COVER PICTURE
by David van Edwards

Jacob Waben, Lady World 1622 ©Westfries Museum, Hoorn, Netherlands, we are grateful for permission to use this image.

The music scene in the picture on the front cover looks like a classic Flemish painting of wine, women, song and feasting, possibly set in a high-end brothel, with the lute and flute doubling up as sexually suggestive emblems framing the groping hand, breast, glass of wine and swan pie. The players' hats have the waving ostrich feathers which so often symbolise wavering inconstant affections in such scenes. The lute itself is a nicely observed seven-course instrument with ebony half edging, small rose and the right number of pegs, though only single strings have been sketched in. From the comparative size of the player's hands it is a very small lute but the playing position looks very convincing, albeit his little finger is right off the end of the instrument. However, the painting as a whole is a much stranger, more troubling affair of social commentary. The composition echoes a common Flemish theme of Amor vincit omnia such as this . . .

or this . . .

Paul de Vos and Jan van den Hoeck, Amor Vincit Omnia c.1640 Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria, Inv.-Nr. GG 3554

. . . where Cupid triumphs over all the symbols of art, music, warfare and science summarised by the globe representing the whole known world.

But instead of a charming cupid holding the all-conquering arrow of love, the cover painting shows a mad-looking gap-toothed Indian brandishing his arrow for revenge and looking straight at the viewer, who is thus implicated in the message of the painting, 'This means you, you rich art lover.' He is even wearing a winged hourglass as headgear making this into a sort of vanitas, in which he is the agent of death whose triumph is only a matter of short time. He is holding an open book with writing which is unclear but appears to start with 'journ . . .' perhaps journal.

All these figures, and the Indian girl smoking a pipe and holding a tobacco jar while resting her arm on the rich woven eastern carpet, are revealed by the drawn-apart red hanging curtain. They are, as it were, waiting in the wings behind the main protagonists of the painting who are prominent in the brightly lit foreground, unaware of the drama behind that comments on them.

The woman, Lady World of the title, as shown by her orb and sceptre, is being grasped, or groped, (in exactly the same manner as the shadowy pair behind) by a corpulent Dutch burgher dressed up in borrowed robes as an eastern potentate with rich turban and shawl and sitting in a chair whose finial is the Dutch symbol of the golden rampant lion holding a shield.

He is, as it were, spotlight as the Dutch Golden Age personified, spending and displaying his, perhaps ill-gotten, wealth in the pursuit of vain and temporary pleasures.

The Vanitas theme is made further explicit by the gold embroidery on the hem of the woman's dress which reads both 'OMNIA VANITAS' and 'IDELHEID', the Dutch translation from Ecclesiastes I:2. She is being served her wine by an old crone who so often features as a madam in these Dutch paintings but bizarrely this old woman is wearing another symbolic headgear: it is a stick purse of the sort explicitly used for foreign exchange dealers since it has separate pouches for each currency. It was also a common symbol for avarice and is rendered even more pejorative by the snake twined about it.

continued on p.5
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held at the Dutch Church, 7 Austin Friars, London EC2N 2HA (nearest tubes: Bank, Liverpool Street). A selection of Lute Society publications is on sale at all meetings; please ask the Secretary to bring any specific publications you would like.

LATE AUTUMN MEETING, SATURDAY 18th NOVEMBER: MEDIAEVAL LUTE DAY

The next meeting will be one of our themed meetings, on a topic we tend to neglect, the mediaeval lute. We are delighted to welcome Jacob Mariani, to discuss his reconstruction of the mediaeval cetra, something barely attempted hitherto, and José Luis Pastor, one of the leading Spanish performers on mediaeval plucked strings. Matthew Spring will discuss the earliest tablatures, while Massimo Marchese and Brian Wright plus singers make welcome return.

10.30 Coffee
11.00 The mediaeval art of the plectrum a talk, and demonstration of vihuela de peñola, Spanish and Italian mediaeval lutes, citole, hurdy gurdy, and mediaeval guitar, by José Luis Pastor
12.00 Mini-recital: Leonardo’s lute, music by Dalza, Spinacino, Capriola, and Da Milano, by Massimo Marchese
12.30 Lunch
1.45 Building the Ferrara cetra, talk and demonstration by Jacob Mariana
2.45 Mini-recital of new Christmas music, by Brian Wright, performed by Jeni Melia, Jess Hallett and the composer
3.15 Early lute and keyboard tablature, a talk by Matthew Spring
4.15 Home-made cake, tea and wine
4.45 The Lute Society Recital: The art of the mediaeval plectrum lute multi-instrumental recital by José Luis Pastor

If you are booking an advance train ticket, our recitals usually end around 5.45 pm, and always by 6.00 pm, when we vacate the hall.

MEETINGS IN 2019

Feb 10 Masterclass-workshop on improvisation, in conjunction with the European 16th Century Lute Fantasia Improvisation Project, Din Ghani mini-recital for Rosseter 450th anniversary, presentation of theorbo made by David van Edwards lute building summer school
Mar 2–4 Lute Society stall, and try-the-lute session with Mark Willcocks, at Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Federation rally, Worthing, Sussex
March 15–18, Benslow Lutefest (three-day event, Friday is optional) with Andrew Maginley, Alex McCartney, Stewart McCoy, Jeni Melia and Roy Marks
May 5 AGM, meeting at The Dutch Church, lecture and recital from Andrew Maginley, talk by Michael Lowe, ‘Plucked continuo instruments, why history matters’
August 31–September 2, Lute weekend, within Utrecht Early Music Festival
September 8, meeting at The Dutch Church, mini-recital from Dario Landi, Xavier Cauhepe presents his new lute method, performance and talk on Dowland’s Lachrimae Pavans from Chelys ensemble
October 27, European Lute Orchestra concert at Laval, followed by second concert at Honfleur, October 29th
November 17, meeting at The Dutch Church, talk by Nigel North, recital of 6-course lute duets by Nigel North and Michael Gondko

2020
International Lute Festival, Berlin
Members can download this Lute News (with many more of the pictures in colour) in PDF format, plus The Lutezine, music supplements from this url addresses: http://www.lutesociety.org/uploads/lute-news/ezine/lute-news-123-7676prad

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New Recordings compiled by Monica Hall. Course Listings, Useful Addresses and Registers of Teachers and Makers appear in print once a year only, but in every issue of The Lutezine, and this information is constantly updated on the website, as are For Sale and wanted lists. Individual concerts can be publicised free of charge in a weekly email circular.

Supplements with this issue:

Omnium trium perfectum: D-minor lute works composed using three tablature letters, ed. Wilfred Foxe

In The Lutezine:

Reports from recent events: Joint meeting with the Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Federation, 4th February (reprinted from Lute News 121) Flow my beers nights, The Sutton Arms pub, London, 5th June, 4th September; The very last David van Edwards workshop lute building summer school, 5th-13th August; Benslow lute song course, 18th–21st September Members’ lute photographs: A lute-playing angel using guitar-style dos dedos technique in a Spanish abbey? Features: Lutes and vihuelas in Lleida, Catalonia, by Laia Paleo et al; The wooden economy, or logistical solutions for lutenmakers, by David van Edwards. Collage of photos and concert programme from recent meetings, Other societies and periodicals, Lutes on the internet. Picture gallery of covers of CDs reviewed, List of summer schools, Registers: of teachers, makers, lutes for hire and useful addresses.

Additional tablature: The Twenty-Seven Recercars Composed or Intabulated by Joan Maria da Crema, Lute Settings of ‘Est ce Mars’ and ‘Jamie has lost his dagger’ and more versions of Courantes and Voltes by Jacob and Dowland’s Lachrimae Pavan, ed. John H Robinson; two chanson intabulations by Albert de Rippe, ed. Denys Stephens

Coming soon . . .


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Yes you have, or else you would not have this copy of Lute News

Lute News 123, October 2017 4
His discovery of this projection which rendered thumb lines straight on maps and charts underpinned the voyages of conquest and trade which were then laying the foundations of the wealth of the Dutch Golden Age shown in the painting. For this was the period when the Netherlands was becoming fabulously rich by the colonising activities of the Dutch East India Company, the VOC or Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie. This painting is part of the deeply ambivalent Protestant attitude to all this wealth gained by force of arms from their native conquests. Pleasure in the opportunities and products from the whole world but also a moralising non-conformist spirit of guilt. When later the English became fabulously wealthy from the same process we don’t seem to get art reflecting quite so much doubt. The nearest we come to such social criticism is Hogarth but he satirises the effects of wealth not its dubious creation. As Conrad doubt. The nearest we come to such social criticism is Hogarth but he satirises the effects of wealth not its dubious creation. As Conrad means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.’ (Heart of Darkness, 1899).

Jacob Wäben (c. 1575–c. 1641) was born in Alkmaar but moved to Hoorn in about 1609 as the captain of a company of waardgelders. These were mercenary militias in the pay of the city who were deployed from the beginning of the Dutch Revolt against Spain to protect cities against enemy troops or to prevent riots. So Wäben was not just a painter, he would have known all about the armour and weapons in this picture.

Retrospectively 1609 was an important date, for in that year Henry Hudson, an English sea captain, was hired by the VOC to captain a ship they had acquired, the Halve Maen, or Half Moon, to look for the North-East passage to the Far East. He found the way blocked by ice just north of Norway and turned west to look for the rumoured North-West passage past Canada. Landing in Nova Scotia in late July, on the 25th a dozen men from the Halve Maen, with muskets and small cannon, went ashore and drove the people from the village near their anchorage and took their boat and looted the village. Later he sailed up what is now known as the Hudson river where one of his crew was killed by Indians with an arrow to his neck. This expedition was the start of the Dutch colonisation of New Netherland and led to the founding of New Amsterdam (now NewYork) in 1625 just three years after our painting. It seems not impossible that this is the Indian arrow, on such a momentous voyage for Dutch wealth, which might be threatening the viewer and the concupiscent burgher in Wäben’s painting.

The kind of social commentary implied by the painting and the way in which each protagonist is identified as a type by his or her symbolic headgear, in fact the piling up of symbolism throughout the painting seems more related to modern serious political cartoons than to modern fine art.

There is a strange later twist to this painting, for in 2005 this painting and 23 others, plus 70 pieces of silverware, were stolen from the Westfries Museum in Hoorn. Nothing was heard for ten years and then in July 2015 two members of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, one of the ultra-right militias supporting the regime in Kiev, and in turn supported by NATO, approached the Dutch embassy in Kiev, showed a photo of one of the paintings alongside a current Ukrainian newspaper to back up their claim and initially demanded €50m for their return but later said they would settle for a ‘finders’ fee’ of just €5m! ‘Our collection is in the hands of corrupt people, deep in the heart of the Ukrainian political elite’, said the museum’s director, Ad Geerdink. Arthur Brand, an independent stolen art expert engaged by the museum said, ‘I cannot reveal everything, but members of the SBU are involved’. The museum published police-crime-investigation-style photographs of some of the militia and its political contacts.

Two years of negotiations followed until on 14th April 2016, four of the stolen paintings, including the Wäben, were retrieved during a secret operation by the SBU, the Ukrainian Security Service, who seem to have been implicated all along. The secrecy seems also to extend to whether any of the ransom money was paid.

Surely Jacob Wäben, the mercenary militia captain who chose to put his monogram on the bag of silver in the painting, would have appreciated the irony of his painting about the dubious sources, and uses, of Dutch Golden Age wealth being stolen and held to ransom by other militias fighting a murky civil war amid opposing great powers.

To end on a brighter note: The paintings had been rolled up and kept in a damp cellar so there was considerable damage which you can see in a video of a conversation (in Dutch) between the restorer Ronald de Jager and Cees Bakker of the Westfries Museum https://vimeo.com/193685703.

The museum needed to raise €100,000 for their restoration, they could afford only €28,000 and turned to crowdfunding to raise the remaining €72,000. In the event they raised nearly €85,000 and the director Ad Geerdink said ‘We are so grateful and happy that we can now restore all five damaged canvases! The heart-warming campaigns and responses have been overwhelming. This shows the dedication of the people, and that’s what we do it for!’
LUTE SOCIETY NEWS

Thanks

A very, very big thank you to David van Edwards and his team of students on the very last of David’s residential lute-making summer schools (David has fulfilled the ambition of making just about every kind of lute there is on these courses). They gathered this summer to build a fine new theorbo for the hire fleet. Theorboes are always in short supply; students need to learn to play them but they are costly and rare. The participants were Thea Abbott, Luke Emmett, Manfred Hennessy from the UK, Ralf Schröder from Germany, Cristina and Ricardo Arnt from Brazil, Yasuhiro Nakashima from Japan, Nicolas Eterradosi from France and Francesco Tribioli from Italy. It will be formally presented at our meeting in February 2018, when it has received its ‘last foil and polishing’ and has a case. You can see photos and read an account of the course in *The Lutezine*.

Very many thanks to Din Ghani and Gernot Hilger who have taken on the task of moderating our Facebook page—apparently some questionable material appeared there lately.

Many thanks to Martin Hudson for the unusual donation of lots of unused postage stamps(!)—such pretty old designs one can hardly bear to use them—and Ray Black for donating two books to the archive.

Nominations for Presidency, and a new constitution?

Nominations are hereby invited for the post of President of the Lute Society. (We are not obliged to change Presidents; the constitution says that the incumbent may stand any number of times.) Any member may nominate any other member, or simply volunteer. Under our constitution (which you can see at [http://www.lutesociety.org/pages/constitution](http://www.lutesociety.org/pages/constitution)) the President is simply *prima inter pares* as a committee member, but is a figurehead for the Society. Names of candidates and real/virtual ballot papers will be circulated with the December *Lute News* and paper/email votes counted, along with show of hand votes, at the AGM next May; note that only votes from current members in good standing at the time of the AGM will be counted.

At the same AGM it may be that we follow the encouragement of the charity commission in transforming ourselves from a ‘registered charity’ to a ‘charitable incorporated organisation’ or ‘CIO’. This limits the liability of the trustees if something goes horribly wrong, and requires a longer and more legalistic constitution. Our treasurer David Protheroe and committee member John Reeve are investigating the possibility for the committee; a new draft constitution would of course be circulated in good time for the AGM.

Errata in *Lute News* 122 CD reviews

John Reeve writes: ‘After we went to press I noticed that a mistake had crept into my review of Nigel North’s Weiss CD Galanterie. The corrections by Weiss in the London manuscript D minor Partie are of course in the opening bars of the Sarabande, not the Courante.’

Also, Paul Keiffer points out that contrary to what was written in the review of his CD *Il Barbarino*, Arcana AD 105, it is available in physical format, a nice ‘digipack’ with proper booklet!

**URLs for electronic Lute News**

If you wish to have a PDF copy of this issue of *Lute News* you can find it at the following web addresses. *Lute News* is very pretty in PDF format nowadays as so many of the pictures are in colour!

This service is for members only! Please don’t share these with non-members; we are a not-for-profit organisation, but we still have bills to pay, and if there is widespread ‘cheating’ we will have to introduce all sorts of tedious security measures. *Lute News* 123, music supplement and *The Lutezine*.


If you have supplied us with a valid email address you should already have received an email containing this url, or the PDFs as attachments, or both. If you have not received such an email and attachments that means we do not have a valid email address for you, or our emails are ending up in you spam filter. So please check your spam filter, and please send your email to secretary@lutesociety.org if you want to receive our emails and links.

**Stephen Gottlieb’s workshop: contents sale, 8th-9th December, 10 am-6 pm**

The contents of the workshop of the late Stephen Gottlieb are to be sold in December. Specialist wood, hand-tools, workshop machinery and books (some collectors’ items) to be sold. Most items have been valued and we will accept offers on those that have not. Anyone wishing to see the spreadsheet of what is available and register an interest should apply to jane@editor.net in advance. It will also be posted, with photographs where available on the website [www.lutemaker.com](http://www.lutemaker.com) website in October. The family would like to have a rough idea who is coming nearer the time. The workshop is at 5 Leicester Mews, East Finchley, N2 9EJ.

**Recent and forthcoming events**

**SLEGS meetings, 16th September and 9th December**

A report of the September meeting of the Scottish Lute and Early Guitar Society has been posted to [https://scottishluteandearlyguitarsociety.wordpress.com/](https://scottishluteandearlyguitarsociety.wordpress.com/)

The 24th meeting of SLEGS will take place on Saturday 9th December. Visitors are most welcome. The venue is Chris Elmes’s place: 1F1, 25 Haddington Place, EH7 4AF (the left side of Leith Walk between Annandale St and MacDonald Rd). Parking is unrestricted off Leith Walk on weekends; MacDonald Road or Hopetoun Crescent is the best area. Time: 1pm for a 1.30pm start, lasting two or three hours, depending on contributions from members. There will be a charge of £1 a head for the use of the venue. If anyone wishes to make a presentation, please contact Rob MacKillop: robmackillopATgmailDOTCOM

**‘Flow my beers’ night, Dublin, 4th September**

The recently formed Lute Society of Ireland held its first pub evening on 4th September, in the Stag’s Head pub in Dame Court, Dublin. Oh to have been there!

**Welcome to new members**

We would like to welcome to the Lute Society the following new members (or in some cases, former members returning): Terence Ford-Williams, Nathan Barnett, Paul Miley, Charles Delius, Steven Watson, Ricardo Albuquerque Arnt, Chris Willoughby, Steve...
Acklin, Antonio Bustos Segovia, Robert Cases Marco, Andrew Saul, Enrique Jimenez Martin, Sean Smith, Alex McNulty, John Giles, Mark Schofield, Manou Schreiner, John H. Park, Jan Cizmar, Judith Austerberry, Peter Robinson, and Gernot Hilger.

Coming soon to the website

Over some years David van Edwards and helpers of various kinds have been assembling a stupendous database of historical iconography of the lute which will be searchable in all sorts of ways. We hope that it will appear before long at www.lutesociety.org.

Journal

Those who were already (non-electronic) members in 2014 should find herewith a copy of our annual journal, The Lute volume 54 (2014). Those who are electronic members will have received the url which gives access to the PDF version on our website. If you did not receive the email, the url is http://www.lutesociety.org/uploads/journal/ejournal/the-lute-54-97ermfla

This has also been sent, ex gratia, to current members in 2017, in view of the long delays in publication (I believe it has been three years late since 1959)! The journal contains an illuminating paper by Anthony Bailes on Miss Burwell’s lute and its pitch and size, and the meaning of B flat and B sharp tunings; a paper by Jean-Marie Poirier on the French 17th century lute in the era of changing tunings; photos and study of a recently discovered fragment of lute music at Duke University; obituaries for Stephen Gottlieb and Eugen Dombois, and book reviews.

LuteScribe: a new community-based free software for reading and editing tablature

Luke Emmet, writes: Lute tabulature files are a fundamental way for the lute community to exchange music in our modern age. Existing commercial tools exist, but alongside these there should be widely available community tools to ensure tablature can be created, read and shared by the widest possible range of players, scholars and researchers.

LuteScribe is a new piece of software designed to allow the graphical creation and reading of lute tablature by Luke Emmet. It runs on Windows (or on Mac/Linux via a virtual machine), and provides a visual user interface to edit lute tablature.

With it you can create new files or open existing lute tablature in two of the most common formats for lute tabulature, namely the TAB plain text format or Fronimo FT3 files. A wide range of existing tabulature files exist in online repositories and LuteScribe offers another way to enjoy and build on this music.

Under the surface, LuteScribe works together with the established TAB software by Wayne Cripps which provides a wide range of typesetting commands to create the tablature. As a result, LuteScribe can produce beautiful typeset output that can be saved as PostScript, PDF or printed off for players. A major advantage over the native TAB format is that LuteScribe shows the content in a way that is familiar to lute players and can be easily edited.

LuteScribe is a community project and will be released as open source software meaning that anyone can contribute changes, fixes or enhancements.

Currently LuteScribe is in BETA, and feedback is being collected in advance of the upcoming official release. Anyone wishing to test or try out LuteScribe should send an email to: luke.emmet@orlando-lutes.com for further details of how to download the current beta version.

LuteScribe: a new community-based free software for reading and editing tablature

You can bet on The Lute Society . . .

There is an Australian racehorse named Lute Society. A four-year-old, tained by Sean Tarry, it was sired by stallion New Approach out of the dam Lute. So far it has won one race out of four run. You can see its form, and place a bet on it if you wish, at the Punters website: https://www.punters.com.au/horses/Lute-Society_472460/

A double conference issue of Lute News: historic mandolins, and dance and the 15th century lute

This issue consists mainly of reports of two joint meetings earlier this year: a joint meeting with the Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Federation held on 4th February, on the subject of the historic mandolin, and followed by a Sunday workshop, and a joint meeting with the Early Dance Circle on the subject of 15th century dance and the lute, held on 22nd April. Photos from both meetings and supplementary materials appear in the accompanying issue of The Lutezine. Non-members who have purchased this magazine should contact the Secretary at secretary@lutesociety.org to ask for the PDF issue of this magazine, with zoomable colour versions of all the pictures, and the complementary e-zine, The Lutezine, which contains all the supplementary materials.
The mandolin in 18th century London, by Paul Sparks

On 4 February 2017 I gave a talk to the Lute Society, as part of its historic mandolins weekend. That talk was based on my latest article for the *Early Music* journal, ‘The Mandolin in Britain 1750–1800’, which is scheduled for publication during 2018. The next three paragraphs offer a brief summary of that forthcoming work, and are followed by further specific detailed information about the instrument and its players in 18th century London which—due to limitations of space—I was unable to include in my *Early Music* article. Taken together, these two articles will demonstrate that the instrument was much more widely known and played in the capital (and in many other parts of Britain) during the 18th century than had previously been realised by mandolin historians (myself included).

