

BONNER, ANDREW, D.M.A. "Curious Inventions": Carlo Farina's *Capriccio Stravagante*. (2013)

Directed by Marjorie Bagley and Kailan Rubinoff. 150 pp.

Carlo Farina's 1627 *Capriccio Stravagante* uses four violin-family instruments (violin, two violas, and a violoncello-range instrument) to mimic other instruments such as trumpets, shawms, organs, and guitars. This investigation seeks to equip the modern performer by framing the piece in the context of contemporary understandings and techniques. Carlo Farina and the *Capriccio* model the influence of emerging tastes for Italian practices and musicians in the courts of northern Europe, and for the violin as an individually idiomatic solo instrument. Marin Mersenne identified the violin's specific strength as its versatile ability to adopt the timbre and musical idioms of other instruments, as demonstrated in the *Capriccio*.

One of the primary tasks facing the modern interpreter is to identify the instruments which Farina imitates throughout the piece. The *Lira*, for example, is not the *lira da braccio* but the hurdy-gurdy, and *Il tremulant* is not a string tremolo technique but an organ setting. Chapter V of this analysis examines each mimicked instrument in turn and considers their period performance practice and repertoire, extrapolating an application to violin-family instruments.

“CURIOUS INVENTIONS”: CARLO FARINA’S

CAPRICCIO STRAVAGANTE

by

Andrew Bonner

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of The Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Musical Arts

Greensboro
2013

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank all the members of my advisory committee for their time, input, and support, and in particular Kailan Rubinoff for her input into this document and Marjorie Bagley for her professional and violinistic guidance throughout the degree program. Special thanks to Rebecca Cypess for providing her experience with the *Capriccio Stravagante* as an outside reader, and for sharing a pre-publication copy of “*Die Natur Und Kunst Zu Betrachten*” with me early in my research.

I would also like to express my thanks to Aurelio Bianco for sharing initial scans of Farina’s *avertimenti* and providing guidance on several questions; to the digitization staff of the SLUB Dresden for assisting me in obtaining high-resolution scans (and for eventually making them freely available on the Internet); to Sergio Bonanzinga for guidance on the connection between blind mendicant musicians and the hurdy-gurdy; to Kerry McCarthy, Micaela Janan, Jennifer C. Woods, and Stephan Stücklin for assistance with translations; and to Alexander Batov for providing some perspective on the presence of the guitar in early seventeenth-century Germany.

My heartfelt thanks goes to my parents, my parents-in-law, and my daughters for their many sacrifices, longsuffering patience, and ongoing encouragement, and especially to my peerless wife for her love and companionship (and all of the above too). Finally, I wish to thank and honor the Father of all human invention, and human curiosity as well, who glories in concealing things for his children to glory in searching out, for his unmerited love and sovereign grace.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation focuses on a single piece, the *Capriccio Stravagante*, published in Dresden in 1627 by the Italian violinist Carlo Farina.¹ The piece is written for four bowed string instruments; the topmost part is definitely intended for a violin, and the remaining ones are probably intended for violin-family instruments as well, most likely two violas and a “bass violin”² (for more on the evidence for instrumentation, see pp. 61-72). Over the course of the remarkably lengthy piece (roughly ten times the average length of the other works published in the same volume), Farina inserts many brief episodes in which these string instruments are called on to imitate the timbres and idioms of other instruments, such as trumpets, shawms, organs, and guitars, as well as the sounds of several animals—chickens, cats, and dogs (see fig. 1 for a complete list). These representational passages are interspersed among stretches of material with no

¹ The volume in which the piece was published titles each piece individually in Italian, but the title page is in German, and refers to the piece in question as “einem kurzweiligen Quodlibet.” In modern editions, recordings, and general usage the piece is most often referred to by its Italian title, but it might with equal validity be called the *Kurzweilig Quodlibet*. For simplicity, I will refer to it as the *Capriccio Stravagante*, or simply *Capriccio*. For the meanings and connotations of *capriccio* and *quodlibet* see Rebecca Cypess, “‘Die Natur Und Kunst Zu Betrachten’: Carlo Farina’s *Capriccio Stravagante* (1627) and the Cultures of Collecting at the Court of Saxony,” *The Musical Quarterly* 95, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 147–50 and Aurelio Bianco, “*Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*”: *Vie et oeuvre de Carlo Farina*, Collection “Epitome musical” (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 124–5.

² The lowest part is in the range of the modern violoncello, and evidence from Praetorius shows an instrument with four strings and the modern ‘cello tuning, but also shows that such a setup was far from standardized; see pp. 67–69.

mimetic intent, similar in style and texture to the pavans, galliards, and other dance pieces that fill the volume in which the *Capriccio* was published.

This volume was the second of five that Farina published during his three year stay in Dresden, which represent almost the entirety of his known output. The title page of this publication highlights the *Capriccio* as a special feature: “Another volume of new pavans, galliards, courantes, [and] French airs, with a humorous *Quodlibet* of all manner of curious inventions, such as have never before been seen in print, together with several German dances, all charmingly suited to viols.”³ The title page further identifies the author as “Carlo Farina von Mantua,” and the printer as Gimel Bergen. The volume is printed in four partbooks, designated as “Canto,” “Alto,” “Tenor,” and “Basso.” Two copies are extant, though neither is totally complete. One copy consists only of the “Canto” partbook; this is currently housed in Dresden, in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek.⁴ The other copy, in the Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel,⁵ contains all four parts, and also includes an additional, handwritten Basso partbook.⁶ The Kassel copy, however, is missing a few final pages at the back of the Canto partbook. These pages, preserved in the Dresden copy, are crucial, as they contain Farina’s own instructions to performers of

³ Carlo Farina, *Ander Theil Newer PADUANEN, GAGLIARDEN, COURANTEN, Frantzösischen Arien, benebenst einem kurtzweiligen Quodlibet von allerhand seltzamen Inventionen, dergleichen vorhin im Druck nie gesehen worden Sampt etlichen Teutschen Tüntzen alles auff Violen anmutig zugebrauchen* (Dresden: Bergen, 1627). Translations mine unless otherwise indicated.

⁴ Shelf mark Mus. 1510-N-1. This source can be accessed online at <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/id326018611>.

⁵ Shelf mark 2° Mus. 25.

⁶ Cypess, “‘Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten,’” 178–9.

the *Capriccio*. Apparently its “curious inventions” were so novel that Farina felt compelled to describe their technical execution. These textual instructions are headed “A Few *Avertimenti*,” or “Necessary Reminders” (hereafter called *avertimenti*)⁷ and take the form of a page each of Italian and German text, roughly identical in content. These are indeed “necessary,” as Farina not only painstakingly explains such commonplace modern features as first and second endings, double stopping, slurs, and third position, but also provides precise performance instructions, such as specifying that the “Il Flautino” section be played *ponticello* with the bow “half a finger’s width” from the bridge. Further, Farina’s *avertimenti* provide unequivocal clues to the identities of some of the instruments he imitates, even those about which there has been misunderstanding among modern interpreters.

⁷ “ALCUNI AVERTIMENTI NEL SOPRANO INTORNO AL CAPRICCIO STRAVAGANTE” and “Etliche Nothwendige Erinnerungen wegen des Quodlibets von allerhand Inventionen”

Italian heading	German heading ⁸	Measures ⁹	Literal translation	Most probable interpretation ¹⁰
<i>La Lira</i>	<i>Die Leyer</i>	55-74	The lyre	Hurdy-gurdy
<i>Il Pifferino</i>	<i>Das kleine Schalmeygen</i>	75-82	The small pipe/small shawm	A high-register shawm (or shawm band)
<i>Lira variata</i>	<i>Die Leyer uff ein andert art</i>	83-88	The varied (or altered) lyre/another style (or type) of lyre	Unkeyed hurdy-gurdy, or perhaps hurdy-gurdy played <i>en violon</i>
<i>Qui si bate con il legno del archetto sopra le corde</i>	<i>Hier schlegt man mit dem Holtze des Bogens</i>	103-111	Here one strikes with the wood of the bow upon the strings	col legno, “like a hammered dulcimer”
<i>La Trombetta; Il Clarino; Le Gnachere</i>	<i>Die Trommeten; Das Clarin; Die Heerpaucken</i>	149-180	The trumpet; the clarino; the kettledrums	A trumpet ensemble with kettledrums and a virtuosic, high-register clarino part
<i>La Gallina; Il Gallo</i>	<i>Die Henne; Der Han</i>	181-187	The hen; the rooster	Cackling hens and a crowing rooster
<i>Il Flautino pian piano</i>	<i>Die Flöten still stille</i>	197-204	The small recorder, very quiet	A recorder (or recorder consort)
<i>Il Tremulo</i>	<i>Der Tremulant</i>	244-266	The <i>tremulant</i>	Organ with tremulant device
<i>Fifferino della Soldatesca; Il tamburo</i>	<i>Das Soldaten Pfeifgen; Die Paucken oder Soldaten Trommel</i>	274-284	The soldier’s fife; the kettledrums or soldier’s drum ¹¹	Military fife and drum
<i>Il Gatto</i>	<i>Die Katze</i>	289-295	The cat	Cats
<i>Il Cane</i>	<i>Der Hund</i>	307-309	The dog	Dog (or dogs)
<i>La Chitarra Spagniola</i>	<i>Die Spannische Cythar</i>	351-360	The Spanish guitar	Guitar

Figure 1. Table showing representational sections of *Capriccio Stravagante*.

The *Capriccio Stravagante* is strikingly long compared to the other pieces in the volume (and other instrumental works of the time). Aurelio Bianco’s edition contains

⁸ Found only in the Basso part of the Kassel copy

⁹ Following the critical edition included on CD-ROM with Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*.

¹⁰ Some differences between the literal translation and this interpretation reflect my conclusions for the best understanding of these passages, as elaborated in Chapter V.

¹¹ For the question of kettle vs. snare drum, see p. 128.

377 measures, and most performances last fifteen to twenty minutes, whereas the other pavans, galliards, correnti, and other pieces making up the rest of the volume average 38 measures in length. Although the sections of the *Capriccio* that imitate instruments or animals have historically commanded the most attention and discussion, they represent only 38 percent of those 377 measures. The remaining 62 percent are devoted to generic four-part consort music, not intended to evoke or imitate anything, and very similar in compositional style to the dance pieces with which the *Capriccio* shares the volume. It should be noted that one passage is not officially labeled as imitating any instrument *per se*; the section in mm. 103-11 is simply showcasing an unusual playing technique, striking the strings with the stick of the bow (what would be indicated today as *col legno*). However, even in this section, Farina turns to instrumental metaphors to explain the technique in his *avvertimenti*, likening the violin-family instruments to drums (in the Italian instructions) and hammered dulcimers (in the German).¹²

This *col legno* section is only one of several unusual playing techniques Farina employs in the course of the piece. His *avvertimenti* specify that the *Flautino* and *Fifferino* sections should be played *ponticello* (with varying degrees of bow weight and distance from bridge), that the *Gatto* and *Cane* should employ *glissandi* (and, at the end of the

¹² “...come fanno li tambarini...” and “...gleich eines Hackebrets...”

Gatto section, some bowing on the “wrong” side of the bridge), and that the *Chitarra Spagniola* should be played pizzicato, with the violin held “under the arm” like a guitar.¹³

Despite the *Capriccio*'s popularity among modern performers and audiences, resources and reference materials for performers are particularly sparse. There have been a handful of modern printed editions of the piece, from Harnoncourt's 1970 edition, marked by editorial restraint, to Gunther Schuller's 1982 edition, which attempts to represent every nuance of performance practice (or editorial invention) through the liberal addition of articulations and dynamic markings for modern performers.¹⁴ However, aside from these two, there are only a scattering of other editions, and none is very widely disseminated. Alessandro Bares has created an edition in 2008 through his own “small publishing house,” producing both the *Capriccio* by itself and an edition of the larger volume in which Farina published it.¹⁵ The most recent and most scholarly offering is in the electronic edition of Farina's complete works which Aurelio Bianco included, on CD-ROM, with his exhaustive 2010 study of Farina's life and work.¹⁶ Even this is not widely available; at the moment there appear to be thirty-five

¹³ The latter instruction is clearer in the German, “... indeme die Geigen unter den Arm nimbt...” than in the Italian, “... levando via il Violina dalla spalla, & mettendolo sott'il fianco sonando con le dite...”

¹⁴ Carlo Farina, *Capriccio Stravagante: Kurtzweilig Quotlibet, Aus Libro Delle Pavane, Dresden 1626, Für Streicher Und Basso Continuo.*, ed. Nikolaus Harnoncourt (Wilhelmshaven: O.H. Noetzel Verlag, 1970); Carlo Farina, *Capriccio Stravagante: An Amusing Quodlibet: For Violin, 2 Violas, Cello, Bass, and Harpsichord*, ed. Gunther Schuller (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1982).

¹⁵ Carlo Farina, *Capriccio Stravagante*, ed. Alessandro Bares (Albese con Cassano: Musedita, 2008).

¹⁶ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*.

libraries worldwide holding a copy.¹⁷ Furthermore, none of the editions mentioned offers adequate guidance to performers, especially English-speaking ones, in interpreting the work's representational sections. Some even offer imprecise identifications of the instruments to which Farina refers, or by their silence leave the performer to find similar misinformation in some scholarly works; in total, of the seven instruments Farina imitates, maybe two have survived the past two centuries without any brush with confusion or misidentification. Bares's edition describes itself as "diplomatic-interpretive," indicating minimal editorial intervention, but it is also completely free from editorial commentary on the piece or its context. Most significantly, only Bianco has included Farina's "necessary reminders," the *avvertimenti*, though only in the original seventeenth-century Italian and German (and, in his book, in French). The only translation available to English speakers at the moment is not in an edition at all, but in a journal article by Rebecca Cypess (and even this does not offer the full text of the *avvertimenti*).¹⁸

The separation between the notes and the text of the piece is possibly explained by the fact that one of the two extant copies of Farina's publication, the Kassel holding, is missing the *avvertimenti*. As the Kassel copy has all four partbooks, it is naturally the one consulted first in constructing a modern edition. However, it is the Dresden copy of the Canto part that has been known longer, as Wilhelm Wasielewski first encountered it

¹⁷ Consulting WorldCat.org on January 31, 2013. This figure includes the copy, not shown on WorldCat, that the Duke University music library bought at my eager encouragement.

¹⁸ Cypess, "Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten'."

in 1869 and noted that only the topmost voice was available.¹⁹ Modern scholars can thank the Kassel copy for providing the remaining three voices of the work, but they cannot blame it for losing the *avvertimenti*. It is regrettable that no edition in physical print has supplied performers with such a vital resource.

It is my hope that the fifth chapter of this dissertation, dealing in detail with each of the instruments that Farina imitates, may provide modern performers with the best possible identification of the instruments Farina intends to mimic, along with any information about the performance practice or characteristic musical idioms of those instruments that might affect their imitation on violin-family instruments. It is also my desire, in the preceding chapters, to locate Farina and his *Capriccio* within a historical and cultural context.

The first task is to investigate the “meaning” of the *Capriccio*; that is, to establish its intent and function as a piece. Chapter II will include a “selective reception history,” examining prior commentators’ attempts to establish such meanings. Most engage the piece as an aesthetic object, assessing its artistic merit (usually according to nineteenth-century criteria). Another popular way of understanding the piece has been in relation to the “evolution” of violinistic techniques, a viewpoint from which the *Capriccio* appears to be an experimental proving ground of “new” techniques for the developing instrument. Later voices offer more nuanced models, viewing the piece as an artifact of the *stile moderno*, in which both of the previous views can coexist, as technical

¹⁹ Wilhelm Joseph von Wasielewski, *Die Violine und ihre Meister* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1869), 28, <http://books.google.com/books?id=fltDAAAacAAJ> (accessed January 10, 2012).

innovation and experimentation were a valid aesthetic currency. Rebecca Cypess proffers an interpretation which likens the *Capriccio* to a *Kunstkammer*, a gallery of natural and man-made marvels. Finally, we return to Farina's own contemporary Marin Mersenne, whose comments on the violin's ability to mimic other instruments reveal the *Capriccio*'s mimetic elements to be more than entertainment. Rather, they take their place in a broad history of timbral imitation, which the violin appropriated as its own unique idiom, and the *Capriccio* stands as a prominent and early example of a mimetic practice which contributed to the emerging definition of the violin as the "king of instruments" on the basis of its expressive versatility.

The next chapter lays out the circumstances of Farina's life and career, such as we know them. Although I devote some attention to the popular topic of the *Capriccio*'s purported influence on subsequent generations of German mimetic violin works, I show that the significance of Farina's legacy lies primarily in his ability to represent trends shaping the European musical landscape in the first decades of the seventeenth century, such as the migration of national schools of taste (as well as the migration of national musicians themselves) and the emergence of violinistic repertoire.

In the fourth chapter I address two questions in which a historical context may help to inform modern performance. The first is the attempt to determine the most appropriate instrumentation for performing the *Capriccio*, including reconciling apparent references to viols and investigating what the bass member of the "violin family," the equivalent of the violoncello, would have resembled in size, tuning, and

playing position. Secondly, I seek a historically appropriate solution to the problem of the ambiguously printed slurs in the *Capriccio*, and compare the capabilities of various printers in the early seventeenth century. As “technology follows technique,” it becomes clear that the surviving (mostly printed) written record is not an infallible indicator of practice.

Chapter V is made up of six subsections, each addressing a section of the *Capriccio* which imitates one or more instruments. In each of these sections, the goal is first to establish which instrument Farina is imitating, and secondly to investigate the musical and cultural connotations surrounding that instrument. I explore in particular the musical idioms unique to the instrument and any aspect in which its performance practice might influence its imitation on the violin.

Although the organological minutiae of such a survey make it the bulkiest chapter of this investigation, an understanding of the musical environment that generated the piece remains as, if not more, edifying. Framed in the context of the shifting currents of international tastes and of the the developing histories of various instruments and their repertoires, the *Capriccio* presents a picture of a piece in which

creative eccentricity and virtuosic ambition make no apology, a musical culture that rewarded such “extravagance,” and above all of a nascent instrument that “imitates and counterfeits all sorts of instruments,” in a calculated display of its versatility, its mutability—its “Universal Harmony.”²⁰

²⁰ Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, vol. 2 (Paris: Pierre Ballard, 1637), 183, 180–1, [http://imslp.org/wiki/Harmonie_universelle_\(Mersenne,_Marin\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Harmonie_universelle_(Mersenne,_Marin)) (accessed March 12, 2011). “... il imite & contrefait toutes sortes d’instrumens ...” “... la touche ... contient une infinité de sons differens ... & consequemment qu’elle peut estre appelée *Harmonie universelle*.”

CHAPTER II

THE MEANINGS OF THE *CAPRICCIO STRAVAGANTE*

In the backstage area of the Eastman Theatre, when I was a student at the Eastman School of Music, stood a large, retired piece of lighting equipment.²¹ This console, once the master house lighting control panel, had been out of operation for decades, and its six-foot, mint-green bulk was covered with metal toggle switches, lighted dials, and oversized knobs, making it look like a relic of the Apollo space program. One particularly large rheostat was equipped with a protruding, lever-like handle that pivoted vertically, suggestive of the kind of switch Dr. Frankenstein might throw to animate his monster. The upper and lower extremes of this dial had been labeled with pieces of black gaffer tape and a white marker. One was marked “Art,” and the other, “Entertainment.” The joke was that, for any given concert, the lever could be set to the appropriate point on the continuum—perhaps all the way to Art for, say, Webern, and all the way to Entertainment for John Williams. In only two words, though, the machine illuminated a pivotal distinction in modern musical thought: by calling attention to the binary opposition of Art and Entertainment, it challenged the very validity of the notion.

²¹ Kodak Hall stage manager Ron Stackman recalls this as “the old Kleigl house light control panel. It had controls for ‘art, entertainment, mood,’ and others” (personal communication, January 4, 2012). The unit was non-functional by my time (1999-2003), and has since disappeared entirely.

In collective attitudes toward early music (as well as other periods) there is often a disparity between scholars, on the one hand, and performers and audiences on the other, with some works and composers commanding a high share of popular attention but little scholarly treatment.²² Since music of great artistry is sometimes of minimal popularity, there is a corresponding assumption that music of great popularity is of minimal artistry. Similarly detrimental to a musical work's scholarly reputation are virtuosic indulgences, programmatic spectacle, and most of all humor.

The subject of this dissertation, Carlo Farina's *Capriccio Stravagante*, is unfortunate enough to suffer from all of the above complaints. Its technical demands are unusual for its time; it is packed with, if not true program, at least representational "impressions" imitating various instruments; and its most striking features include a few moments of outright absurdity. As often happens, however, the very same elements that have earned it critical neglect (and even disdain) have also bequeathed to it a popularity that overshadows the remainder of Farina's output by far. Since the late nineteenth century²³ it has been the topic of much discussion, even if not all that is said

²² For instance, John Phillip Sousa's marches are a perennial staple, but in the history of the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, there has been only one article about Sousa: Patrick Warfield, "The March as Musical Drama and the Spectacle of John Philip Sousa," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 2 (2011): 289–318. I have singled out one of the most prominent musicological journals, but even extending the search to 83 publications including *Music and Letters*, *The Musical Times*, and *Notes*, spanning over a century, yields only about a dozen articles.

²³ To the best of my knowledge, the earliest mention of the *Capriccio* is in Julius Rühlmann, "Die Kunst des Violinspiels: Ein historische Studie (continuation)," *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 3, no. 36 (September 6, 1865): 588–9 (discussed below). Three earlier reference works contain a few sentences each on Farina: Johann Gottfried Walther, *Musicalisches Lexicon oder Musicalische Bibliothec* (Leipzig: Wolfgang Deer, 1732), 239–40,

about it is complimentary; Aurelio Bianco and Nona Pyron call it “the famous *Capriccio stravagante*,”²⁴ David Boyden the “much-mentioned *Capriccio Stravagante*,”²⁵ Peter Allsop “the much-quoted *Capriccio stravaganza*,”²⁶ and Simon McVeigh, “Farina’s notorious *Capriccio stravagante*.”²⁷ To the best of my knowledge, it has been commercially recorded at least eleven times and, in Bianco’s words, “it enjoys a certain notoriety with the (ever-increasing) audience of connoisseurs of baroque repertoire, to the point of appearing frequently in the programs of ‘early’ music concerts.”²⁸ It is by no means the kind of programming staple that Vivaldi concerti or Bach cantatas represent, but it is a remarkably well represented work for such an otherwise overlooked composer.

<http://archive.org/details/JohannGottfriedWalther-MusicalischesLexiconOderMusicalischeBibliothek> (accessed March 22, 2013); Charles Burney, *A General History of Music: From the Earliest Ages to the Present Period*, vol. 3 (London: Becket, 1789), 547, <http://books.google.com/books?id=EEFDAAAaAAJ> (accessed January 1, 2013); Ernst Ludwig Gerber, *Neues historisch-biographisches Lexikon der Tonkünstler*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: A. Kühnel, 1812), 76, <http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/bsb00008092/images/index.html?id=00008092&fip=193.174.98.30&no=&seite=48>. The wording of these entries might, incidentally, be taken to reflect an evolving notion of the roles of performer and composer. In 1732 Walther simply calls Farina a “violinist,” and states that he published pavans and sonatas. Eighty years later, Gerber calls him “a violinist *and composer*” (emphasis added). Burney seems to put the two roles somewhat at odds: while Farina “published pavans and sonatas for the violin,” he “was, *however*, a celebrated performer on that instrument” (emphasis added).

²⁴ Nona Pyron and Aurelio Bianco, “Farina, Carlo,” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/09308> (accessed January 10, 2012).

²⁵ David Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 132.

²⁶ Peter Allsop, *Cavalier Giovanni Battista Buonamente: Franciscan Violinist* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2005), 16.

²⁷ Simon McVeigh, “The Violinists of the Baroque and Classical Periods,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, ed. Robin Stowell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 48.

²⁸ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 123.

Of the eleven recordings mentioned, only three include other works by Farina,²⁹ yet the *Capriccio Stravagante* is only one of 128 pieces in five volumes of music that Farina published, as well as another seven surviving in manuscript.

Clearly, the *Capriccio*'s eccentricity—or perhaps even its simple musical value—gives it a perceived significance to performers and audiences. Yet the piece has at the same time sustained a contrasting reception history of ambivalence and outright antipathy. The difficulty comes when writers set themselves the task of appraising a work's musical value. (Performers have the luxury of doing this tacitly—perhaps even unconsciously—through their programming choices.) Underlying these value judgments is the more fundamental task of determining the work's "meaning"—its function, its purpose, or the content or "message" it transmits. The piece succeeds or fails not only on the basis of whether it meets the critic's predetermined model of worth as an aesthetic object, but also according to how successfully it accomplishes what the critic thinks it is intended to accomplish, whether the critic concerns himself with its original function in its native music culture or its potential utility to modern parties. Of course, as authors assess and pass judgment on the piece's intent, execution, and aesthetic value, they also tip their hand, unveiling their own working models of musical value, and revealing which functions and features they consider musically valid.

As we examine a chronological sampling of scholars' responses to the *Capriccio* below, we will see several patterns of "meaning-making" emerge. Some engage the piece

²⁹ Alberto Rasi's and the Ensemble Clematis's recordings include a selection of Farina's dance-genre works and sonatas; the Ricercar Consort's recording simply lists a "Suite" by Farina.

simply as an aesthetic work, and judge its value as a concert piece. They weigh it, however, in a late-nineteenth-century balance, and find it wanting in comparison to the “wondrous beauty” of the high Romantic “heroes of art.”³⁰ Others (or, often, the same ones) treat its function primarily as an experimental proving ground for violinistic techniques, especially ones that were rare in the contemporary written record and would later become more popular. (There are dangers to this view, as we will examine later, quite aside from its problematic construction of a linear, progressive evolution of instrumental technique, which can be just as deceptive as an evolutionary view of aesthetic expression.) This model, while awarding the *Capriccio* historical significance, ultimately denies it musical value.

Other voices, however, offer avenues by which to construe the piece’s value according to the artistic currency of its time. Aurelio Bianco categorizes responses of artistic condemnation as “absolutely unjustified, ... the product of ... an aesthetic conception totally antithetical to the musical thought of the early *Seicento*; a preconceived vision that underestimates the persuasive power of this music.”³¹ Instead, he points simply to the effectiveness of Farina’s programmatic hijinks and the “decidedly audacious writing” necessary to accomplish them, such as the meticulously

³⁰ Wilhelm Joseph von Wasielewski, *Die Violine und ihre Meister*, ed. Waldemar von Wasielewski (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1927), 64. See full quote below.

³¹ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 130. Translations mine unless otherwise noted. “... absolument injustifié ... le fruit d’une analyse qui trahit une conception esthétique totalement antithétique de la pensée musicale du premier *Seicento*; une vision préconçue qui sous-estime la capacité persuasive de cette musique.”

cacophonous dissonances of the cat fight.³² Rebecca Cypess, for her part, finds a colorful analogy for the *Capriccio*'s function in the *Kunstammer* of the Dresden court. The *Kunstammer* was a collection of artisanal and mechanical marvels as objects of art, emphasizing human ingenuity.³³ The culture that assembled such a collection was one that prized "inventions," and scientific instruments and clockwork automata vied for place with feats of craftsmanship. Cypess connects the *Capriccio* to "the spirit of the *Kunstammer*," interpreting it as a musical "collection," putting the sounds both of the natural world and of human (musical) inventions on display. Furthermore, Cypess's interpretation redeems the piece's technical virtuosity; rather than assigning the violinistic feats a utilitarian developmental value, separate from an aesthetic musical value, Cypess demonstrates that the term "invention" was applied to instrumental virtuosity by several of Farina's contemporaries, and such human "inventions" were welcomed by patrons as a valid currency of artistic value.³⁴ The final voice to suggest a "meaning" for the *Capriccio* belongs to one of its contemporaries, Marin Mersenne. Mersenne's comments do not strictly belong to the piece's reception history, but they describe the violin's ability to mimic other instruments and animals, thus suggesting a context in which to understand the *Capriccio*.

