ABSTRACTS

Friday 20 April, 9:15 A.M. – 12:15 P.M.

The Visual Muse
Chair: Rose Pruiksma, University of New Hampshire, Durham

Michael Dodds, University of North Carolina School of the Arts
The Canon in Pieter van Laer’s Self-Portrait with Magic Scene

In European paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, musical canons stand most frequently as emblems of divine order and musical erudition, often at the same time. In Dosso Dossi’s Allegory of Music and Titian’s Bacchanal of the Andrians, for example, canons support extended humanist conceits. In Johannes Vorhaut’s 1674 group portrait of the Hamburg musicians Reincken, Theile, and Buxtehude, a canon on the text Ecce quam bonum serves both as an emblem of musical learning and a symbol of fraternal unity.

A painting displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Magic Scene with Self-Portrait” by Pieter van Laer, called Il Bamboccio (Dutch, 1582/92–after 1642, but active in Rome 1625–1638), adds an unusual twist to the association of canons and learnedness. A sorcerer receives more than he bargained for, yelling in terror as the devil he has conjured approaches from just outside the picture frame. The three-voice canon prominently displayed in the foreground bears the text Il diavolo non burla, non burla—“the devil doesn’t jest, doesn’t jest.” It is reasonable to suppose that Van Laer himself wrote the canon: Joachim von Sandrart informs us in his Teutsche Academie der Edlen Bau- Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste of 1675 that Van Laer, a close friend, loved music and often sought solace in playing the violin.

While the canon offers up the cautionary moral, it also partakes in the sorcerer’s compromised erudition. The melody begins on a tacitly prohibited B and descends prominently to F, outlining the diabolus in musica. As a vernacular song, it also violates norms of good text setting, coarsely projecting the imbalance in Van Laer’s Faustian magus. Its style, in fact, more resembles the bawdy catches then popular in England than the sublimely learned canons of Roman contemporaries like Pier Francesco Valentini and Romano Micheli, whose canons of dazzling erudition are celebrated in the Musurgia universalis (1650) of another coeval Roman,
Athanasius Kircher—whose own fascination with musical hermeticism and natural magic is evident throughout his works.

Drawing upon critical work on music and magic by Gary Tomlinson and Penelope Gouk and a study of this painting by Mario Giuseppe Genesi, this paper considers Van Laer’s canon within the hermeneutic contexts of Dutch and Roman musical and visual culture in the 1620s through the 1640s. In a painting that uses dramatic intensification to subvert conventions of both *vanitas* and self portraiture, Van Laer’s canon itself subverts the aesthetic premises of the learned counterpoint of the Roman school. The presentation will feature a live performance of the canon in the painting.

Georgi Cowart, Case Western Reserve University
Performing/Transforming French Identity: Watteau and the Satiric Musical Theater

Recent research has shown that a series of opera-ballets by André Campra and his contemporaries may be seen as satires of court ballets dating from the early reign of Louis XIV. Prominent among these is Campra’s *Les Muses* (1703), which satirizes the absolutist agenda for the arts set out in Louis XIV’s *Le Ballet des Muses* of 1666. Subtly mocking the praise of the king voiced by the obsequious Muses of the court ballet, the prologue of the opera-ballet informs us that the nine sisters are now hobnobbing with Cupid, god of love, and Plutus, god of commerce. In other words, they have abandoned the court of Louis XIV to take their place at the libertine Opéra (known as the Temple of Cupid) in Paris. Satirizing the tragic heroism associated with the king, *Les Muses* and a group of related works glorify the genres of the musical comedy and the satiric opera-ballet itself as icons of an emerging public taste.

Antoine Watteau, who is thought to have worked as a set painter at the Opéra for a brief period beginning in 1702, transferred the aesthetic and ideology of *Les Muses* to the fine arts. This paper will argue that four of his mature paintings—*The French Comedians* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), *The Italian Comedians* (National Gallery, Washington, D. C.), *Mezzetin* (Metropolitan Museum of Art), and *The Union of Music and Comedy* (private owner)—may be directly linked to the institution of the Opéra and the genre of the opera-ballet. Like Campra’s *Les Muses*, these paintings satirize the genre of tragedy and celebrate the satiric Muses of the modern musical stage.
Michael Bane, Case Western Reserve University
Francesco Corbetta’s *La Guitarre royalle* (1674) and the Aesthetic of Ease