During the first half of the 18th century, the old 5- or 6-course gut-strung mandolin (played either with the right-hand fingers or a plectrum) was occasionally encountered in the concert halls of London. Hickford’s dancing room in James Street hosted mandolin performances by Francesco Conti in 1707, and by Francisco Weber in 1728, as well as by an unnamed musician who, in 1713, played ‘a new Concerto on the Mandolin, being an Instrument admired in Rome but never Publick here’ (Conti’s performance six years earlier in the same venue having apparently been forgotten). The instrument was also played at a concert in the Haymarket in 1724, when Johann Sigismund Weiss (brother of the famous lutenist Silvius Leopold Weiss) performed on it in 1718, at his lodgings in St. Paul’s Church-Yard. Philippe Mercier’s well-known royal portrait of 1733 depicted the twenty-two-year-old Princess Amelie playing a mandolin, while Handel included an obbligato part for the instrument in an aria from his 1748 oratorio *Alexander Balus*. The newly-invented 4-course Neapolitan mandolin (strung with a mixture of metal and gut strings, tuned in fifths like a violin, and always played with a quill or plectrum) arrived in Britain during the late 1750s, and while it never attained the enormous popularity of the wire-strung English guittar (a type of cittern which was becoming fashionable amongst the British aristocracy and middle classes at much the same time), it soon became widely available throughout both England and Scotland. In London, instrument maker Michael Rauche was selling mandolins and strings at his ‘Musick Warehouse’ near St. Martin’s Lane, and by 1763 Frederick Hintz (‘Guitar-maker to her Majesty and the Royal Family’) was also stocking mandolins in his shop in Leicester Fields (now Leicestersquare). After the death of the eminent composer Thomas Arne in 1778, the sale of his furniture included a mandolin, as well as two guitars and a lute.

Many of the Italian musicians who taught and performed on the Neapolitan mandolin in Paris (and whose names are well-known to mandolinists in our own era) can also be found in London during the 1760s and 1770s. Musicians could study with Giovanni Battista Gervasio (‘Master of the MANDOLINE to their Royal Highnesses the Daughters of the King of France’) in his lodgings in Golden Square, during his frequent sojourns in the capital: indeed, an advertisement from 1772 informs ‘his scholars’ of his latest arrival in the city, and assures them that ‘he continues to teach the Mandolin’. Other Parisian mandolinists who taught and gave concerts in London at this time were Giacomo Merchi, Battista Fontana a Solo on the Lute. To conclude with the sight of a TEENAGE GIRL, a young girl sixteen years old, her stature is beyond expectation, and well proportioned. Three performances on that day, eleven in the morning, one o’clock, and seven in the evening.

In addition to these well-known virtuosos, many less celebrated Italian mandolinists regularly appeared in London, often as part of what later became known as Variety concerts. At Sadler’s Wells in Islington in 1768, audiences could see Mrs Rosse ‘dance twice on the Tight Rope, display two Colours, and play on the Violin, Mandolin, and German Flute,’ while at the ‘Theatre of Varietés Amusantes’ [sic] in Savile Row in 1791, the evening’s entertainment (which included an overture, two one-act comedies, and a Burletta, as well as clownerie and tumbling) concluded with a duet on the violin and mandolin, by two performers from Venice. During 1786, newspaper reports universally praised performances by the Charini family at their Royal Circus (staged in St. George’s Fields, Southwark), noting that ‘the abilities of Signora Charini, on the tightrope, were much applauded, both in the flag dance, and her displaying the mandolin, accompanied by her husband, the Clown, was excellent.’

The instrument also frequently featured in London entertainments staged during the 1770s and 1780s by the German-born conjuror and impresario, Philip Breslaw. In 1773, at Hughes’s Riding School by Blackfriars Bridge, publicity for his ‘Grand Exhibition’ promised that ‘Sieur Coranso and Sieur Romando will play several different tunes on the mandolino and tumbardibus: their performances were never yet paralleled,’ while during 1778, advertisements for his ‘New Exhibitions’ at Cockspur Street announced that ‘An Italian lady will sing several favourite songs, accompanied on the Mandolina and La Mandola . . . Sieur Richardi and Sieur Gaetana, will play two solos on the mandolins.’ A year earlier, his ‘New Grand Exhibition’ had promised that an Italian company will entertain the ladies and gentlemen with several overtures, duets, symphonies, solos, trios, droll and comical songs in large spectacles and physician’s wig, and particularly an Italian Lady lately arrived from abroad, who will sing the new favourite songs, and will play on the mandolina in the most surprising manner.

In 1793, his ‘Variety of New Entertainments’ at the Great Room, Panton Street, Haymarket included ‘Madame Rebecque [who] will sing two favourite songs, accompanied on the mandoline,’ while a year later in the same venue, as part of ‘Breslaw’s New Capital Performances . . . Sieur Nicoli will whistle the notes, accompanied on the mandolin.’

The mandolin’s penetrating sound was well suited to large halls, and it was frequently heard between the acts of such theatrical entertainments as the *Ombres Chinoises* (shadow plays) in the Great Room, no. 24, St Albans’ Street, Pall Mall in December 1776: ‘After the second act, a concert on the arciuleto, and mandolino, by two eminent performers.’ By March 1777, the same entertainment...
was promising that ‘between the acts will be a new musical entertain-ment, vocal and instrumental; in which will be a duetto di mandolino, and a trio with two mandolinos, a mandola . . . two mandolinos, and a solo di mandolino mandola.’12 In 1791, Signor Martinelli’s presentations of his Fantoccinii (mechanical puppets) in Savile Row concluded ‘with a solo on the mandolin . . . a sonata on the mandolin by Signor Beluggi, and a variety of dancing.’13 And a benefit concert for Signor Rossi held at the St Helena Tea Gardens in Rotherhithe in 1776 promised ‘a solo by Mr. Coranso on the mandola. Sieur Coranso will sing the most comic potions of Italy in large spectacles and French Counsellor’s wig.’14 Teachers of the instrument (in addition to the visiting virtuosos from Paris listed above) sought amateur pupils amongst the aristocracy and moneyed sections of society. In 1797, their number included a

Mr Cappiano, No. 48, Upper Titchfield Street, Fitzroy Square. Professor of Music, [who] respectfully informs the nobility and gentry, that he continues to teach, either at home or abroad, the English and Spanish Guitars, Mandolin, and Mandola (or small lute) in the most expeditious and improved taste, on reasonable terms.15

A quarter of a century earlier, a musician known only by his initials C.M. advertised

For the GUITAR and DOUBLE MANDOLIN. Just arrived from Italy a Person that teaches the Guitar and Double Mandolin; plays in a new manner that surprises the Hearers, and that seems impossible, and was never heard before in England. Please to enquire for C.M. at Mrs Aberdeen’s, Archer Street, Great Windmill Street, Hay Market.16

Instruments for amateurs could be obtained from suppliers such as Hinz and Rauche (cited earlier), and also from John Welcker in the Haymarket, who in the mid-1770s announced that he ‘manufactures and sells the following instruments . . . including Guitars at all prices, Spanish guitars, mandolins.’17 As for strings, in 1780 ‘an assortment of superfine Italian and Roman strings for the Violon, Violoncello, and Mandolin, which will stand half a tone above concert pitch, and are the best that have been imported for many years’ could be obtained from the musical instrument warehouse of John Preston, no. 97, near Beaufort buildings in the Strand.18 A modest amount of simple mandolin music was also published in London, such as the Country Dances for the Violin, Mandolin . . . Composed by an African (c.1775),19 and Six Easy Evening Entertainments for Two Mandolins . . . Op. 3 by Giovanni Gualdo.20 Other printed music included a set of Airs for the mandoline (c.1768) by Gervasio, and an English translation of Leone’s celebrated method for the mandolin (c.1785).21

The mandolin also appears frequently in novels of this period. Mary Robinson (an accomplished writer and actress who was also the first public mistress of George IV) made reference to it in at least four of her works, including Walsingham, or The Pupil of Nature (1797), where Sir Sidney Aubrey is described (p. 125) as ‘handsome, polite, accomplished, engaging, and unaffected. He sung, he danced, he played on the mandolin, and spoke the Italian and French languages with the fluency of a native.’22 In Hubert de Sevrac, a Romance (1796), set during the storming of the Bastille in 1789, we learn that ‘Mademoiselle de Sevrac, after supper played several sweet melodies, on an old but finely toned mandolin.’ The instrument also fleetingly appears in her 1796 drama, The Sicilian Lover, a tragedy (‘Beneath her lofty window we repair’d, And with the dulcet tinkling mandolin, Beguil’d her of her rest’), and in her 1792 novel, Vancea, or the Dangers of Credulity, where the main characters (travelling through 15th-century Spain) encounter a group of rustics (vol. 1, p. 94) who ‘danced before them to the tinkling mandoline, or sung in uncouth strains the little ballads of the country’.

Frances Burney (daughter of the celebrated music historian Charles Burney) also included the instrument in Harcourt: a sentimental novel in a series of letters (1780), as a means of fending off melancholy: ‘Emilia no longer gave way to sorrow. Again shall her books, her mandolin, and her embroidery afford the enjoyment which they used’ (p. 92). In her private life, Frances married in 1793 a French exile, General Alexandre D’Arblay, much against the wishes of her father, and in a letter to Charles the following year, she attempted reconciliation by telling him:

How kind is my dearest father, and how straight to my heart comes his kindness! The Chanterelles and Mandoline have vib-rated to that of M. d’Arblay. The Cunning Man he is reading with great pleasure, and from its simplicity, and his remembrance of the French, with as much facility as prose. It will be an exceeding good lesson with his Mandoline.23

The mandolin also recurs frequently in The School for Husbands, a 1796 morality tale, intended to dissuade husbands from keeping mistresses. On p. 87, Lord Charbury’s eyes ‘were fixed languish-ingly on Bab, who, sitting near him, at his request singing a pathetic air to him, accompanied by her mandoline.’ And on p. 219, the Honourable Edward Dashwood describes how Bab and her sister gave a small concert: ‘The two charming sisters sung to their mandolines; I accompanied them upon the violoncello, and Charbury played the German flute.’ In literature, letters, diaries, and paintings of the period, the mandolin was primarily (although not exclusively) viewed as a woman’s instrument, and I shall end this short survey by illustrating this tendency, with a sentence from a language guide of the period. On p. 63 of Easy Phraseology for the use of young ladies who intend to learn the colloquial part of the Italian language by Joseph Baretti (London, 1775), readers are taught to say, in Italian, ‘If my daughter had so fine a voice as yours, I would also have her taught singing, and playing at the same time on the harpsichord, or at least the mandoline.’

Notes

1 Full citations for the references in these next three paragraphs will be found in the forthcoming Early Music article.

2 Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser, 31 October, 1770.

3 Public Advertiser, 21 September, 1768.

4 Oracle, 2 December, 1791.

5 Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser, 29 June, 1786.

6 Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, 8 May, 1773. I have been unable to discover precisely what a tumbardibus was.

7 Morning Chronicle and Daily Advertiser, 14 September, 1778

8 Morning Post & Daily Advertiser, 3 June, 1777.

9 Morning Chronicle, 15 February, 1793.
10 Morning Post, 29 April, 1794.

11 Public Advertiser, 30 December, 1776.

12 Morning Post and Daily Advertiser, 3 March, 1777; and 12 March, 1777.

13 World, 9 March 1791; Morning Herald, 11 June, 1791.

14 Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, 26 October, 1776.

15 True Briton, 2 February, 1797.

16 Public Advertiser, 11 May, 1771. I have not encountered the term 'double mandolin' elsewhere during this period, but it may well refer to the pair of strings on each course.

17 Welcker, John, Catalogue, c. 1775.

18 London Evening Post, 27–30 May, 1780.

19 Copy in British Library. The African was probably Ignatius Sancho.

20 Copy in the Rowe Music Library, Kings College, Cambridge.

21 Copies in British Library.

22 Sir Sidney is actually a girl, disguised as a son by her mother, in an attempt to become the family heir.

23 Letter dated 9 May, 1794. The Cunning Man was Charles Burney's English translation of Rousseau's Le Devin du Village. 'Chanterelles' may be a reference to a hurdy-gurdy.

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such a bewitching sçightliness! such a
transporting grace in every thing she does!
What quickness of apprehension;—what vi-
city, yet what delicacy of sentiment!—Avon
was a lucky fellow in seeing her before me;
had I met with her, not the wealth of
worlds should have gained her from me.—
I never yet beheld a woman so totally to
my taste. — I would even have committed
matrimony, as little refresh as I have for a
state of slavery, to have secured her. — She
has made me appear ridiculous, I believe,
already, as things are situated: for I could
not take my eyes off her; let me die if I
could.—Mountney stared at me as I stared
at her; and Avon, had he not been engag-
ed in the same delightful employment,
looking at her, and listening to her, would
have, no doubt, observed me, and not with
the most unruffled aspect, as I have a strong
notion that he is inclined to be jealous.

When dinner was over, and when the
coffee things were removed, I crested the
delightful treasure he is possessed of, and

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deisous of exhibiting all her perfections,
he asked her in a tone and manner, as if he
had been rather a lover than a husband, if
she would favour his friend, meaning me,
with a song?

She made a condescending bow, smiling
most alluringly at the same time, and, call-
ing for her mandoline, sung such an air that
it threw my soul into extasies: never felt till
that delicious moment. I was quite dis-
solved in rapture! — her fine eyes full of
the most bewitching languor looked every
syllable articulated by her melodious voice,
while the whitef and most elegant fingers
in the universe, brought out with soft lull-
ing sounds, and while the gracefulness hand
and arm were shewn to such advantage.—
Oh! Ackworth—there was no enduring it.
—You might as well have floated the fun in
his course, as have made me keep my
transports within bounds.

When she was going to lay down her in-
strument I rose, took it gently from her
with one hand, while I softly pressed her
delicate

The Masquerade, or the History of Lord Avon and Miss Tameworth in a series of letters (London, 1769, author unknown), vol. 1, p. 116–117; the whole can be read at https://archive.org/details/masqueradeorhis00unkngoog
A Swedish gentleman’s souvenir from the Grand Tour: the Gimo Collection of mandolin manuscripts, by Lars Berglund

The Gimo Collection at Uppsala University is a rather famous source of mandolin music. I noticed this summer when in Naples that the Gimo Collection seems to have taken on a somewhat mythical status among mandolinists, its music having circulated as photocopies for many years, but the origin of the library siglum ‘Gimo’ is not so well known. So I would like to give some context to this collection.

I should like to work backwards, so to speak, from the 20th century to the 18th century, when the collection was gathered. In 1935 the Gimo manor house (‘Herrgard’) was offered for sale. Gimo is located in the province of Uppland in Eastern Sweden, about 50 km north of Uppsala.

This mansion, finished in 1767, was built for a Gimo family of ironfounders; theirs was one of many ironworks in Uppland in the 17th and 18th centuries. It was little short of a country palace, in private ownership until 1935, in the hands of successive Swedish noble families. In that year it was sold to a political foundation, the Swedish conservative party, to be used for conferences and for the education of young party members. Up to that point the palace library had been kept here, including everything accumulated since the 1760s.

When the party organisation took over the palace they partially remodelled the interior (today it is a hotel so you can go and stay if you wish!) and sold the library to an antiquarian book dealer who offered it for sale in his shop in Stockholm. Besides the printed musical works there was a big collection of music in manuscripts, which the music dealer considered to be of no commercial value, so he gave it to a friend, a medical doctor who offered payment which the book dealer refused to accept. In 1951 this doctor donated the manuscripts to Uppsala University Library, on two conditions: that he himself should receive no publicity for the gift, and that his friend the music librarian Ake Davidsson should prepare a catalogue of or the manuscripts, and this was duly published in 1963. It is a model of its kind, and is in English, to reach the widest possible audience—forward-looking in its day.

I actually met Davidsson before he died in the late 1990s, and he told me that one of the reasons that the catalogue took 12 years to prepare was the difficulty of identifying so many opera arias and sinfonias lacking composer names or titles. He spent more than half a year travelling between libraries in Italy looking for concordances, all paid for by Uppsala University Library. What civilised times those were!

So much for the modern history of the collection, and the story of how it came to be in Uppsala University Library. Davidsson was able to identify most of the music in the collection, and gives his information in the very thorough introduction to the catalogue. I have been able to add something more, however, and offer a few corrections to his conclusions.

The collection was originally owned by Jean Lefebure (1736–1804), the son of an iron master, from a family of French Huguenots who had migrated to Sweden in the early 1600s, and his father owned several iron and brass foundries in this part of Sweden. In 1758 Jean Lefebure embarked on an educational journey, a ‘grand tour’, together with his tutor, the Uppsala astronomer Bengt Ferrer (1724–1802). They took the customary counter-clockwise tour through Europe, to Holland, England, France, Italy and Austria or Germany, but in this case it was unusually long, lasting for five years, until 1763, because apart from the personal education and cultivation that was the purpose of such travels, they were engaged in business deals, and in studying industrial processes, especially in England. They also bought astronomical equipment. Lefebure kept an unusually detailed journal of his travels: the modern printed edition (of 1956) runs to more than 500 pages. From this journal we know that attending concerts and operas was a significant part of their activity on this journey. Both Lefebure and his tutor cultivated a great interest in the performing arts, and visited all the major stages of Europe, such as Covent Garden in London and the royal opera in Paris, and opera houses in Turin and Milan. They went to some shows several times, and wrote interesting commentaries on the quality of the singers and other aspects of the performances. Unfortunately the fourth volume of the diary is lost and we have no account of their journey in Italy beyond Milan. But we do have the collection of music manuscripts as testimony to their Italian adventures. Shortly after they returned to Sweden in 1763, Jean’s father Johan Henrik acquired the Gimo foundry, and had the manor house built, finished four years later. Jean Lefebure was ennobled, perhaps in view of the education furnished by his travels, because the king often ennobled educated men with a view to giving them important jobs in the civil service. At some point after this the manuscripts from the Italian tour were lodged in the library, where one suspects they were more or less completely neglected until 1935.

There is plenty of evidence for Jean Lefebure’s ownership of the manuscripts: their location at Gimo, the fact that the Italian music MSS are Italian, and some are dated 1761 or 1762. There is a even a dedication to Lefebure, as we shall see.

It might be supposed that the collection was acquired little by little, with music bought in several cities during the journey through Italy. However, one of the few mistakes in Davidsson’s survey was his failure to consider the watermarks of the collection, and certain other details. When I went through the collection myself it was clear that the same copyist’s hand was found many times, suggesting that a large part of it was acquired as one large ‘job
lo’, I think in Naples. Interestingly there is a thematic catalogue, also seemingly prepared in Naples. The cover says ‘Catalogue of Music / sent home’.

It was normal for gentlemen on the Grand Tour to have all the artworks and antiquities, books and music they had bought packed up and sent home, rather than laboriously carting it with them all through Europe. You can see the head of a page of the thematic catalogue which is in the collection: ‘Arie di vari autori’; there are similar lists for ‘Sonate’ and ‘Duetti e sonate’.

The kind of manuscripts that Lefebure brought home were the product of what was really a big business at this time; a music copying industry. A large number of music copyists made their living this way in Naples. They copied for the opera houses, the churches, and other musical establishments, and also made MS copies of operas and sold them outside the theatres, so that you could buy a copy of an aria that you had liked, as you left the building. One of the activities of these scribes was to copy music for foreign tourists, who would acquire them either with a view to performance in their own countries, or just a souvenirs of their great adventure.

Around the same time that Lefebure visited Italy, Charles Burney described the trade in his diary. He wrote:

I was plagued by copyists the whole evening. They began to regard me as a greedy and indiscriminate purchaser of whatever trash they could offer.

And in his earlier satirical book on opera Il teatro alla moda (1720) in Benedetto Marcelli gives quite a similar, if perhaps slightly exaggerated commentary on the copyists. He says that copyists will arrange with their impresario to copy for a lump sum. They will hire someone else to do the work and pay for pen, paper, ink, [blotting] sand etc, and when they copy out the score:

there will be many wrong words, clefs, accidentals etc and they will leave entire pages blank. Then they will sell to anyone from out of town who is interested in the latest opera aria some old sheets with any piece of music written on it, on which they put the names of some leading composers.

If this is so, then at least we can say that Lefebure was luckier (or more discriminating) and acquired some very fine music.

There are 360 items catalogued in the collection. Much of it is instrumental chamber music; 140 trio sonatas, mainly for two violins and bass, but also flute and cello. This is perhaps what you would expect a man like Lefebure to buy because this is the music that amateur musicians could play on their return from the grand tour. Here we find such composers as Campioni and Galuppi. These were probably copied from already printed books. Then there are 50 opera sinfonias in full score for an eight-piece orchestra including two oboes and two French horns. This is less likely fare for domestic chamber music making. Moreover there are about 80 opera arias in the collection, also scored for voice and string orchestra, not just a two-line treble and bass score reduction that we so often find in grand tour ‘souvenir’ collections. Most of the music is by Neapolitan composers or musicians who worked there. Some in fact, though from Naples, were more associated with the Venice opera houses, and perhaps this is why Davidson assumed that the collection was gathered gradually over the course of Lefebure’s travels. There are one or two odd items such as a complete score of Baldassare Galuppi’s oratorio La Caduta di Adamo, and some dance pieces. Some items must have been added after Lefebure’s return to Sweden such as music by Francesco Uttini, who was active mainly in Stockholm, from around 1754.

Finally we come to the mandolin manuscripts. There are 25 items in the catalogue for Neapolitan mandolin; a total of 19 pieces, with some pieces duplicated. As Paul Sparks has pointed out, the Neapolitan mandolin was in vogue at exactly the time of Lefebure’s journey—and indeed the two Swedes may have come across it in Paris, where it was extremely popular in the early 1760s. This is perfectly exemplified in François-Hubert Rouais’s famous portrait of Jeanne-Antoinette Poisson, Marquise de Pompadour (1764) where we can see her Neapolitan mandolin lying on the floor.

The mandolin manuscripts owned by Jean Lefebure are particularly interesting in that they preserve a number of unica, without which we would know much less about the earliest repertoire for mandolin; these are really the earliest surviving Neapolitan
mandolin manuscripts. There are seven composers: Gervasio and Barbella are the two most important, but also we have music by Ugolini, Giuliani, Caudioso, Cocchi and Cecere. However, the mandolin manuscripts are something special in another way, even within the Gimo music collection, because it is here we find the original dedication to Lefebure. It is on the title page of a sonata in G major by Gervasio, for mandolin and bass. The inscription says that it was ‘composed for the entertainment of the excellent, signore cavaliere Lefebure’. The telling detail here is that the name Lefebure was clearly added later, in a different hand and a different, more brownish ink. We can safely assume that the manuscript was prepared speculatively for just such a gentleman connoisseur, perhaps a foreigner on the grand tour, whose name would be filled in when the purchase had been agreed! So we can take the statement that the music was composed for Lefebure with a very large pinch of salt. Of course Lefebure could have met Gervasio, or even taken mandolin lessons with him, though I have not managed to find any evidence that Lefebure actually owned a mandolin.