³² Ibid., 131.

³³ Cypess, "Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten'."

³⁴ Rebecca Cypess, "Esprimere la voce humana': Connections between Vocal and Instrumental Music by Italian Composers of the Early Seventeenth Century," *The Journal of Musicology* 27, no. 2 (April, 2010): 181–223; Cypess, "Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten'."

The following examination of responses to the *Capriccio* might be described as a “selected reception history.” It might even be described as a slanted reception history, as I focus on responses to the piece’s perceived musical value or function (though there has been little substantive discussion of the piece without such assessment). I will present these sources chronologically.

After Farina’s lifetime there are few documents that mention him at all, and these few make no mention of the *Capriccio* in particular, so its “reception history” begins rather late.³⁵ In 1865 an ambitious survey of violinistic history by Julius Rühlmann, spread across nine issues of the weekly *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, provides a thorough summary of the piece.³⁶ Although it is most likely the contribution of the next commentator, Wilhelm Wasielewski, that has remained better known to posterity, Rühlmann’s analysis establishes the themes that would recur throughout most subsequent treatments: a negative appraisal of the work’s artistic merit and an emphasis on the value of its technical content. Like most later commentaries, Rühlmann’s depiction of seventeenth-century violin playing assumes a quasi-evolutionary progression from its humble and “simple beginnings” to more complex, more soloistic, and more artistic “expressive capability,” and attributes a rather anthropomorphic (and clairvoyant) desire to the violin to “attain” the latter

³⁵ See p. 13 for the eighteenth-century sources that reference Farina.

³⁶ Rühlmann, “Kunst des Violinspieles.” The article begins in issue 35 (August 30) and concludes in issue 43 (October 25), with the discussion of the *Capriccio* found in issue 36.

development.³⁷ Compared to future critics, however, Rühlmann takes a fairly lenient and even positive tone toward the piece, describing it as captivating to the hearer and “certainly ... a virtuosic performance,” but he cannot accept it as “serious” art: “If one cannot speak of such pieces of music overall as an artistic use of the violin, it is because the instrument is used here only as a humorous gimmick or plaything, for which only minor technical development was necessary.”³⁸ Rühlmann seems almost apologetic for devoting any consideration to the *Capriccio* at all, but justifies it on the grounds of its technical features:

In these little gimmicks we find already manifold expedients to represent different sound effects that still today come somewhat into use, such as pizzicato, *flautando*, tremolo, etc., and on these grounds we consider this *Capriccio* an exhibit worthy of mention, as the appreciation of sound effects is now beginning to revive, and [they] only require a truly artistic usage to be considered a legitimate art medium.³⁹

Wilhelm Wasielewski’s 1869 book on violinistic history duplicates many of Rühlmann’s sentiments (indeed, as both were published in Leipzig, it is quite possible

³⁷ Ibid., 588–9. “Aus solchen schlichten Anfängen...”; “zu einem ausdrucksfähigeren Standpunkte zu gelangen.”

³⁸ Ibid., 588. “... die gewiss in diesem *Capriccio* eine virtuose Leistung erkannt haben und schon damit die Hörer entzückten.” “Wenn man bei diesen Musikstücken überhaupt noch nicht von einer künstlerischen Verwendung der Violine sprechen kann, so liegt dies darin, dass dies Instrument hier nur zu einer scherzhaften Spielerei benutzt wird, zu deren Darstellung nur geringe technische Entwicklung nöthig war.”

³⁹ Ibid., 589. “In diesen kleinen Spielereien finden wir schon mannigfache Hülfsmittel zur Darstellung verschiedener Klangwirkungen, die zum Theil noch heute in Anwendung kommen, z. B. das Pizzicato, das Flautino, das Ondulez etc., und wir halten aus diesem Grunde dieses *Capriccio* für ein erwähnenswerthes Zeugnis, wie der Sinn für Klangwirkungen sich jetzt zu beleben beginnt und nur noch einer wirklich künstlerischen Benutzung bedarf, um als berechtigtes Kunstmittel angesehen zu werden.”

that Rühlmann's article was a source for Wasielewski). Like Rühlmann, Wasielewski encountered only a copy of the topmost, or "Canto," voice of the four-part *Capriccio*, and prefaces his comments with a disclaimer:

We can hardly make an absolute judgment on the quality and the overall design of the "Capriccio stravagante" from this violin part, because the three other parts, which determine the harmony and complete the form, are missing. Still, in light of what survives, we may certainly conclude that the invention and structure of the whole piece in no way oversteps the boundaries of primitive illustration. Composition for the violin was, after all, still in its childhood. The author can certainly find an expression for this or that feeling—as long as he relies on concrete materials—but it is entirely trivial in musical terms. In the largely aphoristic construction of the piece, vaguely reminiscent of free rondo form, we can nonetheless recognize some attempts at well-proportioned melodic and thematic treatment. We gain some positive insight into the obviously manifest violin technique of the time, whose abundance unfolds here in a very remarkable way.⁴⁰

In the ensuing decades, Wasielewski's *Die Violine Und Ihre Meister* underwent some eight editions, with Wilhelm Joseph von Wasielewski presiding over the first three, but his son, Waldemar von Wasielewski, continuing his father's work with the fourth

⁴⁰ Wasielewski, *Die Violine und ihre Meister*, 28–9. I am grateful to Kerry McCarthy for this translation. "So wenig man mit absoluter Gewißheit aus einer einzelnen Stimme die tonkünstlerische Beschaffenheit des Musikstückes, zu dem sie gehört, bestimmen kann, eben so wenig vermag man aus dieser Violinpartie mit voller Bestimmtheit ein unbedingtes Urtheil über Werth und Gesamtgestaltung des 'Capriccio stravagante' zu fällen, denn es fehlen die drei anderen harmoniebestimmenden und formergänzenden Partien. Doch ist im Hinblick auf das Vorhandene der Schluß gestattet, daß Erfindung und Struktur des Ganzen nach keiner Seite hin die Grenzen einer nur primitiven Bildweise überschreiten. Die Violincomposition lag eben noch in der Kindheit. Der Autor findet zwar schon für diese und jene Empfindung, namentlich, wo er sich an Gegenständliches anlehnt, einen bestimmten Ausdruck, dieser ist aber musikalisch höchst unbedeutend. Wir erkennen jedoch in der größtentheils aphoristischen, entfernt an die freie Rondoform erinnernden Satzbildung die Anläufe zu wohlgegliederter melodischer und figurirter Behandlung. Positive Einblicke gewinnt man in die sich klar offenbarende Violintechnik jener Zeit, deren ganzer Reichthum hier auf sehr bemerkenswerthe Weise entwickelt wird."

edition in 1904. By the 1927 “revised and enlarged” edition, the wording of this assessment of the *Capriccio* has been entirely re-written, whether by Wilhelm or by Waldemar, though the sentiments remain the same: faint praise for a “primitive” attempt in an immature discipline. This later edition intensifies the theme of progress with new eloquence:

Primarily, this ... “entertaining quodlibet” ... arouses our attention through the fact that in it the first, if rather grotesquely failing, attempt is made to bring recognition to the violin’s variety of expression. Guided by the urge to a characteristic musical language, Farina loses his way in a grossly materialistic direction, for which he may be, however, less reproached, as the time was not yet ripe for the expression of poetic sentiments in music, which has blossomed with such wondrous beauty in the instrumental works of our heroes of art.⁴¹

The 1927 Wasielewski’s final summation is that “this ‘entertaining quodlibet’ can be regarded as nothing but a work of minor importance”⁴² (Willi Apel translates the phrase as “of only modest significance,” and Adele Maxfield as “of subordinate meaning”).⁴³

This edition also reproduces Rühlmann’s identification of the *Capriccio*’s technique as

⁴¹ Wasielewski, *Die Violine und ihre Meister (1927)*, 64. “Vorzugsweise erregt dieses ... ‘kurtzweiliges Quodlibet’ ... unsre Aufmerksamkeit dadurch, daß in ihm der erste, allerdings ziemlich grotesk ausfallende Versuch gemacht wird, das vielseitige Ausdrucksvermögen der Violine zur Geltung zu bringen. Von dem Drang nach charakteristischer Tonsprache geleitet, verlor sich Farina dabei in eine grob materialistische Richtung, was ihm indeffen um so weniger zum Vorwurf gemacht werden kann, als seine Zeit noch nicht für den Ausdruck jener tondichterischen Stimmungen reif war, welche in den instrumentalen Werken unsrer Kunstheroen so wunderbar schöne Blüten getrieben haben.”

⁴² *Ibid.*, 66. “Kann solchergestalt das kurzweilige Quodlibet seiner Totalität nach nur als ein Musikstück von untergeordneter Bedeutung bezeichnet werden....”

⁴³ Willi Apel, *Italian Violin Music of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Thomas Binkley (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 72; Adele Louanne Maxfield, “Carlo Farina’s *Ander Theil neuer paduanan...*” (master’s thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1990), 22.

the justification for discussing it at all: “... however, it cannot be denied that Farina has done an outstanding service in no small measure to the promotion of violin technique, and therefore a more detailed illumination of the same for the purposes of these pages seemed appropriate.”⁴⁴

With “entertaining quodlibet,” Wasielewski alludes to the Art/Entertainment dichotomy illustrated on the lighting console at Eastman—“entertaining” is the opposite of “important.” In fairness, however, it is Carlo Farina himself who first pulls the figurative handle of the lighting console from “Art” to “Entertainment”; in the title page of the volume in which the *Capriccio Stravagante* was published Farina bills it as “eine kurzweilige Quodlibet.” Of course, in 1627 Dresden, “Art” and “Entertainment” might not have been placed at opposite ends of the imaginary lever, or even plotted on a linear continuum at all.

In 1881 George Hart invokes the same dichotomy in the negative:

This, it must be confessed, is *not high art*, and points to a disposition on the part of the Violin to return to its old companions of the Fiddle. Perhaps we ought not to expect to find at this stage of its independence that punctiliousness associated with its behaviour when in the company of the Viols, and we must also bear in mind that Corelli had not yet taught it to be dignified even though engaged in playing a jig.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Wasielewski, *Die Violine und ihre Meister* (1927), 66. “...so ist doch nicht zu verkennen, daß Farina sich in ihm um die Förderung der Geigentechnik in nicht geringem Maße verdient gemacht hat, weshalb denn eine nähere Beleuchtung desselben dem Zweck dieser Blätter angemessen erschien.”

⁴⁵ George Hart, *The Violin and its Music* (London: Dulau / Novello, 1881), 172, <http://books.google.com/books?id=CaPUAAAAMAAJ> (accessed January 9, 2012), emphasis added.

Many subsequent opinions follow Wasielewski's template: they emphasize Farina's curiosities of technique (perhaps they even make too strong a claim for their innovation), but as a result imply (or state outright) that the piece is lacking in musical merit. In 1904 Paul Stoeving, in *The Story of the Violin*, minces no words:

Even if we were disposed (judging only from this specimen of his muse) to suspect Carlo Farina of having been something of a musical charlatan, a Woldemar in embryo, this capriccio would stand as a valuable document for the stage of violin technique at the time; but there is good reason to believe that the composer was prompted by a perfect earnestness of purpose, as it shows itself in the other pieces of the collection. Not having learned as yet to speak in musical parables, he landed in the crudest forms of tone-picturing as soon as he tried to depart from the stereotyped dance-tunes and arias.⁴⁶

Edmund van der Straeten, similarly, delivers damning praise to Farina's technical elements, while calling the piece as a whole "grotesque," meritless, "ridiculous," "childish," and "primitive":

The technical development of his instrument was uppermost in his mind, and the way in which he set to work to attain his object was very amusing. Like other early virtuosi he did not try to widen the scope of musical figuration for the violin on the basis of either aesthetical or theoretical (contrapuntal) requirements, but merely by trying to find new "effects" which nobody else had tried before. Whether these effects were in the nature of the instrument or entirely alien to it gave him but small concern. The chief question was, "Were they curious, and would they astonish the public?"

⁴⁶ Paul Stoeving, *The Story of the Violin* (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., 1904), 262, <http://books.google.com/books?id=pyQuAAAAYAAJ> (accessed January 9, 2012). "Woldemar" refers to Michel Woldemar, 1750-1815, for whom Stoeving employed even stronger language in pp. 200-1: "We find after Lolli an indefinite number of men who tread in his tracks, and bring in turn credit and discredit on his name and style:—Woldemar, arch-charlatan, who, to redeem himself, writes a violin-method without a method..."

The result of his endeavours was that curiously grotesque and amusing composition which he describes as “Capriccio Stravagante”....

In his extravagant “capriccio” Farina was the father of the virtuosi who strove to excel in tricks and outward show. The piece, which on the whole has no particular merit, consists chiefly in imitation of the fifes and drums, mewing of cats, barking of dogs, the cock's crow, the cackling of hens, the soldiers' fifes, etc. etc.

With childish delight and pride he explains in an appendix how these *marvellous effects* may be obtained....

However ridiculous these things appear they led to the discovery of several instrumental effects like the “sul ponticello,” “col legno,” and others. (Moreover, Farina here and there brings into his formless Capriccio snatches of real melody, which are completely absent from better pieces by the old counterpunctists.) How much these childish tricks must have been admired by the public is evident....

The works of Marini, Quagliati, and Farina are the first germs of our present violin literature. Primitive as they are...⁴⁷

Gustav Beckman, in 1918, refutes Wasielewski's low opinion of the *Capriccio* rather bluntly, but even his defense reflects questionably on the piece's artistic merit:

Wasielewski ... calls the Capriccio a piece of subordinate rank. This is false. One must not apply here the same standard required of a serious composition, but must keep the purpose of the piece in mind, to be a humorous piece, with prominent virtuosity for the violin. It is a light-hearted string serenade.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Edmund van der Straeten, *The Romance of the Fiddle: The Origin of the Modern Virtuoso and the Adventures of His Ancestors* (London: Rebman limited, 1911), 21–2, http://openlibrary.org/books/OL7097724M/The_romance_of_the_fiddle (accessed January 9, 2012).

⁴⁸ Gustav Beckmann, *Das Violinspiel in Deutschland vor 1700* (Leipzig: N. Simrock, 1918), 14–5, <http://books.google.com/books?id=KYsIAQAAMAAJ> (accessed February 7, 2012). “Wasielewski ... das Capriccio selbst aber nennt er ein Musikstück untergeordneten Ranges. Das ist irrig. Man darf hier nicht den Maaßstab, den eine ernste Komposition verlangt, anlegen, sondern muß den Zweck des Stückes im Auge behalten, ein humoristisches Stück zu sein, mit virtuosem Hervortreten der Violine. Es ist eine lustige Streicherserenade.”

William S. Newman dismisses the *Capriccio* in 1959 as one of the “first random trials” in “experimental uses of the violin ... by way of out-and-out stunts.”⁴⁹ For Newman, “stunt” is obviously a distasteful word; he discusses the contemporary trend for “bizarre stunts” and pieces full of “strange technical effects ... that are more in the nature of stunts than music.”⁵⁰ Even David Boyden’s indispensable *History of Violin Playing*, in 1965, delivers judgment on musical merit and forbids serious consideration of any but technical qualities:

About 1600 violin music is remarkable for its experiments in idiom, form, and expression; but it does not follow that novelty and experiment are always synonymous with the best artistic results. The most interesting piece violinistically is not necessarily the most interesting musically, and the exploration of the violin idiom sometimes advances the technique of the instrument more than its musical ends. Farina’s much-mentioned *Capriccio Stravagante* ... is a classic case. This piece calls for relatively exotic devices like *col legno*, *sul ponticello*, and even *glissando* in the interests of depicting barking dogs, yowling cats, and crowing cocks. All this is good fun for the violinist—and was probably intended as such by Farina—but *musically such pieces cannot be considered seriously except in so far as they advance the technique of the instrument.*⁵¹

Walter Kolneder, in 1972, is gently patronizing:

With his *Capriccio stravagante* he ushered in a genre that became highly significant for the violin, though it often had little musical substance: the virtuoso showpiece.... Farina’s famous *Capriccio* gave the composer a bad reputation among those espousing “noble” violin playing, but as an outstanding virtuoso he apparently had fun exploring all the sounds he could extract from his

⁴⁹ William S. Newman, *The Sonata in the Baroque Era*, 4th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983), 54.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁵¹ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 131–2, emphasis added.

instrument. Some indeed were new at the time and no doubt amused his listeners in a harmless way.⁵²

For Boris Schwarz, in 1983, “musical value” and “fun” also appear to be opposites: “The *Capriccio* is a ‘fun’ piece and there is no use pretending that it had musical value, but the technical devices have survived and were adapted to musical purposes by later composers.”⁵³ Finally, also in 1983, Willi Apel says that “it seems to me, from a standpoint of musical artistry, to be a monstrosity, best passed over in silence,” but, like Wasielewski, spares a few words for its “interesting details.”⁵⁴ In the 1990 English translation of the same work, Apel condenses his artistic evaluation into a terse damnation: “To my mind, *Capriccio stravagante* is best forgotten.”⁵⁵

It is striking how many of these critics highlight the *Capriccio*’s catcalls, even though the section mimicking the yeowling and screeching of alley cats represents a

⁵² Walter Kolneder, *The Amadeus Book of the Violin: Construction, History, and Music*, trans. Reinhard G Pauly (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1998), 268–9; originally published as *Das Buch der Violine* (Zurich: Atlantis Musikbuch-Verlag, 1972). I am not aware of any contemporary sources among whom Farina had a “bad reputation”; in fact, few mention him at all. Perhaps Kolneder refers to later voices like Wasielewski’s.

⁵³ Boris Schwarz, *Great Masters of the Violin: From Corelli and Vivaldi to Stern, Zukerman, and Perlman* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 36.

⁵⁴ Willi Apel, *Die italienische Violinmusik im 17. Jahrhundert*, Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 21 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1983), 54. “Mir erscheint es, vom musikalisch-künstlerischen Standpunkt betrachtet, als eine Monstrosität, die man eigentlich Stillschweigen übergehen sollte, womit nicht abgestritten wird, daß es einige interessante Einzelheiten enthält.”

⁵⁵ Apel, *Italian Violin Music of the Seventeenth Century*, 72. This edition was published using Apel’s own translation, but 1990 does not accurately date his sentiments, as he died in 1988.

mere fourteen seconds, or one percent, of a roughly twenty-minute piece.⁵⁶ The animal noises are fleeting marginalia among the much longer sections imitating instruments, which are themselves far outweighed by non-representational material.⁵⁷ Perhaps these critics are responding more to the rustic implications of the barnyard mimicries than to the actual substance of the piece.

Another recurrent theme among these voices is a tendency to over-value, or “selectively value,” the *Capriccio*’s unusual violinistic techniques. The piece features several playing techniques that either are appearing for the very first time in extant violin literature, or else have very few recorded precedents. These include what would today be described as *col legno*, *sul ponticello*, *glissandi*, multiple stops, pizzicato, bowing on the “wrong” side of the bridge, and playing above first position. Writers’ enthusiasm for these techniques is deceptive; while they legitimize discussion of an otherwise “meritless” work, they tend to count as a point against its artistic worth. For some, the handle on the lighting console could just as easily be labeled with “Technique” and “Expression” at opposite ends. Further, there is a grave danger in the overemphasis of these techniques of hailing Farina prematurely as their inventor. Bianco warns that just because techniques appear for the first time here it does not follow that they were newly

⁵⁶ Using the Ensemble Clematis recording as a benchmark. This version lasts eighteen minutes and twelve seconds, and the “Il Gatto” section occupies fourteen seconds. Carlo Farina and Ensemble Clematis, *Capriccio Stravagante & Sonate*, CD (Ricercar 285, 2009).

⁵⁷ Counting measures in Bianco’s critical edition, supplied on CD-ROM with *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, of 377 total measures, representational sections add up to 144 and non-representational sections total 233.

conceived, “if it is [even] reasonable to imagine such potent technical expedients to be the fruit of the inspiration and inventiveness of one sole person.”⁵⁸

For instance, the liner notes of the recording by Nikolaus Harnoncourt and the Concentus Musicus Wien credit Farina with “the very first use of the term ‘ponticello’” and “the first ‘col legno’ in the history of music.”⁵⁹ Both claims are in need of modification, though; for one thing, although the *Capriccio* may in fact be the first recorded example of ponticello, Farina never actually uses the word, instead specifying exactly how near the bridge to bow. More to the point, Farina’s is not “the first ‘col legno’ in the history of music”; in 1605, twenty-two years earlier, the English viol player Tobias Hume, in a piece titled “Hark, Hark,” wrote “Drum this with the back of your bow.”⁶⁰ As with the *col legno*, multiple stops were first notated in viol literature, this time in the previous century (Ganassi’s 1542 *Regola rubertina*).⁶¹ Even if we restrict our focus to violin literature, there is some evidence that Biagio Marini might have beaten Farina to publication by a matter of months with his eighth opus, which contains “a few capricious sonatas in which a single violin plays two or three parts” (i.e. multiple

⁵⁸ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 126. “... s’il est raisonnable de penser que de tels expédients techniques puissent être le fruit de l’inspiration et de l’inventivité d’une seule personne.”

⁵⁹ Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Concentus Musicus Wien, *Programme Music of the Baroque Era*, Telefunken SAWT-9549, 1970.

⁶⁰ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 172.

⁶¹ Peter Walls, “Multiple Stopping,” *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/19345> (accessed February 9, 2012).

stopping).⁶² Similarly, Bianco points out that while the *Capriccio* may appear at first glance to be the first use of pizzicato in violin literature, it is pre-empted by Monteverdi's *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*: although the *Combattimento* was published in 1638, eleven years after the *Capriccio*'s printing, it was first performed in 1624, three years prior to it.⁶³ Bianco concludes, "It is obvious that [an inquiry] limited to extant sources can only lead to unconvincing results," and that "insisting on the presumed novelty of the *Capriccio stravagante*" is counterproductive.⁶⁴

To be fair, this problematic celebration of both the significance and the unprecedentedness of the *Capriccio*'s technical features is first provoked by Farina himself.⁶⁵ Farina gives pride of place, a mention in the *Ander Theil*'s title, not to the *Capriccio*'s length or musical value, but to its "curious inventions," and emphasizes their novelty, as "never before seen in print." The modifier "in print" is significant, however. Not only was violin playing a relatively young discipline in the early seventeenth century, but music publication was as well (we will examine later how the *Capriccio*

⁶² Biagio Marini, *Sonate, symphonie, canzoni, pass'emezzi, balleti, corenti, gagliarde, & retornelli* (Venice: Bartolomeo Magni, 1626), <http://www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/publication/9849> (accessed January 21, 2013); Cypess, "Esprimere la voce humana," 128. For the possibility of a 1626 publication for Marini's op. 8, traditionally dated 1629, see p. 209, n. 41. Cypess outlines the possibility that Farina was aware of Marini's publication, and attempting to outdo Marini's "curious and modern inventions."

⁶³ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 127.

⁶⁴ Ibid. "Il est évident que s'attacher aux problématiques du développement de la technique du violon à l'aube de son histoire en se limitant aux seules sources qui nous sont parvenues ne peut aboutir qu'à des résultats peu convaincants. Plûtôt que d'insister sur le caractère présumé novateur du *Capriccio stravagante* ..."

⁶⁵ It must be noted that the promotional wording in the *Ander Theil*'s title could have been supplied by Farina's printer, Gimel Bergen, rather than by the composer. Since we have no way of knowing, though, I will operate on the assumption that these words are approved by Farina.

stretched the technical capacities of its printer.) Moreover, much of the musical performance of the early seventeenth century was never written down (or was sketched with only minimal notation, intended for temporary use), and much of what was written was likely never printed. Boyden reminds us that it had only been a matter of decades since the violin had emerged from a career of improvised dance-band accompaniment, and “a number of players, even so famous a violinist as Bocan in the seventeenth century, could not even read music.”⁶⁶ The insufficiency of the extant written record has been best expressed by Nino Pirrotta:

The music from which we make history, the written tradition of music, may be likened to the visible tip of an iceberg, most of which is submerged and invisible. The visible tip certainly merits our attention, because it is all that remains of the past and because it represents the most consciously elaborated portion, but in our assessments we should always keep in mind the seven-eighths of the iceberg that remain submerged: the music of the unwritten tradition.⁶⁷

The gulf between written and unwritten traditions is perhaps more significant to the context in which Pirrotta voiced this principle, the Quattrocento, but his warning is relevant to all periods. Its message for the *Capriccio* is that, while there may be few extant, printed antecedents to Farina’s techniques, it may be overconfident to describe any of them as “the first in the history of music.” In fact, Farina’s own addition, “never before seen *in print*,” argues against their unprecedentedness. He could have simply said,

⁶⁶ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 51. “Bocan” is Jacques Cordier, whose career more or less coincided with Farina’s.

⁶⁷ Nino Pirrotta, “The Oral and Written Traditions of Music,” in *Music and Culture in Italy from the Middle Ages to the Baroque: A Collection of Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 72.

“such as have never before been seen.” Adding “in print” could imply that such “stunts” had been witnessed before in performance, whether his own or that of colleagues.

Having said this, the fact remains that Farina’s “curious inventions” were significant to the contemporary perception of the *Capriccio*, not in spite of, but because of the fact that they appeared amidst a surrounding context of similar technical creativity. For instance, both Tobias Hume’s viol music and Marini’s opus 8⁶⁸ show a similar emphasis on novel effects. Hume includes “an Invention for two to play upon one Viole,” a sort of one-viol-four-hands concept involving one player seated in another’s lap.⁶⁹ Marini, in addition to the pieces mentioned earlier “in which a single violin plays two or three parts,” provided several more featuring multiple stops, and in one case facilitating them through *scordatura*, and one in which a single violin could imitate a *lira da braccio*, playing sustained three-note chords, by moving the lower three strings closer together on the bridge. Marini also includes a “Sonata a 3 in ecco,” in which only one violin appears on stage (along with, presumably, the continuo players), but two more violins provide unseen echoes from side galleries.⁷⁰ All of these seem like what William S. Newman would deem “stunts,” but Marini promotes them with a

⁶⁸ Marini, *Sonate, etc.*. See Cypess, “‘Esprimere La Voce Humana’,” 209 for discussion of the publication date of Marini’s op. 8. Also note, on p. 198n33: “Marini’s opus 8 was published in Venice while he was employed at the ducal court of Neuberg, in Bavaria.”

⁶⁹ Tobias Hume, *The First Part of Ayres, French, Polish and Others* (London: John Windet, 1605), http://imslp.org/wiki/The_First_Part_of_Ayres,_French,_Polish_and_Others_%28Hume,_Tobias%29 (accessed February 11, 2012).