The stylistic gulf separating Francesco Corbetta’s final two publications for the guitar continues to stymie persuasive accounts of this important composer’s stylistic development and the development of the French baroque guitar school generally. Both entitled *La Guitarre royalle* and published in Paris within three years of one another, the two publications nonetheless embody striking contrasts. The second *La Guitarre royalle* (1674) avoids the musical and technical complexity of the earlier work, opting instead for accessibility and playability. Scholars have expressed disappointment that Corbetta’s final work should be so commonplace, and compared to the magisterial 1671 publication the 1674 book is indeed lightweight. I will argue, however, that the 1674 publication represents a burgeoning compositional strategy among guitarists catering to guitar-crazed nobility and a wider amateur audience. The conscious formation of a new musical aesthetic, one I call the “aesthetic of ease,” is traceable here and in nearly every other guitar publication from late seventeenth-century France.

The special needs of the nobility, at whose pleasure guitarists generally served, necessarily circumscribed the music published for and dedicated to them. Difficult music that required practice, persistence, and concentration to perform could scarcely interest those for whom toil was antithetical to pleasure. Guitarists calibrated their compositions accordingly, publishing works that emphasized technical ease. The enterprising guitarist Antoine Carré even republished simplified editions of difficult compositions from Corbetta’s 1671 publication. I will demonstrate that the ultimate goal for the French baroque guitarist was to render contemporary musical styles in a highly playable, technically inviting form fit for noble consumption. The history of the French guitar in the seventeenth century can thus be understood as a gradual refinement of this aesthetic of ease, a delicate balancing of technical facility and musical charm. The aesthetic of ease clarifies not only Corbetta’s final publication, but also the musical aims shared by French baroque guitarists and the demographic for which they composed.
The violinist and composer William Brade (c.1560 – 1630) was a crucial figure in the transmission of the English consort idiom and string performance practice to Germany and Denmark around 1600. He started his continental career in 1594 as an ordinary instrumentalist in the Hofkapelle of King Christian IV of Denmark, and eventually became Kapellmeister at the court of Margrave Christian Wilhelm of Brandenburg in Halle in 1616. He was not only the first English musician to lead a German Hofkapelle, but also the first string player to rise to such an eminent position.

Some scholars have attributed the fact that Brade changed his employment about 15 times during the 36 years of his continental activity merely to his “restless” character and even to an “unhappy marriage.” I argue instead that Brade’s biography shows distinct patterns of a carefully planned career. By reevaluating known sources, such as the eight funerary poems published after his death, as well as referring to newly discovered archival material, I show how Brade was able to use political and dynastic networks between the Danish court and courts and cities in Northern Germany for his own continuous professional and social advancement.

Examining Brade’s career in the context of networks between courts in early modern Europe not only gives a fascinating insight into the socio-cultural mechanisms behind these networks, but it also illuminates Brade’s own significant contribution to the rising social status and professionalism of violin playing in Germany in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Friday 20 April, 4:15 – 5:15 P.M.

Lecture Recital: Pasqualini singing
Chair: Roger Freitas, Eastman School of Music

Margaret Murata, University of California, Irvine
Arthur Haas, Stony Brook University
Katherine Kaiser, Stony Brook University

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York owns a well-discussed painting by Andrea Sacchi of castrato singer and composer Marc’Antonio Pasqualini (1614-91), whose voice was first
described by Monteverdi in 1628 (<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1981.317>). Fewer than five of his almost 250 chamber cantatas have been recorded. We demonstrate some of the vocal traits and idioms of one of the principal singers of mid seventeenth-century Rome, focusing on verbal indications and articulation marks in his holograph scores in the Vatican Library.

Short excerpts from Pasqualini’s cantatas illustrate his melismatic style and the effect he termed ondeggiato; his placement of trills, especially in 6-beat contexts; and the text-underlay mark of the virgola that he adopts in his 1654 volume, which results in a kind of accent of syncopation. We also demonstrate his dissonance practices with respect to the continuo part and the stresses of the poetic meters. By the 1650s, Pasqualini was among those Roman composers taking the cantata beyond the limpid lyricism of the Rossi generation, and we speculate whether the notation and variety of articulations in his 1654 volume reflect his sojourn in Paris in 1647.

