, 1–62	3/8, [Andante], 63–165	4/4, [Lento], 166–172	3/4, [Allegro], 173–287
7	SA	f^3	Bc	2/4, Allegro, 1–94	3/2, [Lento], 95–127	4/4, [Allegro], 128–176	
8	SS	A^2	Bc	4/4, [Allegro], 1–40 → 3/4, [Lento], 41–44	3/8, [Larghetto], 45–129	4/4, [Allegro], 130–185	
9	SS	C^0	Bc	4/4, Affettuoso ma non largo, 1–62	3/8, Larghetto, 63–183		
10	SS	$B\flat^2$	Bc, Lbl	3/4, Affettuoso, 1–66	2/2, Allegro, 67–173	4/4, Largo, 174–184	3/8, Allegro, 185–293
11	SS	a^0	Bc, Lbl	4/4 Affettuoso, 1–40	12/8, Larghetto, 41–62	4/4, [Allegro], 63–111	

12	AA	d[1]	Bc	4/4, Largo, 1–25	3/4, Affettuoso, 26–63	3/8, Allegro, 64–148	

* S = Soprano; A = Alto; B = Bass. In all cases, a continuo part accompanies.
† Upper case for major keys, lower case for minor keys. The superscript number records how many sharps or flats appear in the key signature.
‡ Bc = Brussels, Conservatoire royal de musique; Lbl = London, British Library; SK = Skara, Stifts- och Landsbiblioteket.
** 4/2 and 2/2 metre are indicated alike in the sources with a cut time (barred C) signature, 4/4 metre with a common time (C) signature.

Table 2. Scoring, keys, location and structure of Bigaglia's chamber duets

A breakdown of the vocal specifications represented in the duets produces six for paired sopranos, two for paired altos, three for soprano and alto and one for alto and bass.[10] This is therefore a mixed anthology probably compiled on the 'scattergun' principle of guaranteeing that at least some duets would be immediately performable at their first destination, even if others were not. Predictably, sopranos predominate, while altos come second, leaving the bass in duet 5 as an outlier. These are proportions reflecting the general incidence of these vocal types in vocal chamber music of the time. More interesting, however, are the consistently wide vocal compasses demanded of the singers, for they have a direct effect on the musical structure. No individual compass is ever narrower than a tenth, and it may extend to a thirteenth. One consequence of this is that, whatever the chosen combination of voices, imitation at the unison (or octave, in the case of duet 5), favoured in canonic writing, and imitation at the fourth/fifth, favoured in fugal writing, are equally feasible over a considerable pitch range. This enlargement of possibilities tends to increase the scale of movements and make their tonal trajectories adventurous, allowing the composer to give full rein to his ability to treat and combine motifs in ever-new ways. It also allows him to use sudden translations of motifs to a higher or lower octave as a potent musical effect.

The almost complete avoidance of key duplication among the twelve works and the approximate parity of major and minor keys are expected in sets of sonatas, which is what one indeed finds in Bigaglia's published collection of solo sonatas.[11] This variety of keys responds alertly to the variety of *affetti* in the poems, but it has the added merit of placing the vocal compasses (which vary little from work to work for either soprano or alto voice) in many different relationships to the respective duet's keynote, with consequences for the treatment of the thematic material.

Deciding today whether the major structural divisions of chamber duets should rank as free-standing movements or merely as successive sections within a unitary structure is often hard.[12] Where all the sub-units are tonally and thematically rounded and no material carries over in literal form into a later sub-unit in the manner of a refrain, division into movements appears justified. Conversely, where such rounding does not occur or the sub-units flow into one another, and especially where the music is punctuated at wide intervals by a refrain, division into sections seems preferable. The problem is – and here the situation is no different from that seen in many contemporary sonatas, such as those of Corelli – that some works exhibit both sets of characteristics at different points. In such circumstances, the criterion has to be the preponderance of features. On that basis, Bigaglia's chamber duets are best viewed as successions of movements, not sections, even if a few transitional sub-units (resembling certain internal slow movements in sonatas) would qualify in isolation for description as 'sections'.[13]

Typically for a post-1700 composer, Bigaglia opts for a small number of movements, most of which, in compensation, are substantial in length and complexity. Three movements is the norm, but both two (in duets 1 and 9) and four (in duets 6 and 10) also occur. The number and textual content of the movements are chosen by him in accordance with the natural divisions of the poem as determined by line division, syntax and sense. Very often, though

not always, the result is a Fast–Slow–Fast or Slow–Fast–Slow–Fast configuration, exactly as favoured in contemporary sonatas and concertos. Individual internal movements, especially when slow or transitional, are often set (or at least begin) in a related key for contrast.[14] As the time signatures and tempo directions given in the table suggest, Bigaglia has a number of characteristic habits – ones that also appear constantly in his solo cantatas and instrumental works. He likes both the 'short' metres 3/8 and 2/4 and the 'long' metres 2/2 and 4/2. The latter connect, as one would expect, with *stile antico* church music, but they also presage the widespread use of *alla breve* metre in secular, including operatic, music of the 1720s and later, spearheaded by Neapolitan composers. Bigaglia is inordinately fond of siciliana rhythm, as featured in the second movements of duets 4 and 11. He prefers middling, even rather indeterminate, tempo directions, as illustrated by the ubiquitous 'Affettuoso' or markings such as 'Andante ma non allegro' and 'Non tanto allegro', with their faintly jocular mode of expression reminiscent of Vivaldi's humour.[15]

The table does not show one frequently encountered and notably sonata-like feature of Bigaglia's duets, which is the quasi-cyclic appearance of the same, or a very similar, motivic shape in different movements, especially the first and last.[16] By 1700 such motivic cross-references no longer have the rigour of head-motives in Renaissance Masses or the rhythmically manipulated paraphrases of entire movements in early baroque variation suites: they hint at inter-movement affinity rather than proclaiming it too overtly.