⁷⁰ Cypess, “‘Esprimere la voce humana’,” 198–206.

description strikingly similar to Farina's: "curious and modern inventions." Rebecca Cypess speculates,

It seems possible that Marini and Farina employed the term *inventioni* as it was used in the field of science, in which newly invented tools, instruments, and machines were taken to reflect well on the inventor's patron. Indeed, as Allsop suggests in "Violinistic Virtuosity," the patrons in German courts that hosted Marini and Farina seem to have valued technical novelties in musical performance.... If an analogy may indeed be made between scientific inventions and Marini's and Farina's musical inventions, it seems most likely that the performance of the *inventioni* would have been exhibited prominently—that is, with the performer at center-stage.⁷¹

This notion of *inventioni* provides an alternative to the dual problems of viewing the piece's technical achievements either as aesthetic limitations or as stepping stones in a progressive view of violinistic development. Instead, the "technical novelties"—the "stunts"—exist for their own sake, and are themselves an artistic currency of musical value.

Cypess expands on this idea with a more recent article, in which she finds a fruitful analogy for the *Capriccio* in the Dresden *Kunstammer*, a heterogeneous collection not only of art in the traditional sense but also of curiosities of natural beauty and of human ingenuity, like drinking vessels fashioned from nautilus shells, which "bore witness to human interaction with and mastery over nature."⁷² Cypess likens the *Capriccio* to the *Kunstammer* on several levels. For instance, the *Capriccio* can be thought of as a collection of its own, with the mimicked instruments on exhibit, set off

⁷¹ Cypess, "Esprimere la voce humana," 203n36.

⁷² Cypess, "Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten," 139 (the cups are pictured on p. 162).

and framed by the non-mimetic material. The Elector, Farina's patron, had separate *Kammern* for collections of instruments that saw regular use, but the *Kunstkammer* included a number of tools representing local trades, such as "joinery, hunting, gardening, [and] wool-spinning, ... but lavishly decorated and constructed from the finest materials."⁷³ Similarly, ornately rendered musical instruments were included, more as objects for aesthetic observation than as functional tools. Farina's "exhibit" of imaginary instruments, likewise, represents the instruments in question rather than making actual use of them. Cypess also highlights the *Kunstkammer's* role in juxtaposing early modern views of the natural world and man's role in transforming or contextualizing nature. She suggests that Farina's use of animal sounds in congruence with the sounds of human musical inventions is comparable to this juxtaposition within the *Kunstkammer*.⁷⁴ (I might suggest that, if Farina does indeed intend some degree of commentary on the natural and human worlds, perhaps it is significant that all the animals he includes—dogs, cats, hens, and roosters—are domesticated. Like the musical instruments, they serve human purposes, either as pets or as livestock.)

Next, Cypess returns to the importance of the word "invention."⁷⁵ The *Kunstkammer* also housed a number of scientific tools and clockwork automata—exhibits

⁷³ Ibid., 164.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 157–63.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 163–70. There was also, by the seventeenth century, a musical heritage for the use of the word—see the Tobias Hume example above which uses "Invention" as a title, as Bach would do later—but Cypess touches on not only the scientific connotations inherent in the musical usage but the artistic, and rather theatrical, connotations attached even to the scientific usage. See John Caldwell, "Invention," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press,

of human mechanical invention. Cypess describes the contemporary appearance of engraved books described as “theaters of machines,” detailing the workings of such mechanical marvels, and suggests that this trend reflects on the *Theatrum instrumentorum*, the collection of engravings with which Farina’s contemporary (and fellow Dresden resident) Michael Praetorius illustrated his organological treatise.⁷⁶ This spirit of “theatrical” assembling also informed, perhaps, Farina’s present “encyclopedia” of instruments. Further, Cypess points out that the violin itself was a fairly recent “invention,” and suggests that Farina puts it through its paces to illustrate every aspect of its workings, like the engravings in a “theater of machines.”⁷⁷ (The critical distinction between this concept and the nineteenth century view of the *Capriccio* as a technical proving ground is that the phrase “theater of machines” presents the scrutiny of these devices as a “theatrical” experience. Contemporary commentaries on “theaters of machines” and *Kunstammern* demonstrate “a correlation between invention and enjoyment ... at the courts of late-Renaissance Germany.”⁷⁸ “Enjoyment” is only a step away from “entertainment”; are we now discussing Art or Entertainment? Clearly the distinction is anachronistic, as both technical intricacy and pleasurable pageantry are at home in the *Kunstammer*—a room named for Art.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/13877> (accessed February 27, 2013) for an overview of the musical use of the term.

⁷⁶ Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum: De Organographia*, vol. 2, 3 vols. (Wolfenbüttel: Elias Holwein, 1618), [http://imslp.org/wiki/Syntagma_Musicum_\(Praetorius,_Michael\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Syntagma_Musicum_(Praetorius,_Michael)) (accessed December 29, 2011).

⁷⁷ Cypess, “Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten,” 167.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 171.

Finally, Cypess explores a different use of the word *Invention*, to refer to spectacular public processions designed “to display the power and knowledge of the Elector.”⁷⁹ Such parades were often organized to celebrate major occasions in the life of the court. Cypess notes that Farina’s dedication of the *Ander Theil*, of which the *Capriccio* is the centerpiece, “to Johann Georg’s wife, Electress Magdalena Sibylla, on 1 January 1627, [comes] when the court would have been busy preparing for the wedding of her daughter.”⁸⁰ Cypess thus offers a new possibility for the function of the *Capriccio*: “It may ... have been intended as music to celebrate an important occasion—in fact, as a sort of wedding gift.”⁸¹

The function of the *Capriccio* can also be understood not only within Dresden but within a wider international movement. In two earlier articles⁸² (and a planned book)⁸³ Cypess connects the *Capriccio* to the work of Farina’s peers. As observed above, the phrase “curious inventions” in Farina’s title is suggestive of Marini’s usage, “curious and modern inventions.” This is more than a two-man correlation, though. The “modern” component of Marini’s subtitle echoes the words of another Italian; Dario Castello, in 1621, identifies his writing as characteristic of a “*stile moderno*.” This

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 174.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Rebecca Cypess, “Evidence about the Lira da Braccio from Two Seventeenth-Century Violin Sources,” *The Galpin Society journal*, no. 60 (2007): 147–160; Cypess, “‘Esprimere la voce humana’.”

⁸³ Mentioned in “‘Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten’” as “*Curious and Modern Inventions*”: *Humanism and the Mechanics of Italian Instrumental Music, 1610–1630*.

“modernism” is closely tied to Caccini’s 1602 *Le nuove musiche*; the virtuosity that Caccini promoted in a vocal context is, in the *stile moderno*, given a distinctly instrumental emphasis.⁸⁴ In the first half of the seventeenth century, instrumental writing for unspecified forces began to be replaced by writing that was distinctly idiomatic for specific instruments, and the violin was one of the primary subjects for such a spotlight.⁸⁵ Farina’s collective works mix generic consort writing, “equally suitable for viol consort,” with sonatas for solo and continuo, “idiomatic to the violin family and in the tradition of the *stile moderno* sonatas of the composer’s Italian contemporaries.”⁸⁶ These include not only Castello and Marini but Salomone Rossi (like Farina, a Mantuan), who played “a determining role in the ‘birth’ of the sonata for two violins, [and] in the emancipation of the violinist’s status,”⁸⁷ Giovanni Battista Buonamente,⁸⁸ and Antonio Bertali.⁸⁹ Clearly, another defining feature of the *stile moderno* was its Italian-ness. Many of the violinists named above had, like Farina, careers in German-speaking territories. We will explore in greater detail the migration of violinists, instrumental styles, and technique between Italian and German areas later, but for the moment it is noteworthy that Farina’s *stravaganze* (even when they were *seltzamen Inventionen!*) were prized not only for their content but also for their part in

⁸⁴ Cypess, “Esprimere la voce humana,” 186.

⁸⁵ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 99–100, 121–31.

⁸⁶ Cypess, “Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten,” 167.

⁸⁷ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 25.

⁸⁸ Allsop, *Cavalier Giovanni Battista Buonamente*.

⁸⁹ Cypess, “Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten,” 170.

transmitting the most current Italian practices to Germanic courts keen to adopt them. (This leads back to a comparison to the *Kunstammer*; such collections were meant both to celebrate local resources and craftsmen and to display exotic “imports,” especially when the latter could be reshaped and given a Saxon character.⁹⁰)

By drawing on Castello, Marini, and the other leaders of the *stile moderno*, Cypess allows us to construct a more historically informed alternative to the reading of the *Capriccio* presented by Wasiliewski and his successors. Contextualization of the *Capriccio* within early seventeenth century musical values helps to paint a picture in which the piece’s “curious inventions” are neither embarrassing and inexplicable antics nor immature, larval stages of the evolutionary growth of violin technique, aspiring to the full flowering of violinistic expressivity as manifested by the nineteenth century’s “heroes of art.” Newman’s use of the term “stunts” is in fact not inaccurate, but they can be understood not as parlor tricks but as displays of human inventiveness and virtuosity as art, and integral components of an emergent instrumental aesthetic at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

One final perspective on the *Capriccio* may be discerned from the comments of another of Farina’s contemporaries, the French theorist Marin Mersenne. With only a few stray comments Mersenne illuminates an environment in which such “stunts” could, far from lowering the status of the violin, contribute to a still-malleable definition of the

⁹⁰ Ibid., 139, 180.

violin's strengths, and lay the initial foundation for the lofty shrine which subsequent centuries would build to the instrument.⁹¹

Mersenne honors the violin in unambiguous terms, as the “king of instruments,”⁹² and highlights its versatility as its chief feature. Initially, he focuses on the chromatic ability of its fretless fingerboard, describing it with the same phrase that titles his entire work, saying that such ability to play in all possible modes merits the term “Universal Harmony” (*Harmonie Universelle*). Given the breadth of the work that Mersenne published under that phrase, encompassing not only organology but higher mathematics, physics, and metaphysics in one grand inquiry into the workings and nature of the universe, it is no small matter that he bestows the same title on the violin. Eventually, however, he shows that the violin's flexibility is connected not only with chromaticism but with expressive scope and a palette of multiple timbres. He writes:

The violin is one of the most simple instruments imaginable, in that it has only four strings, and that there are no fret-points on its neck; this is why one may execute all of the just consonances, as with the voice, in that one can touch wherever one wants: this renders it more perfect than the fretted instruments....

To which it can be added that its sounds have more effect on the mind of the listeners than those of the lute or other string instruments, because they are more vigorous and penetrating, on account of the great tension of the strings and their high sound. And those who have heard the Twenty-Four Violins of the King bear witness that they have never heard anything more lovely or more

⁹¹ In 1789, Charles Burney finds Mersenne's praise of the violin to be to his credit: “There is nothing in this good father's book which reflects more honour on his taste and penetration than his partiality for the violin, to which ... he gives the preference over all other instruments then in use, at a time when it was thought unworthy of being admitted into the concerts of other countries.” Burney, *A General History of Music*, 3:583–4.

⁹² Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 2:177.

powerful.... Now the beauties and graces that one may practice on it are so numerous that it is preferable to all the other instruments, because the strokes of its bow are so delightful sometimes that one has a great discontent to hear the end, particularly when they are mixed with ornamentations of the left hand which force the listeners to confess the violin to be king of the instruments. ...

... [T]hose who judge the excellence of music and its instruments ... have rather powerful reasons for maintaining that it is the best, of which the greatest is drawn from the great effect it has on the passions and affections of the body and soul.

Now if one wishes to dispose of the names by which the ancients expressed their modes, that is the Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Ionian, and the others, and should wish to impose more intelligible names on them than those of the Greeks, the Tone or mode of the violin could be called the gay and joyous mode, as that of the viol and lyre the sad and languishing mode; that of the lute the prudent and modest mode; that of the trumpet, the hardy and war-like tone, and so the others according to the property of each instrument.

It must still be noted that the violin is capable of all the genres and all the species of music, and that one can play the Enharmonic, and each species of the Diatonic and Chromatic upon it, because it carries no frets, and contains all the intervals imaginable, which are possible upon its neck, which is comparable to the primal matter capable of all sorts of forms and figures. ... Thus it must be concluded that it contains an infinity of different sounds, as the string or the line contains an infinity of points, and consequently that it can be called “Universal Harmony.” ...

Now the violin has this above the other instruments, that in addition to various songs of animals, both birds and land animals, it imitates and counterfeits all sorts of instruments, such as voices, organs, the hurdy-gurdy, the bagpipe, the fife, etc., so that it can provoke sadness, as does the lute, or enliven like the trumpet, and those who know how to play it to perfection are able to represent everything that occurs to their imagination.⁹³

The final paragraph is the one that most clearly relates to the *Capriccio*.

Mersenne could almost be describing the very piece, with animal sounds and hurdy-

⁹³ Ibid., 2:177, 180–1, 183–4.

gurdy, organ, and fife. Of course, the *Capriccio* is not the only piece in which an instrument imitates the timbres and idioms of other instruments. More examples within the German violin school would appear shortly after (prompting speculation that the *Capriccio* served as a model for composers of other works), but voices, guitars, trumpets, and keyboards all engaged in the same trick, and had done so for some time (see pp. 55-59). However, Mersenne states here that this kind of imitation is uniquely suited to the violin. With the *Capriccio* (and its successors in violin literature, all the way to Paganini), the violin appropriated this mimetic genre as its own domain.

Further, Mersenne's final paragraph is informed by the previous ones. He speaks not only of the violin's ability to reproduce the sound of another instrument, but to "provoke sadness, as does the lute, or enliven like the trumpet." The violin does not merely "borrow" the timbre of a given instrument, but its uniquely associated affect as well. Mersenne's focus is on a broad spectrum of emotive capabilities. In the second and third paragraphs quoted above, he emphasizes the "effect on the minds of the listeners," and "on the passions and affections of the body and soul." In the fourth paragraph quoted above, Mersenne assigned the violin a native affect of its own, joy, but later he makes it clear that it can also temporarily adopt those of other instruments. This paragraph is also significant because Mersenne draws a direct analogy between Greek modes—structures of theory and tonality as well as symbols of affective connotations—and the musical affects that are the sole "property of each instrument." Thus, when he goes on to say that "the violin is capable of all the genres and all the species of music,"

he has extended his frame of reference from pitch collections to unique instrumental idioms and affects. This means that, when he asserts the violin's primacy on the basis of its "infinity of different tones" and emotive flexibility, he equates these with the ability to "imitate and counterfeit all sorts of instruments"—exactly the talent that Farina puts on display in the *Capriccio*.

The violin was young enough in Farina's time that its definition—what it is that makes a violin a violin—was still taking shape. A repertoire of "violinistic" writing was beginning to take on more clearly defined forms, and organological taxonomists like Mersenne were trying to identify quintessentially "violinistic" traits. In this light, the *Capriccio* may be seen not so much as a parlor trick, or as a vehicle for naked, non-associative technical skills like double stops and *ponticello*, but as a different kind of showcase for violinistic ability. In this model, the instrumental imitations take center stage. The violin's capacity to become more than itself, to take on the trappings of such diverse instruments as hurdy-gurdies and organs, to paint with a full palette of tonal colors and affective "modes," from the grotesque to the sublime, presents a complete musical definition of an instrument, just as that instrument was redefining itself.

CHAPTER III

FARINA'S LIFE AND MUSICAL ENVIRONMENT

A useful inquiry into Farina's "life and times" must dwell more on his times than on the specifics of his life, because the available biographical data is skeletal. However, the little that is known about his individual circumstances still merits inspection because, even as a faceless figurehead, he embodies a number of contemporary musical trends. Farina was an Italian violinist in Germany, at a time when Italian influences—and individuals—were increasingly in vogue in Germanic courts, and his international career yielded a distinctly international body of work. He was a violin specialist and technical innovator at a time in which instrumental idioms were beginning to enjoy increased attention and increased specialization, and in which the violin in particular was rapidly gaining prominence. And he stands as an example of the *stile moderno* school, which shifted the definition of virtuosity from ornamental passagework to a lyrical style, enlivened by capricious and inventive creativity.⁹⁴ Finally, this chapter will examine the possibility of Farina's influence (especially, the influence of the *Capriccio*) on subsequent composers. Much has been made of similarities between the *Capriccio*

⁹⁴ I am combining the definitions of two authors: Timothy A. Collins, "Reactions Against the Virtuoso': Instrumental Ornamentation Practice and the Stile Moderno," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 32, no. 2 (December 1, 2001): 137–152; Cypess, "Esprimere la voce humana'." N.B. that, at the time of writing, Cypess is working on a book to be titled "Curious and Modern Inventions": *Humanism and the Mechanics of Italian Instrumental Music, 1610-1630*, which may help to clarify and contextualize the use of the term.

and later pieces, with no clear evidence of causal connections. However, in some cases influence is more plausible than others.

The facts of Farina's life are, like those of so many instrumentalists of his time, plagued by uncertainty. We know about his positions of employment and from them can trace his peregrinary career (Prague, Dresden, Bonn, Parma, Lucca, Danzig, and Vienna), but we know little about the man himself.⁹⁵ We have no extant portrait, no (clear) commentary on his character, and even no description of his playing. Even details that are routinely presented as fact are not securely corroborated: Farina describes himself in his musical publications as "Mantuan,"⁹⁶ but as Aurelio Bianco notes, this does not even guarantee that he was born in Mantua; it could simply be an identification with a "Mantuan" school of musical taste.⁹⁷ Because of Farina's self-identification with the city, scholars have looked to records there for evidence of his youth, but as Bianco cautions, the results are really at best "seductive" speculations, impossible to confirm.⁹⁸ Farina's date of birth has traditionally been set in the first 5 years of the seventeenth century, but Bianco points out that there is no evidence to contradict a much earlier birth date; at any rate, a date after 1606-1607 is unlikely, as it would put him in full-time international employment as a teenager.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 10, 23–5.

⁹⁶ "Mantovano" or "von Mantua," depending on the language, in the title each of the five Dresden publications.

⁹⁷ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 24.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

If, however, we know nothing for certain about Farina's early life, there is no lack of "seductive" evidence with which to sketch exciting potentialities. For one thing, there are records of a man who could perhaps be Farina's father.¹⁰⁰ In 1603, a Luigi Farina entered the employment of the Mantuan duke as a member of the six-man violin band known as the "*concerto delle viuole da ballo*," presumably employed primarily to play dance music.¹⁰¹ Luigi Farina is referred to in documents as "sonatore di basso" and "Luigi Farina dal violone," both indicating that he played a bass string instrument (for more on the definition of the *violone* see p. 66-69). He is the only person documented as being hired solely to play the violone, though there is evidence that one of his colleagues in the *concerto delle viuole*, the violinist Orazio Rubini, could also play the violone (as well as the theorbo).¹⁰²

If this Luigi Farina is in fact Carlo Farina's father, then it is a reasonable supposition that he gave Carlo his first introduction to string playing at home. The fact that Luigi is described as a bass player does not necessarily preclude knowledge of the violin. Carlo's future identity as a "violinist"—a specialist in one instrument—was something of a new career model; most musicians previously were multi-instrumentalists like Rubini, who had one primary role at court, but could play at least

¹⁰⁰ This line of research begins with Pietro Canal, *Della musica in Mantova: notizie tratte principalmente dall'Archivio Gonzaga* (Venice, 1881), 87, <http://books.google.com/books?id=sVYAAAAMAAJ> (accessed January 4, 2013).

¹⁰¹ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 26.

¹⁰² Rodolfo Baroncini, "Scelte e idiomi strumentali nell'Orfeo' e in altri luoghi monteverdiani," in *Claudio Monteverdi: Studi e prospettive*, ed. Paola Besutti, Teresa M. Gialdrone, and Rodolfo Baroncini (Florence: Olschki, 1998), 299n29; Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 26-8.

two other instruments competently. Also, parental instruction was normative, creating “dynastic” musical families like the Bassanos, who emigrated from Venice to England, where they flourished for over a century.

We do not know who else might have given Carlo formal instruction in either violin performance or composition, but we can at least say that if he was in Mantua in the early seventeenth century he would not have been without potential teachers. Whether through speculation, confusion, or the human urge to amplify a figure’s perceived importance by associating it with a renowned name, many sources have suggested or assumed that Farina had formative contact with Claudio Monteverdi (who, after all, was originally hired by the Duke of Mantua as a string player).¹⁰³ These sources lead Boyden to state as fact that Farina, along with Biagio Marini, Salamone Rossi, and Giovanni Battista Buonamente, “began as one of the violinists under Monteverdi in Mantua,” when in fact there is no evidence to link Farina or Buonamente to Monteverdi (moreover, Rossi was in his thirties when Monteverdi became *maestro di capella* at the Gonzaga court, and Marini only worked with Monteverdi from 1615, at the age of 31, in Venice, so the notion of “beginning under” Monteverdi is imprecise on all counts).¹⁰⁴ Of course, neither is there evidence that Farina did *not* have contact with Monteverdi; indeed, as Luigi Farina was the only dedicated *violone* player at court, it is quite likely that he for one played under Monteverdi’s direction, perhaps for *Orfeo* or similar

¹⁰³ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 26n13.

¹⁰⁴ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 135.

events.¹⁰⁵ Other candidates for the young Carlo's violin instruction include the brothers Orazio and Giovanni Battista Rubini, who played alongside Luigi.¹⁰⁶ A more prestigious name might be Salamone Rossi, celebrated contemporarily as a virtuoso, and valued retrospectively for furthering the technique of the violin and advancing its role as a solo instrument.¹⁰⁷

Nor would Farina have wanted for musical peers. Peter Allsop outlines the parallel career trajectories that Farina had in common with two contemporaries, Giovanni Battista Buonamente (with whom Farina might have grown up in Mantua) and Biagio Marini (who was born only sixty miles away, in Brescia).¹⁰⁸ Although every Italian city-state had a distinct artistic culture, Allsop locates both Mantua and Brescia within a circle of influence radiating from Venice (with the "opposing pole" being Milan).¹⁰⁹ All three were part of "an exodus of Italian instrumental composers to the northern courts" in the first three decades of the seventeenth century—"Marini to Neuburg, Farina to Dresden, Buonamente and Bertali to Vienna, Merula to Poland—but this merely accentuated a trend already under way well before 1600."¹¹⁰ Indeed, "Italian violins and players" had been enjoying "a flourishing export business to foreign countries" since at

¹⁰⁵ Baroncini, "Scelte e idiomi strumentali," 298–9.

¹⁰⁶ Rodolfo Baroncini, "Farina, Carlo," *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1994), [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/carlo-farina_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/carlo-farina_(Dizionario-Biografico)) (accessed January 1, 2013).

¹⁰⁷ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 25.

¹⁰⁸ Allsop, *Cavalier Giovanni Battista Buonamente*, 7.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* There is further overlap among those named here: Farina also went to Vienna in 1638, and he, Marini, and Buonamente were each in Parma at some point.

least the mid-sixteenth century,¹¹¹ when, for instance, Henry VIII of England recruited a large influx of Italian wind and string players (a trend that continued for almost a half century in the court violin band; in 1594 William Warren became “the first native Englishman” to join the band since its inception in 1543).¹¹² Likewise, in the 1540s through ’50s, the French court imported an Italian dancing master and violin band, led by “the best violinist in Christendom,” Baldassare da Belgiojoso (later Gallicized as Balthasar de Beaujoyeulx).¹¹³ (For that matter, roughly a century later, the iconically French Jean-Baptiste Lully was another Italian import, born in Florence as Giovanni Battista Lulli.)

Italian violinists, and Italian musical taste in general, were particularly in demand in Germanic and Austrian territories. Delphine-Anne Rousseau has assembled an overview of this “diaspora,” and suggests that a number of factors contributed to it: the overall influence of Italian humanism, the financial and mercantile strength of northern Italy, marital unions between Northern and Italian dynasties (the Empress whom both Buonamente and Farina served in Vienna was Eleonora Gonzaga, like themselves a Mantuan).¹¹⁴ Other causes might include the advances made in printing in sixteenth-century Venice (facilitating transmission), political one-upsmanship between

¹¹¹ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 38.

¹¹² Peter Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers: The Violin at the English Court, 1540-1690* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 108.

¹¹³ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 38.

¹¹⁴ Delphine-Anne Rousseau, “La diáspora de compositores Italianos en el *primo Seicento* y su música para violín” (final project, Barcelona: Catalonia College of Music, 2008), 2, 3, 11–3, http://www.casacota.cat/2x2/baixap.pl?loque=la_dispora_de_compositores_italianos_-esmuc.pdf (accessed January 9, 2012).

Catholic and Protestant German states (the former were quicker to adopt Italian trends),¹¹⁵ and the developments in instrument making in Northern Italy. In addition, Northern Italy appears to be not only the birthplace of the modern violin,¹¹⁶ but a cradle for rapidly maturing technical prowess, contributing to the specific demand for Italian violinists. While this may be initially true, Allsop warns against an oversimplified view in which technical facility is dominated by Italians in the first half of the seventeenth century and then passed on to Germans in the latter half. Instead, he suggests that this appearance owes more to the relative state of local printing capabilities (we will see in the next chapter that Farina strained the abilities of his Dresden printers).¹¹⁷ At any rate, in the first half of the century we see rulers and their agents actively recruiting Italian musicians. Besides Farina, Marini, and Buonamente, Rousseau lists thirteen Italian violinists active in northern courts.¹¹⁸

The first firmly documented information on Farina appears in hindsight: in 1625 he appeared in Dresden, but his letter of recommendation shows that he was previously employed in Prague. The letter is dated August 20, and reports that Farina had already been “for some time” in Prague, serving the archbishop Ernst Adalbert von Harrach as a

¹¹⁵ Mary E. Frandsen, “Allies in the Cause of Italian Music: Schütz, Prince Johann Georg II and Musical Politics in Dresden,” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 125, no. 1 (2000): 2.

¹¹⁶ Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 18.

¹¹⁷ Peter Allsop, “Violinistic Virtuosity in the Seventeenth Century: Italian Supremacy or Austro-German Hegemony?,” *Il saggiautore musicale: Rivista semestrale di musicologia* 3, no. 2 (1996): 233–58.

¹¹⁸ Rousseau, “La diáspora de compositores Italianos,” 41–51.

“*musicus* of the viola.”¹¹⁹ Most likely “some time” was at most two years, as von Harrach himself had only arrived in Prague in 1623.¹²⁰ Already, in von Harrach’s employ, it would appear that Farina was valued for his Italian origin. Although born in Vienna, Archbishop von Harrach was fluent in Italian—he wrote his personal diaries in it for 27 years—and, just prior to his arrival in Prague, had been educated in Italy (at the *Collegio Teutonico* in Rome, with some subsequent study of philosophy with Scipione Borghese).¹²¹ Indeed, the von Harrach family had strong Italian connections; his father, count Karl von Harrach, had been educated in Padua and Siena, and the family had “good relations” with the ecclesiastical powers in Rome.¹²² Ernst Adalbert “was a great connoisseur and admirer of Italian ... music”;¹²³ later in life he served as translator for an opera by Antonio Bertali, *L’Inganno d’Amore*,¹²⁴ and once extended a stay in Italy

¹¹⁹ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 33. “...seiner profession ein musicus auf der Viola ein Zeitlang allhier ... sich aufgehalten...” As I will discuss more fully in the next chapter, the word “viola” here should not be taken as a narrow indication of Farina’s instrumental specialization. The word could refer to the viol, or to the violin family in general, of which the “violino” was regarded simply as a diminutive “viola,” but it is best understood here as a generic identifier of bowed string instruments. At the same time, it allows the possibility that Farina performed on the viol as well.