Although the lecture does not focus on Sacchi’s painting, we also provide a sound sample of the clavicytherium depicted with the singer—an instrument with a resonance different from theorbo, harpsichord, or harp. The continuo parts, however, will be realized on an Italian-model harpsichord, depending on the climate constraints of the venue.

We include a complete performance of a shorter cantata from Pasqualini’s earliest, 1638 volume and conclude with a longer one from his 1658 collection.

Saturday 21 April, 9:00 A.M. – 12:40 P.M.

Music and the Printed Object
Chair: Bruce Gustafson, Franklin & Marshall College; Oxford Bibliographies Online

Graham Freeman, University of Toronto
“Things Marvelously Altered”: Print, Manuscript, and Consumer Demand in Early Modern England

The early stages of the development of printed music in England are often seen as somewhat of a debacle, rife with disorganization, disinterest, and a litigious and adversarial approach to the business practice of publishing music. Joseph Kerman has gone so far as to assert that the “irresponsible” printing monopolies granted by Elizabeth I had a deleterious effect on not only the publication of music, but also upon the act of composition well into the seventeenth century.
From this perspective, English music from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries stands mostly as a monument to what might have been had it not been for the censorship imposed upon it by an immature and incompetent printing industry.

It is my assertion, however, that the inability to secure a niche for printed music in early seventeenth-century England can be more readily attributed to the fact that print became a site of active resistance by those who continued to uphold the authority of manuscript circulation. Further, I contend that printed music—nascent in England even in the early seventeenth century despite its secure foothold in Italy and Germany for almost a century—represented an impersonal and inherently suspect element of the burgeoning consumer culture that threatened many of the ideological values of English society. As economic historian Jan de Vries has pointed out, changes in the economic organization of English households meant that many traditional labor methods were being uprooted in favor of those more conducive to the emerging consumer market, a change paradoxically both condemned and embraced by English consumers. Patterns of consumption in England were creating a new consuming society virtually overnight at the end of the sixteenth century, and “Things,” according to rector William Harrison in 1587, were “marvelously altered.” Using the analysis of early modern consumer behavior and economic thought by historians such as de Vries, David Hawkes, and Joyce Oldham Appleby, this paper will demonstrate that the retention of manuscript circulation in early modern England constituted a determined resistance to the growing ideology of consumerism and print culture, and that many English composers used manuscript culture to articulate their dissent from the consumer market in ways that other social critics were unable to accomplish.

Alexander Silbiger, Duke University
The Mystery of the Frescobaldi Portraits

To many people the name of Frescobaldi conjures up a slightly severe-looking face with a mustache and a little goatee, set in an oval frame in the style of an engraved medallion. Actually two such engraved portraits exist, both frequently reproduced but quite distinct, their differences being as curious as their similarities. They are not the only known depictions of the composer, but aside from a caricature—whose connection to Frescobaldi is purely conjectural—these other portraits are all related to one or the other engraving.
One of the two engravings was included in the original editions of his two books of toccatas that were published between 1627 and 1637. The purpose of the other engraving is not known, although some scholars think it served as model for the one accompanying the editions. Along the frames of both portraits are similar Latin inscriptions, which provide the name of the composer, his position at St. Peter’s, and his age, which both list as 36. This age would date the portraits to 1619 or 1620. In view of the biography and stylistic development of the engraver of the presumed earlier portrait, Claude Mellan, such a date must be too early by several years. This is only one of several puzzles regarding the dates of the Frescobaldi portraits. Another portrait by Mellan, a charcoal drawing that resembles his engraving, has an inscription that dates it to 1628 at the earliest. This drawing is thought to be the model for his engraved version. However, this assumption would appear to contradict the assumption that the engraved version served as model for the portrait included in the toccata book published in 1627. After a review of all known early Frescobaldi portraits (which include two paintings in addition) and a consideration of what is known or can be deduced regarding their original settings, I will offer possible explanations of these paradoxes, which may require a change in our understanding of how Frescobaldi’s engraved editions were produced.

Derek Stauff, Indiana University
Polemical Broadsheets and Lutheran Music in Saxony during the Thirty Years’ War

During the Thirty Years’ War, some Lutheran sacred music in Saxony engaged with the political or confessional issues of the time. Polemical broadsheets of the period offer one way of illuminating this relationship. Composers sometimes set biblical texts that also appear on these broadsheets. When interpreted in this context, the music takes on a more specific political significance.