In the top right hand corner of the page are written the words ‘primo nuovo’, in another hand, and ink, and we find similar inscriptions on many of the MSS, all in the same hand, including the words ‘buono’, ‘migliore’—‘new’, ‘very new’, ‘good’, ‘the best’—so someone has taken the trouble to go through the whole collection and evaluate the music for Lefebure, and my guess is that it was the same person who compiled the thematic catalogue, who was given Lefebure advice on which the best pieces of music were.

Here are two duplicate pieces—the same Gervasio sonata but in a different hand. This I think argues that Lefebure bought the manuscripts as a single lot, rather than collecting them piece by piece.

Though the scores are reasonably accurate and some trouble was taken in their cataloguing, there is not much evidence that the music was played very much back at home in Sweden; no torn pages, wear marks, or corrections or marks made on the pages by performers, so perhaps the collection was more in the nature of a souvenir, or an act of library building. Perhaps Lefebure took up the mandolin while in Naples—it was common to take up an instrument on the grand tour [see Tim Crawford’s essay in Lute News 116, and Chris Page’s essay in Lute News 117, or for instance John Evelyn’s diary]—and no doubt equally common to let one’s studies slide on one’s return home!

You can download all 19 mandolin suites at http://www.mutopiaproject.org/collections/gimo/index.html typeset by Erik Sandberg: five suites for mandolin and bass, five for two mandolins, four for two mandolins and bass, and five for mandolin, two violins and bass.
The mandolin in Naples in the second half of the 18th century: a research project by Anna Rita Addessi

Anna Rita Addessi is a musicologist and mandolin student of Mauro Squillante, who first told her about the Gimo Collection; in 2016 they hatched the idea of a project focusing on the collection in Uppsala to bring to light the early history of the mandolin in Naples. The first 50 years of the Neapolitan mandolin have not been much studied. The research team is Lars Berglund, Davide Rebuffa, Mauro Squillante and Anna Rita herself.

The approach is an interdisciplinary one, looking at primary sources, treatises, picture, musical analysis, biography, and the social and historical background. Of course there are some good books available already as a starting point, notably the works of Tyler and Sparks, Berglund, and Schlegel and Luedke, but there are many aspects which have not been much studied, such as the music copying industry, or how the mandolin was taught, and its role in opera.

The project’s works in progress include three recordings, one of music by Gervasio, another of Barbella et al, and one of mandolin concerti with string orchestra, using original instruments from the Tagliavini collection; also a programme of symposia, masterclasses, and lectures, a website, and music editions. The groundwork for academic editions of the music has come in the discovery of mistakes while simply playing through the music. The drawing up of a detailed catalogue of the works leads to some basic conclusions regarding such matters as typical patterns of movements, key, characteristic tempo markings, and so on.

Lars Berglund has discussed above the composers represented in the manuscripts and told something of the invaluable social history left by Lefebure’s journal—alas, lacking the all-important volume of his travel in the south of Italy and to Naples. Study of the Gimo Collection will help give clues as to the social context, function, geographical range, aesthetics and pedagogy of the early Neapolitan mandolin.

The instrumental music of 18th century Naples has not been exhaustively studied. There is a very good article by Fertoniani (2009), one of the few studies, though even he mainly discusses violin, harpsichord and organ. Our knowledge is mainly of vocal music, especially sacred music. Although Naples was a major musical centre, it lacked music publishers until the activities of Marescalchi (1785–99); Neapolitan music was published in Paris, and elsewhere—Barbella was published in London, in fact. There seems to have been a dual, even schizophrenic musical culture, torn between local influences and international styles, reflecting the political domination of the city first by the Hapsburgs and later by the Bourbons. The multiplicity of musical style, genres and forms can be seen even within individual works of early 18th century Neapolitan instrumental music, where we may find baroque counterpoint alongside elements of lighter, galant styles of accompanied melody. There was always a strong relationship, with mutual influences, between operatic vocal and instrumental music, reflecting the fact that students at Naples’ four conservatories at that time studied an instrument as well as vocal composition. This was moreover an era in which national musical ‘folklore’ became a resource throughout Europe, exemplified in movement titles such as ‘All’Italiana’, ‘Alla Francese’, and so on. Fertoniani’s characterisation of the ‘modern’ music of the day seems appropriate for the music of the Gimo corpus. Here we find soft melody and affective cantabile, embellished and finely diversified by rhythmic variety (in Barbella), periodical grouping of musical phrases, light textures, recurring cadential formulas, linear harmony, clear articulation of the shape into two ‘arches’ with exposition-recapitulation (tonic–dominant or tonic minor–relative major), and a great creativity, freedom of invention, whimsy, and virtuosity, both in composition and in performance practice. Daniel Heartz, in his book on the galant style (New York, 2003) observes what you might call an aesthetics of ‘sampling’ with a short motif continuously varied, and the idea of expressing a series of different affects within the same piece, by contrast with some aspects of early baroque composition. The style of the Gimo pieces complies with these observations, and indeed looks forward to the ‘sensitive’ or empfindsamer Stil, with a kaleidoscopic quality of quotations, allusions, and memories as if from different styles.

Musical analysis is a heavyweight academic field in itself, so far little applied to the music of the mandolin. My own inclination is to apply the theory of ‘topics’ to this repertoire. A topic is like the subject of a conversation, and this analysis may be fruitful because this music was chamber music for the pleasure of a very intimate audience, and the players themselves. Topics are musical signs that rely on association with different genres, styles, and types of music making. Composers started crossing the boundaries between styles and using stylistic conventions as means of communication with the audience. Musical analysis could be conducted from the perspective of composers, performers, and listeners. This type of analysis has been discussed by various musicologists, Ratner (1980), Agawu (1991), Hatten (2004), Monelle (2006), and Danuta Mirka (2014), whilst what we may call ‘intertextuality’, a ‘playing with the signs’ goes back to the semiologist Barthes (1953), later followed by various music analysts (Escal 1983; Hatten, 1985; Street, 1989; Straus, 1991; Korsyn,1991; Addessi, 2000; and Pasticci, 2002). Gjerdingen (2007) presents an attractive analytical approach for a historically and cognitively informed music analysis, based around looking at the ‘schemata’, or standard patterns that formed a core vocabulary for aspiring galant-era musicians, their preferred musical phrases and cadences, and the link between musical training and the student musician’s cognitive development of a repertoire of preferred schemata.

It is also worth examining and indeed using the Gimo repertoire in a didactic context. Some of the leading players of the days emigrated and published tutors (discussed elsewhere in this issue) and their repertoire is used to this day. The Gimo music is well adapted for pedagogy today, much of it by no means technically too difficult, and musically very approachable not least because stylistic elements are still present in Italian folk music, and Christmas music.

The talk concluded with a video of an ensemble performance from a masterclass given recently in Hungary, with a band of students playing music from the Gimo collection.
The mandolino in the 17th and 18th centuries: organology, stringing and tunings, repertoire, luthiers, surviving instruments and iconographical sources, by Davide Rebuffa

The aim of our meeting was to encourage present-day lutenists to approach the baroque mandolino and its repertoire, which, as a matter of fact, in the 17th and first half of the 18th century was only played by lute and theorbo players. Likewise I would also like to direct the interest of modern mandolin players towards original instruments, encouraging them to be adventurous, learning to play with a historically-informed technique.

Although considerable progress has occurred during the last decades, research on historical mandolins is still lacking, particularly on the organological, philological and terminological side.

Mandolin players who are seriously and conscientiously endeavouring to rediscover and re-create in performance the original sounds of early instruments and the original intentions of early composers are aware that today's frequent use of modern mandolins to perform 17th and 18th centuries repertoire is completely anachronistic, and no more acceptable in professional concerts and recordings.

As a lute player who has spent his entire life discussing about historical performance practice using period instruments, I find it particularly annoying to see that in the mandolin world, even well-known professional players are still intentionally ignoring historical documentary evidence, performing baroque repertoire with modern instruments. As a matter of fact, even when they are playing on a copy of historical mandolin, they use an inappropriate modern technique, plectrum and ornamentation, even persisting in using tremolo on long notes and trills, a practice that was already considered already inappropriate by Giovanni Fouchetti in 1771.

It is in fact surprising that although Jim Tyler and Paul Sparks' book *The Early Mandolin* was published almost 30 years ago, a whole generation of young Italian mandolin players still play early music as their grandparents and great-grandparents did. As James Tyler pointed out in 1981:

> to ignore historical evidence playing early music on a modern mandolin which produces a tone-colour quite different from that of historical instruments, should be as unthinkable today as it would be to perform harpsichord music on a modern piano.

Even more disappointing is the fact that some teachers intentionally deny the overwhelming evidence for finger-style technique on the mandolino, simply because they can't play finger-style and do not want to learn.

Before James Tyler's publications and recordings, all those who approached the early mandolino (myself included) thought that any mandolin of any time had been only played with plectrum. The study of repertoire, original sources and iconography clearly showed us that while some instruments such as the French mandoline, the Italian cetera and the colascione were played with plectrum, its use on the mandolino is not supported by evidence until the second half of the 18th century, shortly after the spread of the Neapolitan mandoline.

As a matter of fact, the polyphonic writing, chord configuration and right-hand fingering indications found in a few manuscripts—as well as the evidence provided by iconography sources—confirms that this repertoire was only performed with finger-style technique. Moreover we know that apart from celebrated composers such as A. Scarlatti, A. Caldara, A. Vivaldi, G. F. Haendel and J. A. Fasse, most of the pieces written for the mandolino were composed by lute/theorbo players, among whom we may mention Pietro Paolo Cappellini, Niccolò Ceccherini, Filippo Sauli, Francesco Bartolomeo Conti, Carlo Arigoni, Nicolò Susier, Lodovico and Giovanni Giuseppe Fontanelli, and Francesco Webber.

Among mandolin players there is still a great of confusion about the various types of instruments, and on how to determine which mandolin must be used for a given repertoire and terminology.

With regard to organological and terminological research, what often leaves the researcher entirely baffled is finding terms used in a certain way, but later taking on different meanings, while different instruments were called by the same names! We find a rich range of versatile terms such as: *mandolino*, *mannolino*, *mandolin*, *amandolino*, *armandolino*, *leutino*, *pandolino*, *pantolino*, *mandola*, *pandola*, *pantola*, *pandora*, *pandurina* and so on encountered only in 'lower middle-class' environments, but also in the most important court inventories as well as in luthers' workshop inventories.

Concerning modern terminology, the use of 19th century terms to name baroque instruments has further muddied the waters. The most irritating expression, that I would place on the podium of my terminological idiosyncrasies, is 'Milanese mandolini' (or, even worse, 'Lombardo'), used to name any early gut-strung *mandolinos* with the bridge glued onto the soundboard, in order to distinguish them from the 'Neapolitan' mandolin. Likewise, it makes no sense to name as 'napoletano barocco' ('Neapolitan baroque') the 18th century Neapolitan *mandolino* whose original repertoire has no relation to compositions of the so-called baroque period. If we decide to use terms borrowed from the history of art, 'rococo mandolin' would perhaps be more appropriate.

It is true that the term baroque mandolin, referring to the 4-, 5- and 6-course _proto-mandolin_, while very practical because it avoids adding other adjectives and because it refers to the period of origin of the instrument, remains questionable, first of all because it is a modern term that was not used before the 20th century, and secondly, because it is not entirely appropriate: this type of mandolin (albeit with constructional modifications) continued to be played also in the rococo and classical periods.

It is therefore essential to make a terminological choice, whenever possible based on original sources, to clarify all misunderstandings and errors that have became quite common—paradoxically during the last thirty years, following the rediscovery of early music and its repertoire— in a wrong terminology that is tending to become irreversible.

As a writer I am well aware that the big problem that all authors face is that none of us has the power to impose a new nomenclature on the rest of the world, nevertheless I think that we should at least not use terms which are clearly unhistorical and misleading.

In their admirable book *The Early Mandolin*, James Tyler and Paul Sparks, in an effort to be easily understood took a very practical approach, using the Italian term *mandolino* for the gut-strung instrument with glued bridge and the French form *mandoline* for the violin-tuned 'Neapolitan' variety with movable bridge, the French term being chosen because of the development of such a large repertory for the instrument in France. (In reality both types were *mandolino* in Italy and *mandoline* in France.)

In this paper I will use 'baroque' mandolino when referring to the 17th and early 18th-century 4-, 5- and 6-course instruments with glued-on bridge and played with fingertips; *mandolino* for the 6-course instruments with glued-on or movable bridge built during the second half of the 18th century and played finger-style or with a plectrum, and mandolin where a non-specific meaning is required.
Our current knowledge about organology and performance practice is still quite limited. In fact, we can only define an approximate and superficial history of the mandolin, as with other types of plucked-string instruments. There must be a good deal of material in archives yet to be discovered and studied.

Nevertheless, in this regard it should be remembered that most of what we know about the early mandolino we owe particularly to the late James Tyler whose work — both as a musician and as a researcher — was a fundamental and invaluable contribution, still essential for anyone who approaches the history of the mandolino. Therefore I would like to dedicate our meeting and this lecture to his memory.

Early sources

The history of the mandolin spans four centuries, during the first two of which it took various shapes and tuning schemes, serving an increasingly important role both as a solo instrument as well as in cantatas, operas and oratorios in ‘obbligato’ parts. However, starting from the early decades of the 19th century the mandolin no longer aroused the interest of the great composers; yet, especially towards the end of the century, although it was widespread and popular, it was mainly used to make informal music among the middle and lower classes.

For reasons of space I will not say anything about of the possible origins of the mandolin: a subject that embraces the whole field of ‘little lutes’ including the ‘liuto soprano’, ‘Italian guitar’, German Mandurichen and French mandore.

To my knowledge, the term mandolino appears for the first time in 1627, in the workshop inventory of luthier Caspar Frei. The listed items are 250 finished instruments and hundreds under construction, among which are 30 ‘Leuti et Chitaroni,’ 8 ‘Chitarre sfornite’ [guitars without strings], a ‘chitarra Tiorbata’ and a ‘Mandolino [. . .].’

The presence of only one mandolino may imply that at that time it was not yet a popular instrument, perhaps because only recently introduced. We may therefore presume that the mandolino was built and played at least as early as 1626, just like the Pandurina or Mandurichen described by Praetorius, but it is possible that it was already in use a few decades earlier.

The next document dates from 5 May 1634; it is a repair bill concerning ‘various works and strings’ presented to cardinal Francesco Barberini in Rome by luthier Adamo Acciaini. The contents of the bill are summarised on its cover, perhaps by Antonio Maria Ciacchi lute, theorbo, (and mandolino?) player and ‘aiutante da camera’; it refers to work done on a theorbo, a Spanish guitar, an archlute and ‘a case for the mandolinos’.

Almost 20 years later the workshop inventory of the Roman luthier Lorenzo Filzer was drawn up; he had died of plague in 1657. Here 22 mandolinos are listed, among 300 plucked-string instruments.

As far as repertoire is concerned, the oldest surviving music source, which can be dated between 1650 and 1670, is a Florentine manuscript by Agnolo Conti, written in tablature for a 4-course mandolino.

The oldest surviving printed music book containing mandolino pieces was published in Rome in 1677. It is a method for the 5-course guitar entitled Scuola d'intavolatura by Giovanni Pietro Ricci; at the end of the book are added two balletti per la mandola for a 5-course mandolino, composed by ‘Sig. D. Gasparo Cantarelli Bolognese’. This editorial choice suggests that the mandolino was apparently played or at least fairly common among guitarists.

This is also confirmed by other 17th-century sources showing a great similarity of repertoire. It is, however, interesting and curious that no examples of this kind have come to us in 17th-century Italian lute books.

During the late 17th and first half of the 18th centuries, it was quite common for the mandolino to be played by lute and theorbo players, yet it is possible that in the previous century — the first decades of the mandolino — it was also, or mainly, a sideline for guitarists, who were not always lutenists as well.

As for England, the first account of the use of the mandolino dates from 2 April 1707; Francesco Conti’s concert in London at:

Mr Hinckford’s Dancing Room in James Street, at the Hay Market: . . . Signior Conti will play upon his great Theorbo, and on the Mandoline, an instrument not known yet . . .

Curiously our instrument is spelled mandoline with the final -e as was to become customary in France in the second half of the century, while in other British documents it is spelled mandolin. Even more peculiar is the term Mandelitta used in another London newspaper announcement on the day of Conti’s concert:

. . . Signior Conti is to play upon his Great Theorbo, and la Mandellita, an Instrument hitherto unknown . . .

However, it should be recalled that the James Talbot MS (c. 1690) contains a page originally headed ‘Mandoline’ (which, regrettably enough, for some reason was crossed out by Talbot himself).

Terminology

The term Mandola, which was often used in Rome and Florence during the 17th century, is actually a linguistic pitfall because it was
used as a synonym. In fact the diminutive form *mandolino* does not refer to a smaller size but to an instrument with 4 courses of strings instead of 5, which the *mandola* had. This is clearly stated in Francesco Redi’s *Bacco in Toscana* (1685), which also tells us that the 6-course *mandolino* was called *pandora*:

> La Pandora de’ moderni musici è strumento di dodici corde in sei ordini. Il Mandolino ha sette corde, e quattr’ordini. La mandola ha dieci corde e cinque ordini

(The Pandora of modern musicians is an instrument with twelve strings [grouped] in six [double] courses. The mandolin has seven strings and four courses. The mandola has ten strings and five courses).

Francesco Redi (1626–90) held a prominent position at the Medici court; his ability in natural and rational investigation and the fact that he was commissioned to expand the *Crusca* vocabulary make him a highly reliable source, if not the most influential among those extant of the 17th century. In addition, Redi was advocating the use of a ‘living language’, and was far from being pedantic. He supported the use of the words in daily use.

It should be noted that the terms *Pandurina* (also used by Praetorius in 1619, referring to the French *mandore* and soprano lute) and *mandore* (in France) were and are still erroneously used in museum and catalogues to label *mandolinos*. This is due to the fact that many reference works, such as that of Curt Sachs, incorrectly limit the definition of mandolin to the later Neapolitan model.

The existence of the 6-course *mandolino* is documented for the first time in Milan (a few years before Redi’s *Bacco in Toscana*) in Tomaso Motta’s *Armonia capricciosa*, published in 1681. Motta, who was apparently a composer, lute and mandolin player and dancing master, in the preface of his *Armonia Capricciosa* offers a number of services to his customers, including private services such as scoring music for two or three instruments, that is, for 4-, 5- or 6-course *mandolinos*, archlutes and guitars, or transposing *Ariette, Mottetti, Canzonette* or *Sinfonie* in whatever key or for whatever instrument.

### Stringing and tuning of 4-, 5- and 6-course mandolinos

The earliest tuning information for the Italian 4-course *mandolino* (Figure 4 below), written in staff notation, is found in a Florentine manuscript MS3802, Florence, Conservatorio (I-Fn Magl. XIX 28) of c.1650–70. The range of the instrument goes from E₃ on the fourth course to high D₄ on the seventh fret of the first course, and the author also provides the names in use for the four courses (from bass to treble): Bordone, Mezzana, Sottana, Cantino.

Another 4-course tuning chart, written in staff notation, is found in Matteo Caccini’s manuscript book dated 1703 (Figure 5). Although it indicates a compass extending only to the high C₅ on the fifth fret of the first course, some of the pieces in the MS require a high D. Although the book is dated 1703, it is likely that the music written in the manuscript is considerably earlier. In fact the presence of composers such as Federico Meccoli and Pietro Paolo Cappellini suggest a date of perhaps a half-century earlier.

In this book we find significant evidence for finger-style right-hand technique; in fact we have an indication of how to arpeggiate chords, clearly showing the use of index and middle right-hand fingers, as was common in the lute repertoire (Figure 6)

An example of 5-course tuning chart is found in the Dalla Casa manuscript (Figure 7), which is notated both in tablature and staff notation. It shows a range from the B₂ on the fifth open course up to the high D₇ on the seventh fret of the first course.
Figure 9: Four-course mandolino by Stefano Franchi, Florence, 1727, and his brand mark

This mandolino has eight gut frets on the fingerboard and a rather long string length (348 mm), especially if compared to those built in North Italy. This is due to the use of a lower performing pitch (around 386–392 Hz), which was still in use in central and southern Italy in the 18th century.

The instrument is branded with the initials S. F. on the soundboard, counter clasp and, curiously enough, also internally on the soundboard bars. As shown in some iconographical sources, this specimen attests that 4-course mandolinos were still being built many years after the introduction of 5 and 6-course instruments.

Figure 8: Tunings of the 4-, 5-, and 6-course mandolino

Surviving instruments

A surprisingly large number of 18th century mandolinos survive in their original state. As Jim Tyler pointed out, this is perhaps because their design and small dimensions rendered them unsuitable for conversions to the newer-style instrument.

The 4- and 5-course mandolinos have a maximum width of 137–140 mm, an overall length of 540 mm and a bowl depth of about 85 mm. The dimensions and width of the neck at the nut were kept substantially identical in both types of instruments, obviously with different string spacing at the bridge and nut. In this regard, the considerable distance between the different courses of strings (10 mm) on the 4-course mandolino is to be considered as further evidence of the use of the fingers of the right hand and not the plectrum.

The only substantial—but inexplicable—difference between the two instruments, is that the 4-course mandolino had a single top string, while 5-course one always had all double courses.

It should be noted that earlier 4- and 5-course mandolinos were quite narrow and elongated, rather different from the broader 6-course instruments built in Venice, Bologna, Milano and elsewhere during the second half of the 18th century (which at some point were also played with the plectrum).

The oldest surviving mandolino would appear to be the specimen built in Rome in 1681 by Matteo Nisle, preserved at the Musikhistorisk Museum & Carl Claudius Samling in Kopenhagen. The instrument bears a label which reads ‘Matteo Nisle–Leutaro–Rom 1681’. Unfortunately this mandolino has undergone a number of big changes during its existence and was eventually converted to a 4-string ‘mandolino Cremonese’.