¹²⁰ Ernst Adalbert von Harrach, *Die Diarien und Tagzettel des Kardinals Ernst Adalbert von Harrach (1598-1667)*, ed. Katrin Keller and Alessandro Catalano, vol. 1 (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2010), 64.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 1:62. The archbishop was only barely older than Farina (if at all), having been born in 1598 and ordained archbishop in 1623, with a special dispensation for his “lack of age.”

¹²² *Ibid.*, 1:60.

¹²³ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 33.

¹²⁴ Angela Romagnoli, “From the Habsburgs to the Hanswursts, to the Advent of Count Sporck: The Slow Progress of Italian Opera on the Bohemian Scene,” in *Italian Opera in Central Europe*, ed. Melania Bucciarelli, Norbert Dubowy, and Reinhard Strohm (Berlin: BWV Verlag, 2006), 80 n 32.

specifically to attend an opera in Venice.¹²⁵ It is perhaps inadvisable, though, to imagine Farina in a soloistic role in Prague. All of von Harrach's extant diaries postdate Farina's employment, but in the thirty-eight years they cover, the many mentions of violins in performance almost always describe inclusion in mixed ensembles, and typically in an accompanimental role, for instance supporting a singer along with two theorbos.¹²⁶

Farina's next post, however, was more prestigious. In 1625 he was awarded the position of Konzertmeister in Dresden, serving the Elector of Saxony, Johann Georg I. The prestige lay not only in Farina's elevated job title, but in the location. Dresden was "one of the richest and most vibrant cultural centers in all of Germany," and in particular the Elector's Hofkapelle was "one of the richest and most highly organized of German musical institutions," on a footing even with the Imperial Hofkapelle in Vienna.¹²⁷ Dresden was also particularly attuned to Italian influence, at least more so than most Protestant German states, largely through the activity of the Kapellmeister, Heinrich Schütz.¹²⁸ When Johann Georg I brought Schütz to Dresden in 1614 (to relieve the *pro tem* Kapellmeister Michael Praetorius), the young Schütz had just returned from Venice, where he had been acquiring "the Italian manner" under Giovanni Gabrieli, and

¹²⁵ Harrach, *Diarien*, 1:168.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:191.

¹²⁷ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 31–2. "... Dresde était déjà à l'époque l'un des centres culturels les plus riches et les plus vivants de toute l'Allemagne." "...l'une des institutions musicales allemandes les plus riches et les plus organisées, suffisamment du moins pour être comparée ... à la chapelle impériale de Vienne."

¹²⁸ Frandsen, "Allies in the Cause of Italian Music" details the extent to which the overt efforts to increase Italian influence in Dresden were the work of Schütz and his pupil the crown prince.

he went there again in 1628 to acquaint himself with the latest practices, with input from Monteverdi. Although Mary Frandsen characterizes Johann Georg I as “largely indifferent” to Italian trends, it is perhaps significant that he went out of his way to “wrest [Schütz] from his contract with the less powerful Landgrave” Moritz of Hesse, by dint of “protracted haggling” and sheer political strong-arming, just as Schütz completed his Italian training,¹²⁹ and the Elector later paid for several other court musicians to make similar trips.¹³⁰ He himself, in his youth, “became the first member of the Saxon dynasty to travel to Italy,” where he spent a year and learned Italian.¹³¹ Regardless of the Elector’s response, Schütz certainly contracted “a lifelong partiality for” Italian music and musicians, and he passed this interest on to the crown prince, who, as Johann Georg II, “displayed a fervor for the modern Italian repertory that bordered on obsession.”¹³²

Part of Farina’s job description in Dresden, then, was to be Italian—or at least to provide new Italian idioms and genres. In his printed collections he did just that, though he paired Italian innovations, like the soloistic, lyrical, freely composed sonatas of the *stile moderno*, with the music that was already popular in Germany, consort-based dance genres like pavans and galliards. Even the latter, actually, were ultimately Italian in

¹²⁹ Derek McCulloch, “Dresden: A Music Metropolis,” in *Dresden: A City Reborn*, ed. Anthony Clayton and Alan Russell (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 175.

¹³⁰ Frandsen, “Allies in the Cause of Italian Music,” 3.

¹³¹ Dirk Syndram and Antje Scherner, eds., *Princely Splendor: The Dresden Court, 1580-1620* (Milan: Electa, 2004), 68.

¹³² Frandsen, “Allies in the Cause of Italian Music,” 3, 4.

origin—*pavan* is perhaps a reference to Padua—though roughly a century old. Their popularity in Germany in the early seventeenth century took a roundabout route, as the French court introduced them to the English court in the 1520s, where they were celebrated and refined (by Italians) into a concert genre, and finally exported, via a number of English expatriates, to be “given a new lease on life in Germany.”¹³³ Thus Bianco titles his study of Farina with the phrase “After the English and French Fashion,” quoting the title of a 1611 collection of dance pieces by Valerius Otto, and apparently “numerous” similar German anthologies. Bianco points out that Farina’s approach is relatively atypical; most Italian violinists in German lands simply provided Italian music.¹³⁴ By blending his Italian contribution with the existing German (and French and English) fashions, Farina prefigured the “mixed taste” that would come to define German style in the following century.

Farina’s printed collections, alluded to above, take the form of five volumes, grab-bag anthologies of instrumental genres, and constitute nearly the entirety of his surviving work.¹³⁵ Farina published all five volumes, remarkably, in the three years in which he was in Dresden. Such prolificacy has caused some to wonder whether some of the material was composed in earlier years, but the volumes with Italian titles include the phrase “*novamente composto & dato in luce*”—newly composed and brought to light—and the German ones are simply labeled as “*newer*” (new). Farina singles out one

¹³³ Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 163; see also entire chapter, 145-72.

¹³⁴ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 14.

¹³⁵ There are also a handful of pieces notated in a sort of shorthand, preserved in a manuscript currently housed in Darmstadt. See *ibid.*, 195-217.

galliard in the third volume for special notability: “This galliard was played and sung in echo at the wedding of the Most Excellent Sig. Landgrave of Hesse, when the Comedy in Music of *Dafne* was presented in Torgau.”¹³⁶ This cryptic statement refers to Schütz’s *Dafne*, often if perhaps over-zealously hailed as the “first German opera.”¹³⁷ What relationship did this galliard have to the “comedy in music”? Was it simply presented at the same occasion? Was it an “entr’acte” between dramatic scenes? (The piece, as Farina mentions, makes heavy use of the “echo” conceit; perhaps it was presented in proximity to the “echo-play” in Act One of *Dafne*, which relies similarly on echo-based wordplay.¹³⁸) Perhaps, as Farina says that it was sung, the piece was even incorporated into the dramatic action? Unfortunately, as only the libretto of *Dafne* has survived, we have no way of knowing whether Farina contributed in some degree to, if not “the first German opera,” at least a proto-operatic production. At any rate, his inscription indicates that the performance was a significant honor.

Honor, however, does not pay the bills, and the Elector’s bills were rapidly mounting. The Thirty Years’ War was draining the court’s resources, and as often happens in wartime, the musicians were feeling the reduced circumstances keenly. In 1625, just as Farina was arriving in Dresden, “the entire ensemble, including

¹³⁶ “Questa Gagliarda e stata sonata & cantata in Ecco, sopra le nozze dell’Eccellentissimo. Sigr. Landgravia d’Hassia, quando fu rappresentata in Musica la Comedia della Dafne à Torga”

¹³⁷ See Bettina Varwig, *Histories of Heinrich Schütz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 94ff for a history of this claim and its debunking.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 60–3.

Kapellmeister Schütz, complained that they had not been paid for nearly two years.”¹³⁹ Such petitions would be repeated with increasing frequency in the coming decades, and Farina appears to have left a glamorous position for more lucrative ones.¹⁴⁰ Schütz, on his 1628 sabbatical in Venice, wrote back to Dresden that he had found a replacement for Farina in the person of Francesco Castelli, whom he describes as “very humble and devoted.”¹⁴¹ Rousseau wonders whether this might imply that Farina was the opposite, but perhaps it is simply a euphemism for “cheap”; indeed, Bianco outlines the “miserable treatment” that greeted Castelli. He inherited at least one young student who had previously been studying with Farina, but was required not only to teach but also to host the youngster, and the meager stipend for the purpose was almost immediately suspended, along with more severe cuts in his salary proper.¹⁴²

Meanwhile, by January of 1629, Farina had entered the service of the archbishop of Cologne, Ferdinand of Bavaria. This is the source of some confusion, as the archbishop’s residence was not in Cologne at the time, but Bonn. There is no way of knowing how long he remained with the archbishop, but at some point within the next

¹³⁹ Gina Spagnoli, “Dresden at the Time of Heinrich Schütz,” in *The Early Baroque Era: From the Late 16th Century to the 1660s*, by Curtis Alexander Price (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1994), 165.

¹⁴⁰ Recent evidence by Gregory Johnston suggests that this “climate of debt” was habitual, intentional, and commonplace, and could not be blamed entirely on the Thirty Years War, as it can be traced before and after the war. Johnston argues that courts created financial hardship for their employees and then offered a measure of protection against creditors, making the employees “in effect economic hostages.” Gregory Johnston, “‘He subsists like a sow in a pig-sty’: Court Musicians and Strategic Debt in Seventeenth-Century Germany” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Musicological Society, New Orleans, LA, November 3, 2012).

¹⁴¹ Rousseau, “La diáspora de compositores Italianos,” 22.

¹⁴² Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 39.

two years he returned to Italy. For the remainder of his career he was employed in four locations over only eight years. Since in this time he produced no extant material, his career can be summarized simply by tracking his location. In 1631-2 he was in Parma, playing in the chapel of Madonna della Steccata. In 1635 he went to Lucca, and played for the “musical celebrations for the feast of S Croce.” “At the end of that year he left Italy permanently”—though he would not live four more full years, so the permanency might not have been intentional.¹⁴³ In 1636-7 he played in the Danzig municipal orchestra, and in April 1638 he went to Vienna to work for Empress Eleonora I. He died there of the plague, somewhere between July 22 and August 5 of 1639 (the revision of his will and disbursement of his estate, respectively).¹⁴⁴

Although Farina’s significance in his own time lay mainly in his active performance, and in his national (and international) idiom, the narrative of his musical legacy has always been dominated by the *Capriccio stravagante*. In modern retrospectives, Farina is sometimes situated within a “master narrative” in which Italian virtuosi of the early seventeenth century laid the groundwork for later generations of German violinists and composers, from Biber to Bach (an exchange challenged by Allsop),¹⁴⁵ and the *Capriccio* is linked to a number of later pieces using similar techniques, often with outright (if unsubstantiated) claims of direct inspiration. Although the piece is often singled out today as the best known instance of its kind—an

¹⁴³ Pyron and Bianco, “Farina, Carlo.”

¹⁴⁴ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 66–8.

¹⁴⁵ Allsop, “Violinistic Virtuosity.”

instrumental piece mimicking the sound of other instruments or of animals—it is by no means the first or the last. The trumpet and fife sections, in particular, fit into a long-standing tradition of “*battaglia*” pieces dating back to the sixteenth or even late fifteenth centuries.¹⁴⁶ In instrumental examples, Biber’s 1673 *Battalia* is often mentioned, but a closer equivalent to Farina’s use can be found in Gaspar Sanz’s 1674 *Instrucción de Música sobre la Guitarra Española*, which contains not only a brief “Batalla,” but “Clarines y trompetas” remarkably similar to Farina’s “clarino” and “trombetta” section.¹⁴⁷ The animal calls, as well, find comparisons in pieces attempting to mimic the natural world; vocal repertoire, at least, had already been troping on bird calls for centuries. The chickens, in particular, show up often in instrumental works. Cesare Bendinelli (another Italian virtuoso in Vienna and Germany, albeit a trumpeter) included a trumpet “sonata” on the clucking of hens (though the resemblance is hard to detect) in his 1614 trumpet method.¹⁴⁸ In 1677 Alessandro Poglietti (yet another Italian¹⁴⁹ in Vienna) used remarkably similar methods to Farina’s, albeit on the keyboard, to depict hens and roosters in a “*Capriccio über das Hennergeschrey*.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Alan Brown, “Battle music,” in *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/02318> (accessed March 3, 2012).

¹⁴⁷ Gaspar Sanz, *The Complete Works of Gaspar Sanz*, ed. Jerry Willard, vol. 1 (New York: Amsco Publications, 2006), 55, 156.

¹⁴⁸ Cesare Bendinelli, *Tutta l’arte della trombetta*, ed. Edward H. Tarr (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1975), 37.

¹⁴⁹ Most likely, but see Charles E. Brewer, *The Instrumental Music of Schmelzter, Biber, Muffat and Their Contemporaries* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011), 216.

¹⁵⁰ Enrique Alberto Arias, *Comedy in Music: A Historical Bibliographical Resource Guide* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001), 37.

Poglietti was particularly enthusiastic about sound imitation, recreating not only bird calls, but the noise of human everyday life (blacksmith and church bells).¹⁵¹ He also sketched imitations of a host of instruments, several of which duplicate Farina's: hurdy-gurdy, shawm, and soldiers' fife.¹⁵²

Other parallels are found among the generation of Austro-German composers following Farina. In particular, we find pieces for violin, again imitating some of the same instruments that appear in the *Capriccio*. Johann Jakob Walther, for instance, provides a *Serenata* mimicking, among other instruments, an organ with tremulant, a hurdy-gurdy, a guitar, and a trumpet ensemble with *timpani*.¹⁵³ Walther even spent time in the same city as Farina, Dresden, albeit half a century later. Given these strong similarities and the commonality of location, many have claimed causality, assuming that Farina's *Capriccio* inspired Walther's *Serenata*. This representation of the *Capriccio* as a model has even been extended to hosts of other pieces with fewer commonalities, by composers spanning the seventeenth century and German-speaking territories: David Cramer, Johann Schop the Elder, Johann Vierdanck, Johann Paul von Westhoff, Heinrich Biber, and Heinrich Schmelzer. Aurelio Bianco cautions against over-speculation, however:

¹⁵¹ Brewer, *The Instrumental Music of Schmelzter, Biber, Muffat and Their Contemporaries*, 209.

¹⁵² Willi Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music To 1700*, trans. Hans Tischler (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 568.

¹⁵³ Johann Jakob Walther, "Serenata a un coro di Violini, Organo tremolante, Chitarrino, Piva, Due Trombe e Timpani, Lira todesca et Harpa smorzata per un violino solo," in *Hortulus Chelicus* (Mainz: Ludwig Bourgeat, 1688), http://imslp.org/wiki/Hortulus_Chelicus_%28Walther,_Johann_Jacob%29 (accessed January 4, 2013). The digital copy at this location is the 1694 second edition.

The desire to re-assess the value of a minor composer may seem a noble intention, but elevating a musician to the rank of the founder of an instrumental “school” cannot be based solely on mere musical coincidences.... It is little likely that the *Capriccio stravagante* had become a reference model, or even simply a vague source of inspiration, over an area so vast and after so many years.¹⁵⁴

Bianco proceeds to examine the claims of Farina’s connections to Johann Vierdanck, who is the only composer on the list whose presence in Dresden actually coincided with Farina’s, and finds that most of the apparent similarities (for instance, a number of “capriccios”) collapse upon investigation. Perhaps Vierdanck’s Italian-style sonata writing was influenced by Farina’s playing, but the only truly “mimetic-descriptive” moment is a trumpet-like flourish, more indebted to the aforementioned “*battaglia*” tradition, which stretches far before and after the lifetimes of both men.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Bianco concedes that it is not implausible that Walther was acquainted with the *Capriccio*. As observed above, Walther was in Dresden for six years (and previously in Florence), and his *Serenata* imitates five of the same instruments as the *Capriccio*; furthermore, other pieces by him in the same volume imitate hens and roosters, as well as the ubiquitous cuckoo. Clearly, if Walther was not directly influenced by Farina, then both pieces are part of a larger tradition, perhaps comprising other unwritten or simply non-extant “missing links.” Marin Mersenne’s words, published barely a decade after the *Capriccio* and in the relative remoteness of France, seem to speak to such a widespread understanding, and come remarkably close to describing the *Capriccio*:

¹⁵⁴ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 134.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 134–8.

But the violin has this above the other instruments, that in addition to various songs of animals, both birds and land animals, it imitates and counterfeits all sorts of instruments, such as voices, organs, the hurdy-gurdy, the bagpipe, the fife, etc.¹⁵⁶

Even if Walther's and Farina's pieces are both part of a broader practice, though, it is reasonable to assume that Farina's contribution had an impact on such a tradition, and in actuality the notion of Walther writing such a similar piece for the same instrument, so close in time and geography, without even hearing anecdotally of Farina's becomes rather implausible.

On the whole, however, perhaps a modern summation of the significance of Farina's life would be better served by focusing less on the *Capriccio* and more on the figure of Farina himself: as an emissary of Italian taste to northern courts; as a transmitter of *stile moderno* virtuosity and the sonata genre; as an agent in the rise of the violin as a solo instrument; and as an embodiment of the symbiosis of German, Italian, English, and French elements that defined the German "mixed taste." In these roles the patterns of Farina's life highlight the outlines of forces and movements much broader and more permanent than the direct influence of a single piece.

¹⁵⁶ Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 2:183. "Or le Violon à cela par dessus les autres instrumens qu'outre plusieurs chants des animaux tant volatiles que terrestres, il imite & contrefait toutes sortes d'instrumens, comme les voix, les Orgues, la Vielle, la Cornemuse, le Fifre, &c., de sorte qu'il peut apporter de la tristesse, comme fait le Luth, & animer comme la trompette, & que ceux qui le sçavent toucher en perfection peuvent représenter tout ce qui leur tombe dans l'imagination."

CHAPTER IV

PROBLEMS FOR PERFORMANCE

As noted in the first chapter, the *Capriccio Stravagante* has gained a popularity in performance that stands at odds with the inaccessibility and inaccuracy of vital information about it. Several conundrums in particular face performers who want to present as historically and textually accurate a rendering as possible, such as determination of the “correct” instrumentation and interpretation of the printed bowings. In later chapters I will discuss the instruments that Farina imitates, and many of them have distinct implications for performance practice, in imitating their timbre or playing style, but the present chapter will address the two aforementioned issues in detail: for what instruments is the *Capriccio Stravagante* intended, and how can the printed bowing best be realized? As is often the case, the best solutions require looking beyond narrow, literal inspection of the document itself, to broader historical contextualization of its riddles.

Instrumentation

Farina's use of generic part names without indication of instrument (Canto, Alto, Tenor, Basso) has left room for some confusion about his intended instrumentation. This is augmented by the use of the word *violen*, typically indicating viols, in the title of Farina's second published volume, the *Ander Theil* (etc.) which contains the *Capriccio*. Farina writes that the various "pavans, galliards," and so forth contained therein, "together with" the *Capriccio*, are "*alles auff Violen anmutig zugebrauchen*," which I might translate as "all charmingly suited to viols" (Willi Apel renders it "to be played enthusiastically upon the viols").¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, Farina lists his own job description as "*violisten*," or viol-player.¹⁵⁸ These factors might suggest that the *Capriccio* is intended for viols, but there is in fact clear evidence that this piece at least is for violin-family instruments.¹⁵⁹

To be sure, there is no widespread confusion evidenced on this point. A great many sources call attention to the wording mentioned above, but most of them conclude that violins are the appropriate instruments. Apel "do[es] not wish to dispute this assumption," but suggests that other entries in the collections could be for other

¹⁵⁷ Apel, *Italian Violin Music of the Seventeenth Century*, 71. Besides the arguments that follow, it should be noted that "*alles auf... zu gebrauchen*" was a common phrase in publication titles; see Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 118.

¹⁵⁸ The same phrases recur in Farina's fifth volume, which was published by the same printer, and is the only other one of the five with a German title page.

¹⁵⁹ For more on exactly what is meant by "violin-family instruments," see pp. 65-69.

instruments.¹⁶⁰ Nikolaus Harnoncourt dodges the issue by labeling his edition “für Streicher und Basso continuo,”¹⁶¹ though somehow the entry for the score in many library catalogs has been noted as “for three viols and continuo.” Of course, the mention of *violen* alone cannot explain Gunther Schuller’s assertion that the piece “was undoubtedly first performed on what we now call a baroque violin, a viola, tenor viol, a baroque cello and probably a violone, along with cembalo.”¹⁶² Most, however, follow Edmund van der Straeten’s pattern of pointing out that “viols are mentioned in the title, and Farina calls himself ‘violist,’” but concluding that “violins are evidently meant.”¹⁶³

Most of these sources, however, overlook the strongest clue for the use of violin-family instruments, often because they are partially or fully unaware of Farina’s textual notes, or “*avvertimenti*,” on the piece.¹⁶⁴ I will briefly outline the more subjective arguments in favor of violins before proceeding to the primary evidence.

First of all, it is necessary to recognize that, in early seventeenth century usage, references to instruments were often less specific than in modern practice. Publications were just beginning to specify instrumentation explicitly; late sixteenth century writing typically provided generic, vocal-like lines to treble instruments, and publishers

¹⁶⁰ Apel, *Italian Violin Music of the Seventeenth Century*, 71.

¹⁶¹ Farina, *Capriccio Stravagante*, ed. Harnoncourt.

¹⁶² Farina, *Capriccio Stravagante*, ed. Schuller.

¹⁶³ E. van der Straeten, *The History of the Violin: Its Ancestors and Collateral Instruments from Earliest Times to the Present Day*, vol. 1 (London: Cassell, 1933), 51. For a detailed and well contextualized consideration of the question of instrumentation, coming to the same conclusion, see Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 118–23.

¹⁶⁴ Actually, Straeten is aware of this evidence (*ibid.*).

marketed them as for “violin *or* cornetto,” to appeal to as wide a market as possible.¹⁶⁵ Further, even instrumental names were less than specific. A given word could refer to a specific instrument, but was also used casually to refer to entire families or classes of instruments. Thus *piffari* could be proper shawms, or simply wind instruments in general, or even all loud instruments as an aggregate. Similarly, descriptors for bowed string instruments such as *viola*, viol, fiddle, and *geige* all held specific connotations, but could be swapped about to refer to multiple instrument families. After all, Michael Praetorius refers to viols as *viola de gamba* and to violin-family instruments as *viola de braccio*; both families, thus, are technically *violini*.¹⁶⁶ It is in this context that we can best construe these references, especially since Farina is more specific when writing in Italian; in the three volumes that have Italian title pages, his job title is given as “*Sonatore di Violino*.”¹⁶⁷

An inspection of the actual music of the *Capriccio* reveals distinctly violinistic writing. For example, the double stops of the “La Lira” section are simple open-string affairs on a violin, but for a treble viol in standard tuning (d–g–c’–e’–a’–d’), their demands would progress from heroic to superhuman; the D octave would stretch from

¹⁶⁵ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 123; Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 118–9.

¹⁶⁶ Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, 2:25–6.

¹⁶⁷ The dedication of the fourth volume is to Farina’s former employer, the archbishop of Prague, and is thus in Latin. Farina gives his profession here as “*violista*.” It is unclear whether this should count as a viol-related term or not. There is a more violin-specific Latin term, *violinista*, which appears at least by the end of the seventeenth century, in reference to Rupert Ignaz Mayr. However, since both terms are invented rather than Classic vocabulary (rumors about Nero aside), perhaps they do not bear much scrutiny.

the second fret of the fourth string to the tenth “fret” of the third string, a span of roughly 5 inches (fig. 2).



Figure 2. Carlo Farina, *Capriccio Stravagante*, mm. 55-58.

However, such subjective evidence is ultimately unnecessary in the case of the *Capriccio*, at least, because Farina himself uses much more violin-specific words in his *avvertimenti*. In both the Italian and German renderings of his instructions he uses the most clearly violin-related terms possible: “*al scannello del violino*,” “*levando via il Violino dalla spalla*,” and “*man die Geigen unter den Arm nimbt*” (emphasis added).¹⁶⁸ There is also a different, much shorter, set of textual comments preserved in the Tenor partbook from the full set of four partbooks housed at Kassel. In this source, Farina addresses some remarks “*vor die so in dem Quotlibet den Discant geigen*” — “to him that plays the treble fiddle.” By specifying “*Discant*,” he implies that the other voices are *Geigen* as well. In light of these references it is clear that, at the least, the “Canto” part of the *Capriccio* is intended for violin, and the consort-like writing, in which all four voices

¹⁶⁸ “... the bridge of the violin,” “lifting the violin from the shoulder,” and “taking the violin under the arm.”

have similar material, combined with the reference to the “*Discant geigen*,” strongly suggest that the other parts are for violin-family instruments as well.¹⁶⁹

“Violin-family instruments,” however, is a phrase that may require some clarification. The majority of modern performers on “baroque” string instruments use recreations of late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century models. As such, the four parts of the *Capriccio*, with clefs of treble, alto, tenor (middle C on fourth line) and bass, are often performed on a “baroque violin,” two “baroque violas,” and a “baroque ’cello.” All of these are roughly identical in size to their modern counterparts, and the two violas are typically identical. However, early seventeenth century “alto” and “tenor” parts might have been played on instruments of different sizes (though both with the same tuning standard to violas today).¹⁷⁰ The violin (or simply the “Discant” member of the “Geige” family, as Praetorius refers to it)¹⁷¹ is more straightforward, and would be roughly the same length as a modern instrument,¹⁷² though some proportions and aesthetic details were less standardized (take, for instance, the extremely long tailpiece and lower bouts of the example in fig. 3, painted in the early 1630s.)

¹⁶⁹ One further, if weaker, argument remains: we do not know for sure whether the wording of the title page was dictated by Farina or supplied by his printer, especially such a promotional phrase as “all charmingly suited to viols.” On the other hand, the *avertimenti* are surely Farina’s own words.

¹⁷⁰ Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 24; Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 115–7; Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 2:180.

¹⁷¹ Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, 2:48, plate 21.

¹⁷² Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 116. Boyden is judging from the to-scale engraving in Praetorius, plate 21, referenced above.



Figure 3. Judith Leyster, *Boy Playing the Flute*, detail. Early 1630s, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.¹⁷³

¹⁷³ The organological reliability of this painting could be questioned, as the boy is holding the flute to his left, the reverse of standard practice (though not entirely unheard-of). However, the violin and recorder are executed in meticulous detail, down to the visibly graduated gauges of the violin's strings and a filigree, trailing end of a string, no wider than the threads of the canvas. Further, Judith Leyster included musical instruments in many of her paintings, including what has been conjectured to be a depiction of herself singing while her husband plays the violin and a friend plays lute (*The Concert*, ca. 1633, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.); in her acknowledged self-portrait, in fact, she depicts herself in the act of painting a violinist (*Self Portrait*, ca. 1630, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.). Some have suggested that the reversed flute is the result of an optical apparatus like a *camera obscura*: Thorney Lisle, "Current Art Notes," *The Connoisseur*, November 1933, 340; for more on this practice, see Philip Steadman, *Vermeer's Camera: Uncovering the Truth Behind the Masterpieces* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). Another possibility, given the boy's slouching posture, ill-suited to wind playing (more visible in the full painting), is that perhaps the ignorance of standard practice is his.