Two concertos in particular connect to the politics of their day when read alongside broadsheets. Samuel Michael (c. 1597–1632), organist at St. Nicholas Church in Leipzig, published a concerto in 1632 whose biblical text honors Gustav Adolf of Sweden. The text, Psalm 12:5 (“Weil denn die Elenden verstöret werden / und die Armen seuffzen / wil ich auff / spricht der Herr / Ich wil eine Hülfte schaffen / dass man getrost lehren sol”), also appears on a contemporary broadsheet in praise of the Swedish king. After his victory at Breitenfeld near
Leipzig in 1631, many Saxons saw Gustav Adolf as their long-awaited relief from Catholic oppression. To readers of the broadsheet and, by extension, Michael’s concerto, the relief (“Hülffe”) mentioned in the Psalm referred to Gustav Adolf.

The text of the second work, Heinrich Schütz’s well-known concerto “Saul, was verfolgst du mich” from the Symphoniae sacrae III (1650), also appears in an allegorical broadsheet depicting the Church as a ship steering a steady course despite the onslaught of its enemies. The text turns out to have a twofold significance in the context of this broadsheet. It engages Protestant fears of persecution and provides comfort in the face of adversity.

**Voices of Sculpture**
Chair: Jeffrey Kurtzman, Washington University in St. Louis

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Wendy Heller, Princeton University
Arethusa and Daphne: Opera, Sculpture, and the Staging of Desire for Scipione Borghese

In late sixteenth-century Florence, as the Camerata was reconfiguring the relationship between music and drama, the sculptor Battista (di Domenico) Lorenzi (1527–1594) created an ornamental statue for a fountain in the garden of Almanna Bandini, Knight of Malta. Positioned under a triple arcade in an unabashedly theatrical manner, Battista’s sculpture, now housed at the Metropolitan Museum, dramatizes an episode from Book 5 of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* in which the nymph Arethusa, pursued by the rapacious river god Alpheus, is—much like her companion Daphne—transformed into a stream. Although Arethusa’s tale contains no mythic musicians, it would provide the inspiration for an opera: *Aretusa*, with music by Filippo Vitali and poetry by Ottavio Corsini, first performed in Rome at Corsini’s palace on February 8, 1620. Often dismissed as a belated and pale imitation of the first music dramas in Florence and Mantua, *Aretusa* was intended to provide one of Rome’s most discerning patrons of the arts—Cardinal Scipione Borghese—“with some brief and honest relief during carnival from the continual weight of public business for all of Christendom.” This would not be Borghese’s only encounter with Ovidian rapes: his commissions over the next several years would include Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s *Apollo and Daphne* and *Rape of Proserpina*. 
Considering Borghese’s apparent fascination with these erotic tales, my paper focuses on hitherto unexplored links between early opera and sculpture and a shared interest in the virtuosic and expressive potential of Ovidian abductions in both media. I explore the remarkable sensuality and theatricality of Lorenzi’s *Alpheus and Arethusa* and its much celebrated sense of motion that has been viewed by some scholars as anticipating and even influencing Bernini’s *Apollo and Daphne*. I demonstrate how the numerous laments in *Aretusa*, condemned by Pirrota as an “orgy of musical deploration,” provided the listeners with a voyeuristic experience analogous to that of the viewer gazing on the nude Arethusa in Lorenzi’s sculpture. In so doing, this paper not only sheds light on the moral ambiguity of Bernini’s masterpieces, but also provides us with new insights into the central role of sculpture in the invention of opera.

Alex Fisher, University of British Columbia

A Musical Dialogue in Bronze: Gregor Aichinger’s *Lacrumae* (1604) and Hans Reichle’s Crucifixion Group for the Basilica of SS. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg

In 1605 churchgoers at the Imperial Benedictine basilica of Saints Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg were treated to a new sight: obstructing their view of the high altar was a new bronze sculptural group depicting the crucifixion of Christ, erected directly at the front of the church’s nave. Flanking Christ at each side were the figures of the Virgin Mary and John the Apostle, seeming to gesture and exclaim, while a weeping Mary Magdalene embraced the foot of the cross. Designed by Hans Reichle and cast by Wolf Neidhart, this group provided a strong visual focus for congregants and devotees, and embodied a characteristic mode of post-Tridentine Catholic, indeed Jesuitical, devotion that foregrounded the tactile experience of Christ’s suffering and the affective response of penitential tears and lamentation.