One of the very few surviving 4-course mandolinos and the only extant one built by this maker is the specimen that I played at the Lute Society and BMG meeting, by Stefano Franchi in Florence in 1727. It is part of an Italian private collection and was restored by Federico Gabrielli in 2008 (Figure 9). Stefano Franchi worked during the second half of the 17th century and first decades of the 18th century and was probably of German origin.

Figure 10: Drawing of the soundboard barring by Federico Gabrielli
The important role played by Roman luthiers is attested as early as the 16th century by the presence in Rome of many luthiers, half of whom were German luthiers from Bavaria or surrounding areas. Between the last decades of the 16th century and the mid-18th there are documents relating to more than fifty luthiers owning workshops, and hundreds of apprentices. Their workshops were concentrated in ‘Vicolo dei leutari’ (Figure 11) between the Piazza Pasquino and the church of San Lorenzo in Damaso e in the Parione district.

Among the most important mandolino makers active in Rome several deserve a place of absolute prominence: Giovanni Smorsone, David Tecchler, Benedetto Gualzatta and Gaspar Ferrari, a good number of whose instruments survive, including the two (5- and 6-course) mandolinos by Giovanni Smorsone, dated 1721 and 1724 and the 6-course by Gaspar Ferrari (1774), which we have been lucky enough to play in our concerts, and which you can see photographed in this issue. Giovanni Francesco Smorsone (1668-72 ?–1738) is registered as ‘chitarraro’ from 1702 to 1738, when he died. His workshop was located at Palazzo Galli, which was demolished and corresponds to the current no. 52 of the Palazzo della Cancelleria.

The 5-course specimen that I played in the concert is one of the two surviving 5-course mandolinos, built by Smorsone. This instrument—which is now part of an Italian private collection—was restored by Bruce Brook and Martin Haycock in 1997 and is the only surviving 5-course baroque mandolino in playing condition.

It is an instrument of sublime construction. The bowl is made of 13 fluted kingwood(?) ribs with wide ivory spacers. The neck and back of the pegbox are veneered with rosewood and decorated with bone strips. It has a deep plain counter-cap with a single ivory purfling. The 12 bone lines of the bowl run up on the neck and to the back of the pegbox.

The very elegant pegbox is entirely veneered with rosewood and the finial is veneered in diagonally chequered marquetry made of the same materials of the back.

The soundboard is made of two matched pieces of spruce of fine-to-medium grain. The original soundboard barring consists of two bars above and two below the rose, plus three small bars crossing the rose in its centre. Its overall length is 530 mm, body length 242 mm, maximum width 133 mm, and overall depth 83 mm. Since the string length measures 337 mm, it is to be tuned in nominal G at ‘chorista’ pitch of 392 Hz.

Although it is not possible to compare its sound with other Roman specimens of other makers, from a constructive point of view Smorsone’s mandolinos are in my opinion the most elegant and outstanding ever built.

The other specimen by Smorsone discussed here is a 6-course mandolino built in 1724 and is part of the Royal College collection (Figures 13, 16). At 441 mm its string length is even longer than the 1721 specimen. It is also larger and longer (with a maximum width of 144 mm) but it has the same bowl depth of 83 mm. Its overall length is 573.5 mm; body length at front 241 mm.

This mandolino has a veneered fingerboard with a central plaque of engraved bone. It is an instrument of intermediate size between the narrowest 1721 example and those with a broader shape and size, that would spread in the following decades, in northern Italy. Also the soundboard barring differs from the 1721 specimen, because, despite being larger, it has only one bar above the rose (Figure 16).
Let us now examine some examples of Roman and Neapolitan 6-course instruments that were in use in the second half of the 18th century, both those built with movable bridge and canted table (such as the new type of 4-course violin-tuned mandolino) and those with glued-on bridge.

Considering the astonishing amount of repertoire, and bearing in mind that their ranges are identical, the present-day mandolin player has the problem of knowing which type of mandolin a composer may have intended for music written after about 1760 and which right-hand technique is the most appropriate.

We know that some of the Neapolitan musicians who settled in France in the second half of the 18th century, although mainly promoting the new Neapolitan mandoline tuned in fifths, still continued to play the 6-course mandolino, which was referred to as 'mandoline à six cordes'. Nevertheless—with the total extinction of lute players—following the Neapolitan mandoline fashion, it became acceptable to play the old-fashioned 6-course, glued-on bridge instruments with a plectrum, although with a cherry bark plectrum instead of a quill.

Ignoring here the limited spread of the violin-tuned Cremonese mandolin, 6-course instruments with movable bridge and canted soundboard were also quite popular in central and South Italy, apparently because many performers (who were also guitar players) preferred the tuning in fourths to that of the violin used for the Neapolitan 4-course mandoline. As Fouchetti pointed out in 1771, the 6-course instrument was less demanding in position changes than the Neapolitan violin-tuned type, thus partly explaining why the 6-course mandolino Milanese or Lombardo, strung with single strings, was still played well into the 20th century.

Among the luthiers of the next generation after Smorsone, the most important mandolin maker in Rome was Gaspar Ferrari, who during his long life and career built and developed all the types of mandolins in use in the 18th century.

His work is so noteworthy that we cannot rule out the possibility that he may have been the inventor of the new type of mandolin with bent soundboard and movable bridge. In fact Ferrari is the maker of the oldest surviving instrument with canted soundboard, namely a ‘liuto a penna’ dated 1731. This was a bass 8-course wire-string instrument, tuned in fourths and played with plectrum, which was probably invented before the Roman/Neapolitan mandoline, and therefore should not be called ‘mandolone’.

Gaspare Ferrari came from Rieti. He was active in Rome, in the ‘Strada Papale’, near the Via del Corallo and Palazzo Avila, between not later than 1731 (the year of construction of his oldest ‘liuto a penna’) and c.1780. It is quite unlikely that he was born in 1716, as claimed by Patrizio Barbieri (Recercare i, LIM, Lucca 1989, p. 189) because then he would have only been 15 years old in 1731.

Among Ferrari’s extant instruments are a few 6-course mandolinos, the oldest dated 1745 (in a private collection) and a number of the new type of 4-course violin-tuned mandolins with canted soundboard and floating bridge. The most rare and interesting of these is the unique specimen (c.1750, in the Museo Nazionale degli Strumenti Musicali, Rome) that has its soundhole closed with a parchment rosette and the typical asymmetrically shaped scratchplate.

Another unique piece is a 6-course mandolino (in a private collection) with canted soundboard and movable bridge, dated 1774 displayed and played at our meeting, which was restored by Federico Gabrielli in 2010. (Figure 17, 17a, below).

It should be noted that Ferrari used a large and rather cambered fingerboard on both types of 6-course instruments, (the one with movable bridge having fixed bone frets instead of tied gut frets), and he increased the size of the soundboard, introducing a gradual shortening of the string length, which in the case of the 1774 specimen measures only 285 mm. It also worth noting that the point in which the soundboard is canted is below the point of maximum width, as we would expect it to be. Since the soundboard is quite thick, the soundboard barring consists of only two bars, one above and one below the rosette, the latter slightly tilted.

On the occasion of this concert this mandolin was purposely strung with historical gut and brass strings following the instructions of Michel Corrette, La méthode de mandoline (Paris, 1772) and Giovanni Fouchetti, Méthode pour apprendre facilement à jouer de la Mandoline à 4 et à 6 Cordes (Paris, 1771) as discussed by Mimmo Peruffo at our meeting. [A summary of his talk appears in The Lute—Ed.]

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It should not be surprising that even in Naples, during the second half of the 18th century, 6-course mandolinos were still built with the bridge glued onto the soundboard. Although only a few have survived, at our meeting we had the pleasure of showing and playing a specimen built in Naples in 1763 by Gennaro Vinaccia, the founder of this very important dynasty of luthiers.

After all, it should not be forgotten that during the Austrian occupation, preceding the establishment of the Bourbons, 5- and 6-course mandolinos were widely played in Naples, as evidenced by operas performed in Naples with mandolino obbligato parts.

Thus, although in Naples the new violin-tuned mandoline spread very quickly, as it were by capillary action, from the middle of the century, the old baroque mandolinos continued to be built and played at least for a couple of decades to meet the demands of customers who wanted to continue to play a 6-course instrument tuned in fourths, with fingertips, and later with plectrum.

However, as shown in the examples described below, Neapolitan luthiers modified the traditional bowl and countercap, adopting the same system of construction used for the new violin-tuned mandoline. Moreover, while maintaining the old sickle-shaped pegbox they introduced fixed bone frets, seemingly long-used in Rome already.

During the last decades of the 18th century, following the example of Roman luthiers such as Gaspar Ferrari and the Genoese Christian Nonemacher, the next and final step was to string the 6-course instruments too (which were now only played with plectrum) with wire strings (partially, to be precise, since the first and sixth courses remained gut) bending the soundboard, now equipped with a scratchplate, using a movable bridge, adopting a flat guitar-shaped pegbox, and removing the carved rosette.

The string length of this Vinaccia instrument is 330 mm. The depth of the bowl is 120 mm while the width of the soundboard at its widest point is 175 mm.

Various features of this instrument suggest that it was probably played with fingers. The soundboard does not show any sign of wear caused by the contact of a plectrum, it has no scratch-plate, the nut is fairly wide (52 mm) and the fingerboard is also quite broad. Besides these features it has nine fixed bone frets (not yet metal), plus six extra wooden frets glued on the soundboard.

The unusual position of the strap attachment should be noted, located at the centre of the body on the countercap, rather than inserted in the lower end block near the pins and on the pegbox.

Besides a 6-course instrument built in Naples by Giovan Battista Fabricatore in 1793 (Paris, Cité de la Musique), another very similar extant 6-course mandolino was one built by Gennaro Vinaccia in 1772 (Figure 20).
The instrument, which is part of an Italian private collection, was restored by Enrico Allorto in 1986.

It is very interesting to compare these two instruments built by the same maker, with a nine year interval between them. The 1772 specimen has an improbably short string length by Neapolitan standards, measuring only 312 mm. Consequently there is only room for eight frets on the fingerboard while, as we can see above, the longer string length of the 1673 mandolino allows nine. The depth of the bowl is 112 mm and its maximum width is 184 mm.

1763 example, and 590 mm for the 1772 specimen. The latter, which was played with plectrum, is fitted with a scratchplate and has a narrower nut (44 mm) and eight metal frets on the fingerboard (plus five additional wooden frets glued on the soundboard).

Stradivari's mandolinos

From the surviving instruments and documents, whilst every luthier produced various models and sizes, we can observe that in Antonio Stradivari's workshop mandolinos were built in a staggering variety of shapes, sizes and string lengths, according to the various performing pitches or tono corista used in Italy. Stradivari, who could boast among his illustrious customers the Medici family, apparently had customers not only all over Italy but quite probably abroad too. In fact it seems he designed an entire family of mandolini and mandole in such a variety of tunings to accommodate all vocal and instrumental ranges.

It should be noted that Stradivari's precisely labelled instrument patterns from the 1680s onwards, are among the few sources to relate terminology to instrument size—for the first time. In fact his patterns for the mandola tend to be slightly larger, implying a longer string length and lower tuning.

Unfortunately Stradivari's 26 surviving patterns preserved in Cremona (for bodies, necks, pegboxes and bridges) are all undated. Moreover, according to his templates we find examples of 4-course mandolinos with four double courses (Mandolino forma nova MSS 405, 406, 407, 409, 421) including the top string, which does not match the work of other Italian makers or Francesco Redi's description, mentioned earlier. (Indeed from lute templates we know that Stradivari preferred double courses, including the first two courses of 11- and 12-course French lutes).

Two mandolinos made in Stradivari's workshop are known to survive but both have been altered. These two instruments were apparently kept together over the centuries until the 1970s, when a New York private collector sold them separately on the antiques market, a year apart. The older of the two specimens is dated 1680 and is the only one actually signed by Antonio Stradivari. It belonged for 23 years to Chris Challen, who bought it in London from Tony Bingham, on Robert Spencer's advice.

Both instruments have a bowl made of 21 maple ribs, and an overall length which is almost the same: 580 mm in the case of the
Figure 23a: Five-course Stradivari mandolino dated 1680 or 1688 (Vermillion, South Dakota, National Museum)

Figure 23b: Mandolino in its case; 23c: on arrival, side view and case

Figure 23d: Bowl, of seven flamed maple ribs

Figure 23e: Stradivari’s signature

Figure 23f: Interior bowl signed by Stradivari

Figure 23g: Neck block; 23h: Rose

Figure 23i: Original bridge

Figure 23j: Soundboard without rose
This *mandolino* has a new pegbox and bridge. The rose, instead of being carved, is inserted, and has some features resembling those of the Stradivari guitar housed at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. The string length is 315.8 mm.

The neck is very long (lengthened?) and bears 10 frets. The original bridge was very similar to that on the Stradivari guitar preserved in Oxford, which could have been built in the same year if the last figure on the label is read as 0 instead of 8; it could be 1688 or 1680, the last number is difficult to read.

The overall length is 501.9 mm, indeed much longer than any of Stradivari's templates: actually the *corista* mandolino (MS 421) measures 371 mm and the one shown on MS 419 measures 431 mm. The thickness of the soundboard is about 1.2–1.7 mm. The soundboard width is 111 mm (the *mandolino coristo* of MSS 421 and 423 measures 110 mm; that of MS 422 is 114 mm). The soundboard length is 198.3 mm (MS 419 is 195 mm; MS 423 is 217 mm).

The other *mandolino* built in Stradivari's workshop, which was on show at our London meeting, belongs to Charles Beare's collection. It was purchased at a Sotheby's auction in New York, where it was put on sale in 1977 on behalf of a private collection (Peter Biddulph), having being previously belonged to the Brooklyn Museum.

The measurements are as follows: string length 318 mm, overall length 510.5 mm, body width 113.7 mm, body length 247.5 mm; maximum depth 63 mm.
The soundboard is longer than the 1680 specimen; the width of the nut is 35.9 mm.

This mandolino, which perhaps dates from around 1706, survives with its original case and although it is unlabelled, is probably attributable to the sons of Antonio Stradivari, Francesco or Omobono or perhaps to ‘Als. [Alessandro] Anto. [Antonio] Stradivari’, possibly a relative, who signed pattern no. 422.

The bowl is made of nine flamed maple ribs with ebony spacers; the rose is carved; the pegs are replacements made by Andrew Dipper on an original model found inside the case.

Today it is strung as a 4-course mandolino, (oddly doubly-strung throughout), but the peg arrangement has been altered by the lengthening of the pegbox and drilling of the highest peg-hole to accommodate an extra peg, transforming it from 4 to 5 courses (4x2; 1x1) with a single top string, unusual and unlikely for a 5-course instrument. The peg box is now approximately 125 mm long, but I would guess it used to be about 115 mm.

Luthier Peter Gibson restored this mandolino. He took off the soundboard to fix the rose (which needed patching with little pieces, totalling about half the rose) and a crack that had been glued with a white glue. As this would not soak off as hide glue does, he steamed it using alcohol steam delivered via a thin tube. He cleaned off a layer of polyurethane or similar varnish (and lots of dirt) which he says came off quite easily. He then made the bridge to match the footprint shape on the belly, which was clearly shown by a clean area. The upper part of this reflects the shape of the bridge on a theorbo by Sellas that was in the workshop at the time, but it significantly differs from extant mandolin models and from those of surviving Stradivari guitars. Peter Gibson cannot remember exactly, but he thinks the pegs were made by Andrew Dipper, to match the remaining original one.

The beautiful original case was restored by Kevin Coates. The ebony fingerboard would accommodate seven gut frets and the neck is maple. The soundboard barring consists of two bars above and two below the rose (diameter 44 mm) which is reinforced with four small bars.

There are only 41 year rings on the bass side of the soundboard and 50 on the treble side, which is usually considered too few to give a secure analysis (60 or more gives a reliable result) but John Topham did a dendrochronological test on the mandolin in 1999. It did not match any chronology he had at that time, but he has since compared it to further dendrochronology tests he has done in the meantime and found a few moderate matches (up to a maximum T value of 6.9) with assorted Italian instruments. The dates that this gives now are 1658 for the bass side and 1679 for the treble side.

It should be noticed that neither of these mandolinos conforms precisely to any of the patterns preserved in Cremona (see Table below). However, the soundboard width measurements of the signed mandolino in the National Museum in Vermilion are similar to those of pattern no. 423 (Figure 30) and MS 41 mandolino coristo, while the length is midway between patterns MS 419 and 423. Body measurements of the Beare mandolino almost match those of template no. 422 (Figure 31) and (only) the body width of MS 421 mandolino coristo (Figure 32).
Surviving mandolinos or Stradivari’s template  Body width in mm  Body length in mm
Antonio Stradivari 1680 111 198.3
Unsigned, Beare collection 113.7 247.5
MS 419 103–105 194
MS 421 ‘coristo’ 4 x 2 (or 4 x 2; 1 x 1) 110 234
MS 420 5-course 131–32 223
MS 422 114–116 250
MS 423 110–114 217–218

It is worth noting that while the rosette of Antonio Stradivari’s 1680 mandolino presents some characteristics similar to those of the rosette of the guitar preserved in Oxford, the specimen from the Beare collection stylistically differs a lot from all Stradivari’s other rosettes, as in the case of that found in the guitar attributed to Antonio Stradivari, dated 1700, preserved at the National Museum in Vermillion, South Dakota.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern name</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>String length in mm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forma S MS 409</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandolino più grando MS 404</td>
<td>5x2</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandolino forma nova MS 405</td>
<td>4x2</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandola seconda forma MS 407</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandola terza forma MS 408</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandola Granda MS 403</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mandolino coristo pattern MS 421 (with nut notches curiously indicating 4x2 or 5x1?) has its bridge position marked indicating an overall string length of 317 mm, 10 mm longer than the string length of 307 mm calculated from the two forma nova patterns, MS 405 and 406.

This brings us to the problematic issue of the relationship between the remarkable variety of string lengths used by Stradivari and the various tone pitches used in Italy. It is worth noting that the shortest string length of 307/8 mm, for the Mandolino forma nova would probably match the high corista pitch used in Venice and Cremona, which may have been between 452 and 464 Hz. It was called Mezzo punto or Corista di Lombardia, later called Corista Veneto, lowered a semitone (in 1708 Bologna too adopted Corista Veneto). By contrast, the maximum string length of the Mandolino più grando, measuring 354 mm (which allowed three extra frets on the fingerboard) is instead even slightly longer than any of the surviving Roman or Tuscan baroque mandolinos (which almost match the pattern Forma S measuring 338 mm) that were tuned to the low Roman corista pitch, varying from 386 up to 392 Hz.

Although it is not possible to establish the exact local pitch standard Stradivari was following in Cremona, apparently he reduced the mandolinos string lengths from 327 mm to c.317 mm (our two examples measure 315.8 mm and 318 mm) and finally to 307 mm perhaps to accommodate the rise in pitch that began in the early 18th century.

As can be seen from Stradivari’s extant mandolins and templates, the width of the body is even narrower than in Roman instruments. It is also surprising that Stradivari’s fret marks, found on neck patterns, are spaced for equal temperament.

Four Stradivari bridge patterns survive: two are made from pear, for tied strings; MS 417 is notched for a 6-double course instrument (a mandolino? a cittern?).

Except for this model of bridge, that might have been built for another type of instrument, it would seem that Stradivari’s production did not include 6-course mandolins. Indeed, apart from the first examples built by Roman luthiers such as Smorsone, Gualzatta and Tecchler starting from c.1722, the 6-course instrument would spread widely only after the fourth decade of the century.

In conclusion, though much work must still be done to glean definitive information from Stradivari’s drawings, we can see that at least 12 models of instruments including mandolinos and mandolas, were built in his workshop.

I would like to acknowledge Andrew Dipper, Chris Challen, Jonathan Santa Maria and Peter Beare for having kindly supplied some of the photos for this lecture.

Iconographical sources

It should be noted that the scantiness of iconographic evidence relating to the mandolin in the 17th and 18th centuries (not only the ‘baroque mandolino’ but also the ‘Neapolitan’ type) is probably proportionate to the limited diffusion of the instrument when compared to the lute and the guitar, for which we have an abundance of documents.

One of the earliest and most important iconographical documents about the use of the mandolino is a well known painting by Anton Domenico Gabbiani, dated 1685 (which is part a set of five paintings that were to decorate the Villa Pratolino), showing the musicians active at the Medici court, in the service of Grand Prince Ferdinando (Figure 34).
A study of this picture was made by John Walter Hill who identified the portrayed musicians, among whom is the mandolino player Giovanni Battista Gigli (?–1703) nicknamed ‘il Tedeschino’ although he was Italian, from Finale Emilia. In the picture we also see Federico Meccoli playing the harpsichord; he wrote some of the pieces found in the Libro per la mandola (1703) of Matteo Caccini. Gabbiani’s paintings confirm the important role that the mandolino acquired at the Medici court, showing it within a quintet of stringed instruments and harpsichord, as an instrument of equal dignity and perhaps regularly used with that instrumental ensemble. Moreover, Gigli’s portrait is a perfect example of posture and the finger-plucking right hand technique adopted in the 17th and first half of the 18th century (Figure 34a).

Gigli was an outstanding player, sought after by many Italian courts, which often exchanged their musicians. For instance, in 1694 he was hired by prince Urbano Rocci in Rome to perform on his archlute at the Teatro Torre di Nona, founded by Princess Cristina from Sweden. Gigli’s career benefited of the protection of Vittoria della Rovere, Grand Duchess of Tuscany and grandmother of Ferdinand III, as is documented by a letter to Princess Farnese from Siena, in which she praises Gigli’s virtuosity.

He was mainly active as composer and theorbo player, as is shown in another painting by Gabbiani in which he is portrayed standing, playing a large theorbo supported with a shoulder strap (Figure 35).

It is worth mentioning other lute and theorbo virtuosi who also played the mandolino and had an important role in the musical environment of that time including the Romans Lelio Colista, Pietro Ugolini and Giovanni Zamboni, and in Tuscany, Francesco Conti, Filippo Sauli, Carlo Arrigoni, Niccolò Susier and others.4 Another beautiful example of a 4-course mandolino is shown in a painting attributed to Giacomo Francesco Cipper (though Italian scholar Maria Silvia Proni and other scholars do not agree in attributing this painting to Cipper), nicknamed ‘il Todeschini’ (Figure 36), who was active in Milano and north Italy between 1705 and 1736.
The *mandolino* depicted in his portrait of a young player has eight frets on the fingerboard and a carved rosette surrounded by a mother-of-pearl decoration, fairly common especially in instruments built in northern Italy.