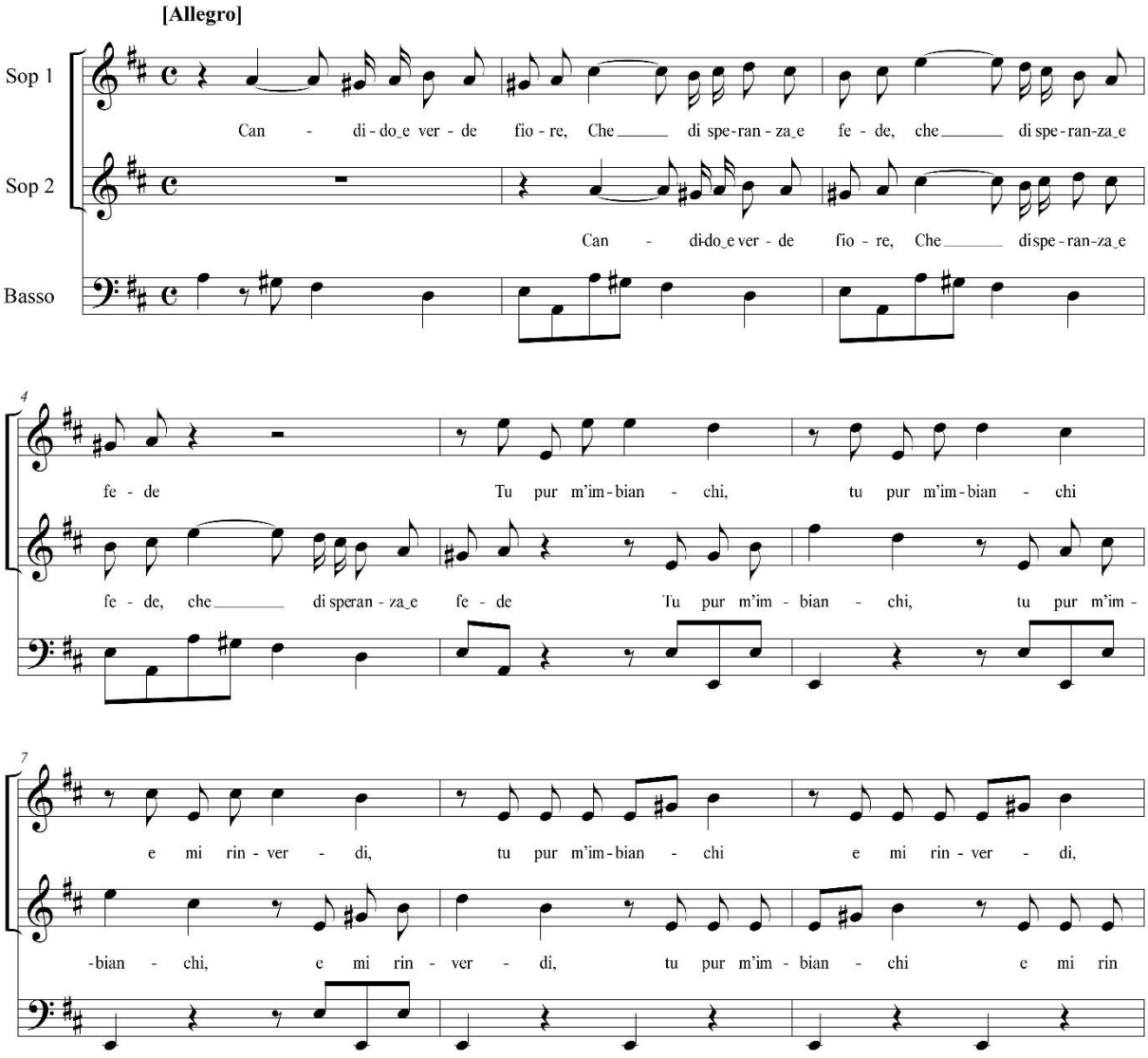
Lack of space precludes a work-by-work commentary on Bigaglia's duets. But they are consistent enough in compositional approach for the points of greatest interest in them to be brought out via examination of just one duet: the eighth. The playfulness of its better-than-average text, which contrasts the lily, a flower proudly displaying purity and fidelity in its colours, with the inscrutability of the poet's lady-love, draws forth a matching skittishness on the composer's part:

Candido e verde fiore,
Che di speranza e fede
Tu pur m'imbianchi e mi rinverdi il core,
Lasso! Siccome chiaro in te si vede
Il tuo color sincero,
scorgess'io pur della mia bella il vero:
O di mia speme allor goder potrei
O di mia fede ne' tormenti miei.

White and green flower,
you who with hope and fidelity
whiten and make verdant my heart,
Alas! Whereas one clearly marks in you
your colour betokening sincerity, could I but
also discern the truth about my lady-love,
so as to be able to gratify either my hope
or my fidelity amid my torments.

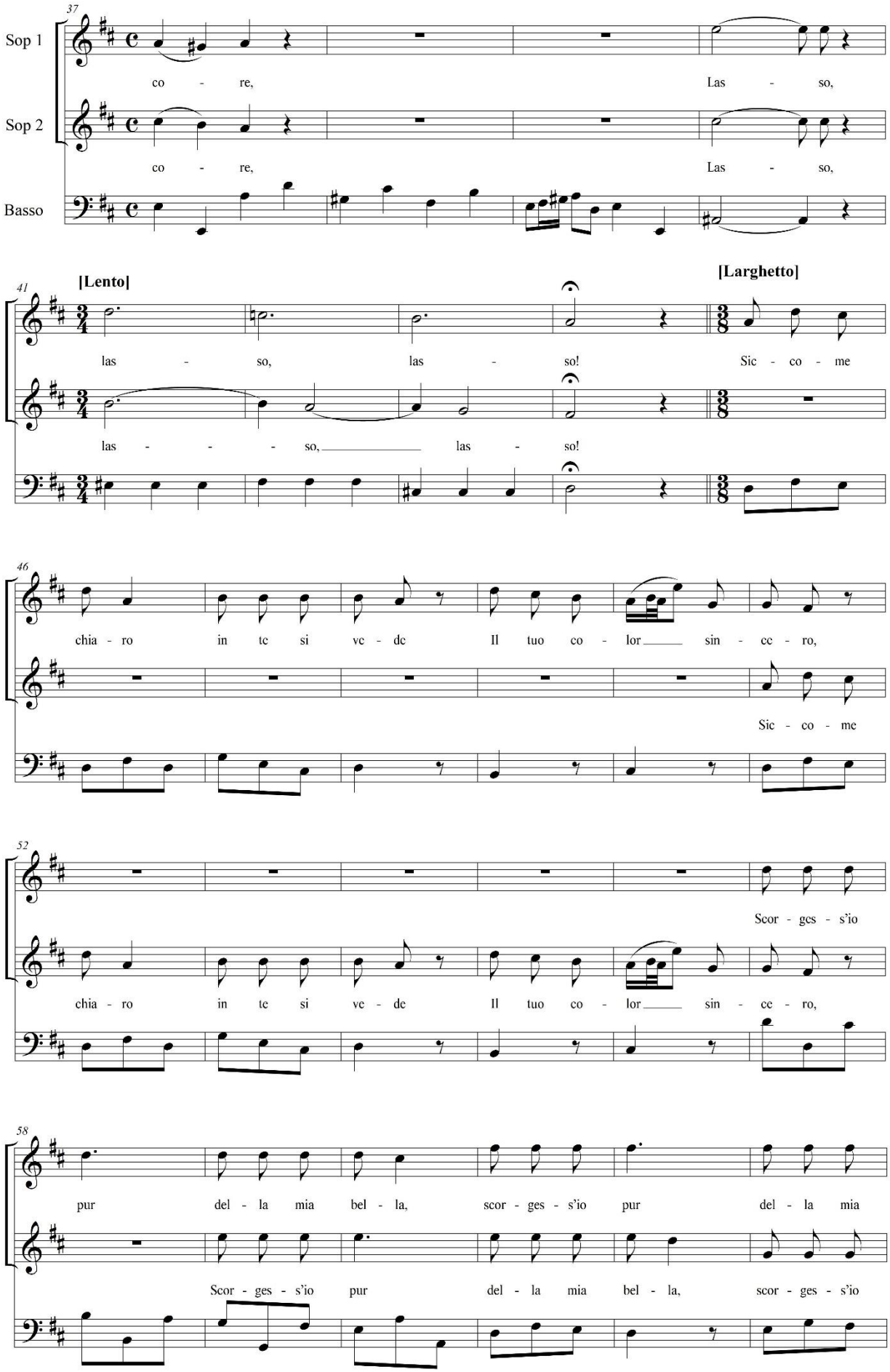
For his first movement Bigaglia selects the poem's first three lines plus, as a coda in slower tempo, the 'Lasso!' opening the fourth line, which marks the transition from contemplation of the lily to that of its comparator, the beloved. The second movement, which exchanges A major for D major, ends on the sixth line, leaving the final couplet for the third movement, where the lover expresses frustration at the uncertainty of his situation.