Less well known than Reichle’s sculptural group is a collection of devotional music apparently written around the same time by the basilica’s organist, Gregor Aichinger (1564–1628), a leading composer of Latin-texted Catholic music in this biconfessional city. The *Lacrumae D. Virginis et Ioannis in Christum a cruce depositum, modis musicis expressae* [Tears of the Blessed Virgin and John upon Christ’s Deposition from the Cross, expressed in the Musical Modes], published in 1604, consists of an eight-part dialogue between Mary and John on the theme of Christ’s suffering and redemption of sin, the whole scored for a five-voice choir;
the Latin texts were penned by the prominent Catholic Stadt-pfleger Marcus Welser. Although in his official capacity Welser pursued a confessionally neutral course for the city of Augsburg, he nonetheless was actively involved in Catholic devotional culture. For his part, Aichinger, an ordained priest, had studied at the Jesuit University of Ingolstadt and maintained close connections with local Jesuits and the Marian Congregation: much of his music reflects new Counter-Reformation currents of Marian, Eucharistic, and sanctoral devotion. For the Lacrumae Aichinger chose a musical medium that is redolent both of the tradition of the Counter-Reformation spiritual madrigal as well as of the Latin, edificatory dialogues cultivated at Jesuit colleges and universities. While proof of a direct link between the Lacrumae and Reichle’s sculptural group is elusive, it is plausible that the greatest effect of Aichinger’s musical dialogue—performed, perhaps, for better-educated members of Catholic confraternities and sodalities gathering at the basilica—was in its giving voice to the otherwise silent, bronze figures of Mary and John at the foot of the cross.

Saturday 21 April, 2:00 – 5:00 P.M.

**Opera and Sacred Song in Italy**
Chair: Robert Holzer, School of Music, Yale University

Andrew Eggert, Columbia University

*L'Eritrea* 1652, 1654, 1661: Comparative Dramaturgy of Cavalli in Performance

This paper explores three performances of the opera *L'Eritrea*: the première at the Teatro Sant’Apollinare in Venice in 1652, the revival in Bologna in 1654, and the Venetian revival at the Teatro San Salvatore in 1661. The final collaboration between Francesco Cavalli and librettist Giovanni Faustini, *L'Eritrea* underwent significant revisions for each of its subsequent presentations. Through the process of comparative dramaturgical analysis, the three stagings of *L'Eritrea* reflect the ongoing musico-poetic changes in Venetian opera at midcentury. The additions and deletions recorded in the libretti that were printed for each occasion are not merely structurally significant in themselves, but also have important ramifications for the performance of Cavalli’s opera on stage. Many of the dramaturgical modifications made for the 1654 performances in Bologna were maintained or altered further for the Venetian revival in 1661, where they are recorded in the printed libretto as “nuove aggiunte d'incerto autore” [“new
additions by an unknown author”). Along with a new prologue, of particular importance to stage performance are the inserted comic scenes, based upon traditions of *commedia dell’arte*, that alter both the narrative and scenographic structure of the overall work. The insertion of new arias at the ends of scenes and the substantial cuts made to the recitative reveal further ways in which Cavalli and Faustini’s original dramaturgy yielded over time to the pressures of audience taste and the exigencies of stage performance. The implications of excavating these multiple textual layers of the same work are both musical and visual; for when considered in parallel the three versions of *L’Eritrea* offer a rare instance to examine the return of a Venetian opera to Venice after a performance outside the lagoon. This genealogy of performance, as well as the shifting balance between musico-dramatic form and visual spectacle in subsequent stage iterations, make the case of *L’Eritrea* revealing of the broader operatic culture of mid seventeenth-century Venice, and allow us to glimpse the impact of decisions made in rehearsal and performance by Cavalli’s contemporaries.