In this painting the right hand is as usual positioned with the little finger resting near to the bridge and, in this example, the thumb has come down to play the chantelle. From a technical point of view, if we look at the way a chord is being held down with the left hand, the left elbow is excessively open. It should, however, be noted that the iconographic sources often show lutenists playing in this position, while resting their elbow on a table. The two strings of the fourth course are of a different colour from the others, perhaps suggesting plain gut but manufactured differently from the other strings, or a demi-filé overspun string.

As far as I know, the only English painting showing a ‘baroque mandolino’ is Philippe Mercier’s well-known royal portrait depicting the royal family. In this picture the Prince of Wales is playing the cello, accompanied by his sister Princess Anne (1709–59) at the harpsichord; Princess Amelia (1711–86) is playing a 5-course *mandolino* and Princess Caroline (1713–57) is reading a volume of Milton’s poems (Figure 37). Philippe Mercier served as painter and librarian to Frederick, Prince of Wales, from 1728 until 1738. The painting was probably painted for Frederick, Prince of Wales, around 1733.

There are three surviving versions of this celebrated image; two (belonging to the National Trust and National Portrait Gallery) are set out of doors, with the so-called ‘Dutch House’ at Kew in the background, and one is set indoors (in The Royal Collection). Since the events depicted here make more sense indoors it is usually assumed that the National Portrait Gallery copy is the first treatment of the theme, although the date of 1733 painted on it provides an acceptable dating for all three.

The princesses are dressed ‘with an almost middle-class sobriety’. The more formally dressed Frederick is given centre stage and yet the effect of the scene is one of informal ensemble music-making. The 22-year-old Princess Amelia of Hanover is playing a 5-course instrument which apparently has only nine pegs, thus an unusual single top string (4 x 2, 1 x 1). On the ebony fingerboard are tied nine gut frets and there is an ivory or bone nut; the pegbox is ebony veneered and the pegs could be stained black, or of ebony; on the square finial of the sickle-shaped pegbox there is the usual shield with triangular ebony and ivory decorations. Along the edge of the soundboard is an ebony purling strip, while the bowl seems to be made from a light-coloured wood.

Although the right-hand position is not painted very accurately, the articulation of thumb and index is clearly shown, and it is clear that the Princess is plucking the strings in the rose area. The perfect posture of the left forearm, wrist and left-hand position, with thumb down and the spreading the other fingers, denotes a fairly correct technique mostly required in scale passages or when holding a bass note while plucking other strings.

Amelia apparently took music instruction from Handel, as did her sister Anne who studied with him as early as 1720, when she was eleven. Amelia must certainly have been a skilled *mandolino* and lute player because she studied many years with Italian virtuoso Francesco Webber who was appointed ‘Lute Master to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales’.

As pointed out by Paul Sparks, from 1735 onwards until his death in 1751, the Italian lute and *mandolino* virtuoso Francesco Webber (from whom we have 12 surviving sonatas for *mandolino* and continuo) was appointed ‘Master of Music to Princess Amelia’. Another notable picture is the *Concertino* by the celebrated Venetian painter Pietro Longhi, in which is shown a young and an old lady (perhaps her mother) playing two 5-course *mandolinos*. (Figure 38). It is interesting to see that although this picture is dated c.1755–60, Longhi is still depicting old-fashioned 5-course instruments which were more in vogue in the 17th and early decades of the 18th century. (A 5-course *mandolino* is also shown in another painting by Longhi, known as *Il cavadenti*, c.1750 which has the same provenance and size and is also preserved in Milan, Accademia di Brera). The two instruments follow the very narrow shape of Stradivari *mandolinos*. They both have carved rosettes and seven tied gut frets on the fingerboard.

Longhi matches the colour of the *mandolino* with that of the player’s dress. In fact the elderly woman, whom is wearing a black dress, plays a *mandolino* with dark bowl, ebony fingerboard, peg-box and pegs, while the young girl, who is wearing in a pink and white dress, is playing a *mandolino* with a light-coloured wood body, fingerboard and pegbox, and boxwood pegs fitted with a white pin. The way they hold the *mandolino* as well as the hand position matches Gigli’s posture, shown in Gabbiani’s painting, with the right hand very close to the bridge and thumb outside. The older lady holds her left thumb extending over the neck, as in Gabbiani’s painting, while the young girl keeps it on the lower part of the neck.

Figure 38: Pietro Longhi, *Concertino* c.1755–60, detail (Milan, Accademia di Brera)
In the famous painting by Giambattista Tiepolo (Figure 41) a girl is depicted tuning the top string of a 6-course *mandolino* with flamed maple body and a carved rosette. The instrument has a long pegbox and considerably long neck for a Venetian instrument, which, in fact, could accommodate more than the 8 gut frets shown in the painting.

The painting in Figure 43, by Pietro Rotari (1707–62), represents a young girl plucking the strings of a 5-course *mandolino* with thumb and index fingers, and resting the ring and little fingers on the soundboard. The instrument is similar to those made in Rome by Smorsone and Gualzatta. In fact, although Rotari was of Venetian origin, he had been also active in Rome and Naples between 1725 and 1734.
Amongst amateurs, another significant example documenting the fashion for the mandolino among the nobility, as a complementary instrument to the lute, is the magnificent painting by Giuseppe Maria Crespi, portraying Count Fulvio Grati (Figure 44). It is a painting of massive proportions, characterised by very theatrical lighting and with a strong effect of ‘chiaroscuro’ which highlights the figure of the Count, who (with a harp in the background), is holding a ‘French lute’ while his left hand grips (or poses with) a 5-course mandolino.

Figure 44: Giulio Crespi, Portrait of Count Fulvio Grati, c.1720–3 (Madrid, Museo Thyssen Bornemisza)

In conclusion, we may observe that most of the iconographic sources dating from 1685 to c.1760 predominantly show 4 and 5-course mandolinos and only a few examples of 6-courses. This is confirmed by the coeval surviving repertoire for solo mandolino, mandolino and continuo and obbligato parts of vocal pieces. (Among 17 arias with ‘mandolino obbligato’ written between 1699 and 1759 only Handel’s oratorio Alexander Balus [1748] requires a 6-course instrument while the other 16 are almost equally divided between 4- and 5-course mandolinos.)

In the second half of the century, particularly in Northern Italy, the 6-course mandolino with glued bridge was to become the only surviving ‘baroque’ mandolino strung with gut strings still in vogue. Soon afterwards at the beginning of the 19th century it was to be significantly altered, giving rise to the less elegant and even lumpish ‘Mandolino Milanese’, strung with six single strings that survived until the First World War.

I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to Chris Goodwin for the precious collaboration in organising this meeting, as well as to Gianni Accornero, Peter Beare and Gabriele Rossi Rognoni (Royal College of Music) for lending their instruments.

Notes

1 [. . .] Ha solamente [la mandola] 10 corde [5 ordini], di questo numero era la mandola ordinaria antica; vi è poi la moderna e ne contiene 12. [6 ordini], in che s’ingannò il padre Filippo Bonanni della Compagnia di Giesì non assegnando alla medema che quattro corde, e ne manda fuori un suono molto acuto [. . .].

2 Georg Kinsky listed a mandolino by Stefano Francho, Firenze 1692, in the inventory of the Cologne Museum, (n. 520) of the Wilhelm Heyer (1849–1913) Collection, part of which is now lost.


6 GB:Lbl, RM23g17.
The mandolino in Rome in the time of Corelli, by Davide Rebuffa, a concert programme

THE LUTE SOCIETY RECITAL
The Dutch Church, London, 4.45 pm, Saturday 4th February 2017

THE EARLY MANDOLIN ACADEMY

Mauro Squillante
6-course mandolinos (Gaspar Ferrari, Rome 1774 / Gennaro Vinaccia, Naples 1762 / Matteo Baldinelli after G. Smorsone)

Davide Rebuffa
4 and 5-course mandolinos (Stefano Franchi, Florence 1727 / Giovanni Smorsone, Rome 1721)

Andrea Damiani
tiorba, ‘chitarra alla spagnuola’

The Mandolino in Rome in the time of Corelli

PIETRO PAOLO CAPPELLINI (17th century)

Fuga - [Corrente] - [Canarie]

Libro per la Mandola dell’Illuss.mo Sig.re Matteo Caccini, (Firenze, 1703)

ANTONIO CALDARA (1670-1736)

Sinfonia

Libro di Sonate per il Mandolino Dell’Ecc. mo Sig.re Don Bartolomeo Ruspoli Principe di Cerveteri

LELIO COLISTA (1629-1680)

Sinfonia del Sig. Leilio Colista à 3 in A minor (30 W-K)
[Adagio - Giga - Passacaglia - Canzona - Giga]
Ms. Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria

PIETRO UGOLINI (17th/18th century)

Sinfonia del Sig. Pietro Ugolini a 3 in G minor
[Preludio - Canzona - Allemanda - Corrente - Giga - Saltarello].
Ms. Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria.

ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653-1713)

Sonata 7 op. V in D minor
Preludio – Corrente – Sarabanda - Giga

Libro di Sonate per il Mandolino Dell’Ecc. mo Sig.re Don Bartolomeo Ruspoli Principe di Cerveteri,
Münster, Diözesanbibliothek.

Sonata 3 op. V in C major
Adagio - Allegro - Adagio - Allegro - Giga

(Opera quinta. Sonate a Violino e Violone o Cimbalo Dedicate all’Altezza Serenissima Elettorale di Sofia Carlotta Elettrice di Brandenburgo Principessa di Brunsvich et Luneburgh…. Arcangelo Corelli da Fusignano Opera quinta, primo (Gennaro, 1700)

Sonata 1 op. II in D major
Preludio Largo - Allegro - Corrente Allegro - Gavotta

The importance of Roman instrument makers is attested, as early as the 16th century, by the presence in Rome of many luthiers, almost half of whom were craftsmen originating from or near Bavaria, whose workshops were concentrated in the homonymous ‘Vicolo dei Leutari’. The 16th century term liutaro, obviously referring to lute builders, was gradually replaced by chitararo, becoming the general rule around 1680, when lute makers neglected lute building, converting their production almost exclusively to guitars, colascioni, mandolins, violins and cetere (citterns). Among the most important mandolino makers active in Rome, deserving a place of absolute prominence, were Giovanni Smorsone, David Tecchler, Benedetto Gualzatta and Gaspar Ferrari, a good number of whose instruments survive, including the two (5- and 6 course) mandolinos by Giovanni Smorsone, dated 1721 and 1724 and the 6-course by Gaspar Ferrari (1774), which we are lucky enough to play in our concerts.

Although resembling treble lutes, the 4 and 5-course mandolinos that Roman luthiers produced between the end mid-17th and the fourth decade of the 18th century, had a few physical distinctions, above all the number of courses and a sickle-shaped pegbox. These mandolinos are characterised by a quite narrow and elongated body, a rounded back, a rosette carved into the flat soundboard, a lute-style bridge glued onto the soundboard and gut frets tied around the fingerboard. These lute-style constructional features and a similar tuning in fourths, allowed lutenists to play the mandolino with the same finger-style right-hand technique, using it as a complementary instrument to the theorbo and the arclute, to perform soprano parts in the range of the flute and violin.

The now much better-known mandolino or mandoline (in French), tuned like the violin and played with a plectrum, characterized by a canted soundboard, movable bridge and a distinct and much deeper round-backed body, was probably invented in Rome towards the end of the fourth decade of the 18th century, whence it soon spread to the Kingdom of Naples, to France and across Europe as the ‘Neapolitan mandolin’ (a term attested only in the 19th century). The oldest surviving specimens date back to the early 1750s, including those built in Rome by Gaspar Ferrari, who, during his long career, built all the existing types of mandolins with glued or movable bridge. The only extant 6-course specimen fitted with movable bridge and canted soundboard built by Ferrari, is the one here presented, dated 1774, which we use to play Corelli’s Sonata no. 3 Opus V. Our justification for the use of a mandolino fitted with a movable bridge and played with plectrum, for the Corellian repertoire, is that the composer’s Opus V remained in vogue for several decades after his death, as is shown in a remarkable painting by Pompeo Batoni, dated 1758. The picture (at Boughton House, Kettering, Northamptonshire, below) portrays John Montagu, Lord Brudenell, with a beautiful 4-course mandolin of the new type, which, in those years, was becoming a fashionable instrument among the aristocracy. The artist shows the sensitivity and culture of Lord Brudenell, portraying him holding in his hands a manuscript copy of Corelli’s Opus V, witnessing that particular English cult of Corelli, which not only survived the composer’s oblivion in Italy, but was still widespread in the years of Johann Christian Bach and Joseph Haydn.

But let us return to the mandolino in use in the time of Corelli, which was played with the customary lute technique. Especially in Tuscany and the region of Rome, the term mandolino was often preferred to mandola, not to indicate a smaller instrument—this was to be the case for the first time with the production of Antonio Stradivari’s workshop, and became normal in the later centuries—but only as a synonym or to indicate an identical instrument with a smaller number of strings.

As for the violin repertoire, the dissemination of its repertoire composed in the Roman context, almost always relied on the ephemeral and perishable manuscript transmission. In fact, though the term mandolino appears for the first time already in 1627, the oldest surviving musical source consists of a Florentine manuscript by Agnolo Conti, written in tablature for the 4-course mandolino, dated between 1650 and 1670, while the oldest printed book was published in Rome by Giovanni Pietro Ricci in 1677, and two short balletti for the 5-course mandolino.

The first composer of our programme is Pietro Paolo Cappellini (or Cappellini), of whom we have scanty information. He was active in Rome as composer and theorbo player in the service of Flavio Chigi, the powerful ‘cardinal nephew’ of Pope Alexander VII, and later in Florence at the Medici Court, but he also played the mandolino, violin and harpsichord. In 1664 Cappellini went along with his colleague Lelio Colista and the celebrated keyboard virtuoso Bernardo Pasquini, on a diplomatic mission of Cardinal Chigi to Louis XIV.

The three mandolino pieces in our concert are from a Florentine manuscript entitled ‘Libro per la Mandola dell Illuss.mo Sig.re Matteo Caccini’ (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale) which, although dated 1703, contains pieces from the mid 17th century, written in staff notation instead of tablature. While Cappellini’s Fuga is written in the very idiomatic Italian Sylus Phantasticus, the following untitled dance pieces, which could be classified as a Corrente and a Canarie, indicate a strong French influence. Some cantatas (Modena, Bibl. Estense and Bologna, Bibl. del Liceo Musicale) and other vocal compositions by P. P. Cappellini survive in a few manuscripts.
preserved in the libraries of Florence and Naples Conservatories as well as a set of Sonatas for violin and organ, in the British Library.

In Rome, at the musical Cappella di San Marcello, particularly between about 1633 to 1685, there were some mandolino players active, among whom Gasparo Cantarelli, Domenico Melari ‘della Mandola’, Antonio Quintavalle and the famous composer, lutenist, guitarist and mandolino player Lelio Colista (1629–80), who was also maestro di cappella in the 1650s.

Trained in the Roman Jesuit seminary, Colista was already a famous lutenist, guitarist and composer when he was only nineteen, described by Athanasius Kircher as an ‘insignis Cytharaedus, & true Romanae Urbis Orpheus’.

With the ascent to the papal throne of Alessandro VII Chigi, Colista occupied an admired position in the Papal household and collected great wealth. In addition to being director of the chapel of San Marcello he was active in various Roman churches taking part to the production of Operi (14 of which in 1675 at St. Luigi dei Francesi alone), and performing in private academies for the Roman aristocracy, especially those organised by Antonio Maria Abbatini, one of the best-known chapel masters of that time. In addition to his engagements as a musician, his name is found among the 22 ‘esquires’ of Pope Alessandro VII’s family; in 1659 he was appointed stili Cariae Romanar and later held the position of Keeper of the Papal Chapel Paintings, a post which he held until his death.

To better understand the relationship between Corelli and the Roman tradition of the trio sonata, and to identify the stylistic features of the instrumental repertoire of a few decades before Corelli’s success, we must re-evaluate the contribution of composers such as Colista—too often relegated to the role of Corellian ‘precursors’—and recognise how these composers assimilated the instrumental models of the early 17th century by adapting them to the needs of modern trio sonata.

Right from the start Colista’s style stood out—both in vocal and instrumental works but particularly in trio sonatas—for its adoption of a comprehensive, formal and recurrent structure. Unlike his violin-player colleagues, he put aside instrumental virtuosity in favour of an elegant counterpoint, showing a strong inclination for idiomatic writing which distinguishes a lutenist-composer, definitively contributing to the development of the instrumental language the second half of the 17th century. Despite the inevitable dispersion of the circulation of manuscript copies, Colista’s sonatas had a wide transmission throughout Europe, especially in England. Among a total of 26 extant trio sonatas (dated between 1650 and 1680) a number exist in a manuscript preserved in Turin (Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria), which also contains compositions by Corelli and other composers active in Rome such as Carlo Ambrogio Lonati, Alessandro Stradella, Pietro Ugolini, Francesco Gasparini, and Bernardo Pasquini.

Among the extant trio sonatas by Colista, the Simfonia a 3 in A minor (no. 30–Vessely Kropík) included in our programme, has a very complex formal structure: in fact, instead of the usual four movements, it is articulated in five movements, each of them in two parts. The first is an Adagio, characterised by a moderately imitative writing, followed by a fast Giga in 12/8 followed by a slow Passacaglia; the fourth movement is a fast Canzona in a fugal duple metre, followed by the final Giga in 12/8. The Canzona in particular, which is marked by a progressive rhythmic acceleration that is structured with a repetition and overlapping developments (each time different) of the two elements constituting the subject, underlines the fact the style of Colista is not based on beauty of the melodic line but rather on emphasising the three contrapuntal voices and rhythmic contrasts. The use of correlation techniques between the various movements of the Sonata—especially in the fugal movement that condenses the rhythmic and melodic elements taken up in the other movements of the Simfonia—is not found in other Roman composers and highlights a new conception of relations between the various movement of the same Sonata.

From this point of view, Colista turns out to be the only Roman composer of his time to be able to combine what Francesco Gasparini called ‘artifice’, ‘beauty’ and ‘variety of subjects’, following an instrumental conception marked by the balance between the different parts and also establishing, though to a different extent, Corellian stylistic guidelines.
The Sinfonia a 3 by Ugolini which is included in our programme (as well as that by Colista) was found in the aforementioned manuscript preserved in Turin. It is in four movements [Canzona–Allemanda–Corrente–Giga–Saltarello], preceded by a very short prelude of only a few bars, written in dotted rhythm. It is followed by a quite short Moderato movement in duple metre, vaguely similar to the style of 16th and 17th century instrumental Canzona, which is followed by an Allemanda. The next movement is a slow Corrente in triple metre followed by a Giga in 12/8, which flows into the final dance like movement, in triple time.

The sonata da camera constituted an independent genre in the musical life of that time and soon became an integral part of the entertainment at court and at the palaces of the nobility. The trio sonata in D major by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) presented in our programme is taken from Opera Seconda di Sonate da camera a 3 (Sonate da Camera a trí, Opus II, published 1685); it is for the first time here transcribed by us for two mandolins and bass, according to the ordinary practice—absolutely usual to the pragmatic 18th-century spirit—of adapting a sonata to any suitable instrument.

It is divided into the four usual movements, Preludio, Allemanda, Corrente and Gavotta. It shows a clear French influence, probably due to direct contact that Corelli had during more than 30 years spent in Rome, where the French had an important role in the cultural life of the city.

Corelli’s style was defined by Antimo Liberati ‘the most delectable and unrivalled sign, filled with all the loveliness, and beauty that can come across the human mind’.

The paradigmatic quality of Corelli’s music was immediately understood and accepted when, on 1 January 1700, the long-awaited Opus V was published which followed 41 prints of his previous publications. Opus V established itself throughout Europe as ‘masterly, balanced and of formal perfection’. Its extraordinary popularity required countless reprints already from the year of its first publication—over 50 in Italy and 29 in Europe—and gave rise to an unprecedented amount of printed and manuscript, even partial, transcriptions, not only for flute, harpsichord, guitar, but also for the mandolino, as in the case of the manuscript version of Sonata No. 7 Op. V (Preludio–Corrente–Sarabanda–Giga) included in this programme.

Our mandolino version is indeed based on an extant manuscript transcription, written in tablature for the 4-course mandolino, which is found in the Libro di Sonate per il Mandolino Dell’Ecc.mo Sig.re Don Bartolomeo Ruspoli Principe di Cerveteri (Santini collection, Münster Diözesanbibliothek) whose title page inscription is reproduced in the following article.

Although, regrettably, of the four movements composed by Corelli only the Preludio and first part of the Corrente survive, the connection with the household of Francesco Maria Ruspoli makes this manuscript a matter of great interest in the history of the mandolin and its repertoire—it is discussed further below.

The court of the Prince of Cerveteri, Francesco Maria Ruspoli (1672–1731), whose eldest son Bartolomeo (1697–1741) was an amateur mandolino player, was the most singular cultural environment of Rome in the early decades of the 18th century. At his court, besides Handel, who was welcomed by Prince in May 1707, some of the most important Italian composers in Europe were active, including Corelli, Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, Antonio Caldara.

Besides Corelli’s transcription of Sonata no. 7, Opus V, the Libro di Sonate per il Mandolino contains a large number of compositions in Italian tablature for the 4-course mandolino, dated around 1730, the authors of which are still mostly unidentified. It also contains other pieces (which are chronologically later) for one or two 5- and 6-course mandolinos and figured bass, some of them composed by Cristoforo Signorelli and Nicola Romaldi.

Batoni’s painting of Lord Brudenell with a 4-course mandolin and a copy of Corelli’s Opus V has been discussed above; our version of Sonata no. 5 Opus V (Adagio–Allegro–Adagio–Allegro–Giga) played with plectrum, finds a precedent in a surviving transcription
for chitarrina a penna o vero Loeto co l’ottava (actually an 8-course 18th century chitarrina Italiana or ‘bass mandola’ with movable bridge and canted belly)—and written in tablature—which was found in a manuscript dating from the third decade of the 18th century, as discussed in the following essay.