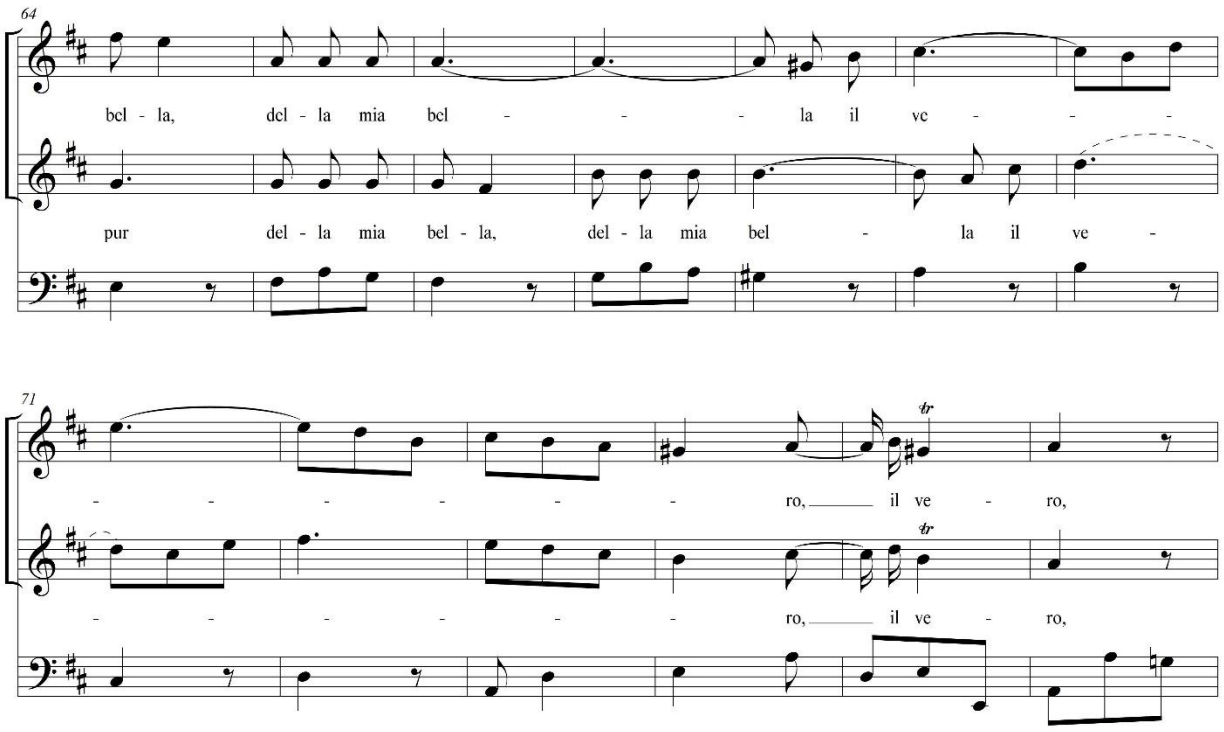
Ex. 1 takes the music up to bar 9. The passage opens with writing for the two sopranos in unison canon, a device of which Bigaglia is extremely fond, never more so than in this duet. Syncopations give this opening a dancing quality, which is heightened by the repeated bass figures in bb.2–4 and 5–7, ostinato being another of Bigaglia's favourite devices, one much employed – and very effectively – for rhetorical emphasis. The rest in the bass part in b.1 is a first indication of another general feature of his music: a liking for an airy texture. I have never encountered a composer from his period who makes so meticulous a choice between a short rest and a dot of addition. The unprepared dominant ninth for Soprano 2 in b.6 typifies Bigaglia's fondness for advanced harmony in the shape of seventh and ninth chords and chromatic harmony of every description (Neapolitan-sixth and augmented-sixth chords, diminished and half-diminished sevenths),[17] which is accompanied by frequent boldness of part-writing (unprepared dissonance, highly unconventional ornamental resolutions, *notes échappées*). There are even two instances of enharmonic change (in duets 4 and 9).



Ex. 1. Bigaglia, *Candido e verde fiore*, bb.1–9

Ex. 2 takes the music from the end of the first movement via its slow coda to the opening part of the second movement. As one would expect, the voices cadence in euphonious homophony, and are followed by a short continuo ritornello. Such ritornellos, used variously as introductions, interludes and conclusions, occur in quite a few of Bigaglia's duet movements. Here, the ritornello's prime purpose is to lull the listener into expectation of a peaceful conclusion. Brutally, the deceptive cadence on a diminished-seventh chord in b.40, coinciding with the re-entry of the united sopranos in Bigaglia's most exclamatory manner, shatters the calm. A further four bars in altered metre (3/4) steer the music towards D major. The progression between the adjacent seventh chords in bars 43 and 44, with an unexpected downward leap in the bass, illustrates a type of harmonic ellipsis typical of him and very reminiscent of Vivaldi.