Sara Pecknold, Catholic University of America
“On Lightest Leaves Do I Fly”: Natality and the Renewal of Identity in Barbara Strozzi’s *Sacri musicali affetti* (1655)

Despite Barbara Strozzi’s popularity among scholars and performers in recent decades, little attention has been paid to her sacred works. In this paper, I examine Strozzi’s *Sacri musicali affetti* (1655), a collection of devotional cantate that occupies a unique place in Strozzi’s œuvre. Why did Strozzi publish this volume one year before her daughters entered the convent of San Sepolcro? Engaging the work of Robert L. Kendrick on “Intent and Intertextuality in Barbara Strozzi’s Sacred Music,” I argue that the publication of Strozzi’s *Sacri musicali affetti* is more closely tied to her daughters’ imminent novitiate than scholars have previously suggested. In fact, it seems that this event provided Strozzi an opportunity—unique within her career—to refashion her public image from the immoral muse of the Accademia degli Unisoni to a devout mother of sanctified offspring. At the same time, the neo-Classical sentiments in the dedication and the unusual theological implications of the cantata texts allowed Strozzi to maintain her position as an educated, cosmopolitan daughter of the Venetian intellectual elite. In Opus 5,
Strozzi’s self-image is suspended in the tension between the secular and the sacred, but “facing” the holy rather than the profane.

This paper examines how Strozzi accomplishes the redirecting of her public persona by considering the composer’s background and her situation at the time that her fifth opus was published, as well as by investigating the significance of the dedication to the Archduchess Anne of Innsbruck, in light of Anne’s specific circumstances in the early 1650s. This context is then applied to an examination of the collection as a whole, concluding with textual-musical analyses of the cantatas “Mater Anna” and “Nascent Maria.” These cantatas are inscribed with multivalent meaning: they exalt Saint Anne and the Blessed Virgin Mary—whilst they praise the archduchess’s piety and magnanimity, proclaim the redemptive nature of motherhood, and trace a narrative from sorrow to joy. The evocation of the Immaculate Conception provides the final twist to Strozzi’s re-imaging project: like Saint Anne, Strozzi was not herself born sinless, but has brought forth blameless female issue.

**Opera and Masque in England**
Chair: Candace Bailey, North Carolina Central University

Murray K. Dahm, Sydney
Henry Purcell’s Spaniards and the Dating of *Dido and Aeneas*

Much ink has been spilt on arguments over the dating of Henry Purcell and Nahum Tate’s opera *Dido and Aeneas*. Whether the first performance was in 1689 at Josias Priest’s School for Young Gentlewomen or at some earlier date has been a matter of fierce (and at times, vitriolic) debate. Likewise, arguments about the precise context of the performance have polarized scholars. Arguments have ranged from non-allegorical contexts through to elaborate readings of allegorical meanings within the subject, text and music of the opera. These range from the meteorology of 1683/4, the Declaration of Indulgence by James II in April 1687 through to the “Glorious Revolution” of 1688. Recently, it has been argued that the earliest performance of the opera dates to July 1688 based on a letter sent from Aleppo. A possible context for the opera which seems to have been overlooked, however, and one which is suggested directly by the surviving sources for the opera, is a commemoration in July 1688 of the hundredth anniversary
of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. In the instructions for a dance in Act III, the libretto states that “Jack of the Lanthern leads the Spaniards out of their way among the Inchantresses.” These “Spaniards” are usually understood or corrected to “sailors” but in the context of a commemoration of the defeat of the Armada they make perfect sense. The dance itself also makes sense in a naval context since the lanthorn was predominately a naval lantern. What is more, the story of the defeat of the Armada features the prominent use of just such lanthorns and, arguably, the idea that the Spaniards were “led astray” by Lord Howard of Effingham, Sir Francis Drake, and the English fleet. The large amount of naval imagery and the allegorical identification of Dido with Elizabeth I add weight to an Armada commemoration. Contemporary diarists such as Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn also reveal that the memory of the defeat of the Armada was alive and well a century later. Taken together, this evidence argues strongly for a new and previously overlooked context for Purcell’s opera.

Amanda Eubanks-Winkler, Syracuse University
Cupid in Early Modern Pedagogical Masques

As recent scholarship has extensively documented, music and dance occupied a conflicted space in early modern England. On the one hand, English conduct book authors, following the example of Castiglione, strongly believed that music and dance were an essential part of a well-rounded education. On the other, moralists decried the potential of these arts to lead to wantonness. Given such anxieties it is surprising that pedagogical masques designed to train schoolgirls in music and dance sometimes featured the potentially transgressive character of Cupid, the god of erotic love and desire. To unpack this seeming contradiction, this paper considers works featuring Cupid that hitherto have escaped significant musicological analysis: Robert White’s *Cupid’s Banishment* (1617, performed by pupils from Ladies Hall in Deptford for Queen Anna at Greenwich) and Thomas Jordan’s *Cupid His Coronation* (1654, performed by “Masters and yong Ladyes that were theyre Scholers” at Spittle [Christ’s Hospital?!]).