Antonio Caldara (1670–1736), after having served as maestro di cappella to Charles IV, Duke of Mantua, and later in Barcelona as chamber composer to Charles VI of Austria, moved to Rome becoming maestro di cappella to the above-mentioned Francesco Maria Ruspoli, where he came into close contact with Corelli, Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, Pasquini, and Handel, whose place he took in 1709. Although in 1716 Caldara obtained a post of vice-chapel master at the Augsburg Court in Vienna, where he remained until his death, he continued to send cantatas and oratorios to prince Ruspoli. The Sinfonia for mandolino included in this programme, here proposed with an added bass line, is also part of the Bartolomeo Ruspoli’s Libro di Sonate per il Mandolino housed at the Münster Diözesanbibliothek.

The use of the mandolino as an alternative instrument to the violin or flute is well documented by several publications, in which the multiple instrumental possibilities are expressly stated. Among these are the sonatas by Robert Valentine (Sonate per il traversiero, col basso che possono servire per violino, mandola et oboe [...] Opera XII), published in Rome by Antonio Cletus in 1730, and Opus II of the Bolognese composer Pietro Giuseppe Gaetano Boni, dated between 1717 and 1728 (Divertimenti per camera a violino, violone, cimbalo, flauto e mandola). The alternative destination to other instruments mentioned in these publications, should not only be understood as an editorial expedient to increase sales, but is linked to the ancient instrumental performing practice ‘with all sorts of instruments’. As documented by the Corellian transcription here presented, behind this practice (which was still widespread well into the 18th century) there was a conception of musical writing that allowed instruments, different in their nature and character, to perform any Sonata written for a high-register instrument (and continuo) simply by means of minimum and appropriate changes, to match the natural idiom the instrument being played.

Two movements of a sonata by Arcangelo Corelli, in the book of Sonate for the mandolino, owned by Bartolomeo Ruspoli, Prince of Cerveteri, by Davide Rebuffa

The rich cultural ambience in Rome, around the Prince Francesco Maria Ruspoli (1672–1741) is well known to scholars, though his important patronage is still far from being fully evaluated, beyond the support offered to some of the most important composers and artists active in Europe—Handel, Corelli, Scarlatti, Caldara and others. A glimpse of this precious environment can be seen in an unpublished and long-neglected manuscript, the ‘Libro di Sonate per il Mandolino dell’Ecc.mo Sig.re Don Bartolomeo Ruspoli principe di Cerveteri’ (Book of Sonatas for Mandolin of the Most Excellent Sir Don Bartolomeo Ruspoli Prince of Cerveteri).

Bartolomeo was the eldest son of Francesco Maria and a mandolin amateur.

The connection with the household of Francesco Maria makes this manuscript a source of great interest in the history of the mandolin and its repertoire, as well as shedding light on little details of musical life around the Prince. The Book of Sonatas for the Mandolino, now part of the Santini collection kept at the Diözesanbibliothek in Münster, contains a large number of compositions for the 4- and 5-course mandolino, written in Italian tablature, the authors of which are still largely unidentified. James Tyler dated all the mandolin compositions of the Santini collection, written in tablature, to around 1730.

A manuscript with shelfmark Hs 3448 constitutes the main body of pieces written in tablature contained in Bartolomeo Ruspoli’s collection: 121 short pieces, including some by Antonio Caldara (1670–1736) and Robert Valentine (c.1671–1747). The other manuscripts containing pieces written in tablature are: Hs 4107, of 64 folios (the only one to contain also vocal pieces), Hs 4108, of 36 folios; Hs 4109, of 16 folios; Hs 4110, of 23 folios (the subject of the present study); Hs 4111, of 5 folios; Hs 4112, of 32 folios. To these must be added other manuscripts which are chronologically later (according to Tyler, written around 1740), in which there are compositions written in staff notation; these include sonatas and concertos for one or two 5- or 6-course mandolins, by Christoforo Signorelli (Hs 4014, 4015, 4016, 4017, 4018, 4019, 4020, 4021 and 4022) and two sinfonie for solo mandolin by Nicola Romaldi (HS 3424).

Given the anonymity of the majority of the compositions distributed in these manuscripts, the recent discovery in manuscript Hs 4110 of transcriptions of two movements from a sonata from Op. V of Corelli, discussed here, is particularly important, drawing into consideration one of the greatest names in music of that time. We know about the significant contacts that Corelli had with Francesco Ruspoli; Corelli directed Handel’s Resurrection at the Palazzo Ruspoli, in Rome, for Easter 1708. This manuscript is also
the only known source to contain a version for ‘baroque’ mandolino of a composition by Corelli; it is curious that until now it had eluded musicologists and highly qualified mandolin experts, including the late James Tyler, who is credited with having catalogued all the ‘baroque’ mandolin manuscripts and printed sources and was the first who described its historical performing practice.

The four, five and six-course ‘baroque’ mandolino

The extant mandolino compositions of the second half of the 17th century and the first four decades of the 18th—surviving in both tablature and staff notation—are intended for 4-, 5-, and sometimes 6-course instruments, to be played exclusively with the fingertips of the right hand. The genealogy and morphology of the mandolino has been discussed in Lute News 104, and elsewhere in the present issue, but to recap, this type of mandolin, which can be called ‘baroque mandolino’ to distinguish it from the more famous Neapolitan mandolin (the latter played with a plectrum and introduced to Rome and Naples in the mid-18th century) is characterised by a narrow and enlonged body, the bridge glued on soundboard, a rosette carved in the soundboard, gut strings knotted around the neck and fingerboard and a sicle-shaped pegbox. These structural characteristics largely being derived from the lute, made it all the easier for lute players to employ the mandolino as a complementary instrument to theorbo and archlute, to perform in the high register and using the same techniques and a similar tuning, as I discussed at some length in Lute News 113.

Especially in Tuscany and the region of Rome, the term ‘mandolino’ was often preferred to ‘mandola’, not to indicate a smaller instrument—this was to be the case for the first time with the production of Antonio Stradivari’s workshop, and became normal in the later centuries—but only as a synonym or to indicate an identical instrument with a smaller number of strings. The tuning of the 4-course mandolino with a single top string was (from bass to treble): E₂, A₂, D₃, G₄.

The stringing and tuning of the 5-course mandolino (B₂, E₂, A₂, D₃, G₄) and that of the 6-course mandolino (G₂ or F♯₂, B₂, E₂, A₂, D₃, G₄) is characterised by the double first course and by the addition of a fifth lower course.

Manuscript HS 4110 in the Diocesan Library of Münster, and Corelli transcriptions for the mandolin

The Santini collection is considered one of the largest and most valuable sources of Italian music from the 16th and 17th centuries. It consists mainly of sacred music and includes about 20,000 pieces in about 4,500 manuscripts and 1,200 printed works. This exceptional collection was gathered together by Abbot Fortunato Santini (1778–1861), Roman priest and musician. Santini donated the collection to the Diocese of Münster on condition that it remained in Rome until his death, and in 1862 it was moved to Germany. Only about 40 years later, the musicologist Edward Dent consulted the Santini collection looking for material on Alessandro Scarlatti and described in an article its poor state of preservation. Later, Joseph Killing began to examine and catalogue the collection for his dissertation, ‘Treasures of sacred music, the library of abbot Fortunato Santini’ (1908), but the catalogue was unfinished because of his untimely death. In 1923 the Library of the University of Münster received the collection on loan, with a contract period of 25 years. The Department of Musical Studies at the University of Münster, and Karl Gustav Fellerer in particular, dealt with the cataloguing and enhancement of the material. From 1931 to 1937 there was published in the Yearbook of Sacred Music an alphabetical catalogue of religious works in the collection, but because of the suppression of the magazine by the Nazi regime even this work was not completed. The complete catalogue of the university library was destroyed in October 1943 during an air raid but the collection, which was kept elsewhere during the war, could be returned to the university library at the end of hostilities. Unfortunately in 1946, due to a flood, some important manuscripts (including works by Palestrina and Pergolesi) were lost.

With the exception of a few pieces in manuscript Hs 3448 and Hs 4108, where the name of the composer is indicated (Antonio Caldara and Robert Valentine), the other manuscripts in the collection with mandolin tablatures contain compositions of as yet unidentified authors. My recent discovery, in one of the manuscripts, of two movements of a sonata from Corelli’s Op. V is therefore significant. The Corellian compositions transcribed for the mandolino in Hs 4110/1 are the Prelude and the Corrente from Corelli’s Sonata no. 7 in D minor, Op. V, intabulated for the 4-course ‘baroque’ mandolin. Of which is here published for the first time the original tablature (Figures 1, 2, 4, 5) and its transcription into modern notation (Figures 3 and 6).

While the Prelude (f.18r) has been transcribed in its entirety (Figures 1, 2), only the first part of the Corrente (f. 19v) is transcribed (Figures 4, 5). The pages used for the tablature transcriptions of the Prelude and Corrente are the only ones in this entire mandolin collection in which we find the violin clef at the beginning of the four-line stave—an anomaly of course, given the context of tablature. Nor would it have been easy to use the staves for staff notation, if this had been an alternative use for this music paper, since it is a four-line stave. Nonetheless the presence of many traces of deleted notes seems to reveal that the clef may have been used to write notes in staff notation: on the last four lines of the four-line stave of the Corrente (f. 19r, Figure 5) one can see numbers and maybe even erased black notes, as if—perhaps for lack of more suitable paper or to economise—the scribe has erased music written earlier, with the intention of transcribing the end of the first part of the Corrente, though this was never completed.

The handwriting of the scribe of these two compositions by Corelli is careless and far less organised than that of most of the other compositions of the collection, written in tablature. If we add all the erasures and uncertainties it may be assumed that it is not the work of a professional copyist but, an attempt at transcriptions by a mandolin amateur or student. In other compositions noted in tablature (in the hands of other copyists) we do not find corrections or erasures; this is usually the case with copies made by a professional hand, especially in the case of copies of already existing tablatures.

A further indication of an amateur at work, after the end of the Prelude and before the beginning of the Corrente, are some rough drafts of the opening of the Prelude (f.19r, Figure 4). The copyist...
at first tried to transpose it from D minor to A minor (down a fourth and with the fourth course tuned in E and played as an open string) believing that in that way he could perhaps maintain unchanged the intervals of the original part—but the attempt was immediately interrupted when, as soon as the second bar, he realised that he had already reached the high C5, corresponding to the fifth fret of the first string. The copyist went then back to the original D minor key, accepting that he would often have to transpose down an octave lower to avoid excessively difficult positions for the left hand (seen as soon as the third movement of the first bar). Likewise, when the original source text goes down to the bass register, our mandolino player was forced to transpose some notes one octave higher, because of the limited extension of the 4-course baroque mandolino in the lower register, compared to that of the violin. Although it is true that the use of octave jumps in the low register was almost inevitable, some of the transcriber’s choices are still unpleasant, and hardly convincing, especially in the Corrente. This is particularly noticeable in a solo mandolino performance, although we do not know if this and other transcriptions in the manuscript were intended as solos or for performance with another instrument playing the bass, in which case, the unpleasant octave transpositions seem to be nearly acceptable.

Though most of mandolino tablatures in the book simply consist of literal transcriptions of an original violin or flute part without diminutions and ornamentation (except some trills), they are nonetheless an important document for the study of the repertoire and performance practice of the baroque mandolino.

As noted in the programme essay above, the use of the mandolino as an alternative instrument to the violin or flute in Rome is well documented on the title pages of such works as Robert Valentine’s Sonate per il traversiero, col basso che possono servire per violino, mandola et oboe […] Opera XII (Rome: Antonio Cleton, 1730) and Pietro Giuseppe Gaetano Boni’s Opus II, dated between 1717 and 1728, Divertimenti per camera a violino, violone, cimbalò, flauto e mandola (fascimile: S.P.E.S., 1985). These directions should not only be understood as an editorial expedient to increase sales, but are linked to the most ancient instrumental performing practice ‘with all sorts of instruments’, mutatis mutandis for the idiom of the instrument being played. And as noted above, the choice of transcribing Corelli for the mandolino, particularly Opus V, is not surprising, since the work was admired across Europe as the acme of balance and formal perfection, endlessly reprinted from the very year of first publication, and widely transcribed for flute, harpsichord, 5-course guitar and ‘chitarra a penna’.

Conclusively, as an additional documentary evidence of the cult of Corelli’s Op. V, even many years after its publication, and of the specific use of the mandolin to perform his sonatas, we should recall the magnificent painting by Pompeo Batoni, dated 1758 (Boughton House, Kettering, Northamptonshire), depicting Lord John Brudenell with a mandolin and holding in his hands a manuscript turned to the end of Corelli’s Opus V, Sonata VI.
Figure 3. Arcangelo Corelli, ‘Preludio’ from Sonata op. V, no. 7, transcription for the 4-course baroque mandolino (Münster, Diözesanbibliothek, HS 4110, ff.18r–v).

Figure 4. Münster, Diözesanbibliothek, HS 4110, f. 19r, ‘Corrente’, transcription for the mandolino (first part).
Figure 5. Münster, Diözesanbibliothek, HS 4110, f.19r, ‘Corrente’ transcription for the mandolino (final part).

Figure 6. Arcangelo Corelli, ‘Corrente’ from Sonata op. V, n. 7, transcription of the first part for the 4-course baroque mandolino (Münster, Diözesanbibliothek, HS 4110, ff.19r-)}
Figure 7 ‘Preludio’, Corelli’s original version (Op. V, Roma 1700).

Figure 8 ‘Corrente’, Corelli’s original version, ibid.

Figure 7 ‘Preludio’, Corelli’s original version (Opera quinta. Parte Prima - [Seconda] Sonate a Violino e Violone o Cembalo Dedicate all’Altezza Serenissima Elettorale di Sofia Carlotta Elettrice di Brandenburgo Principessa di Brunswich et Luneburgo Duchessa di Prussia e di Magdeburgo Clever Giulier Bergh Stettino Pomerania Cassubia e de Vandali in Silesia Grossen Burgravia di Norimberg Principessa di Halbernsta Min- den e Camin Contesa di Hobernolbern e Ravensburg Raveneztain Lunenburg e Buttau da Arruangelo Corelli da Fusignano Opera quinta ... Incisa da Gasparo Pietra Santa ... [a Roma] primo Gennaio 1700.

Figure 8 ‘Corrente’, Corelli’s original version, ibid.
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A mandolin workshop with Davide Rebuffa and Mauro Squillante

Our mandolin-themed meeting on Saturday 4th February was followed by a workshop, the next day, at the Fitzrovia Community Centre near Goodge Street, London, led by Davide Rebuffa and Mauro Squillante. Sandra Woodruff and Susanna Ingram of the BMG Federation had worked hard behind the scenes to organise things, and Davide provided an extract of his La Prassi Esecutiva Storic del Mandolino nel XVII e XVIII Secolo, translated by Susanna Ingram. The thirty-odd participants had prepared movements from a sonata by Sauli (from Davide’s edition of Sauli Sonatas published by Ut Orpheus Edizione) for which Davide had provided a bass line, in what seems very likely to have been the manner of the time. (The same piece appeared arranged for archlute in Lute News 113.)

As an ‘orchestral’ work, for the afternoon session conducted by Mauro Squillante, the participants had prepared a Sinfonia for two mandolins and bass by Gervasio, from the mid-18th century Gimo manuscripts, discussed above (available at http://www.free-scores.com/download-sheet-music.php?pdf=133) The bass line was provided by two theorebos, a bass viol and a mandolin-cello.

Sinfonia a due mandolini, è Basso

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Sinfonia a due mandolini, è Basso

Giovanni Battista Gervasio
(c. 1725-c. 1755)
Gian 116

Davide Rebuffa’s class began his introduction to the basics of baroque mandolin at the very beginning, with the question of how to hold the instrument in a secure yet comfortable posture. Shoulder straps were not used historically for the smaller instruments, but rather a length of ribbon or gut held taut between buttons at the bottom of the body and near the neck joint, which hooked discretely onto one of the buttons of one’s attire. (See David van Edwards collection of historic images at www.vanedwards.co.uk/straps.htm). A 45° angle allowing thumb-outside technique is often what we see in paintings. A long thumbnail, seen in portraits, would have made thumb-index alternation difficult, although this is found sometimes even in late lute composers such as Weiss, and in the 19th century guitar. Low tension (with pitch a tone lower than today) corresponds to the low right-hand position, near the bridge, seen almost universally in iconography of the baroque era (see http://l.luth.free.fr/baroque/index.html or Mimmo Peruffo’s collection of images in Lute News 94); if your instrument is more tightly strung you can play nearer the rose. Davide discussed tone production with each student in turn. It may be that our taste is different from historical taste; perhaps a brighter, more harpsichord-like tone was preferred in the historic past (see running discussion in Lute News 101, 102, 106).

When Davide began his studies he was able meet elderly players in their 80s and 90s who played with their little finger resting on the soundboard—a tradition in common with many Middle Eastern instruments. Perhaps this ancient aspect of technique was only abandoned after the First World War, under the influence of the classical guitar, where the right hand does not touch the soundboard at all.

The playing of scales was discussed; the size of the mandolin facilitates one finger per fret as a principle. Of the early tutors (see below) Fouchetii (1771), Denis (1768) and Leone all indicate the use of slurs—pull-off and hammer-on in modern parlance. For arpeggios we use thumb, index and middle fingers (p, m and i) but not the ring finger (a). In ascending scales, we play thumb–index up to the second course, and when descending, use middle and index down to the third. Articulation should be varied, sometimes legato, sometimes staccato. Davide urged regular practice of ornamentation and trills, and discussed the finer points of left and right-hand fingering.

The class worked on the opening movement of the Sauli Partita. He was an Italian composer working in Vienna at a time when many French lutenists had migrated there after the lute had fallen out of fashion in France; French influences are apparent in the piece, though the second movement, an allemande, borrows a lot from Corelli.

Mauro Squillante gave a class on interpretation during the morning to one student at a time, and in the afternoon led all the attendees in a rendition of a Sinfonia by Gervasio, as mentioned above. He commented that in the absence of really detailed evidence about interpretation, a contrapuntal approach is probably historically appropriate. The musical structure of much of the repertoire is fairly simple, based around chords I, IV and V, and so appoggiaturas
assume great importance as they add spice and dissonance. Judicious use of accent is also important to mark changes of harmony or the end of a musical ‘sentence’. Mauro gave us a great deal of bar by bar guidance in musical interpretation. A final run-through marked the end of a day both musically and intellectually stimulating. We hope to repeat the whole experience before too long.

The early mandolin tutors and their availability


Giovanni Fouchetti, (1757–89) Methode Pour apprendre facilement à jouer de la Mandoline à 4 et à 6 Cordes, (1771) (both downloadable from http://www.musicaneo.com/)


A demonstration of mandolin plectrum making

There are many traditions of plectrum playing on plucked instruments. Mediaeval lutes could be played with a length of stiff gut string, but this was never the mandolin tradition.

One of the early mandolin tutors recommends a plectrum about 5 cm long, with about 1.35 cm of its length projecting from the hand. Plectra are made from feathers or cherry bark. Davide was able to learn the traditional making of plectra with elderly players, when he was younger. For feather plectra, ostrich, goose or raven quills were used. The hardness and rigidity of hand-made plectra will vary; Leone actually preferred a quill plectrum with a little ‘beard’ of worn fibres for a softer tone.

To make a quill plectrum a sharp knife and sandpaper are needed, and a small bench vice and gloves are very useful.

The very tip of the quill is cut off and discarded, and the remaining end of the quill is pared down the middle with the knife.

The final stage is sanding down to make the plectrum smooth and flat, and trimming the tip to the desired shape with scissors.
Plectra can also be made from cherry bark. The bark of a young tree is used as this will be more flexible. The gauge of course can vary according to taste and requirements. A plectra carefully stored (in tinfoil) or otherwise sealed can last decades. Here is one made perhaps 30 years ago.

To make a cherry bark plectrum you will need a piece of bark, linseed, olive or almond oil, a sharp knife and sandpaper.

A piece of the bark is pared off and oil is poured onto it.

Vigorous sanding (hence the blurred picture!) has the effect of both flattening and thinning the bark, and wearing down ragged edges.

At last the end is trimmed to the shape you want with scissors. At the tip it should be +/-1mm in thickness.

So now you are ready for . . .
SATURDAY 22nd APRIL 2017, JOINT STUDY DAY WITH THE EARLY DANCE CIRCLE:
15th CENTURY DANCE AND THE LUTE

This was a very special meeting, which offered us the opportunity not only to hear leading experts address the question of whether and when people danced to the lute in the 15th century, but also to unite theory with practice with audience participation, and finally a magnificent dance display with costumes dancers from three different historical dance troupes, Renaissance Foornotes, Dance Past and the EDC itself, accompanied by no fewer than six musicians, including duetting lutes and pipe and tabor. Our last joint meeting (written up in Lute News 98) established that it is perfectly possible to dance renaissance and baroque dances, to a solo lute, or to lutes in ensemble; this may have happened in history, especially before the rise of the violin, or when lady or gentleman amateurs (much more likely to play lutes than fiddles) had to provide their own music for their friends to dance to. At this recent meeting we established that Italy seems to have been the epicentre of dancing to the lute in the early renaissance, perhaps following Graeco-Roman prejudices in favour of strings, and against wind instruments. And from a practical point of view—it works! Dancing to lutes can be delightful.

There is no need to summarise the morning’s sessions, as they are transcribed verbatim below. After lunch theory gave way to practice with a session in which Hazel Dennison invited the audience to take the floor, and after first practising the basic steps or units of Domenico’s dances: piva, saltarello, quadernaria, and bassadanza, to dance Domenico’s ballo Belfiore. Music was played by Derek Guyatt and Peter Greener on lutes and Bill Tuck on pipe and tabor.

Domenico da Piacenza (c.1400–c.1470), also known as Domenico da Ferrara was an Italian Renaissance dancing master; his pupil Guglielmo codified this in the term *ombreggiare*.

Domenico’s dances: piva, saltarello, quadernaria, and bassadanza, to dance Domenico’s ballo Belfiore. Music was played by Derek Guyatt and Peter Greener on lutes and Bill Tuck on pipe and tabor.