The elongated lower bout of this violin is also evidenced in other iconographic sources, such as Gerard von Honthorst's *Merry Fiddler* (1623, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) or *The Prodigal Son* by Dirck van Baburen (1623, Gemäldegalerie, Mainz; reproduced in Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, plate 17). The iconographic sources collected in Boyden's plates show many instruments with the opposite eccentricity as well, radically elongated upper bouts, often with a bridge placed

A more complicated problem is the bass instrument. Schuller's confident suggestion of "a baroque cello and probably a violone" belies a morass of conflicted terminology and organology.¹⁷⁴ The term "violoncello," in fact, did not even appear until 1665.¹⁷⁵ The relative histories of the instruments recognized today as the violoncello and the double bass are intertwined, and the examples we find described and pictured are often as much bass members of the viol family as of the violin family, sometimes borrowing freely in name or in organological makeup from both. Marc Vanscheeuwijck points out that to view these as either viols, violins, or "hybrids" is something of an anachronistic standpoint; in reality, the field of low-register bowed string instruments was simply populated by far more variations in size, number of strings, register, body shape, and even playing posture than we imagine.¹⁷⁶ With regard to the latter, it is worthwhile to note that the decorative woodcut on the title page of the *Ander Theil* (in which the *Capriccio* is printed—fig. 4) shows a man playing a viol-shaped instrument in a standing position, with the instrument presumably suspended from his person. At the same time, this image does not have much to do with the contents of the volume, as the other two instruments pictured are plucked strings; it was probably simply a "stock image" the printer had on hand.

well below the f holes (e.g. plates 11, 20, 22, 23, 30, 36, 37, 39, and 40). These examples extend all the way to Leopold Mozart; a clear conclusion is that for some time the exact proportions of the violin were not fully standardized.

¹⁷⁴ *Capriccio Stravagante*, ed. Schuller.

¹⁷⁵ In Giulio Cesare Arresi, *Sonate à 2. & à Tre Con la parte di Violoncello a Beneplacito*, Op. 4 (Venice, 1665).

¹⁷⁶ Mark Vanscheeuwijck, "Violoncello and Violone," in *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed. Stewart Carter, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 239.



Figure 4. Carlo Farina, *Ander Theil Newer Paduanen etc.*, title page, detail. Sächsische Landesbibliothek - Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden, Mus.1510.N.1, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/id326018611>.

Praetorius gives illustrations of three different low-register violin- and viol-like instruments. The “Violone, Groß Viol-de-Gamba-Baß” has frets, six strings, and perhaps a small endpin, and appears to measure roughly six feet seven inches from scroll to button, as the engravings are carefully drawn to scale.¹⁷⁷ The “Groß Contra-Bas-Geig” has frets, five strings, and a clear endpin, and measures seven feet, six inches.¹⁷⁸ Despite the “Geig” label, Praetorius seems to group this instrument with viols. He describes it as

¹⁷⁷ Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, 2: plate 6. I am converting from Praetorius’s scale of “Brunswick feet,” 0.93622 of the modern English foot.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2: plate 5.

doubling bass parts at an octave below, and likens it to a sixteen-foot organ stop. He relates his own recent attempt to use five of them at once; finding, however, that “these enormous instruments in such numbers produce far too much resultant throbbing and beating,” he reassigned the upper voices to “ordinary viols.”¹⁷⁹ He further adds that the instrument is a “recent” innovation. Finally, he illustrates a bass instrument of the violin family: the “Bas-Geig de brac[c]io” has no frets, but unlike the “baroque cello” common among modern practitioners of early music, it has five strings, and a clear endpin (fig. 5). It measures four feet eight inches, excluding the 5-inch endpin—surprisingly close to the four feet standard for the modern cello.¹⁸⁰ Praetorius’s tables listing the tunings of these instruments complicate the matter further.¹⁸¹ Two tunings are given for the “Baß Viol de Braccio,” but these are both four-string tunings. One is identical to the modern cello (C–G–d–a), and the other is a fourth higher (F–c–g–d′)—presumably this four-stringed bass member of the violin family is not pictured in the engravings. Immediately beside them, a five-string tuning is given for a “Groß Quint-Baß” which has the four strings of a modern cello plus a lower string at F′.

¹⁷⁹ Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum II: De Organographia: Parts I and II*, ed. David Z. Crookes, trans. David Z. Crookes, Early Music Series 7 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 54.

¹⁸⁰ Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, 2: plate 21.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 2:26. More legible in Crookes’ modern edition, 39.



Figure 5. Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, plate 21, detail of “Bas-Geig de brac[c]io.”

At this juncture it may be beneficial to examine the tessitura required of the Basso part of the Capriccio. The lowest pitch is D, which occurs very frequently, some 51 times (the prevailing tonality being centered on D), and the highest pitch is d', appearing only in m. 353 of Aurelio Bianco's edition.¹⁸² Middle C also appears fairly

¹⁸² Carlo Farina, *Édition des Cinq Recueils de Dresde*, ed. Aurelio Bianco (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), included on CD-ROM with Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösicher Art*.

often. Clearly Praetorius's higher tuning (F–c–g–d') is too high, and the fifth string of the "Groß Quint-Baß" is redundant. In fact, it is curious that, even if the standard cello tuning were used, the lowest open string should never be utilized, and that the whole tone above should appear so often. It is suggestive of the tuning given by Bartolomeo Bismantova in 1677: "The modern violoncello *da spalla* is tuned in fifths, except that the lowest string, instead of being tuned as C, should be tuned as D, and this is done for the ease of the player, but it could also be tuned as C."¹⁸³ The *da spalla* modifier refers to a playing position on the shoulder or upper chest, often held in place by a strap.¹⁸⁴ It is entirely possible that, amid such variability, this tuning was also used with instruments held gamba-style, supported by the legs while seated, but there is no reason to rule out the possibility that Farina's "Basso" instrument would have been played on the shoulder.

While Schuller's suggestion of an additional, sixteen-foot-range bass instrument and a continuo instrument is far from "undoubtable," it is intriguing that, in the copy of the *Ander Theil* housed at Kassel, the four partbooks are accompanied by a second, handwritten "Basso" part. Rebecca Cypess suggests that this may be for a continuo player,¹⁸⁵ (which could just as well be lute as keyboard). At any rate, Jack Ashworth and Paul O'Dette suggest that a chordal instrument, especially a quieter one like a lute or

¹⁸³ Quoted in Vanscheeuwijck, "Violoncello and Violone," 237.

¹⁸⁴ Gregory Barnett, "Viola da spalla," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/29449> (accessed January 15, 2013).

¹⁸⁵ Cypess, "Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten," 178–9.

spinet, is more likely than a sustained instrument reinforcing the bass line in seventeenth-century writing for small forces, and point out that the extra part could even have been for a music director.¹⁸⁶

Slurs

Another quandary, with perhaps more relevance for the performer, is how to interpret the printed slurs that appear in several sections of the piece. These slurs are placed cryptically in relation to the notes (see fig. 6 and 8, below), and any attempt to render them “faithfully,” according to Farina’s intentions, may be less than straightforward. These curved lines are symbols, and it is worthwhile to ask ourselves not only, “How do we translate these symbols into more legible and functional symbols,” but “What do these symbols signify?” The pursuit of the second question involves investigating the technique and practices not only of seventeenth-century violinists but also of printers.

The difficult placement of the slurs is due partly to the fact that Farina was active after the age of woodblock printing and before the widespread adoption of intaglio engraving, in which entire pages were shaped by hand, customizable to any shape of the human imagination. Instead, the prevailing method was letterpress printing, using movable type. In music printing, minute sections of five-line staff were

¹⁸⁶ Jack Ashworth and Paul O’Dette, “Basso Continuo,” in *A Performer’s Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed. Stewart Carter, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 319, 342.

cast, each with a note of a different pitch and duration, and these could be assembled side by side to (ideally) create the illusion of a continuous staff (the gaps between the sections can be seen clearly at the ends of the lines in figs. 6 and 8). The creator of the set of type, or “fount,” would of course cast more than one copy of each unique note, as there would be, for instance, more than one c" quarter note on a given page. The slurs as well had to be cast as pieces of type, and in the example below it appears that only one character for a slur was cast; all the slurs are the same size (with the possible exception of the third-to-last in the first line; perhaps this was “trimmed”). As a result, most of them appear to be slurs of only two notes, and it is often difficult to decipher exactly which notes appear to stand at the beginnings and ends of the slur (let alone which are meant to).



Figure 6. *Capriccio Stravagante*, Canto part, mm. 74-82. SLUB Dresden, Mus.1510.N.1, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/id326018611>.

The modern performer faces a dilemma in interpreting these cryptic symbols. Some have undertaken to decipher the slurs literally, attaching each to the nearest note, but the result, while intriguing, is often neither practical, violinistically idiomatic, or reconcilable to contemporary treatises. Figure 7 compares two such renderings of the first two measures of the “*Pifferino*” section pictured above with Aurelio Bianco’s less literal but more functional approach. Figure 8 shows the preceding measures, from the “*Lira*” section, in the original print, and Figure 9 shows Rebecca Cypess’s interpretation of the slurring; note that repeated figures experience different bowings. (It should be noted, in fairness, that of these examples only Bianco’s is intended as an edition useful for performance; the others are concerned with transcription.)

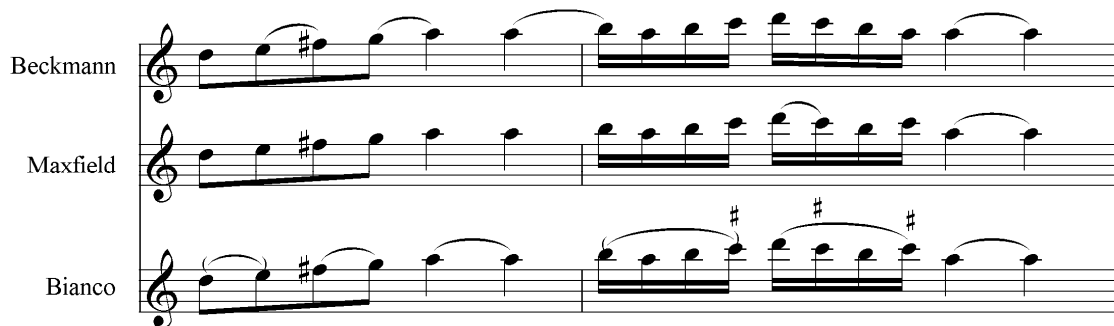


Figure 7. *Capriccio Stravagante*, Canto part, mm. 75-76, as realized by Gustav Beckmann,¹⁸⁷ Adele Maxfield,¹⁸⁸ and Aurelio Bianco.¹⁸⁹

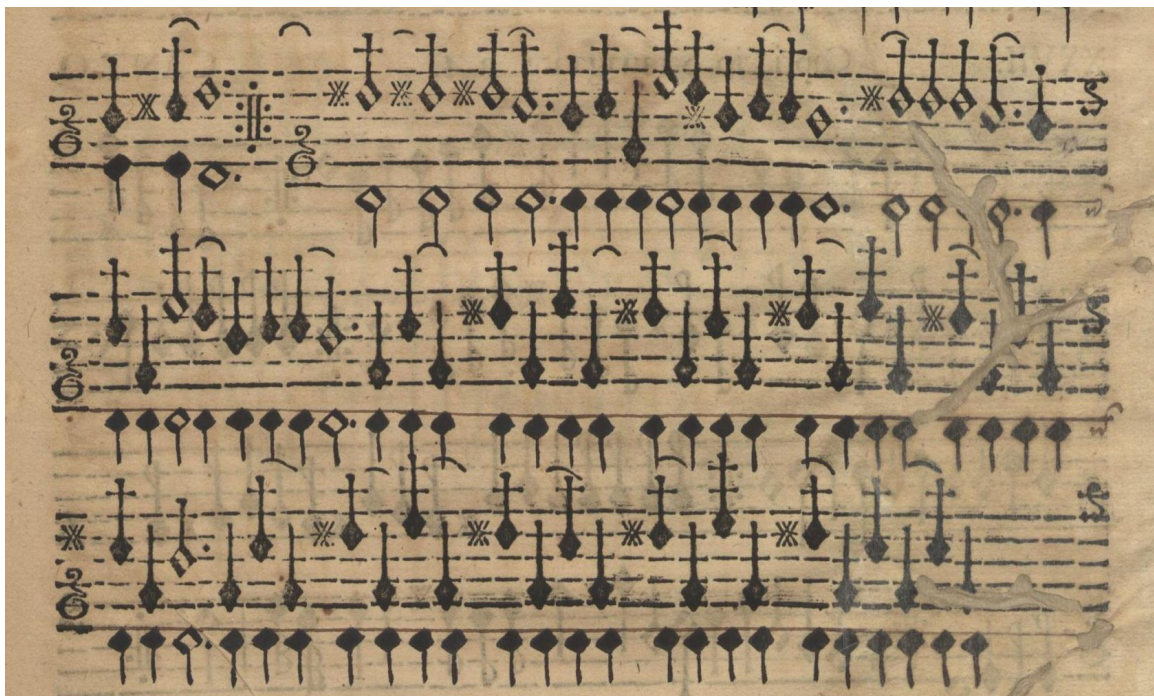


Figure 8. *Capriccio Stravagante*, Canto part, mm. 58-73. SLUB Dresden, Mus.1510.N.1, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/id326018611>.

¹⁸⁷ Beckmann, *Das Violinspiel*, Anhang; Beckmann's slurring is reproduced (without attribution) in Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 166.

¹⁸⁸ Maxfield, "Carlo Farina's Ander Theil neuer paduanan...", 100.

¹⁸⁹ Farina, *Édition*, 184.



Figure 9. *Capriccio Stravagante*, Canto part, mm. 59-74, as realized by Rebecca Cypess.¹⁹⁰

An alternative to this literal approach would be to regard these slur marks as simply indicating that the passages in question “are slurred,” and to construct the bowing in the most logical and informed manner possible. After all, on close inspection, the slurs appear to simply be spaced roughly equidistantly across the affected lines (see, in particular, the middle line of fig. 8 or the final line of fig. 6).

We find similar evenly-spaced slurs in a sonata by Marco Uccellini—and get a rare glimpse into the distinction between composer’s intent and printer’s capability (fig. 10). Gustav Beckmann reproduces an excerpt by hand in his *Das Violinspiel in Deutschland*, and includes both the slurs in the printed edition (above the notes), and those appearing in the manuscript (below the notes). In the second excerpted section, the two groups of thirty-second notes are topped by five and six curly braces

¹⁹⁰ Cypess, “Evidence about the Lira da Braccio from Two Seventeenth-Century Violin Sources,” 155.

respectively. Any attempt at a literal rendering would demand heroic measures, perhaps involving “ragtime” syncopation and a slur across a barline. However, Uccellini’s slur below the notes shows that he simply wanted all the thirty-second notes to be slurred together; the string of curly braces is simply an attempt to show this “large slur.” Similarly, in the first excerpted measure, an evenly-spaced string of curly braces places one above a quarter note where no slur was even intended. Clearly, the message of the printed slurs to the performer was simply, “Here be slurs,” and the performer was left to distribute them as seemed best.

Nr. 6. M. Uccellini. op. 5. 1649.

Aus Son. 8. 16. Die Klammern über den Noten nach dem Druck,



Figure 10. Marco Uccellini, from “Sonata ottava,” op. 5.¹⁹¹

It is worth noting, in light of the discussion below of the distinction in printing capabilities by region, that although this was printed in Venice, the “birthplace” of music printing under Petrucci, Krummel and Sadie report,

¹⁹¹ Marco Uccellini, *Sonate over canzoni da farsi a Violino solo*, op. 5 (Venice: Vincenti, 1649), reproduced in Beckmann, *Das Violinspiel*, 93.

The Vincenti music editions, made from movable type, met the needs of their times but typify a period of technical stagnation and artistic decline in Italian music printing generally (except in music engraving, which Vincenti did not practice). Most are mediocre in appearance, and some are marred by ugly decoration, worn type, poor inking and errors in text and pagination.¹⁹²


The challenge facing Farina and Uccellini was one that has persisted throughout the history of written music: as new musical practices develop, so must methods for transmitting them—technology follows technique.¹⁹³ It is striking that Farina (or perhaps his printer, Gimel Bergen) drew attention to the newness of Farina’s techniques, or more accurately the newness of printing them: the title page advertises an “entertaining *quodlibet* of all manner of curious inventions, such as have never before been seen in print.”¹⁹⁴ Slurs were not the most significant strain Farina placed on Bergen; several sections in the *Capriccio* call for double and even triple stops. Evidently Bergen did not have any pieces of type with multiple notes (indeed, it would be prohibitively expensive to account for all the possible combinations of threefold pitch with duration), so he printed only one pitch, and someone hand-inked the remaining ones (with great precision, and closely mimicking the diamond noteheads of the printed pitches, in the Dresden copy, though the Kassel copy shows a hastier hand with round

¹⁹² D. W. Krummel and Stanley Sadie, eds., *Music Printing and Publishing* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 461.

¹⁹³ See Tim Carter, “Printing the ‘New Music’,” in *Music and the Cultures of Print*, ed. Kate Van Orden (New York: Garland, 2000). Carter focuses particularly on attempts to represent post-Caccini vocal ornamentation in movable type.

¹⁹⁴ “... einem kurtzweiligen Quodlibet von allerhand seltzamen Inventionen, dergleichen vorhin im Druck nie gesehen worden ...”

noteheads and unruly flags).¹⁹⁵ In Figure 8, the handwritten lower pitches are clearly visible; note also the hand-ruled bottom staff line. Farina's previous volume, printed by Wolfgang Seiffert in 1626, expresses double stops by resorting to a system of numbers like figured bass to indicate the interval at which to add a pitch below the printed one. For his fifth and final volume, Farina returned to Gimel Bergen (in between, he had printed the third "at the author's own expense," with no indication of the printer, and the fourth through Johann Gonkeritz), but this time Farina used the figures as in the first volume, rather than inking by hand.¹⁹⁶

The slurs and multiple stops were not newly invented techniques, nor were they, despite the claim, appearing for the first time in print. However, either their practice or their written depiction was rare enough that Farina thought it advisable to explain them in the *avvertimenti* as if they were unheard of: "When one finds notes stacked one on top of another, as if in organ tablature, with this sign  over them, one must slur with the bow (*mit dem Bogen schleiffen*), like a *lira*."¹⁹⁷ The phrase *mit dem Bogen schleiffen* is

¹⁹⁵ The two hands can be seen in comparison in Bianco, 168. Bianco suggests that the printed characters in the Kassel copy show more wear, which would make it the later copy (168). It would be intriguing to view the "extra," handwritten copy of the Basso part at Kassel and compare it to the handwritten notation in the Canto.

¹⁹⁶ This hand-inking raises the question, if a scribe were already going to the trouble to draw in extra notes, why should he not also draw in more accurate slurs? No adequate answer presents itself, except that the printer had slur characters on hand and not multiple-stop characters. After all, as we will see shortly, other works were printed with slurs in movable type, with more clearly specific results; perhaps Farina had no way of knowing the outcome when he agreed to the procedures.

¹⁹⁷ I am triangulating a translation from the Italian and German instructions. For more on *schleiffen*, see the discussion of Samuel Scheidt below. For more on the "*lira*," see pp. 90-106. "Dove si truovano nota sopra nota con forme all'Intavolatura dell'Organo con questo segno [slur sign] di sopra, all'hora si suonera Lirsando ..." "Wann zwo Noten uberinander stehen oben mit

curious; translations for *schleifen* include grind, drag, and polish—all words full of weight and friction, perhaps bespeaking an element of emphasis and sustain.¹⁹⁸ However, it is clearly more than an isolated, eccentric turn of phrase, as the organist Samuel Scheidt used the exact same words to describe violinists’ slurs.¹⁹⁹ In his 1624 *Tabulatura Nova*, Scheidt marked several passages of sixteenth notes with four-note slurs (rendered, incidentally, with great clarity in movable type by a German printer, three years before the *Capriccio*), and captioned the passages with the phrase “Imitatio Violistica.” At the back of the volume, like Farina, he printed an explanation, below another sample of slurred sixteenth notes:

When notes are drawn together as seen here, as is encountered often in this *Tabulatura*, it is a special style, just as violinists (or viol players—*Violisten*—see above), who know how to play clearly and gently, are wont to slur (*mit dem Bogen schleiffen*). As this manner, which is not uncommon among master *Violisten* even of the German nation, gives a very charming and graceful effect on the organ ... I have myself fallen in love with it and let myself acquire the habit.²⁰⁰

diesem Zeichen [slur sign] gezeichnet als muß man dieselben Noten mit dem Bogen schleiffen gleich einer Leyren.”

¹⁹⁸ When Francesco Rognoni explains slurring, he describes a slow bow, “giving strength to the wrist of the bow hand.” Francesco Rognoni, *Selva De Varii Passaggi*, vol. 2 (Milan: Filippo Lomazzo, 1620), 4. “E volendo che riesehino bene, bisogna farle adaggio, dando forza al polso della mano dell’arco ...” Later in the *avertimenti*, Farina uses the Italian verb *srascinare* to denote slurring, which means “to drag.”

¹⁹⁹ Samuel Scheidt, *Tabulatura Nova*, ed. Harald Vogel, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1994), 159. Scheidt’s explanation of the slurring is reproduced in facsimile in vol. 1: 262.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.* Again I am translating from Scheidt’s German and Latin at once. “Wo die Noten / wie allhier / zusammen gezogen seind / ist solches eine besondere art / gleichwie die Violisten mit dem Bogen schleiffen zu machen pflegen. Wie dann solche Manier bey fuernehmen Violisten Deutscher Nation / nicht ungebuechlich / gibt auch auf gelindschlägigen Orgeln ... einen recht lieblichen und anmutigen concentum, derentwegen ich dann solche Manier mir selbstem gelieben lassen / und angewehnet.” “Ubi notulas signo hoc notatas & circumductas videris, id quod saepius in hac tabulatura occurret, scito esse Imitationem Violisticam a peritissimis eius artis inventam, qui modo clarius modo lenius fidibus norunt canere: Estque haec variatio apud

This establishes two striking precedents: German printers were in fact capable of using slurs clearly in movable type before the *Capriccio*, and more significantly, slurring was perhaps more common among violinists in practice than the printed record indicates. It also offers a tantalizingly oblique commentary on the technical advancement of German string players relative to those of other nationalities. Clearly, since Scheidt says this technique is known among German violinists, slurring cannot be counted among any technical innovations that Farina is supposed to have brought with him as an Italian. On the other hand, in the Latin text Scheidt ascribes the practice of slurring to “those most highly skilled in their art, who know how to play the strings clearly and gently,” and then, with the phrase *etiam in ipsa Germania*, slips in some connotation of “even in Germany,” which sets the renown of German violinists back a notch.

Scheidt’s comments remind us that if technology follows technique, it follows it at some distance, and the earliest printed evidence of a practice can sometimes also be taken as evidence of its undocumented use for some time prior. There is documented use of slurring, however, even in violin literature as early as 1620. Francesco Rognoni devotes the first half page of his instrumental treatise to a thorough example of slurring in various rhythmic permutations (fig. 11).²⁰¹ These examples can help us to reconstruct the most contemporaneously justified interpretation of Farina’s slurs. In his textual

artifices Violistas etiam in ipsa Germania non infrequens: In Organis ... edit concentum suavissimum & jucundissimum: propterea & ego hac ipsa variatione admodum delector, e atque saepissime utor. Vale, utere, & fruire.” For translation help with the phrase *etiam in ipsa* I am indebted to Drs. Micaela Janan and Jennifer C. Woods of the Classical Studies department of Duke University.

²⁰¹ Rognoni, *Selva de varii passaggi*, 2:5.

explanation, Rognoni starts off very simply: “Slurring (*lireggiare*) means to take two, three, or more notes in a single bow ... ; if there are two, [then] two in down bow and two in up bow; if there are three, the same; if four, four down and four up; if there are eight, or twelve, the same.”²⁰² This formulaic definition is belied by the variety of the notated examples that follow, though he does in general progress from slurs of two notes to three and four, and ultimately fifteen (fig. 11). One trend that can be extrapolated from his examples, though, is that most of the slurs end at the end of a beat (i.e. so as to start the next bow on a beat). Only twice is this rule broken, with the syncopated bowing in the measure that ends the first line and begins the second, and with the hemiola in the measure ending the third line and beginning the fourth (N.B.: in this edition, sixteenth notes are differentiated from eighths by a small secondary flag at the notehead end of the first flag). Never does any slur cross a barline. Beckmann’s slurring in fig. 7 and the cross-measure slurs in fig. 9 are thus unlikely, and a comparison with Uccellini’s printed and handwritten slurs in fig. 10 suggest that Farina’s slurs are best parsed to align with beats, as in Bianco’s solution.

²⁰² Ibid. “Per Lireggiare s’intende far due, trè, ò più note in una sola arcata, come ne i contrascritti essempli si vede; se sono due, due in giù, è due in sù; se sono trè, l’istesso; se quattro, quattro in giù, è quattro in sù; se sono otto, ovvero dodeci il medesimo.”

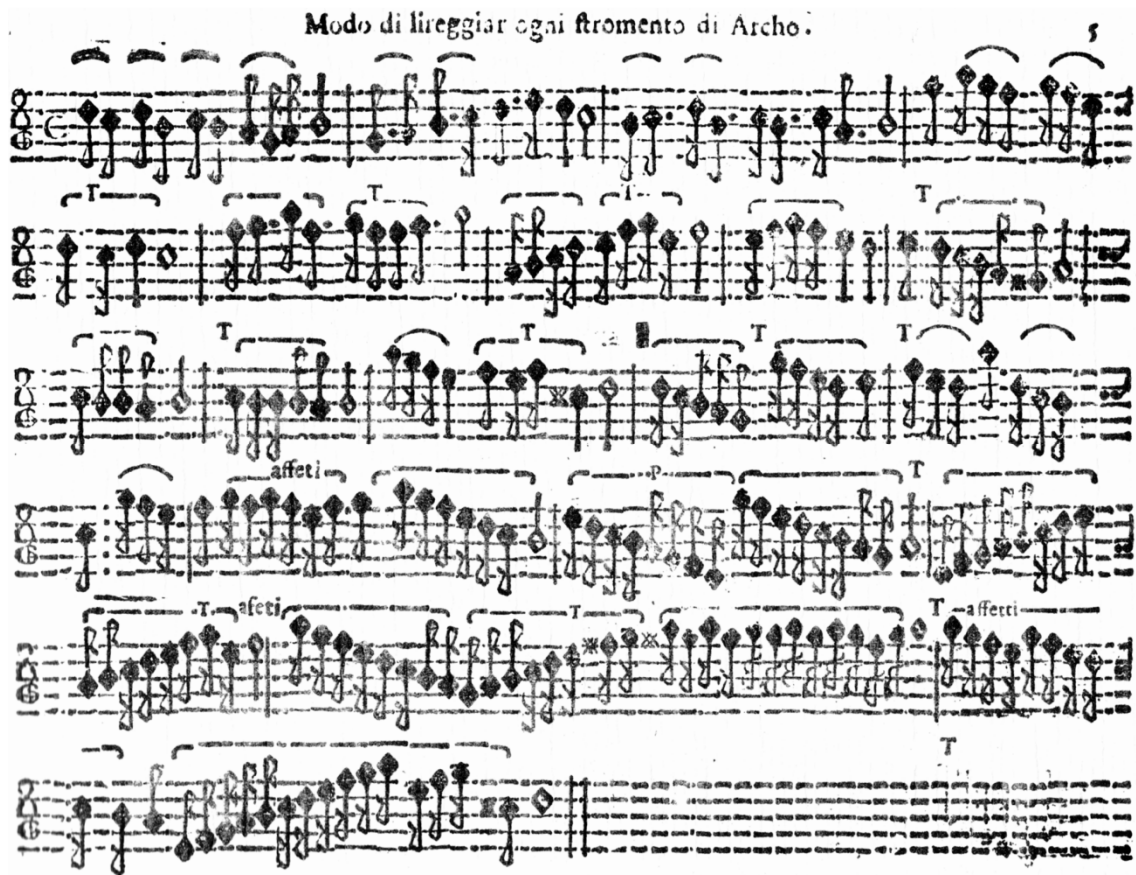


Figure 11. Francesco Rognoni, *Selva de varii passaggi*, part two, *Ove si tratta dei passaggi difficili per gl'instrumenti*, 5.

