

December 1st, 2021 19:30 hrs.
Abraham Ross, D.Mus. Recital
Redpath Hall
McGill University
Classe de/Class of: Jonathan Oldengarm

These programme notes are written by the student performing and are presented by the student in partial fulfilment of the requirements of their course.

Ces notes de programme sont écrites par l'étudiant-interprète et sont présentées en tant que réalisation partielle des critères de leur cours.

“Intabulation” (Italian: *intavolatura*) refers to the arrangement of motets, madrigals, or chansons for instruments capable of playing polyphony, a practice dating to the earliest keyboard sources in the Middle Ages. In the sixteenth century, this genre found a renewed life when Italian lutenists, vihuelists, and keyboardists took a keen interest in displaying their virtuosity by adorning intabulations with lavish passagework and ornamentation. This solo style converged with an emerging school of division playing known in Italy as *viola bastarda*, which referred to divisions played on any solo instrument (not exclusively the viol) to the accompaniment of a madrigal played on a plucked-string or keyboard instrument. Spanish and Italian authors left detailed treatises on playing the *bastarda*, leaving examples of *passaggi* that were obliged to remain within the limits of a well-balanced musical taste, regional style, and the affect of the music’s text.¹ These writings describe in vivid detail how musicians of the period thought about divisions of longer notes into shorter values, a central facet of intabulations.

After the year 1600, Artusi’s ideals of the *seconda prattica* directed musical tastes towards text-driven musical pictorialism. These new tastes dictated that music *must* transport the listener to a state of intensified emotion, determined by the affect of the text or musico-rhetorical figures (see also: Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia Universalis*, 1650). The popularity of solo intabulations thrived in this environment, practiced widely in Italy and the rest of Europe. The English virginalists, already well-practiced in diminutions, intabulated popular Italian madrigals, perhaps even alongside the skilled lutenists of the British Isles. Yet the most curious synthesis of intabulation and *bastarda* comes from northern Germany, where we find notated examples titled “Kolorierung” (colouring) by Heinrich Scheidemann (c.1595-1663) in Hamburg and Delphin Strungk (1600/01-1694) in Braunschweig. Both composers follow a similar method: they intabulate all the parts of the motet or madrigal in the left hand and pedal and then add a discant solo moving in rapid divisions in the right hand. The resulting music resembles fantasias and variations which feature similar divisions in the *cantus firmus*, apart from their basis in some of the day’s “greatest hits” (secular and sacred) by Lassus, Bassano, von Hassler, and Praetorius! The following programme begins with historical and original intabulations on late-Renaissance madrigals and chansons, interspersed with free works by contemporary organ *virtuosi*. The second half of the recital will explore the influence of intabulation practice on the division school of Scheidemann, Strungk, and Buxtehude’s predecessor in Lübeck, Franz Tunder (1614-1667).

¹ Among these authors are violist Diego Ortiz (1510-1570), violinist Riccardo Rognoni (c1550-before 1620), his son, organist Francesco Rognoni (late-16th c. – before 1624), Girolamo dalla Casa (?-1601), and wind player Giovanni Bassano (1560/1-1617).

The madrigal *Fuggi pur se sai*, originally written for two choirs of four voices each, appears without its text in a set of Venetian partbooks titled *Dialoghi musicali raccolte da diversi eccellentissimi* (1590), suggesting its performance by instruments, singers, or a combination of the two. My arrangement of the piece for organ demonstrates the concept of *intavolatura* in its simplest form, placing the parts in a score (*tavola*) with no need for added ornamentation. Two separate divisions of the organ embody the *cori spezzati* (split choirs) of Venice's St. Mark's Basilica, which call and respond to one another before joining together at the piece's conclusion. The formidable Liuwe Tamminga (1953-2021) formerly intabulated this piece for the two organs of the Basilica, and this rendering is dedicated to his memory.

Hernando de Cabezón (1541-1602) is best known for his curation of his father Antonio's and his own compositions in the volume *Obras de musica para tecla, arpa, y vihuela* (Madrid, 1578), one of the most comprehensive sources for early Spanish music. *Dulce memoriae* (sic) receives a particularly affected treatment using the technique of *glosas*, the Spanish term for free divisions. Diego Ortiz's *Trattado de glosas* (1553) uses the term to describe his school of divisions, which would become the groundwork of the *viola bastarda* school. Sandrin's well-beloved chanson *Doulce memoire* also received solo division settings from Ortiz and Italian bastardists such as Vincenzo Bonizzi (?-1630).

Several pieces of evidence connect the pupils of Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562?-1621) in Amsterdam to theoretical and performance practice of early *seicento* Italy. The Dutch master distributed Zarlino's theoretical *Instituzioni harmoniche* (1558) to his students in German translation, indicating their understanding of Renaissance modal counterpoint. Furthermore, several Italian keyboard works survive in copies of Sweelinck's students. Heinrich Scheidemann (c. 1595-1663) notated a "fantasia" of Frescobaldi (actually *Canzona terza* from *Capricci, Ricercari* of 1626), making several modifications to the contrapuntal motion and intervallic content. I interpret this work with an imaginative North German registration scheme, underscoring the contrasting affects appearing in the motivically-united sections.