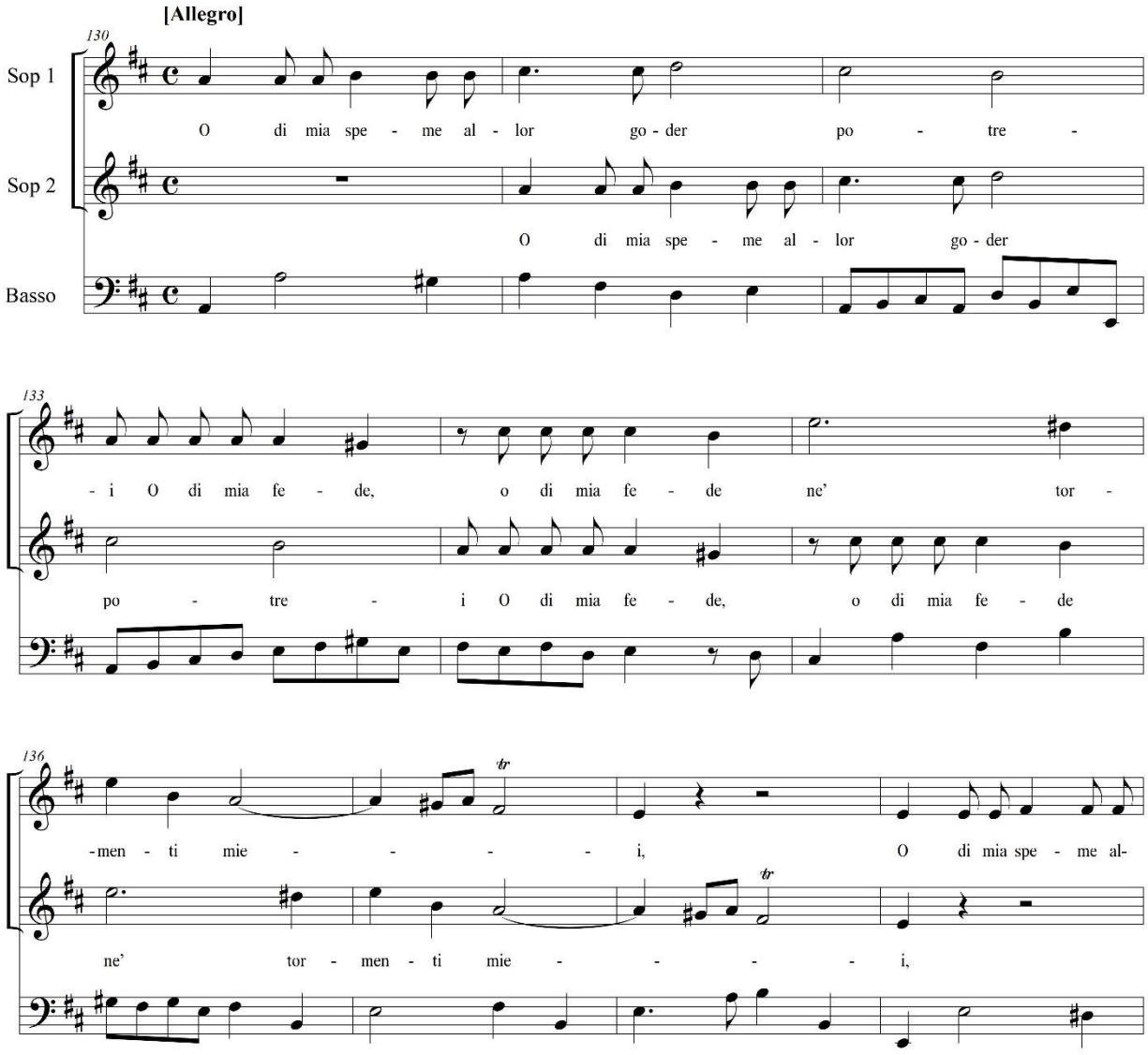

37
Sop 1
co - re,
Las - so,
Sop 2
co - re,
Las - so,
Basso
41
[Lento]
[Larghetto]
las - so, las - so!
Sic - co - me
las - - - so, las - so!
46
chia - ro in te si ve - de Il tuo co - lor sin - ce - ro,
Sic - co - me
52
Scor - ges - s'io
chia - ro in te si ve - de Il tuo co - lor sin - ce - ro,
58
pur del - la mia bel - la, scor - ges - s'io pur del - la mia
Scor - ges - s'io pur del - la mia bel - la, scor - ges - s'io



Ex. 2. Bigaglia, *Candido e verde fiore*, bb.37–76

The breezy second movement opens with a formula, common in chamber duets, known as *a risposta* (by reply).[18] Here, the singers introduce themselves in turn with the same motif. As well as the very straightforwardly consecutive presentations featured here (ignoring the brief overlap), one elsewhere often finds counter-motifs introduced by the other singer already in the second statement or even the very first. The punning melisma on 'color' in bars 50 and 56 (referring to the extended meaning of that word as decoration) is charming. In b.57 there begins a soaring imitative sequence based on the familiar Corellian device of 'leap-frogging', whereby (allowing for possible downward octave-transpositions) the lines alternately rise by a fourth and descend by a second, cleverly counteracting the need for suspensions to resolve downwards. The importance of sequence to Bigaglia's handling of thematic development and movement architecture cannot be overstated. This device is ubiquitous in all its common varieties: rising or falling by seconds; rising or falling by fourths or fifths (often with the familiar zigzag motion); rising or falling by thirds. It is variously employed (a) diatonically within the starting key, (b) for the purpose of modulating to a new key (here, in bb.57–76) and (c), most excitingly, for a grand parade through a long series of keys that may take the music to unexpected tonal regions. Type (c) is employed later on in the second movement in an electrifying passage running from b.88 to b.105, where a modified, tauter version of the rising motif goes on the rampage, travelling from D major via A major, E minor and B minor to F sharp minor.[19] The stepwise-rising lines occurring throughout this movement, whether presented by a single singer or shared hocket-fashion between the singers, connect with the same basic thematic shape prominent in the two outer movements.