Domenico da Piacenza (c.1400–c.1470), also known as Domenico da Ferrara was an Italian Renaissance dancing master; his pupil Guglielmo codified this with the term *ombreggiare*. What did these terms mean? Collins Italian Dictionary gives the sense of what these words seem to have meant. *Onda* means wave, and *ondeggiare* today means to undulate, to ripple. *Ombra* means shade and *ombreggiare* is to shade. *Campo* is a field, pitch or site, and *campeggiare* can mean to stand out, as in a picture. Within the dance treatises of Domenico, Guglielmo and Cornazano these terms encapsulate skills essential for the art of perfect dancing in the courts of northern Italy c.1440–1500.

*Ondeggiare* concerns the rising and lowering of the body through skilled working of the feet and lower limbs. The rise could be sustained or swift, and the lowering swift or sustained, to create contrasting dynamics. Domenico enhances his instructions with the image of a gondola lifted upon a wave. He implies a need for subtle undulation ‘ni troppo ni poco’ neither too much nor too little. It is his pupil Guglielmo who codifies this with the term *ombreggiare*. Perhaps he is more concerned with the external attributes of the dancer in conveying renaissance concepts of magnificence and *virtù*, the self-fashioned man holding court and centre stage. His treatise seems that of an observer rather than a practitioner. It is Domenico and Guglielmo who leave us a legacy of foundations for the perfect art of dancing. Firm foundations built through essential practice of steps and measure, developing physical skills in order to convey eloquent style and poise, all embellished with a subtle flourish of *ombreggiare*, *ondeggiare* and even *campeggiare*.

After tea the three dance troupes danced to the accompaniment of six musicians. You can see photographs and the full programmes in *The Lutezine*. The dances were interspersed with lute duets played by Matthew Spring and Chris Elmes: Landini’s *ballate* ‘Donna’l tuo partimento’, ‘Amor c’al tuo suggetto’, the anonymous ballata ‘Eh, vatene segnor mio’, and Andrea Stafani’s ‘Isenti matutino’; Franco-Flemish pieces, Hayne van Ghizeghem’s ‘De tous biens plaine’ and Dufay’s ‘Je veull chanter de cuer joyeux’; and improvised barse dances over ‘Le Petit Rouen’ (Brussel MS), and ‘Ingrata’ (Domenico and Ebreo arr. Gaita). The duets were as much about demonstrating techniques and instruments as performing pieces, and the vocal pieces in particular were freely and loosely interpreted.

You can see the programme of dances in *The Lutezine*, these included the following, *Alessandresca*, an Italian bassadanza that was clearly very popular as it appears in eight surviving sources and unsurprisingly they don’t all agree; probably intended for a single couple at a time, here it was danced by three couples in a triangular formation to add an extra dimension, to new music composed by Chris Elmes: *Bialte di Chastiglia* appears in both the Italian and French sources, it has a very unusual formation and structure and surviving music. *The Italian version of the dance is for a lady between two men, but here danced by two sets, one of men and one of women. La Danse de Cleves is a Burgundian base dance and has its own music, though the choreography is vague; the dancers used a reconstruction by Madeline Inglehearn, with four couples
dancing in a square formation to fit the available space, though originally it was probably performed either by a single couple or by a column of dancers. Matthew Spring had created an arrangement which he was joined by Bill Tuck.

In Italy in the 15th century we have choreographies for two major dance styles; bassadanza and ballo. For Northern Europe we have quite a few sources for bassas dances, but just a few hints that there was an equivalent to the Italian ballo in Northern Europe. There are a handful of Italian balli that also appear in Northern European sources, such as Rostibolli and Bialte di Chastiglia, but also there are two dances in one of the Italian sources that are said to be French and that look stylistically like Italian ballo. The most comprehensive source that we have for late 15th century dance is a little book from England called the Gresley manuscript and it contains 26 choreographies and 13 tunes. The dances in that book can be re-constructed in the style of the Italian ballo. Next we saw Robert Huggett’s reconstruction of Esperens with an arrangement of the original music by Chris Elmes. Then we enjoyed a different interpretation of La Danse de Cleves with Bill Tuck playing pipe and tabor. Rosti Bolli obviously had wide and long lasting popularity as it exists in versions for two and also for three dancers and it appears in most of the Italian dance manuscripts of the period. It also turns up in English and French sources. This was now performed by Dance Past with Bill Tuck providing the music.

Prigionera too was clearly popular in its day and appears in 8 of the 12 surviving Italian 15th century sources; it has surviving music, and rather interesting music having a number of half measures sprinkled through it. Originally the dance was for a single couple, but here was danced by four couples arranged around the room, in the manner of a ballroom dance. The arrangement was by Bill Tuck, who played it together with Matthew Spring.

Legiadora is a 15th century Italian ballo that has a distinctly English country-dance feel about it. Here it is was performed by members of the EDC committee with music performed by a massed band of the musicians.

Marchesana appears in 7 of the 12 surviving Italian sources and has surviving music. Just to show that they do occasionally follow the instructions(!) the dancers performed this dance with just a single couple.
The question of who played for mediaeval dance and on what instruments is one which has not perhaps received the attention it deserves. The lute of course was a very important instrument, and the question of its use in playing for the dance in the renaissance and baroque periods more generally, was addressed at our last joint meeting [see Lute News 98—Ed.]. Let us begin with some statistical evidence.

**Information from illuminated manuscripts**

In the early 1970s Edmund Bowles, on leave from his post at IBM, carried out a search in which he checked through all of the 15th-century illuminated manuscripts held by four of the world’s largest repositories of such material: the British Library (BL), the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), the Pierpont Morgan Library (PM) in NY and the Walters Museum (WM) in Baltimore, listing all of those with images of musical instruments. In addition, he noted in what kind of context the instruments appeared: a hunting scene, a banquet, battle or dance. The results were published in a series of papers in the journal *Notes*, periodical of the Music Library Association.1 It is a remarkable piece of work to have gone through all those manuscripts, rather than following one’s normal piecemeal approach. The totals are as follows.

- **BL**: 253 manuscripts of which 185 have images of instruments, giving 466 separate images, 9 including dancing,
- **BNF**: 306 manuscripts (mostly French or Flemish, only 5 Italian,) 157 with images of instruments; 536 separate images, 23 include dancing,
- **WM**: 274 manuscripts, 134 with images of instruments; 440 separate pictures, 7 include dancing
- **PM**: 116 manuscripts containing 428 images of instruments, 9 include dancing.

From this total of nearly one thousand manuscripts some 1870 images of musical instruments could be extracted. But of these only 48 could be said to depict dancing. Of this 48, the numbers associated with different instruments is as follows:

- 14 with bagpipe
- 13 with pipe and tabor
- 12 with loud wind (trumpets and shawms)
- 4 with harp
- 3 with recorder (including ‘pipe’ or ‘flageolet’)
- 1 with lute (in ensemble with harp)
- 1 with triangle, psaltery and horn

The conclusion from these, admittedly rather rough, statistics is that the lute was not frequently used as dance accompaniment. Nor was the recorder—contrary to much common practice these days. The more surprising result is the preponderance of the pipe and tabor, which is more or less neglected in modern reconstructions of 15th century dance.

One factor that must be taken account of, however, is that the majority of these manuscripts are French or Burgundian in origin, with very few Italian examples (of the 23 from the BNF that show dance, only one is Italian—the familiar image reproduced above with dancers dancing to the harp from Guglielmo’s De Practica Seu Arte Tripudii, BNF MS 973). It would appear, therefore, that Italian 15th century dance may be very much under-represented in our sample.

**Instruments of the Italian courts**

The first question we try to answer here is ‘what instruments were available to the musicians of 15th century Italy?’. The second is to consider just which might have been used to accompany dance. Unfortunately, there are few, if any, surviving instruments from the 15th century in any sort of condition that might lead to their reconstruction. The best we can do is look at their pictorial representations. Perhaps the most valuable of these representations are the intarsia panels created to decorate the studiolos of various dukes and, in particular, the two that were created for Federico de Montefeltro at his palaces in Urbino and Gubbio. The latter has been carefully restored and is on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. If you go to New York this is a must to see; it is reconstructed in its entirety, except that there would have been paintings in the blank spaces above the panels. (Lots of images can be seen in internet searches, for instance [https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=intarsia+studiolo&tpv=intarsia+studiolo](https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=intarsia+studiolo&tpv=intarsia+studiolo).)

The images created here are a very good representation of the instruments currently available at this important court in the 1480s, which was acknowledged as holding to high cultural values. It can be assumed therefore that similar courts, such as Ferrara, Mantua, Milan, Florence and elsewhere would have a similar array of instruments available. One proviso is that Federico had no love for trombones, shawms, or other loud winds (or at least didn’t feel that they had the right associations for this context) and these are absent from the intarsia representations. Apart from the tabor pipe, the only wind instruments present appear to be two straight cornetti (although the mouthpiece ends are not visible, their conical shape precludes them being recorders).
The instruments that we do see here are pipe and tabor . . .

harp and tambourine . . .

organ and rebec or fiddle . . .

and an instrument very little played even within today's early music revival, the wire-strung cetra.

Any of these instruments, or groupings thereof, might plausibly have been used to accompany the dancing at the court. Noticeably absent along with the shawm and trombone are the bagpipes. From this we can assume that neither was welcome within the inner confines of the court though they may well have featured in more rustic settings (in the case of the bagpipes) or for large outdoor ceremonies (in the case of the shawms and trombones). I would be inclined to conclude that what instruments played for dancing would depend on where the dance took place.

We may therefore imagine that dancing within the confines of the court would have been accompanied by instruments selected from this range, for formal or informal dances within interior and possibly quite small spaces.

Federico’s court at Urbino was widely regarded as being highly cultured. The dancing master Guglielmo d’Ebreo was attached to the court from around 1474 and would have been familiar with all the instruments represented in these intarsia panels (a similar set exits in the studiolo at Federico’s Urbino palace).

**Instruments in the dance manuals**

Some clue as to what kinds of instruments might be appropriate for accompaniment of the dance might be expected to be presented in the dance manuals themselves, whether in the Burgundian or
the Italian spheres of cultural influence. (For England at this period we now have the Gresley MS.) These are, however, surprisingly reticent on this matter. In the case of the French/Burgundian repertoire one might reasonably follow the assumptions of the later 16th century writers, such as Arena and Arbeau.

From a slightly earlier period there is story told in a poem by Guillaume Coquillart (quoted by Daniel Heartz): His *Droits Nouveaux*, a parody of a law book, written about 1482, includes a rather droll story about a would-be dancer trying to impress his lady, and an incompetent taborer engaged to accompany him. Under a section entitled ‘De Pactis’ (‘Of Contracts’) it is used to explore in mock-heroic terms the nature and extent of contract law.

Antonius Arena’s *Leges Dansandi* (‘The Rules of Dancing’) first published in 1529, gives an unambiguous account of the important role of the taborer, at least as an instructor and accompanist for the basse danse. The treatise is quite clear that only the pipe and tabor is considered the appropriate instrument to accompany the basse danse, dismissing reed instruments (shawms) as only of interest to country folk and that

I will certainly not impart my rules for dancing to that crowd, since even if they were to learn the basse danse these rustic progeny would not be able to acquire the style. . . . When you have memorised these passages, take the trouble to find a pipe and tabor player who is also a good teacher of the dances. Unskilled taborers will never teach you to be skilful; no-one can teach what he does not know.

Arbeau’s *Orchaeographic* (published in the 1580s, but describing the dance customs of 50 years earlier) regards pipe and tabor as the preferred instrument for dance accompaniment—if only for the reason that one need pay only one musician! Perhaps a clue also resides in the name of Arbeau: Thoinot Arbeau is the anagrammatic pen name of the French cleric Jehan Tabourot. Tabourot, or Tabouret, is in fact a relatively common surname and may indicate that at some point the family was involved in pipe and tabor playing as their profession.

There is no mention of any accompanying instruments in the Gresley manuscript. This might be taken as a licence to use any instrument that might be available and indeed the tunes are simple enough to accommodate almost anything. A practical choice is again the pipe and tabor, which certainly existed in England in the early 16th century.

In the case of the Italian dance manuals we have a little more detail. There is a well-known passage from Giovanni Ambrosio (who changed his name from Guglielmo d’Ebreo when he converted to Christianity) that describes how one should change one’s manner of dancing in accordance with the style of the accompanying music. Here ‘aira’ is thought to mean timbre, and all will play the same ballo. The shawms will sound in one timbre, the organ in one timbre, the harp in another timbre, the tabor in another timbre and all will play the same ballo. Know that it is necessary for he who dances to dance with that quality [aira] and with that misura and with that tempo that the said musicians will play that is dancing it each one by itself. And if the dancer should always with one quality and although he might dance a misurato and in time, not conforming with the quality/timbre of the said musicians his dancing will be imperfect and it signifies lack of comprehension.

So playing to a lute and harp duo might have a different feeling from dancing to the loud winds, for instance. Although other dance manuals of this period, including that by Domenico da Piacenza, also discuss musical instruments it is invariably in very general terms rather than describing specific instruments.

There are, however, numerous references in the correspondence of the period to grand events that involve dancing; quite often women writing to describe what happened. These are prestigious occasions where it is important to make a great show of magnificence. For these, of course, the *alta capella* (shawms and trombones) along with numerous trumpets would be in attendance, both to accompany the general dancing and to entertain. Some of these also indicate the presence of the ‘tamburini’: the pipe and tabor players, their role being, presumably to accompany smaller scale performances, perhaps indoors (for there is no indication that the *alta capella* ever used drums, let alone tambourines). This is partly a matter of the status of the musical establishment.

Additional documentary evidence comes from the accounts of dancing masters and the fees they might charge for tuition. An interesting example is recounted by Accone in his study of music in Siena before 1500. *The Civic Muse*. The rules of the dancing school (established in Siena in 1493) require that each student is obliged to pay the bagpiper monthly, or 2 soldi every time he dances. The cost of dance lessons was quite substantial, such as 21 lire to learn the galiarda (presumably over a number of weeks or months)—comparable to the monthly salary of a high ranking court musician such as Pietrobono.
Employment records

Further information on the musicians that may have played for the dancing comes from the court records of payments. These are useful in that they enable us to rank musicians according to their perceived importance relative to each other and to other members of the court. Taking 1456 as a typical year, during which Domenico da Piacenza, the great dancing master, was resident in the court of Ferrara, we learn that Pietrobono, the celebrated lutenist was on a salary of 8 lire per month, while Corrado d’Alemagna, leader of the pifferi, was on 30—that might reflect extra duties as bandmaster—and Domenico on 20 lire per month. But Pietrobono was still at an early stage of his career (his tenorista, playing the easier parts of duets, was only earning 2 lire per month.)

By 1476 Pietrobono was earning 18 lire per month, while Corrado was still in place but on a lower rate of 26 lire per month. In that same year of 1476 Francesco Malacise, Pietrobono’s tenorista, was on a salary of 4 lire per month, Paolo Grilli the harpist on 10 lire, Agostino, a trombonist earned 18 lire, Lucido da Norso, a trumpeter, earned 10 lire, Nardo, ‘tamburino’, was paid 3 lire, and Domenico the dancing master earned 7 lire.

These figures are from the contemporary diary of Ugo Calefini and quoted by Lewis Lockwood. Another entry from Calefini’s account lists the presence in 1474 of Nardo the tamburino as a member of the Duchess Eleanor’s entourage. Eleanor of Naples (Leonora of Aragon) had married Ercole d’Este in 1473 and it seems possible that she may have brought some of her musicians with her from Naples. Naples had been under Aragonese rule for some time and was a primary route for the transmission into Italy of Spanish and specifically Aragonese customs into Italy. It is generally supposed that this was the route by which the viol first entered Italy, but may also have been the path for the tamburino with his ‘pipe and tabor’. Here is a contemporary picture of the Aragonese troops parading in Italy, led by a pipe and tabor man.

Domenico was still present at the court of Ferrara in 1474 (while his pupil Guglielmo was in Urbino) but his role appears to have become that of ‘podesta’ or magistrate, possibly a minor official of the court. In 1478 there were no fewer than three ‘tamburini’ on the payroll, including Nardo (who remained at court for the next 20 years). This must be significant; their role must have been something more than to play the tambourine! The term ‘tamburino’ is sometimes mistranslated as tambourine player, but it really meant a pipe and tabor player, who, critically, knew and could teach the dances and therefore had a skill valuable in court life.

Whether this employment of three tamburini indicates a sudden flowering of interest in dancing under the influence of the new duchess is difficult to say, but does seem plausible. Eleanor was the mother of Isabelle d’Este, who became well-known for her support of the arts in the following decades.

Clues from the repertoire

The tunes for 15th century dancing are not complex, except in the sense of frequently requiring a rapid transition to a different rhythm, or ‘misura’, in the case of the Italian balli. It is frequently assumed that this simplicity is to be interpreted as meaning that they were just the ‘eno’ line, upon which some more elaborate polyphony had to be improvised. While this may sometimes have been the case—when employing the alta capella to accompany some grand dance event, for example—it would not be needed for more ordinary or domestic occasions, when perhaps just two or even one musician would suffice.

Any of the instruments listed in the instrumenarium of Federico’s Urbino would be perfectly capable of playing Domenico’s or Guglielmo’s balli tunes. What is less certain is whether the services of Pietrobono with his lute or Corrado and his pifferi could easily be obtained, unless for some great occasion. Dancing, according to Barbara Sparti, did not enjoy such a high status at court that unlimited sums might be granted for its accompaniment. It may have been difficult to persuade Pietrobono (on 18 lire per month) and Corrado (on 26) to accompany the weekly (or nightly) ball when the services of Nardo (on a mere 3 lire per month) might be had much more cheaply!

There is one final comment that may be pertinent to this question. The pipe and tabor is a very simple instrument, with a limited range of about an octave and a fifth. The notes available are largely confined to the diatonic scale, plus a few useable accidentals (achieved by half-holing). It is unusual therefore to find a complete body of tunes that fits without any great modification. The French es-tampies et danses royales (Pierre Aubry) are one such collection, and the balli tunes of Domenico and Guglielmo are another. They are remarkable in that they can all be played on a three-hole pipe. The same also applies to the very earliest tunes in the Playford collection, which may date from before the violin took over (in the mid-16th century) as the primary instrument of dance accompaniment. What is more, the tunes of the balli seem to fit quite idiomatically on the three-hole pipe, and for a pipe in F only an octave transposition is needed from the given key.

I end with a picture, at the foot of this article (a fresco of 1491 of the Dance of the Muses, connected with the 1488 marriage of Giangaleazzo Sforza and Isabella d’Aragona) that I would like to believe that is what we would have seen when Nardo played for the dancing of the ladies of Eleanor’s household.

Notes

1. See Edmund Bowles’ publications in references, below.


References


Lewis Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara 1400-1505: The Creation of a Musical Center in the Fifteenth Century.

Barbara Sparri and Guglielmo Ebreo da Pesaro, De Practica Seu Arte Tripudii: On the Practice or Art of Dancing.

Frank d’Accone, The Civic Muse: Music and Musicians in Siena During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The early lute and its uses, by David van Edwards

Addressing the question of dancing to the late mediaeval lute, perhaps it is best to go back to the first principles, and ask, what was a lute? How and when was it derived from the oud, and when did any distinction arise? I have concentrated here on its relationship with the dance—and since Bill Tuck has talked about ‘tamburini’, its relationship with tambourines!

Here is 1st-century AD Indo-Greek sculpture from the monastère de Hadda, Chakhil-i-Goundi, in the Musée Guimet des Arts Asiatiques.

And here, from around the same time, in the first century, is a statue now in Cleveland Museum of Art, from Pakistan, Gandhara, probably Butkara in Swat, of the Kushan Period (1st century–320) It is interesting that the lute player has his plectrum attached to his wrist (so it doesn’t get lost?)
A thousand years later, from around 1100, there are wood carvings showing a pipe, lutes, tambourine and a Dervish dancer in the Egyptian Museum for Islamic Art in Cairo. To leap forward another two centuries, to the 13th century, here is an illustration from the story of Bayâd und Riyâd, made in Seville, but set in Baghdad, and now in the Vatican Library. Here we have arrived at what we think of as an oud; very large and wide bodied, with a strongly tapering neck, plectrum and scratchplate, suggesting a loud instrument—an important matter for dance accompaniment, to which I shall return.

This is a very famous image, of c.1250, from the Cantigas de Santa Maria of Alfonso el Sabio (1221–84) now in the Escorial, MS 170. Again, a large instrument, played with a plectrum, The decorations on the neck might be frets, because as Henry George Farmer has made clear numerous early Arabic treatises discuss tied-on frets on the neck of the oud.

Now we jump forward a century and a half to c.1476; here is the Allegory of April, from the Triumph of Venus fresco, by Francesca della Cossa in the Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara. Here we have a clear front and back view including the neck joint. The line around the join is probably a tied-on fret.

This brings us to Farmer’s researches on the Arabic literature which make it clear that ouds were built from staves of wood, which must be as thin as possible. The famous musician and trend-setter Ziryab at the court of Khalif Harun around 809 used a lute one third lighter in weight than generally used (Farmer, p. 89) silk strings and an eagle talon plectrum. He added a fifth string to the oud. Hitherto there had only been four strings. The sir, the highest string was yellow, the mathna or second was red, the mathlath or third was white and the bamm, the fourth, was black. He added
the fifth between the second and the third (p. 90). The term *bamm* sounds delightfully onomatopoeic.

Al-Kindi (who died c.874) tells us that the depth of the lute was half the breadth (thus it was a semicircle) and at the widest point was the ‘beating point’ and here was usually a strip of tortoiseshell to prevent the plectrum damaging the slender wood of which the belly was made. This point was a tenth of the length of the string from the bridge. Farmer thus deduces that the string length was 675 mm—like a decent-sized lute in F.

It is necessary that . . . the soundchest should be as thin as possible, and that this should be general, so that there is not in the back any place thinner or thicker than any other place. And likewise in its belly because a difference in the thinness or thickness of its parts would interfere with the evenness of the sound of the strings and the concord of the notes . . . And as for the strings, they are four. The first of them is the *bamm*. And it is of thin gut made up of four strands firmly twisted together. It is of equal gauge throughout, there being not a finer nor a thicker gauge in one place than another. After this is the *mathlath*, and it is similar to the *bamm* except that it is made up of three strands. After this is the *mathna*, and it is not so thick as the *mathlath* as it is made up of only two strands. It is however, of silk, but is of the same gauge as if it were made up of two strands of gut. After this is the *sir*, and it is less than the *mathna* by one strand . . . And it is of silk and of the same gauge as if it were made up of one strand of gut.