These masques take radically different approaches to the character of Cupid. In White’s masque, Cupid is a lascivious creature who requires banishment, an appropriate message for the daughters of courtiers who performed the work to convey to their queen. Conversely, the less exalted girls who performed Jordan’s masque for an unknown audience celebrated Cupid and
crowned him king. Politics seem to have affected the portrayal of the character of Cupid in Jordan’s masque. Jordan had royalist sympathies and he conveyed this subtly to his audience by modeling *Cupid His Coronation* on the Caroline era masque, which, under the influence of Queen Henrietta Maria, used Neoplatonic rhetoric to celebrate chaste love.

Yet these readings of the masque only tell part of the story. What were the implications when the girls at “Spittle” dressed as twelve Virgins danced a “Grand Maske” and then, perhaps oxymoronically, crowned Cupid their king, or when pupils from Ladies Hall performed a violent, aggressive dance to banish Cupid, subverting early modern notions of femininity? This paper combines a consideration of the moralism of the masques with an analysis of the moments where the act of performance unsettles or disrupts their pedagogical purpose.

**Sunday 22 April, 9:00 – 12:00 noon**

**Theory and Practice**  
Chair: Michele Cabrini, Hunter College, CUNY

Gregory Barnett, Rice University  
Modal Polemics and the Intangible Modes

In 1623, Mutio Effrem published a scathing criticism of Marco da Gagliano’s *Sesto libro di madrigali*:

> do not worry about having things printed, because your works—as anyone can judge from this score—deserve to be buried in the shadows rather than to enjoy the light.

Most of his remarks begin with the problem of not properly establishing or maintaining the mode, and to judge by the four similar controversies that erupted between 1600 (Artusi vs. Monteverdi) and 1780 (Capalti vs. Coccia), other eminent composers demonstrated similar tendencies. This paper focuses on these modal polemics, concentrating in particular on Effrem’s criticisms in order to investigate 1) what it meant to compose in the modes, 2) what was at stake when composers chose not to, and 3) how this elucidates the relationship between modal theory and compositional practice.
The polemics demonstrate, most immediately, that modal errors were a matter of propriety and decorum which lay beyond the practical, unlike, for example, errors of counterpoint that offended the ear or introduced un-singable intervals. Going out of the mode violated a compositional ideal that comprised neatly restricted ranges, permissible cadence points, and a soggetto that outlines a proper modal fifth or fourth and receives a tonal answer. Moreover, two broader points emerge from the sources studied here: first, the era of modal theory lasted much longer than we realize, inasmuch as identical arguments play out in Francesco Capalti’s 1780 critique of Maria Rosa Coccia’s work; second, the features of modal composition common to each polemic amount to rules of style that are distinct from the syntax of tonal organization. Capalti remarks that Coccia’s piece, while not in the required mode 8, nonetheless fulfilled a basic requirement of being in G. That is, tonal coherence in no way guaranteed modal integrity. The modes thus function in these polemics (and beyond), not as a tonal resource, but instead as a musical symbol. As a legacy of both Catholic ritual and classical learning they evoked order and probity in the Sei- and Settecento imagination—in sum, potent and authoritative symbols, but also abstract and intangible.

Don Fader, University of Alabama

Les Modernes Face the Music: The Circle of the Future Regent as Locus for a Relativist Crisis in “Préramiste” Music Theory