Ex. 3 shows the opening of the third movement. Very often, Bigaglia makes the last movement of a duet its weighty *summa*, and this is no exception. It is the apotheosis of his love of the unison canon. Until nearly the end of the movement most bars feature it – and where they momentarily do not, alternative forms of strict imitation are employed. One interesting characteristic of Bigaglia's style emerges from this movement's opening. He likes, almost jestingly, to offset the regularity of the patterning of the vocal parts by constantly varying the rhythmic (and, to some extent, also the melodic) contour of the continuo. So we find walking crotchets, running quavers and mixed note-values occupying adjacent bars in an unpredictable but certainly not randomly chosen succession. His continuo parts participate only in a minor way in the thematic interplay, but when they do – in ritornellos and in fugal or canonic entries – the effect is always invigorating.

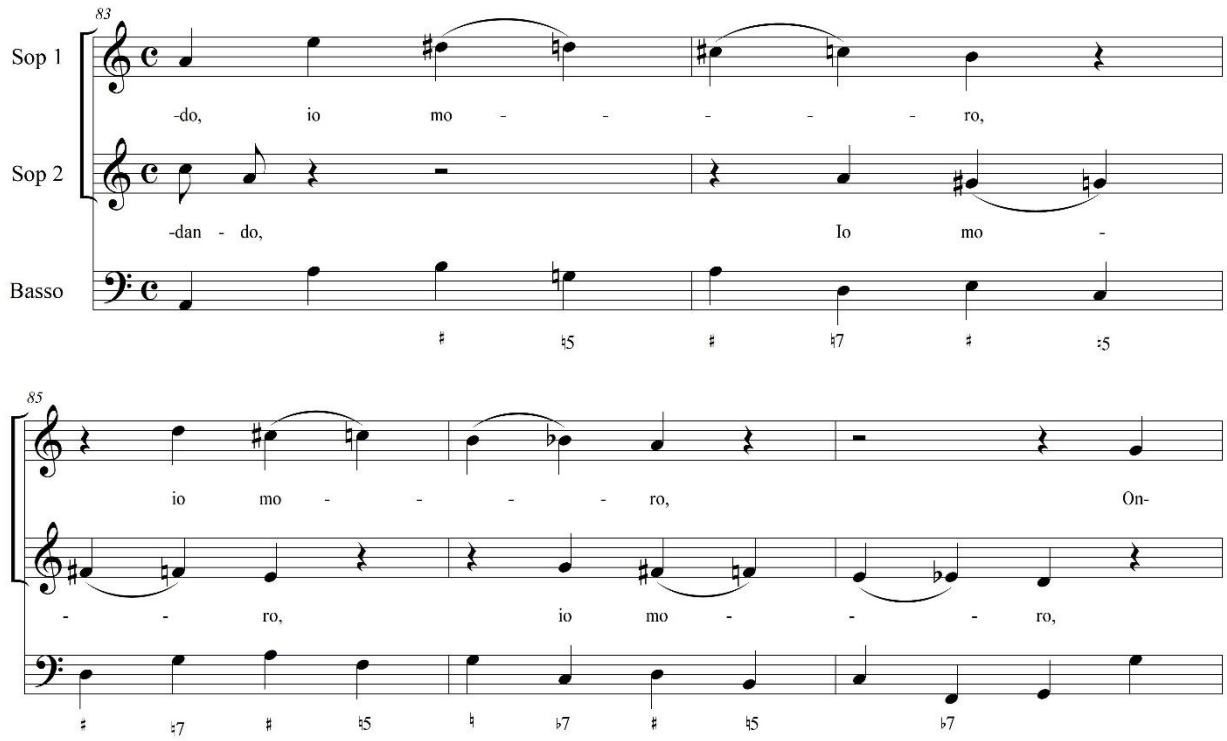


Ex. 3. Bigaglia, *Candido e verde fiore*, bb.130–8

As in several other movements in the set, Bigaglia climaxes in bars 176–80 with an arabesque for the voices over a sustained pedal-note.[20] In a few instances, including this one, the pedal-note is doubled at the octave, possibly as a signal that it is to be performed in *tasto solo* manner.[21]

To end this description of the duets, I need to mention Bigaglia's treatment of the chromatic fourth, the classic *passus duriusculus* in its dual rising and falling forms. Its harmonization is mostly conventional for his time, but in the last movement of duet 11, *Tu m'uccidi, o crudele*, where it is employed copiously in conjunction with the word 'moro' ('I die'), there is one short passage (Ex. 4) that retreats from the comfortable chromaticism of the early Settecento into the more abrasive, experimental world of the early Seicento, almost as if to pay homage to the Gesualdo of the famous *Moro, lasso, al mio duolo* and similar madrigals. As so often, imitation combined with sequential treatment augments the intensity.[22]

It is difficult to estimate a date of composition for these duets. They do not display tell-tale signs of Neapolitan influence such as chains of triplets, reverse-dotting, slides and mid-phrase trills, all of which are seen (in moderation) in Bigaglia's vocal music after *c.*1725. However, their style appears mature and assured, so *c.*1710 should perhaps be taken as the earlier boundary.



Ex. 4, Bigaglia, *Tu m'uccidi, o crudele*, bb.83–7

Final thoughts

The most likely reason why Bigaglia has not yet taken his deserved place among the admired Venetian musical *dilettanti* contemporary with Vivaldi (Albinoni and the Marcello brothers) is a purely biographical one. He led a relatively secluded, settled and socially restricted life that did not allow him to propagate his own music freely through public appearances as a performer or via the advocacy of powerful patrons. Indeed, Bigaglia may have hesitated to promote his own music beyond a certain point out of respect for the egalitarian ethos of his monastic community. His sacred vocal compositions, especially his oratorios, circulated among sister houses and religious institutions generally; his sonatas (especially the ones published by Le Cène), concertos and cantatas also travelled far and wide, if only in small quantities, thanks to the activity of copying shops and the interest of a few connoisseurs. But public recognition of Bigaglia's music of any kind never reached in his own age and for a long time afterwards the critical mass that would have stimulated an interest in his biography, which is normally a pre-condition for any composer's revival. It is poignantly symptomatic that when Hawkins (who, like Burney, makes no mention of Bigaglia in his *History*) claimed in a memoir of Steffani that his subject 'as an exercise of his fancy made use of words that had formerly been set by other masters [prominent among whom was] the prince of Venosa', he must in reality have been thinking of Bigaglia's duets rather than any similar ones by Steffani or another composer, of which there is no record.[23]

Bigaglia certainly produced masterly compositions in every genre that he tackled, and there is evidence from modern editions and recordings that his star is at last rising.[24] Perhaps his least studied works are his chamber duets, which show off his talent to its greatest advantage and demonstrate how his highly personal style looks both backwards and forwards. I hope they will soon be tested out in performance.[25]

I would like to thank Reinmar Emans and Colin Timms in particular for advice and comments related to this article.