Rognoni's slurs are also significant because, as far as I can determine, they are the first use of the now-standard curved-line indication of slurs in movable type.²⁰³

The printer, Filippo Lomazzo of Milan, accomplishes much more specific slur assignment than that shown in the *Capriccio*, and does so seven years earlier. He has a varied stock of characters, with two sizes for two-note and three-note slurs, and

²⁰³ Praetorius' *De Organographia*, 1618-9, uses slur characters occasionally, but not in true staff notation. The work, however, is rather a virtuosic feat of printing for his German printer, with its tables and diagrams.

constructs anything larger with left and right curves connected by straight lines. Clearly the transmission of Rognoni's "difficult *pasaggi*" depended not only on Rognoni's technical facility but equally on his printer's.

Peter Allsop elaborates on this point: to modify my formula, not only does technology follow technique, but if the gap is too great, technology can obscure technique. Allsop suggests that some of the conventional narratives explaining the transmission of violin technique from Italians to Germans and vice versa owe more to the relative capabilities of local printers than to actual regional practice.²⁰⁴ Boyden summarizes the conventional view well: "The German contributions to violin music were less important than those of Italy in the early seventeenth century. The Italians, Marini and Farina, constituted a bridge from the relatively simple German style at this time to the advanced style of J. J. Walther and Heinrich von Biber at its end,"²⁰⁵ by which time "the Germans ... had stolen the ascendancy in the development of violin technique."²⁰⁶ Double stops, for example, appeared to be the sole specialty of Germans (or Italians in German lands, like Farina and Marini) for the latter half of the century, prompting many, like Boyden, to assume that they are evidence that Farina and Marini "learned from the German style."²⁰⁷ However, Allsop notes that this flies in the face of the model above in which the Italians were the teachers.

²⁰⁴ Allsop, "Violinistic Virtuosity."

²⁰⁵ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 136.

²⁰⁶ Allsop, "Violinistic Virtuosity," 234.

²⁰⁷ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 135.

The reality is that there are barely any records on which to base a conclusion. In the first two decades of the century, only three composers printed works with double stops, and all were Italians. Further, aside from Farina's makeshift measures with Gmel Bergen, the remaining two were printed by the same Venetian printer, Bartolomeo Magni. Magni married the heiress of the century-old printing house of Gardano, and retained the venerable "brand name" on his own publications, with the rubric "*Stampa del Gardano appresso Bartolomeo Magni.*"²⁰⁸ With such name recognition and little strong competition, he did business with many illustrious musicians, including Monteverdi and Dario Castello. He also appears to have had the financial capital to keep pace with "curious and modern" facets of violin technique, as he provided our only clear, extant proof of successful printing of double (and triple) stops (as well as very nice slurs) in movable type. These all appear in Marini's *Sonate Sinfonie* (etc.), Op. 8, which advertises its "*curiose & moderne inventioni,*" and which appeared in print possibly as early as 1625. (Rebecca Cypess has noted the similarity of this phrase to Farina's "curious inventions," and suggests that the two publications were in competition to some degree. She also neatly summarizes the mare's nest of confusion surrounding the publication of Marini's Op. 8, which bears dates of 1625 and 1626 on its title pages, amended by hand to 1629; she suggests that this could have been an attempt to make Marini's offering appear even more "modern" after Farina's.²⁰⁹) Allsop has suggested that the double stops in Marini's Op. 8 were specially engraved in woodblocks, as the staff lines appear to be more

²⁰⁸ Krummel and Sadie, *Music Printing and Publishing*, 329.

²⁰⁹ Cypess, "'Esprimere la voce humana,'" 209n41.

seamless than in other passages,²¹⁰ but examination of a digital copy²¹¹ makes it clear that it is indeed movable type, as gaps are evident in the staff which are blurred in Allsop's reproduction (see fig. 12, second system, and cf. Allsop 237). The type is indeed clearer than that of surrounding passages, however, and the flags of eighth notes are shaped differently, as straight stubs instead of the curved flags in the first system. The conclusion seems to be that Magni cut these notes, one at a time, specially for this project; the brand-new characters have not acquired the rounding of the noteheads and staff segments shown in the older type. The remaining example of double-stop writing, also published by Magni, is written by Ottavia Maria Grandi, in his *Sonata per un violino* Op. 2 no. 1 (1628). Sadly, the violin partbook to this opus disappeared during the Second World War, but fragmentary excerpts had already been preserved in Gustav Beckmann's *Das Violinspiel*; these show extensive double stops as well as a few slurs.²¹² If Magni could carve new characters for Marini, he presumably did so for Grandi as well, and in fact would have been able to reuse quite a few; Beckmann's excerpt and fig. 12 below, alone, contain several identical pairings of pitch and duration.

²¹⁰ Allsop, "Violinistic Virtuosity," 244.

²¹¹ Marini, *Sonate, etc.*

²¹² Beckmann, *Das Violinspiel*, Anhang.



Figure 12. Biagio Marini, *Sonata quarta per il violino per sonar due corde*, Op. 8, basso partbook with violin part in score. Digital copy available in Digital Library of Wroclaw University, <http://www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/publication/9849> (resource identifier: oai:www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl:18796)

Of course, cutting these extra characters was not inexpensive, and Magni appears to be the only printer who considered it. In 1671, nearly half a century after the *Capriccio*, Giovanni Maria Bononcini experienced the same difficulty as Farina, and could not print his double stops “with one note upon the other in a single line, as one would write it, for lack of the appropriate characters.”²¹³ Even in 1706 a volume printed in Rome gave up entirely on double stop printing “because of the great expense that

²¹³ Quoted in Allsop, “Violinistic Virtuosity,” 242. “Non sono stampate le seguenti suonate, intavolate colle note l’una contro l’altra in una rigata sola, come si scrivono, per mancanza di caratteri a proposito....”

would have been incurred.”²¹⁴ Meanwhile, German printers had moved on from movable type to copperplate printing by the 1670s, allowing an apparent “flourishing” of chordal writing (and, incidentally, precise slurring),²¹⁵ but Italian printers were slower to embrace the new technology. When they did, at the end of the seventeenth century, they enabled Boyden to announce that “double stops return[ed] to Italian violin music after the absence of half a century,” but were it not for Bartolomeo Magni, the story might be one of Italians “learning” double stops for the first time from Germans.²¹⁶ A more realistic narrative is one in which, one printer’s exceptional efforts aside, the Germans were the first to allow technology to catch up with technique, and perhaps the practice was more widespread over a longer period of time than a skeletal written record can substantiate.

Before concluding this chapter, it is worthwhile to consider briefly the pattern of the sections of the *Capriccio* in which Farina indicates slurs. Slurs appear in sections imitating the hurdy-gurdy, the shawm, the recorder, and the soldier’s fife. The hurdy-gurdy is a special case, as Farina references it specifically when explaining slurring; its hand-cranked operation allowed it a totally unbroken, sustained sound. The remaining three are all wind instruments—in fact, they comprise all the wind instruments imitated in the *Capriccio* with the exception of the trumpet ensemble. It would seem that Farina’s use of slurs can tell us something about how he perceived the articulation or tone of

²¹⁴ Ibid., 243.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 246–7.

²¹⁶ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 226.

wind instruments, and how it differed from bowed string technique. Even though slurring was even more of a “curiosity” among wind players than among strings, and most wind treatises provide extensive advice on tonguing,²¹⁷ apparently the effect of wind instruments was still a more sustained one than the standard violin technique. There are voices to the contrary, to be sure—Boyden assembles a list of calls for “long” bows from Praetorius, Monteverdi, Cerreto, and even Farina’s colleague Schütz, who “mentions the ‘steady extended musical stroke on the violin.’”²¹⁸ However, these appear to apply in particular to long notes and lyrical passages, while “the basic bow stroke ... was clearly articulated, especially in dance music,” the heritage that informs the bulk of the *Capriccio*.²¹⁹

²¹⁷ For example, on the same page as Rognoni’s slurs for bowed instruments, the bottom half of the page is taken up with tonguing examples for wind players.

²¹⁸ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 156.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 157.

CHAPTER V

IMITATED INSTRUMENTS

“La Lira” / “die Leyer,” and “Lira variata” / “die Leyer uff ein ander art”

The first titled section of the *Capriccio* is “La Lira”/“die Leyer” (“the lyre”). It is followed closely (though after the intervening “Il Pifferino” section) by the “Lira variata”/“die Leyer uff ein ander art” (“the lyre, varied,” or “the lyre, a different way”). This “Lira” presents the greatest challenge of organological identification in the piece. The word itself is ambiguous and can refer to multiple instruments, and the modern divorce of the *Capriccio*’s score from Farina’s textual instructions has removed performers from the only clue that confirms the “lira’s” identity (though even that clue, as we will see, requires substantial decoding to render intelligible). The music of these sections is striking. They contain the only (bowed) double-stops in the piece, using drone effects and pedal pitches, typically in fourths and fifths (Judith Kuhn offers the useful term “fourthy-fifthness”).²²⁰ Clearly, the “lira” has something to do with open-string drones and a polyphonic (or at least multi-voiced) style.

The word *lira* means simply “lyre,” and thus is subject to a wide range of use, from intentional designation of the ancient Greek lyre (in whatever form Renaissance

²²⁰ Judith Kuhn, *Shostakovich in Dialogue: Form, Imagery and Ideas in Quartets 1-7* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2010), 65, 85. Kuhn is transliterating the comments of Lev Mazel on Shostakovich’s second quartet.

and Baroque writers imagined it) to a more metaphorical allusion to Apollo's lyre, and by extension virtually any string instrument. "Lira" (or similar spellings in other languages) has been the specific designation for many instruments, including a lute and a rebec-like instrument (indeed the latter is still in use in modern Greece).²²¹ To add to the confusion, the word is also used as a generic modifier indicating a "lyric" function or style. In her book on the Norwegian hardanger fiddle, Pandora Hopkins outlines a practice of modifying instruments for "lyra-way" playing, which she defines as "thick-textured fiddle music characterized by the simultaneous sounding of several strings in drones and, sometimes, true polyphony."²²² (Indeed, the "Lira" section of the *Capriccio* shows a double-stop technique similar to Norwegian practice, in which the D and A strings are both melody and drone strings, interchangeably. However, as we will see, the true referent of the "Lira" is further afield from the fiddle family, though perhaps an influence on hardanger technique.) Hopkins finds the phrase "lyra-way" used by two Englishmen to define not so much new instruments as new incarnations of existing instruments: according to John Evelyn, the viola d'amore was "but an ordinary Violin,

²²¹ "Lyra (ii)," in *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/47689> (accessed October 2, 2011).

²²² Pandora Hopkins, *Aural Thinking in Norway: Performance and Communication with the Hardingfele* (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1986), 123.

play'd on Lyra way,"²²³ and John Playford published a book for the "lyra viol," then in a subsequent edition swapped the term for "the viol, played lyra-way."²²⁴

Finally, *lira* also identified a whole family of bowed string instruments. Like the viol, which came in graduated sizes (*viola da braccio*, *viola da gamba*, and the bass *violone*), there was a *lira da braccio* and *lira da gamba* or *lirone*. The *lira da braccio* was more suited to playing chords than most bowed instruments with which we are familiar today, with a flat bridge and long bow that enabled it to sustain chords, as well as drone strings. It inherited not only the name of Apollo's lyre, but something of its divine cachet as well; it was associated with mythological heroes and celestial choirs.²²⁵ Mersenne describes its sound as "very languishing and suitable for exciting devotion, and for inclining the spirit toward inward reflection," and particularly suited to "sublime and refined things," and opines that "perhaps no instrument represents so well the music of Orpheus and of antiquity."²²⁶ Sterling Scott Jones, in his exhaustive survey of iconographic evidence on the instrument, mentions a painting showing "a single *lira da*

²²³ John Evelyn, *Diary: Now First Printed in Full from the Manuscripts Belonging to Mr. John Evelyn, and as Edited by E. S. De Beer*, ed. E. S. De Beer, vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 187.

²²⁴ John Playford, *Musicks Recreation on the Lyra Viol* (London: Playford, 1652). Hopkins observes the change in title, p. 287.

²²⁵ Sterling Scott Jones, *The Lira Da Braccio* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 3–4.

²²⁶ Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 2:204, 217, 206. "Or le son de la Lyre est fort languissant & propre pour exciter à la devotion, & pour faire rentrer l'esprit dans soy-mesme..."; "...& particulièrement les choses sublimes & relevées..."; "... & qu'il n'y a peut-estre nul instrument qui represent si bien la Musique d'Orphée & de l'antiquité ..."

braccio player performing before the enthroned Madonna with no other instruments present, indicating the high esteem in which the instrument was held.”²²⁷

Understandably, some have identified this as the instrument Farina is referencing here, and the double stops in the Canto and the prominent D and A drones would seem to fit, though in fact Farina’s “lira” is not a lira da braccio but another instrument which features sustained playing and drones: the hurdy-gurdy. Rebecca Cypess called on the *Capriccio* in 2007 as a primary source in analyzing the performance practice of the lira da braccio,²²⁸ though in more recent writings she has identified the *Capriccio*’s “lira” as a hurdy-gurdy.²²⁹ Several recordings, as well, interpret the “lira” as a lira da braccio, whether overtly or simply stylistically. With its elevated, poetic and religious overtones, a performance modeled after the lira da braccio would be easily recognizable, especially as the alternative, the hurdy-gurdy, is distinctly earthy. The performances of Fabio Biondi (with Europa Galante)²³⁰ and Skip Sempé (with an ensemble named after the piece, *Capriccio Stravagante*)²³¹ are clearly aligned with the elegance and transcendence of the lira da braccio. Biondi’s, in particular, is an Elysian sigh, marked by a tempo of otherworldly slowness and Mersenne’s “languishing”

²²⁷ Jones, *The Lira Da Braccio*, 4.

²²⁸ Cypess, “Evidence about the Lira da Braccio from Two Seventeenth-Century Violin Sources.”

²²⁹ Cypess, “‘Esprimere la voce humana’,” 211; Cypess, “‘Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten’,” 152.

²³⁰ Fabio Biondi and Europa Galante, *Invenzione e Stravaganze*, compact disc (Paris: Opus 111, 1999).

²³¹ Skip Sempé and Capriccio Stravagante, *Lamento d’Arianna; Combatimento*, CD (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 1992).

dynamic. The Clematis Ensemble, in 2009, encountered both explanations of the “lira,” as *lira da braccio* and as hurdy-gurdy, and after puzzling over the apparent contradiction, took the middle ground by interpreting the first “Lira” section as the *lira da braccio* and the subsequent “Lira variata” as the hurdy-gurdy.²³² A further compounded confusion appears in Elias Dann’s liner notes to Lucy van Dael’s recording of Johann Jakob Walther’s *Hortulus Chelicus*.²³³ This piece, written a generation later than the *Capriccio* in the same city, is one of the clearest examples of Farina’s influence, as I will show below. Like the *Capriccio*, it uses the violin to imitate various animals and instruments, including a *lira tedesca*, one of the Italian designations of the hurdy-gurdy, reflecting its German origins.²³⁴ Lucy van Dael translates *lira tedesca* literally and confuses it with the *lira da braccio*: “a German lira (a bowed string instrument able to play melody and drone).”²³⁵

In the face of this confusion it is necessary to examine not only the evidence in favor of the hurdy-gurdy, but considerations that might argue against identification of this “lira” as the *lira da braccio*. In the latter category is the fact that, by 1627, the *lira da braccio* was already approaching obsolescence. Seven years earlier, Francesco Rognoni

²³² Jérôme Lejeune, “Carlo Farina: Extravagance and Emotion,” in *Capriccio stravagante & sonate* by Carlo Farina and Ensemble Clematis, Ricercar RIC 285 (CD), 2009.

²³³ Elias Dann, “The Most Difficult and the Most Fanciful...,” in liner notes for *Baroque Violin Sonatas* by Lucy van Dael, Philips 434993 (CD), 1993.

²³⁴ Christopher Page, “The Medieval ‘Organistrum’ and ‘Symphonia’: 1: A Legacy from the East?,” *The Galpin Society Journal* 35 (March 1982): 37–44.

²³⁵ Dael, *Baroque Violin Sonatas*.

described it as relatively unknown.²³⁶ Similarly, Mersenne reported in 1637 that “this type of Lyre is rarely used in France,” though there was still a noted lira da braccio player, “the French Orpheus, Monsieur le Baillif.”²³⁷ In fact, the instrument’s heyday was in the previous century, when it was the instrument of choice among Italian nobility and intelligentsia. Leonardo da Vinci, for instance, is remembered today primarily as a painter and inventor, but in his lifetime he was equally renowned for his accomplishment on the lira da braccio.²³⁸ So while the instrument would perhaps have still been recognized by 17th-century Germans, Farina would have been presenting it as an antique curiosity.

Now we turn to the case in favor of the hurdy-gurdy. Farina’s use of “Lira,” without any modifier, is no difficulty; the hurdy-gurdy has gone by many names in its centuries of existence, but in many times and places it has been the “lyra,” or related spellings and variations (e.g. *lira tedesca*, *lira rustica*, or *lyra pagana*); indeed the instrument is still known simply by that name in several languages. (Just three pages from his section discussing the lira da braccio as “Lyre,” Mersenne addresses the hurdy-gurdy, “which some call Lyre.”)²³⁹ Before continuing with the evidence for identification of Farina’s “Lira” as the hurdy-gurdy, it would be appropriate to give a brief description of the instrument and its history.

²³⁶ Jones, *The Lira Da Braccio*, 3.

²³⁷ Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 2:206–7.

²³⁸ Emanuel Winternitz, *Leonardo Da Vinci as a Musician* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), esp. 25–38.

²³⁹ Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 2:211.

The hurdy-gurdy is a very old instrument, with the first verifiable documented evidence appearing in the twelfth century.²⁴⁰ Its first incarnation was as the *organistrum*, an instrument so large it required two players. Like future models, however, the organistrum was a string instrument that used a wheel, operated by a hand crank, rather than a bow to set the strings in motion, and used wooden tangents instead of direct contact by a player's fingers to stop the strings. Also like later hurdy-gurdies, the organistrum featured drone strings. The seamless sound source of the wheel allowed the drones to sound continuously, and required the melodic line to also sound as one unbroken, sustained thread (we will examine the implications of this on violin bowing later). The organistrum seems to have been used in churches, to accompany vocal music.²⁴¹ Later, as we will see, it transitioned from sacred use to royal entertainment, to an instrument of the very lowest social classes, and finally back to the royal court, as an explosive fad among the nobility at Versailles. This eighteenth-century popularity paved the way for the hurdy-gurdy's ongoing longevity, especially in the folk music of the French countryside and locations of French diaspora, such as Cape Breton. Besides "organistrum" and the "lira" terms already listed, its names over the centuries have included *symphonia*, *vielle*, *lyra mendicorum*, *ghironda*, and *drehleier*.²⁴²

²⁴⁰ Kahren Hellerstedt, "Hurdy-gurdies from Hieronymus Bosch to Rembrandt" (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1980), 2. N.B. Hellerstedt's mention that Werner Bachmann discredited the tenth-century appearance of the organistrum in Odo de Cluny, though this is still often cited.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

²⁴² For a more complete survey of names, see Marianne Bröcker, *Die Drehleier: Ihr Bau und ihre Geschichte*, Orpheus-Schriftenreihe zu Grundfragen der Musik 11 (Düsseldorf: Verlag der Gesellschaft zur Förderung der systematischen Musikwissenschaft, 1973), 187–234.

Ultimately, the strongest piece of evidence demonstrating that Farina intended to imitate the hurdy-gurdy is his own words in his “avertimenti,” the textual instructions for performance. In the section on the Lira, Farina explains the still relatively new slur symbols: “*si suonera Lirsando, come fanno li Orbi overo Ciechi*” [play *lirsando*, like the blind]. Passing over, for the moment, the odd word *lirsando*, we must make sense of the final phrase. How do the blind play? The direction is nonsensical except in the context of the hurdy-gurdy, which was explicitly linked throughout Europe with blind musicians.

As it happens, Farina is not using *orbi* and *ciechi* generically, but to designate a particular, institutionalized category of blind musicians, the *orbi*. Elsa Guggino provides an extensive ethnographic study of their ongoing traditions in present-day Sicily, and traces their history from the Middle Ages.²⁴³ The acceptance of the *orbi* as a fixture in Italian society and a high regard for their music gave them a social legitimacy distinct from ordinary beggars and mendicants. Guggino reports that they were regularly sought out for entertainment in aristocratic houses, and quotes a sixteenth-century account of a “Blind Nicolò of Pontano,” who performed sacred and historical ballads from a raised platform on festive occasions, and always drew a great audience, including all the “learned men who were in Florence.” The artist Mattia Preti depicted Homer as a seventeenth-century blind storyteller, holding a violin, suggesting that these *orbi*

²⁴³ Elsa Guggino, *I Canti Degli Orbi: I Cantastorie Ciechi a Palermo* (Palermo: Folkstudio di Palermo, 1980), 9. “Dii boni, quam audientiam Nicolaus coecus habebat, cum festis diebus, etruscis numeris, aut sacras historias aut annales rerum antiquarum e suggestu decantabat! Qui doctorum hominum, qui Florentiae tunc erant, concursus ad eum fiebant.”

carried connotations more of bards than of beggars.²⁴⁴ In the next century we still find their music valued: in 1773 Charles Burney writes of a celebrated violin and 'cello duo referred to as the “*bravi orbi*, or excellent blind musicians,” who were admired by composers and performers of “art” music, “particularly Jomelli, who always sends for them, when in the same town, to play to him.”²⁴⁵

Outside of Italy, blind mendicant musicians seem to have been less rewarded with bardic status by society at large, but their presence was no less conspicuous. In particular, especially in the Low Countries and Germanic states, they were associated with the hurdy-gurdy to the point that the instrument became an iconographic shorthand for blindness, and Kahren Hellerstedt asserts that “blindness and hurdy-gurdy players were as analogous to the sixteenth-century Dutchman as our proverbial blind bats are today.”²⁴⁶

Hellerstedt has compiled a massive study of the image of the blind hurdy-gurdy player in art “from Hieronymous Bosch to Rembrandt,” and traces early mentions of it in literature as well. The earliest depictions of the hurdy-gurdy, the organistrum, are favorable: like the *lira da braccio*, it is depicted in the hands of angels, monarchs, and Davidic musicians in art from the twelfth century onward.²⁴⁷ Likewise, literary

²⁴⁴ Sergio Bonanzinga, “I Canti Degli Orbi a Domicilio Per Annunciare La Festa,” *La Repubblica* (Rome, December 24, 2010), sec. Palermo.

²⁴⁵ Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy: Or, the Journal of a Tour Through Those Countries, Undertaken to Collect Materials for a General History of Music*, 2nd ed. (London: T. Becket, 1773), 228. “Jomelli” is Niccolò Jommelli, operatic composer 1714-74.

²⁴⁶ Hellerstedt, “Hurdy-gurdies from Hieronymus Bosch to Rembrandt,” 42.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 2-11.

references in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries place it among the entertainment in royal courts. The first clear connection of the instrument with blindness is in 1372, when Jean Corbichon describes the hurdy-gurdy as “an instrument which the blind play while singing their *chansons de geste*” (and adds that it “has a very sweet sound, and pleasant to hear”).²⁴⁸ Eustache Deschamps, Aymeric du Peyrat, and Jean Gerson also connect the instrument with blind musicians (though not necessarily beggars, and without the censure found in later sources).²⁴⁹ In 1383, however, Bertrand du Guesclin identifies it as a beggar’s instrument, telling of “two minstrels in the court of the king of Portugal who decide to play the ‘chifonie’ [and] are strongly criticized for doing so.”²⁵⁰ In the fifteenth century, Paulus Paulirinus and Mathieu D’Eschouchy connect the hurdy-gurdy with the blind, and “a fifteenth-century Dutch Bible commentary ... describes the hurdy-gurdy as ‘an instrument that blind folk are often in the habit of playing.’”²⁵¹ Furthermore, in 1456, the French play *Le Mystère de la Résurrection* includes some rather cruel comedy at the expense of a blind beggar, and mentions the “simphonie” (hurdy-gurdy) that he carries.²⁵² However, the next century starts to give us the most emphatic connections of blind beggars with the hurdy-gurdy. In 1512, Johannes Cochlaeus puts it as directly as

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 11. The source is Corbichon’s 1372 “Le Propriétaire des Choses,” a French translation of an encyclopedia originally written in Latin by Bartholomeus Anglicus in 1240. The mention of the hurdy-gurdy is original to Corbichon, however, and corrects Bartholomeus’ definition of it as “a wind instrument, something like a bagpipe.”

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 12.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 16, 42.

²⁵² Ibid., 62–3.

possible: “The rota [hurdy-gurdy] is an instrument which blind beggars use.”²⁵³ Robert Estienne, in 1549, and Antoine Furetiere, in 1590, give similarly direct statements.²⁵⁴ Rabelais mentions blind hurdy-gurdy players several times in his earthy satire.²⁵⁵

The sixteenth century also contains some of the first representations of the blind hurdy-gurdy player in visual art, starting at the very beginning of the century with Bosch’s *Temptation of St. Anthony* (fig. 13). As with most Bosch paintings, the potential symbolism of individual figures in his cryptic works is subject to disagreement, but the figures’ blindness and supplicant posture are incontrovertible, and his hurdy-gurdy is rendered in such detail as to be a valuable organological source. By Hellerstedt’s count, there are at least three (and perhaps four, if *The Garden of Earthly Delights* qualifies) Bosch works that show a blind beggar with a hurdy-gurdy. One of these, a depiction of the biblical parable of “the blind leading the blind,” initiated a widespread popularity for the theme over the following two centuries, and most of its successors also used the hurdy-gurdy as a convenient way to indicate visual impairment in a visual medium.²⁵⁶ From this point instances of the blind hurdy-gurdy in visual art become too numerous to list individually, continuing from Bosch to Brueghel, Vinckboons, and finally Rembrandt.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 19. “Rota vero instrumentum est, quo coeci mendicantes utuntur.”

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 19–20.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 105.



Figure 13. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*, detail. 1470-1516, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon. The blind beggar with a hurdy-gurdy is on the left.