In his interest in progress, Philippe II d’Orléans (1674–1723) attracted a group of thinkers whose debates concerning the nature and purpose of music in the 1690s made a significant contribution to musical thought. This circle of “modernes” included Joseph Sauveur (founder of the science of acoustics) and Etienne Loulié (music theorist), as Patricia Ranum has noted, but also Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle (secretary of the Royal Academy of Sciences), whose writings provide a key to these debates. Although Herbert Schneider and William Seidel bifurcate the history of seventeenth-century French music theory—the first 50 years being dominated by Neoplatonist attempts to impute affective qualities to particular musical techniques, and the second half by relativism concerning musical expression—the writings of the Orléans circle demonstrate that the issues debated by Mersenne and Descartes concerning the metaphysics of music were taken up again in the late seventeenth century. While members of Philippe’s group adopted the modernist line that artistic taste was relative and did not necessarily legitimate the French style
as superior, their writings reveal a crisis concerning the expressive role of new Italian harmonic techniques cultivated by Philippe and his musicians. Renewed by the *querelle des anciens et des modernes* of the 1680s, Descartes’s ideas were adopted by the modernes in order to show history as a march of rational progress. Attempts at applying Descartes’s metaphysics to music, however, provoked a crisis about whether harmony had a natural basis that developed along the lines of the sciences, which could be appreciated by “learned listeners,” or whether it was merely a product of habituation based upon irrational and “unnatural” cultural prejudices. It was precisely this question of the status of harmony that Rameau’s Cartesian approach attempted to address in his famous *querelle* with Rousseau over the “natural” basis of harmony. The crisis revealed by the writings of this circle thus provides an intellectual “missing link” between the concerns of the Mersenne generation and those of the eighteenth century, which are still with us today.

**Dialogues with Text**

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**Bad Latin and Bad Manners: Giovanni Battista Doni Reads Marin Mersenne**

Music fascinated the polymaths of the Baroque—but their musical interests are often difficult to square with ours. They addressed highly technical questions of mathematics, philology, and astronomy. Their scholarship ranged far beyond music, and their professional lives ranged beyond scholarship. This paper examines the three erudites whose musical researches were most widely known during the seventeenth century: Giovanni Battista Doni, Athanasius Kircher, and Marin Mersenne. All three were personally acquainted through larger political and institutional contexts. Therefore, in their published works and semi-public correspondence, they took care not to offend.

A previously overlooked source allows us behind the dignified and courteous facade, to understand how music scholars actually read and assessed each other’s work. Portions of Doni’s library and personal papers survive, scattered across the libraries of Tuscany. Of particular interest is a copy of Mersenne’s *Harmonicorum libri* (1636) that contains extensive
marginalia in Doni’s hand. Doni’s commentary, detailed and highly critical, almost entirely bypasses matters of contemporary musical practice. Instead, Doni focused on Mersenne’s Latin style, his failure to observe social protocol properly, and the extent to which Harmonicorum libri fell short of (Doni’s) standards for humanistic scholarship. But even as Doni seems to have overlooked matters of contemporary practice, he raised concerns central to his larger musical theories, and he cast into sharp relief the broad cultural milieu in which music was produced, consumed, and studied.

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Cerberus Barks in Vain: Poetic Asides in the Artusi–Monteverdi Controversy

By the end of Act III of Claudio Monteverdi’s Orfeo (1607), Orpheus has succeeded in crossing the River Styx in his effort to rescue his beloved Eurydice. The chorus praises the fact that “nothing undertaken by man is tried in vain” (Nulla impresa per huom si tenta in vano), and cites the examples of other over-achieving heroes of classical mythology. But Orpheus surpasses them all, so we read in a part of Alessandro Striggio’s libretto not set to music: “In vain does Charon have ears deaf to prayers, / and now in vain does Cerberus bark and bite” (L’orecchie in van Caronte à i preghi ha sorde, / E in vano homai Cerbero latra e morde). Surviving the triple-headed snapping of Cerberus might simply be viewed as a common occupational hazard for anyone seeking to enter Hades. But Striggio’s Cerbero latra quotes a poem written by Monteverdi’s friend Cherubino Ferrari and placed at the end of the composer’s Fifth Book of madrigals (1605). This text and one other by Ferrari (in the Fifth Book’s front matter) have received little comment by scholars, who have also failed to note that these poems respond directly, if elliptically, to a series of eulogies at the head of Giovanni Maria Artusi’s L’Artusi, overo Delle imperfettoni della moderna musica (1600). That treatise is well-known as the first public blast in the so-called Artusi–Monteverdi controversy, but the eulogies have been ignored. My close reading of all these encomia provides an intriguing footnote, and perhaps something more, to the controversy over the seconda pratica madrigal and now, it would seem, Orfeo in their broader Ferrarese and Mantuan contexts.