[1] Michael Talbot, 'Vivaldi, Bigaglia, Tartini and the Curious Case of the "Introdutione" RV Anh. 70', *Studi vivaldiani* 20 (2020), 41–67.

[2] The sonatas are discussed in Talbot, 'Vivaldi or not Vivaldi? The unreliable attribution of the sonata RV 34', *De musica disserenda*, 16/1 (2020), 57–72, and the cantatas in Talbot, 'The Chamber Cantatas of Diogenio Bigaglia (1678–1745)', *The Musical Times* (Spring 2021), 37–60.

[3] The varied structures of chamber duets during the period of Steffani and Handel are discussed in Julia Liebscher, *Das italienische Kammerduett (ca. 1670–1750)* (Tutzing, 1987), Colin Timms, *Polymath of the Baroque: Agostino Steffani and His Music* (New York, 2003) and Ivan Ćurković, *The Vocal Duets of G. F. Handel and His Italian Contemporaries (c. 1706–1724)* (Heidelberg, 2017).
[4] This is the duet edited and discussed in the online Supplement to the present volume of *Early Music Performer*. See <http://earlymusic.info/Performer.php>.
[5] Just occasionally, as in Bononcini's duet *Luci barbare, spietate*, published in his *Cantate e duetti* (London, 1721), the singers become named characters: in that instance, Tirsi and Dorinda.
[6] *Partitura delli sei libri de' madrigali dell'illustrissimo ed eccellentissimo prencipe di Venosa D. Carlo Gesualdo*, ed. Simone Molinaro (Genoa, 1613).
[7] *Catalogue de la bibliothèque musicale théorique et pratique de feu M. A. Farrenc* (Paris, 1866), 104.
[8] Duet 11 breaks off, after the fifth bar of the final movement, at the end of the fourth page (f. 96v). Presumably, a second bifolio housing the rest of the movement has simply become detached and lost.
[9] For more information, see Michael Talbot, 'Vivaldi, Orlandini and a Manuscript in Skara', *Studi vivaldiani*, 19 (2019), 51–64.
[10] Bigaglia's lone orchestrally accompanied duet, *O mi sferzi o mi spaventi*, is set for the same pair of voices as the duet for alto and bass; see the online Supplement to the present volume of *Early Music Performer*. Since the compasses in both duets are very similar, there is a possibility that they were written for the same singers, although there is no clear evidence of customization in either work.
[11] G minor is used for both duet 4 and (with different scoring) duet 6. Arguably, the D minor used for duet 3 is not the 'same' key as the one used for duet 12, since the void key signature of the first points to a mode (*tuono ecclesiastico*) different from that of the second, which bears a flat. The sonatas were published by Michel-Charles Le Cène (Amsterdam, 1725) as *XII Sonate a violino solo o sia flauto e violoncello o basso continuo*.
[12] The movement/section distinction is essentially a modern one: Bigaglia and his contemporaries probably thought more in terms of a series of 'parts'.
[13] For example, the third movements of the two four-movement duets (6 and 10).
[14] For example, the second movements of duets 4, 7 and 12, which begin in the submediant (major), dominant (minor) and relative major, respectively.
[15] The drollest tempo direction I have seen in Bigaglia's music is the marking 'così così' ('so-so'), used for the second aria of his cantata *Deh, vanne al mar più lento*.
[16] Corelli's chamber sonatas in Op. 5 and earlier provide good comparators.
[17] Half-diminished seventh chords (the term is of relatively recent coinage) are ones where the fifth is diminished but the seventh is minor. They normally occur on either the leading note or the raised subdominant. Benedetto Marcello is another composer who uses them often.
[18] On the *a risposta* opening formula, see Timms, *Polymath of the Baroque*, 265–6 and 286.
[19] These modulatory passages in Bigaglia (also frequent in his cantatas) remind me of similar ones in Schubert and Smetana.
[20] Timms (*Polymath of the Baroque*, 274–5) discusses and shows in a music example the comparable but less exuberant flourish over a pedal-note at the end of Steffani's duet *Saldi marmi*.
[21] Leaving aside a chromatic passage in duet 11, to be discussed next, Bigaglia figures his continuo bass at best extremely sparsely, and there is no certainty about which passages, if any, he intended to leave unharmonized.
[22] Almost as startling is a passage in bb. 47–50 of duet 9, *Languisco e moro, ahi cruda*, where the sopranos sing rising chromatic scales in strict imitation.
[23] [Sir John Hawkins], 'The Life of Signor Steffani, Master of the Chapel to K. George, I', *The Gentleman's and London Magazine and Monthly Chronicler*, 30 (1761), 558–62 at 560.
[24] Among the recent editions are ones by Marco Di Chio of the complete cantatas for alto and continuo (Edizioni pian e forte/Da Vinci Edition, 2018) and by the present writer of the dramatic cantata for two voices *Plutone e Proserpina* (Edition HH, 2020), the three 'Dresden' sonatas for violin and continuo (*ibid.*, 2020) and the three trio sonatas for transverse flutes in C and continuo (*ibid.*, 2021). The high quality of Bigaglia's sacred vocal music is confirmed by a recording of a Mass in F major and a Miserere in C minor by the Knabenchor Hannover directed by Jörg Breiding (Rondeau ROP 7023).
[25] The set of twelve duets is scheduled for publication by Edition HH (www.editionhh.co.uk) in four volumes during 2021 and 2022.

In Convertendo: Sacred Music from the Düben Collection

Abendmusiken Basel, dir. Jörg-Andreas Bötticher
Coviello Classics, LC 12403 (2017)

Nunc Dimittis: Music from the Düben Collection

Kirchheimer Düben Consort with Dominik Wörner, dir. Jörg-Andreas Bötticher
Passacaille, PAS1081 (2020)

Cantica Obsoleta: Forgotten Works from the Düben Collection

Acronym with Hélène Brunet, Reignald Mobley, Brian Giebler and Jonathan Woody
Olde Focus, FCR917 (2020)

Maria Schildt

The most well-known works that are preserved in the Düben collection, such as the vocal works by Dieterich Buxtehude and Heinrich Schütz's Christmas oratorio, are continuously included in new recordings. The three recently released recordings reviewed here are among only a small number of CDs to have a focus on the collection itself and include music by the collection's less well-known composers.