In seventeenth-century literature we find two notable mentions of the hurdy-gurdy by contemporary organologists. Michael Praetorius seems to feel that the hurdy-gurdy's lowlife connections make it unsuitable for protracted discussion in his 1619 *Syntagma Musicum*; he illustrates the “vulgar Lyres” (fig. 14) a few pages away from the Italian lira da braccio and da gamba, but declines to comment further on “the Lyre of beggars and wandering women.”²⁵⁷ Mersenne has no such qualms, and indeed takes a sympathetic position toward the instrument:

²⁵⁷ Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, 2:5, 49 (illustration on plate XXII). “Lyra Rustica, seu pagana, ein gemeine Lyra”; “der Bauren- und umblaussenden Weiber Leyre.”

If men of status would ordinarily play the Symphonie, which is called *Vielle*, it would not be so scorned as it is, but because it is played only by the poor, and particularly by *the blind* who make their living with this instrument, it is in fact less esteemed than others which do not give as much pleasure. This does not mean that I will not explain it here, because science does not belong to the rich any more than to the poor, and there is nothing so base or vile in nature, or in the arts, that it is not worthy of consideration.²⁵⁸

Mersenne also suggests what was later realized by Louis Braille, a system of music notation for blind musicians. “The tablature of the hurdy-gurdy is not different from that of Music [i.e. standard musical notation], except that one could invent another specific to the blind, and then they could be taught to read and write.”²⁵⁹

Mersenne’s contemporary Pierre Trichet offers a paragraph strikingly similar to Mersenne’s (perhaps derived from it, as Trichet corresponded with Mersenne),²⁶⁰ albeit in more vivid language:

There is evidence that in the past it [the hurdy-gurdy] was more esteemed and more frequently played than it is now; and I have no doubt that if able, upper class people would now smile upon it, it would soon be prized and fashionable. But as long as the instrument is handled only by clod-hoppers and beggars, *most*

²⁵⁸ Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 2:211–212. Emphasis added. “Si les hommes de condition touchoient ordinairement la Symphonie, que l’on nomme Vielle, elle ne seroit pas si mesprisée qu’elle est, mais parce qu’elle n’est touchée que par les pauvres, & particulièrement par les aveugles qui gagnent leur vie avec cet instrument, l’on en fait moins d’estime que des autres, quoy qu’ils ne donnent pas tant de plaisir. Ce qui n’empesthe pas que je ne l’explique icy, puis que la science n’appartient pas davantage aux riches qu’aux pauvres, & qu’il n’y a rien de si bas ny de si vil dans la nature, ou dans les arts qui ne soit digne de cosideration.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 2:214. “La tablature de la Vielle n’est pas differente de celle de la Musique, quoy que l’on en puisse inventer une autre propre pour les aveugles, puis que l’on peut leur enseigner à lire & à escrire ...”

²⁶⁰ Howard Mayer Brown and Florence Gétreau, “Trichet, Pierre,” *Grove Music Online*, Oxford Music Online, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/28356> (accessed December 29, 2011).

of whom are blind, it is not surprising that it served merely to arouse pity, and to give these poverty-stricken folk a means of surviving their abject condition.²⁶¹

The list assembled here of over a dozen sources connecting the hurdy-gurdy with blind players is by no means comprehensive. I have summarized dozens of individual examples that Hellerstedt discusses in visual art alone; I have also focused on a period before and contemporary to the *Capriccio*. If we look further into history, for instance, we encounter an explosion in popularity of the hurdy-gurdy at the French court, but even this gentrification of the instrument begins with blind beggars: in 1661, Lully's *Ballet d'Impatience* features an interlude depicting ten blind beggars playing the hurdy-gurdy.²⁶² Although incomplete, however, this body of evidence serves to illustrate the connection between blindness and the hurdy-gurdy convincingly. This connection not only makes sense of Farina's mention of "li Orbi overo Ciechi," but also conclusively identifies Farina's "Lira" as the hurdy-gurdy. This identification has strong significance for performance practice, as noted above; several modern recordings have emulated the Apollonian strains of the lira da braccio, but the *pesante* drone of the hurdy-gurdy would radically alter an interpretation.

With this confusion resolved, we can attempt to draw some conclusions about performance practices on violin-family instruments. In particular, we can address the

²⁶¹ Quoted in Richard D. Leppert, *Arcadia at Versailles: Noble Amateur Musicians and Their Musettes and Hurdy-Gurdies at the French Court (c. 1660-1789): A Visual Study* (Amsterdam: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1978), 16, emphasis mine.

²⁶² Robert A. Green, *The Hurdy-Gurdy in Eighteenth-Century France* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 4.

mysteries of the term “Lirsando” and of the later section marked “Lira variata” and “die Leyer uff ein ander art.”

“Lirsando” proves a difficult word to translate, but the context provides us enough clues to make a reasonable guess at Farina’s meaning. For one thing, the German version of Farina’s textual instructions for this section make it clear that “lyre-like” is a reasonable translation: “muß man dieselben Noten mit dem Bogen schleiffen gleich einer Leyren” (“one must play these notes with the bow dragging [i.e. slurred], like a hurdy-gurdy”).²⁶³ However, this still tells us little; we must determine what the quality of the “Leyer” was that Farina wants to emulate. First of all, it is noteworthy that of the sections marked by Farina with slurs, the “lira” sections are the only ones not imitating wind instruments. It would seem that, in indicating slurring, Farina is normally trying to emulate the sustained tone of a wind instrument. This can also tell us something, incidentally, about the lack of sustain that would be presumed to be standard in bowing. Although doubtless present in practice long before, the concept of slurring was just beginning to enter notated music in the early seventeenth century, and Farina felt it necessary to explain in his textual notes what the curved line over the notes was intended to convey (see Chapter 3, above, for more discussion of Farina’s slurs). It is also striking that, in explaining the slurring of the “flautino” section, Farina uses the “Lira” to explain the concept of slurring: “gleich einer Lira geschleiffet” (“bowed [or slurred] like a Lira”). It is also significant that, in the Italian translation of

²⁶³ For a contemporary use of “*mit dem Bogen schleiffen*,” see p. 79 ff.

the same instruction, Farina demonstrates that he already has an Italian term for slurring, “strascinando” (literally “dragged”). He uses it in describing the shawm’s slurs as well. Why, then, does he use “lirsando” in describing the bowing appropriate to the hurdy-gurdy?

Unlike wind or bowed string instruments, the hurdy-gurdy’s rosined wheel is capable of sustaining an infinite, unbroken drone. It should also be noted that, while the eighteenth-century popularity of the hurdy-gurdy fostered an advanced technique capable of distinguishing articulation by manipulating the speed of the hand-crank, seventeenth-century sources hint at a more unarticulated style. Mersenne, despite his sympathetic stance toward the instrument, compares its abilities unfavorably with those of bowed instruments:

But because the left hand cannot execute the graces possible on the neck of viols on the keyboard of the hurdy-gurdy, it is deprived of many beauties, of which it would be capable, if one could supply all the shakes, *and the ravishing strokes of the bow*, through some expedient, which many have attempted [through various experiments with the construction of the bowing mechanism] ... but these are no substitute for the movements of the skilled hands of those who charm the ears with the instruments with fretted, and unfretted, necks.²⁶⁴

Of course, Mersenne is speaking partly of left-hand imitations in executing ornaments, but he is also clearly talking about an inability to execute nuances of bowing. The sound

²⁶⁴ Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, 2:214. Emphasis added. “Mais parce que la main gauche ne peut faire les gentillesses du manche des Violes sur le clavier de la Vielle, elle est privée de plusieurs beautez, dont elle seroit capable, si l’on pouvoit suppleer tous les tremblemens, & les coups ravissans de l’archet par quelque industrie, que plusieurs ont recherchée ... mais l’on n’a peu suppleer les mouvemens de la sçavante main de ceux qui charmant les oreilles par les instrumens à manches touchez, & non touchez”

of the hurdy-gurdy in the early seventeenth century was one uninterrupted drone, making it the least articulated instrument imitated in the *Capriccio* (perhaps after the organ). In this case, Farina's "lirsando" should perhaps indicate an even more sustained, heavy slur than would be used to imitate the wind instruments, and far more sustained than standard violinistic practice at the time.

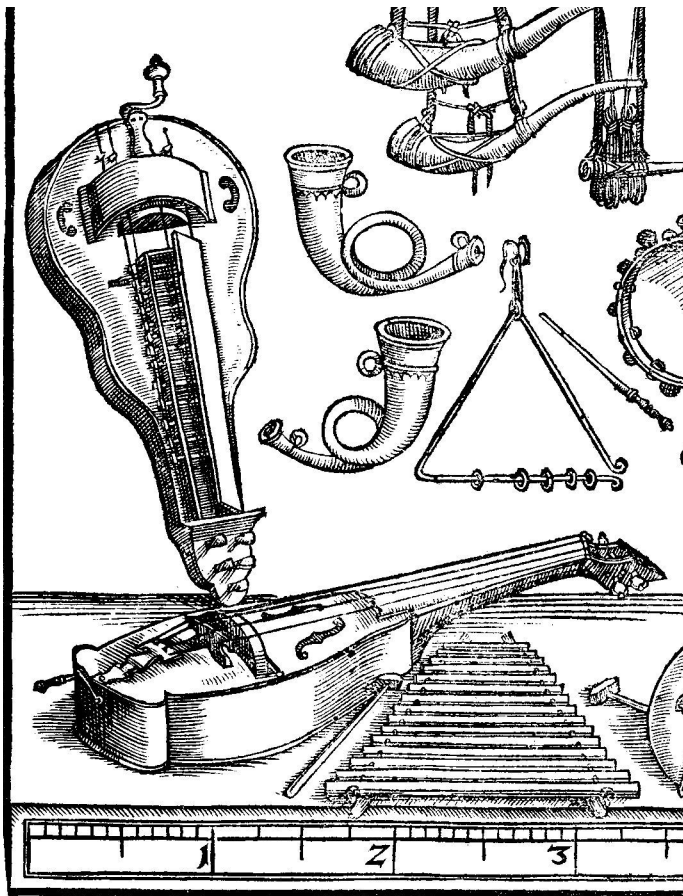
One mystery remains in the form of the later section, labeled "*Lira variata*" and "*die Leyer uff ein ander art.*" These phrases translate literally as "[the] *lira* varied" and "the *Leyer* in another way" (or "style"). What does this signify? Is this section a musical variation, an altered treatment of material from the first "Lira" section? Although there are some similarities, this seems unlikely, as they do not share outright melodies, and only by extraordinary Schenkerian exertions can "harmonic" similarities be perceived.

Does this section present a different instrument, as in "another type of *Leyer*"? This was the conclusion of Ensemble Clematis, who chose the *lira da braccio* for the first section and hurdy-gurdy for the second. There is a difference in the writing of this section; instead of open-string drones, the Canto part shows a much more agile variety of double stops, as if playing two "voices" rather than a melodic voice accompanied by drones. There is some support for this notion, as Praetorius illustrates two varieties of hurdy-gurdy-like instruments under the label "various peasant *Leyren*" (fig. 14).²⁶⁵ One, shown in a vertical and inverted orientation, is the standard instrument. The second,

²⁶⁵ In this plate, the numerals identifying each instrument were somehow omitted from the picture. This has led to the mistaken identification of the second string instrument as the *Strohfiddel*, but this term in fact applies to the xylophone beside it.

shown horizontally, has the same hand-cranked wheel, but lacks the keys and tangents, and is instead fingered directly on the strings. Praetorius's model also clearly lacks drone strings, though according to Palmer this is not always the case.²⁶⁶ There appears to be no specific name for this variant (see n. 265 above), which might explain Praetorius's and Farina's vagaries, referring to "various *Leyren*" or "another type of *Leyer*."

²⁶⁶ Susann Palmer and Samuel Palmer, *The Hurdy-Gurdy* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1980), 35.



1. Allerley Dawren Lyren. 2. Schlüssel Fiddel. 4. Stroh Hörner. 5. Triangel. 6. Singenkugel. 7. Mor
8. Glocken 9. Cimbela : Schellen.

Figure 14. Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, plate 22, detail of hurdy-gurdies.

A third possibility is that “the *Leyer* in another way” refers to the same instrument, the hurdy-gurdy, played in a different style. Support for this theory comes from J.C. Maillard, who describes a practice of disengaging the drone strings to play the hurdy-gurdy “*en violon*, as it is put in the current tradition of Central France.”²⁶⁷ Such a

²⁶⁷ J.C. Maillard, “Music for the Hurdy-Gurdy,” trans. Susan Marie Praeder, in liner notes for *Les Maîtres De La Vielle Baroque* by Matthias Loibner and Tobie Miller, CPO Records 999864, CD, 2002.

modification is easily done, according to Palmer, as the player could simply slide the drone string on its bridge out of contact with the playing wheel, and some instruments could even “secure them behind tiny studs.”²⁶⁸

The latter two explanations seem to be the most likely: either Farina was duplicating a secondary performance practice for the instrument, or he wished to parallel Praetorius’s depiction of an offshoot of the hurdy-gurdy family tree. In either case, both “*lira*” sections are clearly hand-cranked curiosities rather than Apollo’s “lyre.”

“Il Pifferino” / “Das kleine Schalmeygen”

This section is sandwiched in between the hurdy-gurdy sections, “La Lira” and “Lira variata.” There is some ambiguity in the Italian word *piffero*, as it typically indicated shawms in earlier centuries, but was also used sometimes for transverse flutes in the early seventeenth century. This has led some to mis-identify the instrument in question as a fife, like Schuller and Maxfield, and Bianco categorizes it under “flutes of all sorts.”²⁶⁹ This is all the more confusing as there is also a true “fife” section later, *Il Fifferino della Soldatesca*. Maxfield even identifies it as both instruments simultaneously, translating the Italian and German side by side as “the little fife/little shawm.” *Piffero* was analogous to the German *pfeife* or the English “pipe,” and of comparable vagary. Sometimes it was used generically for assorted wind instruments (with the same kind of

²⁶⁸ Palmer and Palmer, *The Hurdy-Gurdy*, 20.

²⁶⁹ Bianco, *Nach englischer und frantzösischer Art*, 124. “... des flûtes droites et traversières de toutes sortes (*il Pifferino, il Flautino, il Fifferino della soldatesca*) ...”

generality that with which “*violen*” could include violins; Elector Johann Georg’s collection of wind instruments, for instance, was the *Pfeiffenkammer*. Complicatingly, there is also some room for it to indicate a transverse flute in some “seventeenth-century documents”²⁷⁰ and “north Italian sources.”²⁷¹

However, there is no such ambiguity about *Schalmeygen*; it is clearly a shawm.²⁷² The diminutive ending “-gen” is somewhat redundant, as Praetorius says that only “the top descant size” is referred to as *schalmei*, though in his illustrated plates he shows both the “*Discant Schalmey*” and a smaller “*Klein Schalmey*.”²⁷³ Praetorius also adds that its Latin name is *gingrina* “—this because of its sound, which resembles the characteristic cackling (*gingrire*) of a goose.”²⁷⁴

There is some work to do in figuring out exactly what role each member of the *Capriccio*’s ensemble is meant to play. In some of its sections, all four parts combine to evoke a single instrument (e.g. the hurdy-gurdy or guitar). In others, each instrument portrays a different instrument within an imagined ensemble (e.g. Basso as kettledrums, inner voices as trumpets, and Canto as virtuoso *clarino* trumpeter). Shawms were

²⁷⁰ Howard Mayer Brown and Giulio Ongaro, “Piffaro,” *Grove Music Online*, Oxford Music Online, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/21746> (accessed February 23, 2012).

²⁷¹ Nancy Hadden, “The Renaissance Flute in the Seventeenth Century,” in *From Renaissance to Baroque: Change in Instruments and Instrumental Music in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Jonathan Wainwright and Peter Holman (Ashgate, 2005), 116.

²⁷² The “-gen” ending is probably intended as a spelling of “-chen,” a diminutive.

²⁷³ Praetorius, *De Organographia*, 47, pl. 11.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

commonly used in ensembles, but Praetorius discusses difficulties with a consort made up entirely of shawms due to tuning disparities,²⁷⁵ and Herbert Myers discusses difficulty with the unwieldy size of the lowest shawms, for which reason sackbuts and curtals (alias *dulcian*, a proto-bassoon) were often used for lower voices.²⁷⁶ Further, the title of this section alludes only to the treble shawm. So then, perhaps the Canto should adopt a shawm-like timbre, for example, by using a relatively slow and firm bow for a “characteristic” anserine tone, but the other three voices are under no obligation to do so. If one wished to argue the opposite opinion, it is true that all four parts are comparably active (fig. 15). The topmost three voices all get running sixteenth notes, often paralleling the Canto; perhaps they could depict three shawms and a sackbut.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 47–8.

²⁷⁶ Herbert Myers, “Woodwinds,” in *A Performer’s Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed. Stewart Carter, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 84.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Il Pifferino" from the opera *Capriccio Stravagante*. The score is divided into two systems, covering measures 75 to 80. The first system (measures 75-77) includes four vocal staves: Canto (Soprano), Alto, Tenor, and Basso. The second system (measures 78-80) includes four instrumental staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music is characterized by rhythmic complexity and melodic ornamentation.

Figure 15. *Capriccio Stravagante*, mm. 75-80 (“Il Pifferino”)

The repertoire and social function of shawm bands is significant. For centuries, they had been vested with civic responsibilities, and municipalities kept official *Stadtpfeifer* (or “town waits,” in England) to provide official municipal music. These ensembles were originally built around the shawm, to the point that one of the English designations for the instrument was “wait pipe.” Dresden was home to a *Stadtpfeifer* which, by the 1620s, had grown to be large and diverse, and performed not only shawms but all manner of wind instruments, including the recorders and trumpets which also

appear in the *Capriccio*.²⁷⁷ It is possible that Farina includes this shawm-based section as a recognition of these local musical colleagues—though he also gives equal time to another wind ensemble which was often in open conflict with the *Stadtppfeifer* (see pp. 116-118).

“La Trombetta” / “Die Trommeten”; “Il Clarino” / “Das Clarin”; “Le Gnachere” / Die Heerpaucken”

Trumpet playing, at the start of the seventeenth century, was an ancient and largely unwritten art. Fortunately, though, the first of the very few contemporary works on baroque trumpet playing appeared only twelve years prior to the *Capriccio*. Cesare Bendinelli’s quasi-pedagogical collection of repertoire and advice *Tutta l’arte della trombetta* (1614) is useful, not only for identifying the instruments imitated, but for illuminating their performance practice. His *Tutta l’arte* has already been mentioned above as (p. 56), like the *Capriccio*, it includes a section imitating chickens. Bendinelli was himself an analogous figure to Farina in some ways: he was a virtuoso proponent of his instrument and an active agent in the development of its technique (claiming to have been the first to apply tonguing syllables to the trumpet), and he was an Italian musician with a career in Vienna and Germany.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ McCulloch, “Dresden: A Music Metropolis,” 173.

²⁷⁸ Edward H. Tarr, “Bendinelli, Cesare,” *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/02642> (accessed February 7, 2013).

There is some confusion surrounding the terms Farina uses, especially *clarino*. Schuller translates “*la trombetta*” as “the little trumpet” (despite the diminutive, *trombetta* was a standard usage for a standard trumpet) and “*il clarino*” as “another form of early high-pitched wooden trumpet.” Perhaps he is thinking of the cornetto, but at the heart of his confusion is a hydra-like mistake that rears its head periodically, the supposition that the *clarino* is a different instrument. Several times, modern trumpets have been invented to facilitate the performance of florid high-register baroque repertoire, and have immediately been confused with mythical baroque instruments, despite the best efforts of their inventors to set the record straight.²⁷⁹ Rather, *clarino* referred for the most part to a specialized technique, a discipline of virtuoso, high-register playing characterized by agile passagework and extensive improvised ornamentation. It is true that there might have been some minor physical differences in a *clarino* trumpeter’s instrument—Virdung illustrated one alongside a “tower trumpet,” though the difference is not readily visible²⁸⁰—but the primary distinction lay in practice

²⁷⁹ John Wallace and Alexander McGrattan, *The Trumpet* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 229–31; Philip Bate, *The Trumpet and Trombone: An Outline of Their History, Development and Construction.*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), 124–5, 128–9. For a colorfully acerbic summation of this trend, see Mary Rasmussen, “Bach-Trumpet Madness; or, A Plain and Easy Introduction to the Attributes, Causes, and Cure of a Most Mysterious Musicological Malady,” *Brass Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (Fall 1961): 37–40 (e.g.: “Its cause: wishful thinking. Its cure: common sense.”); for a thorough and well-contextualized study, see David Joseph Kendall, “The Mystique of the ‘Bach’ Trumpet: Myth and Misinformation” (master’s thesis, University of California, Riverside, 2007). For a first-person accounting from one of the inventors of such a trumpet, see Walter Morrow, “The Trumpet as an Orchestral Instrument,” *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 21 (June 11, 1895): 141–4.

²⁸⁰ Sebastian Virdung, *Musica Getutsch: A Treatise on Musical Instruments*, ed. Beth Bullard, trans. Beth Bullard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 108. To add to the confusion,

(perhaps analogous to the difference between the words “coloratura” and “soprano”).

Philip Bate laments a reemergence of the *clarino* confusion,

... reviving the exploded fallacy that “clarino” is the name of a particular instrument and not merely of a *register* within the theoretical compass of any trumpet. The fact that some clarino specialists seem to have used a relatively small-bore instrument is nothing to the point.... The important thing to emphasize here is that no special instrument was employed by these musicians; the ordinary trumpet of their day served them with no more modification than the application of a personally selected mouthpiece to support the lips in the tense embouchure.²⁸¹

Without the valves of a modern trumpet, trumpeters of the period were limited to the pitches of the harmonic series, and such alterations as masterful manipulation of lips and breath would allow, to ideally bend the “out of tune” members of the harmonic series towards diatonic alternatives. Every ascension in pitch represented an escalation in difficulty, so the lofty register of the *clarino* was reserved for the most exceptional virtuosity, which “called for a naturally suitable lip, good teeth, physical strength, and the most assiduous practice, and there seem always to have been few players who achieved it in perfection.”²⁸²

Despite this soloistic role, trumpets almost always operated as ensemble instruments (in fact, the size of the ensemble was something of a status symbol for their employer, though Bendinelli advocated only five parts, and doubling or antiphonal

Virdung’s woodcuts were copied into Martin Agricola’s *Musica instrumentalis deudsch* in 1529, but were reversed, so the identification of the two trumpets was exchanged.

²⁸¹ Bate, *The trumpet and trombone*, 124–5, 107.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 107.

groupings for greater numbers).²⁸³ They also typically went hand in hand with kettledrums (even when mounted on horseback²⁸⁴), and Farina marks the Basso part as such in m. 169 (“*Gnachere*” and “*Heerpaucken*,” both typically indicating paired, pitched kettledrums), and restricts it to rhythmic iterations of the first and fifth scale degrees (see fig. 16). These trumpet and kettledrum ensembles were explicitly connected with military use and with royalty, to the point that legal decrees (and even more forcible social pressures) restricted their use to the nobility, as we will see in more detail below.



Figure 16. *Capriccio Stravagante*, Basso part, mm. 169-181.

Unlike consort instruments, such as shawm, recorder, viol, and violin, the various parts in the trumpet ensemble were performed on physically equivalent instruments, but the registers in which they operated called for varying degrees of skill. Bendinelli describes the parts of the ensemble as falling into five clearly-defined roles

²⁸³ Mario Bertoluzzi, “Bendinelli’s ‘Entire Art of the Trumpet’ of 1614: A Modern Edition” (D.A., Greeley, CO: University of Northern Colorado, 2002), 311, 320.

²⁸⁴ Bruce P Gleason, “Cavalry and Court Trumpeters and Kettledrummers from the Renaissance to the Nineteenth Century,” *The Galpin Society Journal* (April 2009): 31–54.

by range. The terminology he uses most consistently is, from lowest to highest, “Grosso,” “Vulgano,” “Alto e basso” (often contracted as “Altebasso”) “Sonata,” and “Clarino.”²⁸⁵ Bendinelli outlines a system of organized improvisatory imitation, in which each voice follows a conventional formula. The Sonata was the only voice to play a notated melody, while the other voices extrapolated their parts from it; the Altebasso shadowed the Sonata in similar motion at the distance of one partial lower; the two lower parts provided unwritten but obvious harmonic motions; and the Clarino improvised floridly above the Sonata. Bendinelli cautions that this requires some care to avoid parallel octaves, which “are not used by those who are knowledgeable about music.”²⁸⁶ We see these ranges and functions more or less duplicated in the *Capriccio*, and also see similar motion between the top two voices in mm. 149-155. Bendinelli also prescribes the staggered entry of the different parts: “Be careful that only one player begins, and others follow in order, as is customary.”²⁸⁷ While we do not see the parts enter one by one in the *Capriccio*, we do see a considerable delay until the clarino enters.

The social use of such trumpet ensembles was clearly linked to royalty, and there was a heated feud during the seventeenth century between *Stadtppfeifer* musicians and court trumpeters. The trumpeters defended zealously the elite restriction of their instrument to the use of their noble employers, and perhaps even more zealously the

²⁸⁵ Cesare Bendinelli, *The Entire Art of Trumpet Playing, 1614*, trans. Edward H. Tarr (Nashville: Brass Press, 1975), 13.

²⁸⁶ Bertoluzzi, “Bendinelli’s ‘Entire Art of the Trumpet,’” 36.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.* Tarr suggests that it was most likely the Sonata who started first, since both Bendinelli and Praetorius refer to it as a “leading” role (13), while Bertoluzzi interprets the order as lowest to highest.

position that if anyone else chanced, after all, to employ trumpets, say in “weddings, baptisms, dances of rejoicing, church festivals, or similar convocations,” that the court trumpeters should be the ones employed.²⁸⁸ The *Stadtpeifer*, on the other hand, maintained that it was “their time-honored right to play at weddings,” and “were incensed at the way in which other bodies of wind players, both military and from the Court [i.e. trumpeters] tried to muscle in on the act.”²⁸⁹ Feelings ran hot on both sides. In one case, a group of court trumpeters, hearing the sound of a trumpet from a *Stadtpeifer*’s house, invaded the house “and smashed his trumpet, in the course of which they roughed him up very badly and broke his teeth.”²⁹⁰ *Stadtpeifer* musicians won some protections and leniency in specific towns such as Leipzig, but not in Dresden: when they complained to Elector Johan Georg II of court trumpeters monopolizing wedding jobs, their suit backfired, as he “banned the use of horns in all churches outside the Hofkirche.”²⁹¹

Given these tensions, it is striking that Farina brings the “ancient grudge” of these two instrument groups together in the *Capriccio*. It is conceivable that the inclusion of shawms is a small tribute to the venerable legacy of his colleagues in the Dresden *Stadtpeifer*, but then again Farina was himself a court, rather than a civic,

²⁸⁸ Timothy A. Collins, “Of the Differences between Trumpeters and City Tower Musicians’: The Relationship of *Stadtpeifer* and *Kammeradschaft* Trumpeters,” *The Galpin Society Journal* 53 (2000): 52.

²⁸⁹ McCulloch, “Dresden: A Music Metropolis,” 177, 173.

²⁹⁰ Collins, “Of the Differences between Trumpeters and City Tower Musicians,” 53.