The toccatas of Girolamo Frescobaldi's (1583-1643) *Toccate e partite d'intavolatura... Libro II* (1627) depart from the stylistic constraints laid out by his first book in 1615. He refers to this reform in his preface as "*questa nuova maniera*:" "this new manner [of playing]." Indeed, one observes that the new toccatas feature imitative sections mimicking the *canzona*, specifically call for the use of the organ pedals in two instances, and that their changes in *affetti* occur with greater frequency. *Toccata nona* is a comprehensive synthesis of all the features of the *nuova maniera*. Moreover, each of the *nine* rules described in Frescobaldi's advice to the reader (*Al lettore*) present themselves in the *ninth* toccata, which is rendered as a challenging puzzle for the interpreter. Frescobaldi inscribes one of his characteristically cryptic notes after the concluding cadence: *non senza fatica si giunge al fine* ("one will not reach the end without fatigue!").

It is unusual that Frescobaldi leaves detailed instructions for the interpretation of his pieces at the beginning of each volume. In the first rule of the preface titled *Al lettore*, he compares the performance of toccatas to the popular madrigalian style: "This method of playing must not be subject to a beat, just as one uses in the modern Madrigals which, however difficult, are facilitated by means of the beat, carrying it out at once languid, then quick, and sustaining it in the air according to their *affetti*, or sense of the words." This dependence of the tactus on text and

affect would become paramount in virtually every free style of the seventeenth-century. Therefore, it is no accident that an intabulation of Arcadelt's *Ancidetemi pur* appears in the place of a twelfth and final toccata of Frescobaldi's volume, forming an unmistakable ligature between the performance practice of *toccate, madrigali*, and their hybrid, *musica d'intavolatura*.

The next two pieces are my own intabulations of madrigals from two of Rome's most popular composers at the turn of the seventeenth century. I have intabulated the first madrigal by Alessandro Striggio (1535-1589) using musical figures found in Frescobaldi's toccatas, his intabulation of *Ancidetemi*, and the Neapolitan Ascanio Mayone's (c.1565-1627) intabulation of the same piece. The second intabulation of *Colei che gia si bella* of Alfonso Fontanelli (1557-1622) draws on the division schools of Bovicelli and Rognoni. The exquisite *Consonanze* of Giovanni de Macque (1548/50-1614) demonstrate the extension of modal language beyond the contrapuntal rules of the former century. Two madrigal intabulations of Peter Philipps (1560/1-1628) and Ercole Pasquini (mid-1500s-between 1608/19) conclude the first half of the recital.

While Sweelinck left behind no intabulations, the practice was commonplace among his four students who served as organists at each of the four major Hamburg churches in the mid-seventeenth century. Pieter Dirksen observes that only the *Stadtkantorei* sang motets on a regular basis, leaving their performance to the organist alone at every other service. Scholars speculate that these intabulations were improvised, as few written examples survive other than Heinrich Scheidemann's. He must have been one of the most skillful at this practice, however, as his written examples are compositionally outstanding even compared to those of Delphin Strungk. The imaginative intabulation of Bassano's Easter motet *Dic nobis maria* imparts the joy of Mary Magdalene's discovery of an empty tomb through a *cantus* that seems to dance from the smallest pipes of the organ to the lowest register. Scheidemann's various *passaggi* vary from double-voiced runs to proclamatory dotted-rhythms at the piece's conclusion (on the text: "Hallelujah!"), elevating the affect of the original motet to an almost overwhelming aesthetic.

The fact that motet intabulation was a regular part of musical life must be incorporated into our understanding of division practice in northern Germany. From a handful of written examples, it's clear that organist Delphin Strungk must have been well-versed in this practice as well. His music features more passagework and figural development than any of his contemporaries, sometimes *ad nauseum* by modern standards (see his exhaustive 17-minute *Toccata*). He uses this aptitude for prolific embellishment to great virtuosic effect in 5 chorale variations on *Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt*. Like Scheidemann, Strungk writes his passagework in imitation between various divisions, creating an imitative rhetoric between multiple voices.

A few miles from Hamburg, Franz Tunder served as organist at Lübeck's Jakobikirche, where he began the famous *Abendmusiken* concerts featuring *cori spezzati* of instruments and voices in various galleries, a tradition Buxtehude continued after his death. Yet what vocal music survives from both composers is modest in form and instrumentation, contrasting contemporary accounts of Tunder's "*dramma per musica*," which transported the listeners to religious and moral enlightenment. The organ fantasia on *Christ lag in Todesbanden* provides a glimpse into how that lost concerted music might have sounded; split choirs echo one another between divisions of the organ, motivic development of the chorale tune pushes the limits of the modal system, and the formal structure leads to an impressive contrapuntal convergence at the fantasia's conclusion.