The Düben collection constitutes the former musical library of the Kapellmeisters of the Swedish royal court, dating from the period c. 1650–1726. It contains the repertoire performed at court and in the German church in Stockholm by the royal court musicians. The collection encompasses about 2200 compositions in manuscript and another approximately 3000 works included in about 150 printed collections. The repertoire consists mostly of sacred vocal music, but there is also instrumental music and a considerable amount of French stage music. The Düben dynasty of Kapellmeisters managed to acquire the music, generally of a remarkable high quality, through their wide circle of contacts, which included several prominent composers and musicians in different parts of Europe. Music from the Düben collection is continuously included in concert programs and recordings, in particular since the launch of the Düben online database in 2006.[1] There is also an increasing number of published modern editions, essential perhaps at least for the large share of music notated in German organ tablature.

The three recordings display a well-balanced selection of pieces. The design is similar for all three recordings: sacred vocal concertos interspersed with instrumental pieces, such as sonatas. They include exquisite music, although focussing on music by today less well-known composers, such as Johann Martin Radeck, Caterina Giani, Andreas Kirchhoff, Christian Ritter and Daniel Eberlin.

Jörg-Andreas Bötticher is professor of harpsichord, organ and basso continuo at the Schola Cantorum Basel and organist of the Predigerkirche in Basel. His vast output of recordings with various ensembles includes, more recently, recordings of instrumental music by Antonio Caldara, as well as sacred concertos by Giuseppe Peranda, Johann Rosenmüller and Balthasar Erben. *In convertendo* is Bötticher's first recording dealing with music from the Düben collection. Bötticher and the ensemble Abendsmusiken Basel and six singers have included eleven pieces, of which at least six have not been previously recorded. The repertoire spans from Johann Vierdanck's large-scale *Der Herr hat seinen Engeln befohlen*, representing a slightly older style, to the remarkable harmonic movement in Balthasar Erben's concerto *O Domine Jesu Christe*.

The Düben collection contains about 200 compositions that lack a composer's name in the manuscript sources. Several of these can be identified through concordances in other manuscripts or printed collections, or tentatively attributed on basis of stylistic features. Many of these instrumental and vocal works are most likely composed by, in their time, prominent

Saxon and Viennese composers. It is a welcome achievement to engage also with the unattributed pieces in the collection and *In Convertendo* includes no less than three. In his liner notes, Peter Wollny deals with the complex issue of attribution with a profound knowledge and tentatively attributes two of the anonymous pieces: *Was betrübst du dich* to the proficient Hamburg organist and composer Matthias Weckmann, and *Domine ne in furore* to the Leipzig Thomaskantor Sebastian Knüpfer. Unfortunately, part of this new information has not reached the text on the back cover of the CD. Wollny identifies also the unattributed *Lamento* as copied from Marin Marais collection of trios, printed in Paris 1692. In the light of this identification, the addition of *Flûtes allemandes* in the recording seems reasonable, although the frontispiece of Marais' 1692 publication depicts both transverse flutes and recorders.

Nunc Dimittis (2020) is the second recording by Bötticher devoted to music from the Düben collection, this time together with an ensemble under the name of the Kirchheimer Düben Consort and with Dominik Wörner as bass soloist. The recording includes sacred vocal concertos by Kaspar Förster, Samuel Capricornus and the Saxon composers Johann Krieger, Heinrich Schütz and Carlo Pallavicino, in which Dominik Wörner wonderfully masters the often-virtuosic bass solo lines with well-balanced expressivity. The recording includes also six fine instrumental pieces by Crato Bütner, Johann M. Nicolai and Sebastian Knüpfer. Wollny attributes an anonymous sonata à 5 to either Johann Heinrich Schmelzer or Antonio Bertali, both at the imperial court in Vienna.

The American baroque string ensemble Acronym, formed in 2012, has previously been engaged in music from the Düben collection. Acronym's about ten recordings include occasional pieces from the collection: *Paradise* (2014) contains sonatas by Antonio Bertali and *Wunderkammer* (2020) instrumental works by Samuel Capricornus, Johann Philipp Krieger and Clemens Thieme. *Cantica Obsoleta* includes solely music from the Düben collection. It contains one of the very few works attributed to a female composer, the Venetian singer Caterina Giani, who was married to the composer Massimiliano Neri. The composition, with the text *Liebster Jesu, trautes Leben*, is the only known music attributed to her. It was most likely originally a setting of a secular text in Italian, as indicated by added text incipits in Düben's tablature. The singers Hélène Brunet, Reignald Mobley, Brian Giebler and Jonathan Woody are assigned one solo vocal concerto each, and come together for the ensemble works in four vocal parts. Several of the selected vocal concertos employ full string scoring creating an attractive, rich and dark sonority, as in the Lüneburg organist Christian Flor's beautiful *Inter brachia salvatoris*, here transposed down to fit the tessitura of a male alto voice.

Both *Cantica Obsoleta* and *In Convertendo* contain a few large-scale pieces, all performed one voice per part. At least in the case of Johann Philipp Kriegers's *Cantate Domino*, Christian Ritter's *Miserere* and Vincenzo Albrici's *In Convertendo*, the inclusion of ripieno (capella) voices in the manuscript sources shows that the vocal parts were at least doubled in some sections; investigating and realizing seventeenth-century ripieno practices could possibly be a task for future performances.

The ensembles and soloists of the three recordings present excellent, clever and innovative performances of marked high artistic quality, in which the treatment and execution of the basso continuo in many ways are especially superb. The liner notes are informative and professional. Some words on the historical context of the performances of the music could perhaps have been added. Several of the compositions included in the recordings were, for example, most likely composed for and performed as funeral music, as shown by the designation 'ad exequias' noted on the manuscript of Christian Ritter's *Miserere*.

Although the Düben collection contains more than 5000 works, the three recordings have two pieces in common and only one work is drawn from Düben's collection of printed music. Many fine pieces still await performance and recording. Hopefully, the musicians behind these three recordings and also other early music musicians and ensembles will continue their explorations among the treasures in the Düben collection.

[1] *The Düben Collection Database Catalogue* (https://www2.musik.uu.se/duben/Duben.php)

Settecento: Baroque Instrumental Music from the Italian States

La Serenissima, dir. Adrian Chandler, with Tabea Debus
Signum Classics, SIGCD663 (2020)

Inés Salinas

British group La Serenissima gathers in this album an array of eighteenth-century Italian instrumental works for various line-ups. Each piece represents an Italian state where its composer was either active or born, a conceit that takes us on a route through the Kingdom of Naples, the Republic of Venice and the Papal States. The recording is a good account of what the Italian style actually was: a constellation of styles formed by independent yet interconnected musical centers and a plethora of masters who left their mark in the music making of the whole continent. This was nicely described by Johann Mattheson in his *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre*: 'A Venetian will write differently from a Tuscan, who in turn will differ from a Neapolitan or Sicilian, etc., so that I know of no better comparison for this discrepancy than perhaps with the dialects of their language. For as the same differ from each other, one can also say that the musical genius in one province or another produces something exotic although basically it all has one tree-trunk but different fruits.'