²⁹¹ McCulloch, “Dresden: A Music Metropolis,” 177.

employee, and his sympathies might be expected to lie with the court trumpeters. However, his imitation of trumpets was not necessarily a welcome gesture either, as court trumpeters were not amused by imitations of the trumpet on inferior instruments. A 1658 edict forbids *Stadt Pfeifer* musicians to use trumpets “—and certainly not trombones as if they were trumpets.”²⁹² In 1671 two Altenburg trumpeters complained of this “degrading kind of activit[y]” at a banquet, and an official explained that trombones were simply one of many instruments present, and “if townspeople ... requested a tune in the manner of trumpets on trombones, cornettos and violins, they could not help but oblige them.”²⁹³ If anything, then, Farina’s trumpet section might be seen an act of mild sedition—but more likely, he simply presents both instruments here, without comment, as a neutral party.

“Il Flautino pian piano” / “Die Flöten still stille”

Flautino, like *lyra*, *violen* and *piffaro*, is a somewhat vague and generic term. The word simply meant “flute,” and could comprise not only recorders but other duct flutes, including some folk varieties, as well as the *flauto traverso*, the transverse flute from which the modern flute is derived. However, the *traverso* was usually specified as such, and *flauto* and *flöten* were generally understood to indicate recorders. Antonio Brunelli,

²⁹² Collins, “Of the Differences between Trumpeters and City Tower Musicians,” 52.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 58.

for instance, lists both *traverse* and *flauti* as suitable instruments for his 1614 book of diminutions.²⁹⁴

As such, the Canto probably represents a soprano recorder, and it is a reasonable assumption that the other four voices are also contributing to evoke a full recorder consort. Although this appears to me to be the clearest solution, the timbre is somewhat problematic. Farina directs that this section (and the *Fifferino*) be played *ponticello*, with the bow “just half a finger’s width away” from the bridge.²⁹⁵ The ponticello effect on string instruments seems to me to yield a timbre diametrically opposed to that of the recorder. The string ponticello could be described as “breathy” and diffuse, rich in upper harmonic overtones (sometimes to the point of suppression of the fundamental pitch), whereas the recorder sound could be characterized as comparatively “focused” and direct, and is particularly rich in the fundamental pitch and lacking in upper harmonics. If anything, the string ponticello sound is most suggestive to me of the pan pipes, or other folk flutes, such as the Scandinavian willow bark flute (a simple duct flute played entirely by overblowing). I have also at times entertained the speculation that this could be a flageolet, but as it is not documented in Germany until 1643 it is unlikely.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁴ Hadden, “The Renaissance Flute in the Seventeenth Century,” 116.

²⁹⁵ “... si suona pianino sott'al scannello del violino solamente un mezzo ditto discosto” The German specifies a distance the width of a finger laid sideways: “... nahe bey dem Steg etwan ein quer Finger darvon....”

²⁹⁶ Beryl Kenyon de Pascual and William Waterhouse, “Flageolet,” *Grove Music Online*, Oxford Music Online, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/42044> (accessed February 23, 2012).

Farina offers other clues as well. The title of the section, in both languages, emphasizes its softness by reiteration (“pian piano” and “still stille”). Farina reiterates it again in the “avertimenti”: “pianino” and “gar stille,” and also adds that it should be played “very sweetly” (ganß lieblichen). Is the “pian piano” to be taken as a dynamic indication to the player—i.e. the instrument is a *flautino*, and to best imitate it one should play *pian piano*—or is it perhaps a clue to the instrument’s identity? Is it perhaps a particularly soft variety of flute? Or an ordinary recorder, but played unusually softly? Perhaps the “breathy” sound of ponticello replicates the effect of playing a recorder with just the merest trickle of air?

These speculations are probably off the mark, however. “Pian piano” is most likely a dynamic marking after all, and one of only two in the piece; immediately after the *Flautino* section Farina indicates “Forte” / “Starck,” perhaps simply as a return to the default volume of the rest of the piece. The simplest explanation is that Farina is envisioning a recorder consort, and sees their identity as a “soft” instrument as their outstanding characteristic (particularly coming only a few measures after the trumpets and kettledrums). Perhaps he requests ponticello not for its potential for outlandish harmonics but simply as a means to reduce the volume of the pitch as much as possible. In this case, not only a light but a fairly slow bow should be used. (In contrast, Farina

says that the *Fifferino* section should be played in the same manner, but a bit closer to the bridge and with a bit more force.)²⁹⁷

“Il Tremulo” / “Der Tremulant”

Once again, this section has been the cause of some confusion. David Boyden surmises that this is “probably” an early manifestation of the modern string technique of tremolo, i.e. an unmeasured rapid reiteration of a given note.²⁹⁸ However, in “The String Tremolo in the 17th Century,” Stewart Carter shows that this is in fact another section imitating an instrument, rather than simply one showcasing a technique, like the *col legno* section.²⁹⁹ Or, more accurately, this section mimics a technical device native to another instrument, the “tremulant” setting of an organ. This is not a literal organ stop, in the sense of a register of pipes, but rather a physical device designed to regularly interrupt or attenuate the flow of air, producing an undulation in volume, something akin to the effect of a Leslie speaker for a Hammond organ. Such devices are documented well before the *Capriccio*; Carter quotes a letter written by Giambatista

²⁹⁷ “... me desimamente il fifferino vien sonato conforme il flautino ma sonando la mita piu sotto al scanello & piu forte”; “... deßgleichen das Soldaten Pfeiffgen nur allein daß es etwas stärker und näher am Stege gemachet wird.”

²⁹⁸ Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing*, 130.

²⁹⁹ Stewart Carter, “The String Tremolo in the 17th Century,” *Early Music* 19, no. 1 (February 1991): 43–59.

Morsolino in 1582 in response to the Cremona cathedral's interest in installing such a device, mentioning that one was already installed at Basilica of San Marco in Venice.³⁰⁰

Once again, Farina's "avertimenti" clarify the organological identification of the section and offer technical guidance: "The *Tremuliren* is done with a pulsating of the hand in which one holds the bow, in this way imitating the *Tremulanten* of the organ."³⁰¹ The Italian corollary adds information: "Il Tremolo va sonato solamente facendo tremar il pulso della mano dell'Archetto." However, for this sentence to make any sense, it is most likely that *pulso* (the first person form of the verb *pulsare*, to pulsate) is a typographical error for *polso* (a noun, in this case "wrist"). So then, the whole notes that Farina has written are meant to be subdivided into many smaller articulations. Further, Farina suggests that these subdivisions be accomplished not merely by starting and stopping the bow arm, but by bowing smoothly through the note, while a back-and-forth motion of the hand at the wrist interrupts the sound.

There are abundant clues that can inform the execution of this passage on string instruments. In the above-mentioned letter, Morsolino cautions that the effect of the tremulant should be "languid and sweet," instead of "harsh and displeasing, like someone tormented by fever, whose teeth are chattering."³⁰² In addition, many sources connect the use of the organ tremulant with moments of high emotional affect.

Girolamo Diruta suggests its use in conjunction with the hypodorian and hypophrygian

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 46–7.

³⁰¹ "So wird das *Tremuliren* mit pulsirender Hand darinnen man den Bogen hat auff art des *Tremulanten* in den Orgeln *imitiret*."

³⁰² Carter, "The String Tremolo in the 17th Century," 46.

modes, which make “the harmony mournfully sad and dolorous,” and which “serve for playing at the Elevation of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, imitating with their sound the cruel and harsh torments of His Passion.”³⁰³ Two Bolognese monks, Adriano Banchieri and Lorenzo Penna, both specify the tremulant in settings of the Crucifixus,³⁰⁴ and Monteverdi calls for it in a 1610 Magnificat, to set the phrase “the humility of his handmaid.”³⁰⁵ Matthaeus Hertel says that organists should use the tremulant “only in melancholy music such as penitential songs, [the] Sanctus, and the like, because the tremulant usually makes the melody pious and devout.”³⁰⁶ Finally, we can find the effect mimicked on the viol long before it appears on the violin (as with the *col legno* and multiple stopping) by turning to Ganassi’s *Regola rubertina* of 1542, which recommends the effect as suited to “melancholy and tormented” “words and music.”³⁰⁷

This association with a pious and melancholy affect is supported by Farina’s writing, which prepares this section by, in modern terms, modulating from the *Capriccio*’s predominant D major to A minor, and slowing the tempo, both by writing increasingly prolonged note values and by marking *Adagio* and *Langsam*. However, by the end of the section, this gravity is perhaps betrayed as a mock gravity. While most segments of the *Capriccio* are marked by a fairly simple harmonic stasis, this one is

³⁰³ Ibid., 47.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 48, 51.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 47.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 48.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 44.

characterized by a striking chromaticism, which quickly develops into a daring chromaticism, and finally into a disastrously ill-advised chromaticism. There are several passing but jarring dissonances, such as the Canto's B natural against the Alto's B flat in m. 264. Harnoncourt suggests that this is a bit of satire in which "an organist is ridiculed, of whom modulations are demanded to which he is not equal, and he becomes hopelessly entangled in dissonance."³⁰⁸ Harnoncourt's reading is not the only explanation of these dissonances, however. An alternate possibility is suggested by evidence that passages employing the tremulant, and, even more so, passages in string literature mimicking the effect, were marked by affective chromaticism.³⁰⁹ Carter speculates that this might be the meaning of Roger North's description of "long notes enriched with the flowers of harmony,"³¹⁰ a melifluous turn of phrase to refer to such dissonances. Cypess points out that "what appear to be the contrapuntal improprieties in this section are actually not far from other works in the '*durezza e ligature*' tradition, for example, in works by Trabaci, Macque, and most famously, Frescobaldi."³¹¹ Roland Jackson, in an overview of this tradition, lists several organ pieces with the word *Capriccio* in their titles, and one titled *Consonanze Stravaganti*.³¹²

³⁰⁸ Farina, *Capriccio Stravagante*, 1. "So soll etwa beim Tremulanten ein Organist verspottet werden, der sich Modulationen zumutet, denen er nicht gewachsen ist, wobei er sich heillos in Disharmonien verstrickt."

³⁰⁹ Carter, "The String Tremolo in the 17th Century," 44, 50, 54, 56.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 53–4.

³¹¹ Rebecca Cypess, "'Die Natur und Kunst zu Betrachten': Carlo Farina's *Capriccio stravagante* (1627) and the Cultures of Collecting at the Court of Saxony", 2010, 184n37.

³¹² Roland Jackson, "On Frescobaldi's Chromaticism and Its Background," *The Musical Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (April 1971): 255–269.

In addition to these sources suggesting an appropriate affect, we find several sources that inform the subdivision of the bow, and even suggest a metronome marking for the section. Esaias Compenius and Michael Praetorius (co-authoring a manual on organ tuning in 1614) “state that while many different varieties of tremulant can be found, the most attractive sound is made by one which beats eight times per bar.”³¹³ Similarly, Gabriel Usper actually writes out his “tremolo” in eighth notes, slurred in sets of four, in a 1619 *Sonata a tre*.³¹⁴ Mersenne, however, is even more specific; he recommends that the tremulant should be calibrated to beat “eight times during a bar which lasts two seconds.”³¹⁵ With a little calculation, this provides us with a metronome marking for this section: 60 beats per minute to the half note. This is somewhat more brisk than many performances, but by no means unreasonable. On the other hand, it should be noted that, while this was “the preferred [speed] for the organ tremulant, ... it was not universal,” and some organs were even capable of modulating its speed.³¹⁶

Finally, the passage from Ganassi’s *Regola Rubertina* quoted in part above holds one final possibility for the performance of this section of the *Capriccio*. The full passage reads, “for melancholy words and music, move the bow gracefully, and at times shake (*tremar*) the bow arm and the finger of the hand on the neck [of the instrument], in order

³¹³ Carter, “The String Tremolo in the 17th Century,” 48.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 58n29.

to make the effect conform to melancholy and tormented music.”³¹⁷ Carter explicates, “Ganassi mentions two types of ‘shaking,’ one equivalent to the slurred tremolo, the other to left-hand vibrato.” Similarly, Morsolino’s letter mentions that the effect of the tremulant is enhanced when used in conjunction with the *voci humane*, or other stops that used extremely narrow intervals (or carefully “mistuned” unisons) to produce audible beating, resulting in a slight undulation of pitch.³¹⁸ Even without the use of these stops, Carter notes that the tremulant’s “undulations in the wind supply would create corresponding undulations in pitch; ... perhaps then the string player combined his ‘slurred tremolo’ with left-hand vibrato.”³¹⁹ I would further suggest that such a “vibrato” should be, like the tremolo, not a “modern, unmeasured” vibrato, but a regulated undulation, matching the bow’s motions. Adding this vibrato would be at the performer’s discretion, but Carter warns, “I have found no writer who recommends the simultaneous application of these two types of trembling in the period between Ganassi’s *Regola rubertina* and the 19th century. It may be that the slurred tremolo was assumed to include left-hand vibrato, though supporting evidence is lacking.”³²⁰

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 44.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 46–7.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 49.

“Fifferino della Soldatesca” / “Das Soldaten Pfeifgen”; “Il tamburo” / “Die Paucken oder Soldaten Trommel”

This section divides the Canto from the other three voices, with the Canto presenting the *fifferino*, a military fife, and the lower voices combining to form *il tamburo*, the rope-tensioned field drum with which it was paired.³²¹ The German label for the drum is “*Die Paucken oder Soldaten Trommel*,” which complicates the identification of the drum somewhat, as *Paucken* is usually applied to kettledrums. However, kettledrums were almost always paired with trumpets and associated with cavalry, whereas double-headed cylindrical snare drums were typically paired with fifes (as in fig. 17) and associated with infantry, and the remaining terms (*tamburo*, *Soldaten Trommel*) are adequately generic terms for drums.³²² Organologically, the “soldier’s fife” holds no great mystery. This is the same simple, cylindrical, transverse, edge-blown, six-holed flute that has led infantry into battle since at least the fourteenth century,³²³ and which Americans at least are familiar with as a patriotically charged emblem of the American Revolution—indeed, the “fife and drum corps” continued in military use well into the nineteenth century, and remains an active part of military culture, if not actual warfare, today. The instrument itself has changed little over the centuries. Prior to the

³²¹ The label “*Il tamburo*” / “*Die Paucken oder Soldaten Trommel*,” appears in the bass part only. However, the Tenor part is nearly identical to the Basso, at an octave higher, and the Alto part is also restricted to rhythmic patterns on D, albeit with much smaller note values. It is possible that two drums are being represented, one large and restricted to larger note values and the other smaller, but it is also possible that all three voices combine to give the effect of one drum striking some notes with more force and some with less.

³²² Ardal Powell, *The Flute* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 32.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 4, 20.

addition of a key, yielding the baroque transverse flute, the terms “fife” and “flute” were functionally interchangeable.³²⁴ Iconographic evidence shows a variety of lengths of fifes (some images show fifers with cases made to hold several fifes of varying register), and even the treble model was often as long as two to three feet, but in other respects the instrument’s construction was the same as in later centuries.³²⁵



Figure 17. Fife player and drummer.³²⁶

If the physical instrument and its mode of use have remained the same, its repertoire has not. The late eighteenth-century fife played recognizable, popular tunes,

³²⁴ Ibid., 37.

³²⁵ Ibid., 30.

³²⁶ Leonhard Fronsperger, *Fünff Bücher vonn Kriegs Regiment und Ordnung* (Frankfurt: David Zephelius, 1558).

such as “The World Turned Upside Down” or “Yankee Doodle.” However, this section shows no evidence of incorporating pre-existing melodies; in fact, it does not even feature what one could call a melody. The Canto’s material consists mainly of seemingly arbitrary scalar oscillations back and forth across narrow intervals like fifths, or even thirds (see fig. 19). This quasi-improvisatory material is explained by Thoinot Arbeau’s 1588 *Orchésographie*,³²⁷ a manual on dance that even addresses the “choreography” of footsoldiers, and the music that accompanies it. The work is written as a dialogue between Arbeau and his student Capriol. When questioned whether there is “a particular way to play the fife,” Arbeau answers, “Those who play them improvise to please themselves and it suffices for them to keep time with the sound of the drum.”³²⁸ Capriol requests “examples of music for the fife,” to which Arbeau replies, “As I have told you, the music for the fife... is composed to the player’s fancy.” However, he obliges with a representative sample (fig. 18). This “tabulation” shows the same rapid scalar oscillation, typically across the range of a third, that we see in this section of the *Capriccio* (fig. 19).

³²⁷ An anagrammatic pen name for Jehan Tabourot.

³²⁸ Thoinot Arbeau, *Orchesography*, trans. Mary Stewart Evans (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1967), 39.



Figure 18. Thoinot Arbeau, *Orchésographie*, “Tabulature du Fifre, ou Arigot du troisiemes ton”³²⁹

Figure 19. Carlo Farina, *Capriccio Stravagante*, “Fifferino della Soldatesca,” mm. 278-80

By including this *Fifferino* section, as well as the episode with the trumpets and kettledrums, Farina incorporates the *Capriccio* into the already well-established

³²⁹ Thoinot Arbeau, *Orchesographie: Et traicte en forme de dialogue, par lequel toutes personnes peuvent facilement apprendre & practiquer l'honneste exercice des dances* (Langres: Jehan des Preyz, 1589), 19, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/musdi.219> (accessed March 1, 2012).

tradition of “battle” pieces. It is intriguing to note that Arbeau’s example is taken from another work using an instrument to imitate the fife, in this case the spinet.³³⁰

To inform the performance of this section, we should note that Farina again requests the *ponticello* technique that he asked for with *Il Flautino*, except “a little nearer to the bridge and a little stronger.” Although Farina slurs this section, it should be noted that Arbeau gives two options for tonguing, one using a “té” and the other a “ré” syllable, which he describes as “rolling” the tongue. He emphasizes that his example should use the former articulation, “because the sound of té, té, is shriller and harsher, consequently more warlike than the roll.”³³¹ Perhaps, although this section is slurred, the violin tone should be condensed and incisive. Farina’s recommendation of *ponticello* with more bow weight than that used in the *Flautino* section could combine to yield this “warlike” timbre.

“La Chitarra Spagniola” / “Die Spannische Cythar”

The guitar of Farina’s time was, like many of the referenced instruments, in a period of transition. In the first place, the instrument itself had just been updated: it had existed primarily as a four-course instrument in the sixteenth century, but the turn of the century saw the strong emergence of a five-course guitar. Secondly, the playing style of the guitar was shifting gradually from a strummed style driven by chordal progression

³³⁰ Arbeau, *Orchesography*, 39–40.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

and rhythmic patterns, known as *rasgueado* in Spanish or *battuto* in Italian, to a “mixed style” that combined chords with singly plucked (*punteado* or *pizzicato*) melodic lines.

Finally, since its inception, but especially in the beginning of the seventeenth century, the guitar was undergoing changes in its geographic dispersion. Although Italian usage consistently called the instrument the “Spanish guitar,” the bulk of the output for the instrument in the beginning of the seventeenth century was Italian in origin. According to James Tyler, “One hundred and eighty printed and manuscript collections of solo music for the five-course guitar survive from seventeenth-century Italy alone,” while the total output of the rest of Europe “and the New World amounts to barely more than half the total number of Italian sources.” And “to put the size of the repertory in perspective, the total number of manuscripts and printed books for guitar from the seventeenth century alone ... is substantially greater than the number for either lute or keyboard.”³³² Despite this success in Italy, at the time of the *Capriccio*’s writing awareness of the guitar had not significantly infiltrated Germany; “in the early seventeenth century the Spanish guitar was virtually unknown at the courts of Protestant north Germany, Catholic south Germany, Austria, and her Bohemian possessions.”³³³

³³² James Tyler and Paul Sparks, *The Guitar and Its Music: From the Renaissance to the Classical Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 49.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 139. This unfamiliarity was not to persist for long, however, at least in the field of instrument-building, as the second half of the century featured Joachim Tielke, born in Prussia and educated in Italy but active in Hamburg, celebrated for both the quantity and quality of the many guitars he produced, as well as violins, lutes, viols and many other string instruments. See Ian Harwood and Alexander Pilipczuk, “Tielke, Joachim,” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press,

Praetorius, for one, seems conspicuously unfamiliar with the instrument, to the point that Tyler suspects “that Praetorius had no first-hand knowledge of guitars.”³³⁴ Praetorius gives only a paragraph of discussion to the guitar, in which he identifies it as the older four-course instrument, but mentions the five-course guitar as being used “in Italy.” He offers several confused options on its tuning, each with only four pitches, but illustrates only a “Qinterna” which, despite its name, appears to have an additional single string beyond its five doubled courses, for a total of eleven strings (fig. 20).

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27941> (accessed February 14, 2013); Alexander Bellow, *The Illustrated History of the Guitar* (Rockville Centre, NY: Franco Colombo Publications, 1970), 87–97. Bellow’s presentation of a guitar made in 1624 by Jacob Stadler as “the first known German-made guitar,” though, is problematic, as Stadler was active in Naples.

³³⁴ Tyler and Sparks, *The Guitar and Its Music*, 139.

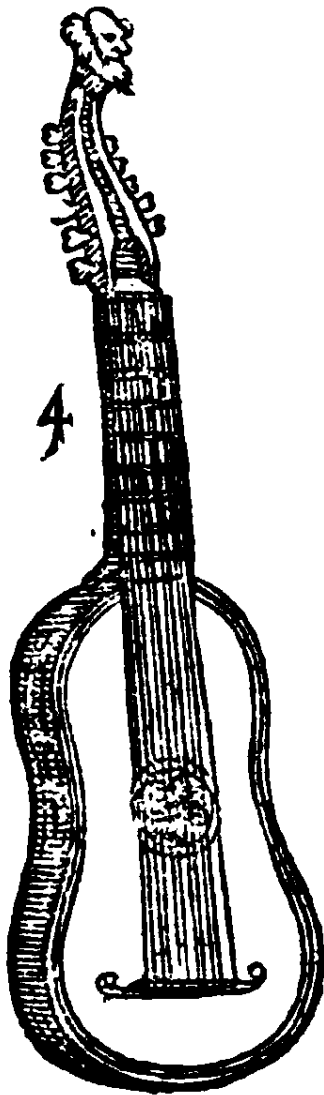


Figure 20. Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, plate 16, detail of “Quinterna.”

Praetorius offers only a few words on the guitar’s use “in Italy,” but includes a few significant details: he distinguishes between usage in “low” entertainment and in “high” art songs, and associates the former with *rasgueado* strumming:

In Italy the charlatans and saltimbanco [commedia dell’arte performers] (who are like our comedians and buffoons) strum on these in singing their villanelle and

other crude songs. But [nonetheless], the quintern [guitar] can be used by good singers for accompanying pleasing and lovely songs.³³⁵

The *Capriccio Stravagante* does not correspond directly to either of these uses, as the guitar is presented on its own without either “crude” or “lovely” singing. It is clearly, however, cast in *rasgueado* chords rather than the lute-like *punteado* that would be a more likely accompaniment to art songs. It is difficult to avoid comparing the guitar to another instrument that Farina has imitated, and that Praetorius connected to plebian and inglamorous music-making, the hurdy-gurdy. As I discussed earlier, Praetorius (like many others) connected the hurdy-gurdy to the lowest social classes, “beggars and traipsing women.” The commedia dell’arte serenaders referenced here occupy a higher rung in the ladder of organized entertainment, but the word Praetorius chooses to describe their art, *Lumpenlieder*, has scurrilous overtones—a literal translation of *Lumpen* could be either “rags” or “rogue’s.”

Farina has positioned these two “ragged” instruments as the first and last of his mimetic selections. The difference is that this latter, the so-called Spanish guitar, represents the exotic to his German audience, and in particular constitutes a token of the Italian instrumental environment which Farina had “brought” with him, while the

³³⁵ Translation by Cypess, “Die Natur und Kunst zu Betrachten,” 155. Original in Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, 2:53. “In Italia die Ziarlatini und Salt’ in banco (das sind beyn uns fast wie die Comoedianten unnd Possenreisser) nur zum schrumpfen; Darein sie Villanellen und andere nährische Lumpenlieder singen. Es können aber nichts desto weniger auch andere feine anmuthige Cantiunculæ, und liebliche Lieder von eim guten Seuger und Musico Vocali darein musicirt werden.”

hurdy-gurdy is an explicitly German instrument, and could be seen to represent Farina's embrace of his Germanic location.³³⁶

The performance practice of the baroque guitar has limited applicability to violin-family instruments, as a curved bridge poses a disadvantage in chordal strumming. However, one concession is possible that few performers attempt. Most performances of the *Capriccio* use the pizzicato technique that is standard to violin-family instruments, plucking with the flesh of the forefinger (if disregarding Farina's instruction to hold the instrument under the arm) or (if heeding it) the thumb. However, Tyler instructs, "Down strokes are played with the backs of the nails of the third, second, and first fingers and up strokes with at least the index finger."³³⁷ Mersenne corroborates, "one strikes the strings ... with one, two, three, or four fingers, just as one wishes. As to the thumb, it strikes only the treble string in rising, and all the strings in descending."³³⁸ "Descending" in this context refers to a "down stroke," i.e. downwards in space, striking strings from lowest to highest. Thus Mersenne describes the thumb's involvement in the down stroke, but obviously any hand position that strikes the strings with the fingers as well would lead with the fingernails. Such a technique, although foreign to bowed string players, is quite possible, and produces a more "guitar-like" pizzicato than the rounded, quickly-decaying tone of a string plucked by the pad of a finger. Further, strumming with

³³⁶ Cypess, "Die Natur und Kunst zu betrachten," 156.

³³⁷ James Tyler, *A Guide to Playing the Baroque Guitar* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 13.

³³⁸ Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle: The Books on Instruments*, trans. Roger E. Chapman (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1957).

nails allows the possibility of “spreading” selected chords, in a style associated today with flamenco tradition, as an occasional ornament.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In the past chapter I have examined the many instruments that Farina imitates and their nature, uses, and unique playing conventions. It is my hope that such details may enable an informed performance of the *Capriccio Stravagante*, but a meaningful engagement with the piece must go beyond these organological data and “make a meaning” for the *Capriccio*. If we, as listeners, are not to dismiss the piece entirely, then we are by implication valuing it, and we must clarify the basis on which we value it—in other words, what the *Capriccio* is “good for.” The question entails determining the piece’s “function”—both its original, intended function and its potential utility to us as performers, listeners, analysts, and historians.

The piece reveals many potential functionalities. It helps us date the early stages of certain violin techniques; it illustrates the influence of Italian virtuosos, and the melding of their *stile moderno* with international influences; it offers a perspective on the sounds and repertoire of various seventeenth-century instruments that is at once contemporaneous and removed, being a violinist’s commentary on these instruments. Determining its original intent is harder, and is limited ultimately to guesswork. Is the *Capriccio* simply an “entertaining *Quodlibet*”—in Beckmann’s words, a “light-hearted

string serenade”?³³⁹ Is it a technical proving-ground, an experimental sandbox for the “first random trials” in non-standard techniques?³⁴⁰ Is it an aural museum, collecting and curating sounds as social signifiers for a monarch’s perusal, juxtaposing the natural and the man-made, the beggarly and the regal, the ecclesiastical and the martial?

If the *Capriccio* was indeed motivated by more than musical frivolity, I suggest that the key lies in the words of Mersenne, who pointed to the ability to mimic the “tones” and “modes” of other instruments as a quintessentially violinistic talent. Perhaps, if Farina indeed had an overarching purpose in assembling this gallery of timbral imitations, it was to showcase this defining ability of the violin, just at the moment when the definition of the violin itself was coalescing.

³³⁹ Beckmann, *Das Violinspiel*, 15.

³⁴⁰ Newman, *The Sonata in the Baroque Era*, 54.

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