Recorder is represented by *Sonata for recorder, two violins & continuo in C minor* by Alessandro Scarlatti, *Sonata for recorder, two violins & continuo in G minor* by Francesco Mancini and *Concerto for recorder, two violins & continuo in A minor, RV 108* by Antonio Vivaldi, the first two representing the Kingdom of Naples and the latter, the Republic of Venice.

Scarlatti and Mancini's sonatas are to be found in Ms. 34–39 in the Naples Conservatory Library. This manuscript is a collection of 24 sonatas for recorder, two violins and basso continuo – only in three of them we find an additional viola (*violetta*) part. The authors featured in the collection are Mancini, Valentine, Barbella, Scarlatti, Sarri and Mele. The two sonatas that appear on the disc are both written in a chamber-concerto style, in which the recorder line blends nicely with the strings and does not have a strong soloistic character. They both contain cantabile movements and fugue-like movements full of eloquent counterpoints. Scarlatti and Mancini were two of the composers who contributed to the surge in popularity of the recorder in Naples in the early eighteenth century; in Scarlatti's vast opus we find abundant recorder repertoire (*sinfonie*, sonatas and many vocal works with solo recorder parts), whereas Mancini made a sizeable contribution to the Neapolitan recorder repertoire and spread its popularity further afield with the publication of his *XII Solos for the flute* in London.

The autograph of RV 108 is preserved in the University Library of Turin. It is dated between 1720 and 1724 and contains interesting alternative passages for the solo recorder in the first movement. The concerto opens with a sparkling virtuoso Allegro movement, followed by a charming slow movement, in which Tabea Debus shows beautiful and audacious ornamentation skills. The concerto finishes with a charming gigue-like movement.

The violin is featured next, namely in Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco's *Sonata for violin & continuo in G minor, Op 4.12* and Giuseppe Tartini's *Sonata for violin & continuo in E minor, Op 1.5, Be6*, both representing the Republic of Venice. Dall'Abaco learnt the violin with Tomaso Antonio Vitali in Modena. He soon joined the court of Bavaria as *Kammermusiker*. Before establishing himself in Munich, he followed the brief exile of the court, being based in various places such as Brussels and Paris, where he absorbed the French style. This influence is particularly audible in the first movement of the sonata featured on the disc. The performance of the *Passagaglio* has a nice groove that is especially enjoyable. No less commendable is the fact that this might be the first recording of this sonata, being that the focus has been traditionally put on Dall'Abaco's concertos and op. 1 chamber sonatas, to the

neglect of his other solo violin opus, op. 4. Tartini's solo is one of his early works and belongs to his op. 1, which was widely spread through Europe thanks to publications by Walsh, Chalon, Le Cène and Le Clerc. We find manuscript copies extant in libraries in Münster, Ancona and Bergamo. In the first movement we hear lyrical lines, quite sober in ornamentation, but featuring nice diminutions in the cello line. It is followed by a fugue in which Chandler shows brilliant skills in the numerous double stops. A short third movement leads to a closing movement full of sequences of trills, very characteristic of Tartini's personal style.

Again in the Republic of Venice, we find the figure of Vandini, a cellist–composer whose works had not been recorded until very recently. Vandini was a sought-after cellist and a loyal musical companion of the great Tartini – they played together for about 50 years at the *Basilica del Santo* in Padua. The following assessment by Charles Burney offers confirmation of his excellence on the cello: 'The famous old Antonio Vandini, on the violoncello, who, the Italians say, plays and expresses *a parlare*, that is, in such a manner as to make his instrument speak.' We are now lucky to have two fresh Vandini discs by cellists Elinor Frey and Francesco Galligioni, both of whom have recorded his opera omnia (six sonatas and one concerto). The marvellous rendition of Vladimir Waltham of Vandini's *Sonata for cello & continuo in A minor* on La Serenissima's album is a wonderful addition to this Vandini revival.[1] It shows a beautiful balance between the cantabile first movement, in which we also hear florid ornaments (possibly the boldest on this album), a passionate performance of the second movement, full of high passagework, and the delicate and brief closing movement. Waltham's colleagues, Carina Drury, Robert Howarth and Lynda Sayce are especially outstanding in their continuo role. The sonata is preserved in a *recueil* in the French National Library, in which can be found another Vandini sonata together with pieces by Carlo Zuccari and Giovanni Battista Sammartini.

The stop in the Papal States is the *Sonata for two violins & continuo in B minor* by Giuseppe Antonio Brescianello. Brescianello was probably born in Bologna around 1690. He worked briefly in Venice and Munich before he established himself in Stuttgart in 1716, where he spent much of his active career as the *kapellmeister* at the Württemberg court. Though educated in Italy, Brescianello represents what we know as the 'mixed style': an amalgamation of the French and the Italian styles that emerged in Germany in the first half of the century. Although the Italian roots are evident, we can appreciate some French touches in this sonata as well as in his famous Chaconne for two violins, two violas and basso continuo. La Serenissima seems to have a special liking for Brescianello, since he was also featured in their two previous albums with Signum Records: *Extra Time* and *The Godfather*. It is always good news when an experienced ensemble puts its focus on neglected (yet significant) composers. Just a small reservation about the liner notes: they affirm that this sonata is preserved in the hand of Pisendel, yet, although it is kept in two different manuscripts in Pisendel's archive in Dresden, he was not the copyist of either of them. Their rendition of this trio sonata is particularly inspired; the sober and velvety dialogue between both violins in the introductory Largo is especially delightful.

As La Serenissima's main focus for nearly thirty years now has been the study and diffusion of Venetian repertoire, the Republic of Venice naturally takes a central role in this journey to three Italian regions. One misses, perhaps, a few more representations of the diversity of styles in the peninsula – some relevant musical centers such as Rome, Milan or Florence are absent from the itinerary – but nevertheless the album offers a very delightful survey and depicts the unparalleled richness and diversity of the Italian baroque style.

[1] In the booklet accompanying the disc, Carina Drury is wrongly credited as the performer of the solo cello part.

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Compiled by James Hume

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