From a little later, Ikhwan al-Safa in the 10th century tells us of the lute that:

its ribs should be thin and made from light wood. And its belly especially should be of thin, hard, and light wood, such as will resound when the instrument is played. (p.92)

In the 14th century, by which time of course the lute is established in Europe, Ibn al-Tahhan al-Musiqi tells us:

Take seasoned larch wood which is without flaws, and cut very thin for the belly of the lute. It should be of two or three pieces rather than of one piece. The back should be of thiner wood than the belly, but it should be cut in narrow strips, equally measured, which are placed side by side. The best lutes are made of eleven strips, although thirteen strips are . . . sometimes used, so that the back may be nicely vaulted. The paper which holds the strips together, should be of the finest mansuri . . . As for the belly, and its ornamentation, this latter should be neatly done and securely fixed, otherwise a buzzing sound will result when you play down the fingerboard with the fourth finger. It is advisable that this ornamentation should not be high. Rather let it be flat . . . As for the bridge, it should not be weighted by anything, and should not be made of ivory, ebony, gold, or any precious thing, because it makes the sound of the lute dull. The decoration of the lute is made with aloes wood, sandal wood, or camphor tree wood, but all this is simply for show . . . The best lutes are those which are uncarved and undecorated, and are made from one kind of wood. If it is desirable that it should be decorated with ebony, this should be as light and thin as possible, and sparsely used. (p.94)

In the 15th century Kitab kasha al-humum tells us:

on the authority of Saih bin Abdullah bin Karim al-Nisaburi four essentials to the lute viz. wood as thin as possible . . . It is agreed that the lighter the wood the better the tone. The ancients used four kinds of wood, which is the best method, viz. beech, elm, walnut and vine, all of which have qualities which do not exist in other woods. Beech gives a ringing tone and is polishable; elm gives a fineness and is soft; walnut lasts for ever, is safe from the moth-worm and has a sweet smell. Any other wood used along with it is likewise safe from attack by the moth-worm. Vine . . . has a quality only to be found in the treasury of kings. If these four woods are unobtainable, others may be used but they are not so good. (p.96)

We have no written descriptions of European lutes from this period at all but almost all of this is valid for the lute, except the use of larch for the belly.

From 1333–4 from the book of Safi al Din ‘Abd al-Mu’min we have an important Arab treatise on musical theory (he also wrote another one) and was written while Safi ad-Din was working in the library of the Caliph al-Mustassim. It includes this picture which shows that by now the oud itself has a hard joint between neck and body, plus five strings and frets. I suspect that the gradual move to a hard joint takes place as the number of strings increases: the neck has to get wider, and the geometry of the lute changes.

Now firmly in Europe, a 14th century painting by Pere Sera, in MNAC, Barcelona, we see a lute(?) clearly paired with a gittern, common combination.
The gittern, on the right, was indeed carved from a solid block of wood, and a couple survive, one in Germany, the other, in less good condition, recovered from a latrine in Elblag, Poland. The plectra by now have become dark-coloured feathers or quills.

From 1405 this Coronation of the Virgin by Andrea di Bartolo in the Ca d’Oro, Venice, has a big scratchplate, which combined with the plectrum implies a loud instrument, different in sound from the delicate renaissance lute.

Now we come to the carvings by Luca della Robbia from the Cantoria of singers’ gallery once in the Duomo in Florence, from 1426. Perhaps the musicians are accompanying the dancers (though there are many other panels illustrating Psalm 150, or maybe the children are just singing their own dance tune, something also seen in famous Effects of Good Government fresco in Siena town hall).

From 1405 this Coronation of the Virgin by Andrea di Bartolo in the Ca d’Oro, Venice, has a big scratchplate, which combined with the plectrum implies a loud instrument, different in sound from the delicate renaissance lute.

Now at last we see European mediaeval dance to the lute and tambourine, in this very rare painted wall hanging, probably North Italian (Venetian?) of c.1375 in Basle Museum. The little dog jumping up, and the fact that alternate pairs of dancers are holding handkerchiefs implies that this is meant to be a depiction of a real scene, and no doubt a real dance, or type of dance.

Incidentally this is the earliest image I know of depicting the 5-course lute. Next we come back to England, c.1450, with some stained glass in St Mary Magdalene, Newark (photo © Peter Forrester) again showing the pairing of lute and gittern, though I make no suggestion that the angels are dancing.

This stained glass image of c.1450 St Andrew, Field Dalling, is remarkable for the size of the angel’s plectrum. I don’t think the strings run to the base of the instrument, though the bridge looks like the sort of bridge on a lute where this is the case.
Now several images from Italy. *The wedding of Antioco and Statoniere*, by Michele di Pietro Ciampanti, c.1470, also a drawing by Matteo di Giovanni, is notable for its rock guitar-style lutenist! Perhaps, however, there are trumpeters in a gallery.

From c.1460–70 here is *The Garden of Love* on a birth salver / chessboard from Florence(?), certainly from Italy, with a lute and a vielle playing for dancers.

It is interesting to see that in 1470 some people are still playing 4-course lutes and with a curving shoulder joint. Again from around 1470 here is a man dancing to the sound of a lute; Anthony Rooley likes to think this might be Cornazano dancing to the lute playing of Pietrobono!

A neat indication of how the choice of instruments might be decided by both social and acoustic context is found in three contrasting pictures illustrating the dance of Salome, in the story of John the Baptist. In the crowded ballroom, depicted by Israel van Meckenen (before 1450–1503) in an engraving now in Basel, a loud wind band plays atop a podium.

For a smaller number of courtiers, depicted c.1473–1482, by Pere Garcia de Benavarri(?), in an altarpiece now in the Lleida art gallery, Salome dances as Bill Tuck has suggested, to a pipe and tabor.
But for Herod’s private pleasure, in the intimate surroundings of his apartment she dances to the lute, and a tambourine which she plays herself. (This is another Catalan work, by the Master of Santa Coloma de Queralt, a century earlier, c.1356, now in MNAC).

It is odd to think of Salome dancing not some (to us) erotically-charged Dance of the Seven Veils, but—at least in 15th century imagination—Rostibolli, Alexandresca, or Petits Riens, to the pipe and tabor!

From Catalonia back to Italy, here are tumblers a-tumbling to the sound of two lutes, in the story of the Rape of the Sabine women, on a Florentine wedding chest by the Master of Marradi, c.1480.

Now to northern Europe. Here is a French source the La Cite de Dieu Manuscript from the 1480s, in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek. You can see all the animals labelled with the names of the Seven Deadly Sins; I think the people are dancing. The lute, still held horizontally by a standing player may still have curved shoulders, certainly it is now played with fingertip technique.

Now a dance of a different sort—although not so different perhaps, also being connected with sin and its wages! Here is a scene from Hieronymus Bosch’s Last Judgement of c.1482. A sinful woman is dancing in hell to the ‘lascivious pleasing of the lute’.
(The shawm-nosed blue beast in bucket-top boots seems to be treading a measure to his own music too.) The ape, a symbol of lust, is playing a lute which seems to have a curved neck joint, by contrast with the sharper neck joint of this next picture.

Bosch did this sheet of drawing of beggars and cripples including a couple of lute players—an interest comment on lute playing at the bottom end of the social order.

In this illustration of the Roman de la Rose of c.1500 in British Library MS Harleian 4425 f. 12v we have gone back to a quiet domestic feeling. The woman leading the pilgrim through the door to a fantasy world of enjoyment is Idleness (which we would now call Leisure!).

From around 1530 there is this Italian broadside ballad, telling us to eat, drink and be merry since life is a fast-fading flower. Note the large lute, with sharp neck-joint, played standing up for a ring of dancers.

Franco Pavan kindly supplied this, and Chris Goodwin typed out the words with the music in an issue of The Lutezine some time ago. From 1533 we have one of the most famous images in the history of the lute, in Holbein’s Ambassadors, which I hardly need to reproduce here; from the same year we have Holbein’s sketch for an arch along the processional route of Anne Boleyn’s coronation, with Apollo and the muses—not used as the (Habsburg) eagle at the top was not really appropriate under the circumstances!

Here is a dance scene of c.1539 by Venetian Jorg Breu the younger; the band (detail overleaf) contains a viol, a lute (back to us) and a pipe and tabor, all playing together!
Here is an engraving of 1642 from a painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder of the mid 16th century; it reminds us of themes found elsewhere in the iconography of lute playing ‘on the move’ and in costume, for instance in carnival pictures.

Note two lutes played here, one on either side in Hieronymus Franken’s Venetian Ball painting of c.1565. Note also the athletic revellers in red body stockings up on the window sill! A masqued reveller and a woman are playing—presumably amateur participants, not hired musicians, and probably playing something rau-cous, not art music.

Two couples dance to the lute in Hieronymous Lang’s (c.1520-1582) design of around 1550 for the Hans Schwartz Window.

Here is an oak mantlepiece carved in 1574, from The Wingfield Room, Christchurch Mansions, Ipswich, presumed to be Apollo and three graces!

Here is the very famous painting of Queen Elizabeth I playing the lute (which she really did, though it would also be a symbol of eloquent communication bringing harmony in the state)—she also danced a galliard every morning, perhaps to the accompaniment of a lute!

Note the carousing onlookers, and the later hand position. By this date this would presumably be the quieter, more subtle renaissance design of lute, but you can still dance to it.
Another famous lute and dance painting is the evening ball for the Wedding of Anne, Duke of Joyeuse and Marguerite de Vaude- mont, on 24 September 1581 at the court of Henri III. The band is four men in livery (one of them just a lad) playing four matched heart-and-sapwood yew lutes. It is interesting that they could make enough noise not just for the dancings but to be heard over the general hubbub. Were the guests wearing soft-soled shoes—and being respectfully quiet and attentive when the happy couple danced? There is carpet under the chairs of the most important people.

Gregorio Huwett/Howett, the lutenist, is known to have played at this wedding in our next picture, on 16 June 1585: the painting is simply called Faustliche Hochzeit, by Dietrich Theodor Graminaus (1530–1593); whether the man in the detail looks like him, we will never know! The lute and the harpsichord will here provide rhythmic articulation as well as tone colour and harmony, to complement the sustain of the bowed instruments and cornetto.

Here is a symbolic representation of Summer by Maarten de Vos, of around 1590; note the curved form of the lutes, both played by the allegorical figure in the foreground and the gentleman playing for a (dancing?) lady in the grove further back.

Here is an image from c.1550 of an Elizabethan dance band, in the Bodleian Library; again a lute complements bowed strings.
Here are courtiers of Queen Elizabeth dancing (La Volta?) to a band consisting once more of three bowed instruments and a lute, attributed to Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder c.1600.

There is another painting of an all-lute band, as at the wedding of the Duc de Joyeuse, around 1600 in a painting by Hieronymus Franken (1540–1610), *The Wedding Dance*, while in this painting of a *Garden Party* by David Vinckboons (I) (1576–c.1632) from around 1610 we have dancers dancing to a lute and a bandora(?) played by fellow partygoers; Vinckboons can be fantastical and we cannot necessarily trust him.

This painting of a ball at the time of Henry IV, around 1610, by Louis de Caullery (c.1580–after 1621) shows yet again a bowed string and lute combination.

This print is of a *balletto* from an event held in Casa Falconieri in Rome for the king of Poland in 1634, published in *Festa fatta in Roma alli 25 febraio MDCXXXIV* by Vitale Mascardi (Rome, 1635). The band seems to feature singers, bass viol and theorbo.

Johannes Gronsveld (1679–1728) continues the tradition of the lute as a portable, carnivalesque instrument played by revellers, with a night scene of a lady playing for fellow merrymakers.

In the 18th century, but looking back to the renaissance and baroque eras is this image from Peru. Baltasar Jaime Martinez Companon was bishop of Trujillo in the Viceroyalty of Peru. When he had to leave Trujillo because he was appointed Archbishop of Bogota, Martinez Companon sent to the King of Spain a series of more than 1400 illustrations he had made during his trip between 1782 and 1785. These images, which are currently in the library of the...
Royal Palace of Madrid, are known as the Codex Trujillo of Peru. Here is a couple dancing to a lute-form instrument.

And finally . . . one plucked instrument is sufficient!

My contention is that lute can be loud enough to dance to, notably in the case of the big, heavily-built, heavily-strung lutes of the late Middle Ages, played with a plectrum and with gusto. So it should not be set aside as a dance instrument.

Notes

1  To follow a thread on lute plus hand-held percussion, see LN 91, 98, 115, 118 p.5, 121 cover story, 123; Lutezine 117, p. 36, 118 p. 36.

2  All quotations from 'The Structure of the Arabian and Persian Lute in the Middle Ages' by Henry George Farmer, in The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

Expert panel question and answer session

There followed a question and answer session with an expert panel consisting of Robert Mullalley, Chris Elmes, Bill Tuck, David van Edwards and Matthew Spring.

Immediately it was observed that the big insight from the morning’s papers, confirmed but the survey of pictures from our last dance special number, Lute News 98, is that most of the images of people dancing to the lute come from southern Europe, especially Italy. Renaissance Italy took its Latin and Greek sources very seriously. The story of the goddess Minerva inventing the flute, but then throwing it away on seeing how it distorted her face when she caught sight of herself reflected in the water is quoted in Castiglione’s Il Cortegiano.

The idea that the fool casts aside the harp and and lute in favour of the bagpipes (opposite) and the stories of Midas preferring the bagpipes to the lute (below), and of Marsyas forfeiting his life playing the aulos in a contest with lyre-playing Apollo were all well known.

So perhaps it is not surprising that a renaissance prince should want to be surrounded chiefly by images of the ‘Apollonian’ plucked string instruments, and that his courtiers might want to dance to these in the spirit of emulating the ancients. When Isabella D’Este, daughter
of Eleonora, took charge of the cultural scene in Ferrara she introduced the viol, and the lute became more dominant. Letters between Isabella and her instrument makers are well known.

While ladies and gentlemen played the viol and lute themselves, the pipe and tabor men would have been paid servants at court; later pipe and tabor became simply folk instruments.

We should not forget the tradition especially in the 13th and 14th centuries of people dancing to their own songs, without any instruments at all, such as Lorenzetti’s famous painting of the effects of good government in Siena town hall.

or this manuscript illumination . . .

Boccaccio also has a scene in which a woman sings with a tambourine for dancers. This idea seems to disappear, however, but the end of the 14th century. In France we then see the pipe and tabor accompanying ordinary people in their dances, and the rise of the Hofantz or ‘court dance’ with shawms.

Bill Tuck has not found any 15th century images of dances accompanied only by voice and tambourine, though this combination is found again in Brittany in the 18th century in traditional Breton dance. Sometimes in the pictures we cannot tell whether people have their mouths open to sing or just to speak!

Many of the pifferi players came from Germany, perhaps because besides shawm they played sackbut, and these sackbuts or trombones were made in Nuremburg. There is evidence of touring German musicians, including a trombone and lute duo—evidently a soft trombone and a loud lute! Nonetheless the Italian renaissance court records do include Italian names. Of course German dynasties, in Germany or migrants in Venice, Padua, Bologna and elsewhere, tight-knit intermarried communities even when living as expatriates, dominated lutemaking from the 15th century. In Venice the German lutemakers were spied on by the city authorities who wished to ensure that export duties were paid in full.

One difficulty is that 15th century portraiture does not tend to include musical instruments, whatever the circumstances, so we must look to literature for descriptions of musical practice. In Germany there are numerous descriptions of lute and dulcimer playing together, not seen in art. So we must look beyond visual representation.

This leads to another broad point, just as we representations of instruments in art may often be symbolic, so too may images of dance. Bill Tuck held a very peculiar pose which in art indicates that a couple are dancing—but this does not mean that such a pose was actually part of any real dance (just as symbols for telephones and (speed) cameras in signage today look nothing like phones or cameras in use today, perhaps . . ).

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**NEWS**

Michael Lewin, Head of Guitar at the Royal Academy of Music, and Warden of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, has announced a major biennial award, The New Elizabethan Award, for classical guitarists and lutenists, for the performance of solo and/or ensemble music by composers from the two Elizabethan ages. The coincidence in 2013 of Benjamin Britten’s centenary, Julian Bream’s 80th birthday and the Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee prompted his ideas for such an award and they found ready support from the late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies.

The New Elizabethan Award is administered by the Worshipful Company of Musicians, one of the City of London’s ancient guilds. Initial sponsorship has come from David and Sandra Briewood and Greensill Capital, and assistance from the lutenist Elizabeth Kenny and composer/guitarist Stephen Goss. The Royal Academy of Music and Wigmore Hall will host, respectively, the selection round and showcase concert. By its focussed yet flexible design the New Elizabethan Award encourages innovative programming and outstanding presentation to delight and challenge both player and listener alike. Full details can be found at the Musicians’ Company’s website [http://www.wcom.org.uk/awards/new-elizabethan-award/](http://www.wcom.org.uk/awards/new-elizabethan-award/). The NEA Steering Group will keep people updated on further developments via Email, Facebook and Twitter.

*Michael Lewin nealuteandguitar@gmail.com*  
Chairman, NEA Steering Group  
Head of Guitar, Royal Academy of Music  
Warden, Worshipful Company of Musicians

Members will be sorry to hear of the passing of a real pioneer of the lute, John Isaacs of Ely, luthier partner of Ian Harwood in his early days, who died in September. He had not been much in contact with the lute community in his latter years, devoting himself to his work as a vicar, but those who have recollections of him are invited to send recollections to Mimi Waitzman at the Horniman Museum, e: mwaitzman@horniman.ac.uk tel: +44 (0)20 8291 8164

Members will be saddened to hear of the passing of a real veteran member of our society, Richard Kenyon of Irvine, California, who died on 23rd February of this year; he had been a member for decades.
NEW BOOKS, PERFORMING EDITION AND SOFTWARE

The latest offering from the Société Française du Luth is something a bit different. Items 53A, 53B and 53C in their Secret des Muses series are three volumes celebrating one of the great renaissance melodies, ‘Une Jeune Fillette’, known in Italy as ‘La Monica’. Volume 53A consists of solo song and partsong versions, volume 53B contains 11 solo lute variation sets, and 53C has 9 ensemble versions: for lute duet, fantasies for 3 or 4 instruments, and sonatas with tablature accompaniments; as usual you can buy these at www.sf-luth.org.

Tree Editions continues its magnificent activities with more volumes in its series of facsimiles of the Rostock lute MSS. Rostock 14 Ms Mus Saec XVIII-59,1 Parthie a Liuto obligato, duoei Violini e Basso del Signr. Spurny, is an ensemble piece in facsimile, French tablature, Renaissance tuning, 25 Euros; and Rostock 15 Ms Mus Saec XVIII-78 contains the Rostock lute manuscripts Ms Mus Saec XVIII-65.6 a, Ms Mus Saec XVIII-65.6 d and Ms Mus Saec XVIII-65.6 c; 35 Euros. There are also new publications for renaissance lute: Pietro Paolo Melili, Intavolatura di Liuto attribuito Libro Secondo / Libro terzo (Venetia, 1616) for 11-course lute attributo or archlute, in renaissance tuning, two volumes, 35 Euros; Giacomo Gorzanis, Terzo Libro di Intabulatura di Liuto (1564) facsimile, Italian tablature, renaissance tuning, 25 Euros; and Dominico Bianchini, Intabulatura di Lauto, Libro Primo, 1546, facsimile, Italian tablature, renaissance tuning, 20 Euro. Website: www.tree-edition.com  email: albertreyerman@kabelmail.de.

NEW RECORDINGS
Compiled by Monica Hall

Lute/Vihuela/Guitar

Dufault and others
La Superbe: lute music of 17th century France and Italy.
Thomas Walker (baroque lute)
Magnatune www.magnatune.com

Gorzani
Solo lute music.
Michèle Carreca (lute)
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 88985374332 www.harmoniamundi.com

Magnien, Victor
Guitar works performed on a French period guitar by Cabasse-Bernard (c.1830).
Pascal Valois (guitar)
Centaur CRC3469 www.centaurrecords.com

Reunier
Les accords nouveaux IV: suites from Delitiae testudinis (1667) and Neue Lauchtenfrüche (1676).
Dominico Bianchini, Intabulatura di Liuto (1564)
Ambitus AMB 96970 www.ambitus.de

Turovsky-Savchuk
Dialogues with time.
Massimo Marchese (lute)
Da Vinci Classics, C00028 www.egeamusic.com

Weiss
Early works. (SW 1, SW 7, SW 44, SW 61 and other pieces).
Joachim Held (11-course baroque lute)
Hänsler HC 16045 www.haensslerprofil.de info@haensslerprofil.de

Weiss
Weiss à Rome: music from F-Pn Rés VMA Ms.1213.
Edicole Grevi/aka Diego Leveriç (baroque lute)
Edition Lilac 161021 www.editionlilac.com

Various composers
Barley moon.
Ayreheart (Ronn McFarlane/Brian Kay (lutes)
Sono Luminus DLS 92203

Various composers
Late night lute: music by Dowland, Rosseter, Johnson, Piccinini, Kapsberger and others.
Matthew Wadsworth (lute)
Deux-Elles DXL1175 www.deux-elles.co.uk

Various composers
Lyra sonora: music for 12-course lute from Panmure House, Rostock, Sloané & Tablye lute books and by Jacques Gautier and Johann Gumprecht.
Anders Ericson (lute)
Daphne DAPHNE 1061 www.daphne.sc

Lute/vihuela/guitar & voice

Dowland
Lachirmae
Thomas Dunford (lute)
Alpha 326; Alpha Collection 22 www.alpha-prod.com

Navas, Juan de
Aves. Flores y estrellas: tonos y arias.
Música Ficta
Lindoro NL 3037 www.lindoro.es www.musicafictabweb.com

Ratis, Francisco
Canzonette spirituali, e morali: Canzonettas from the Chiavenna Oratory 1657.
Capella Intima (Sheila Dietrich (soprano), Jennifer Enns Modolo (alto), David Roth (baritone)
Bud Roach (tenor/baroque guitar).
Musica Omnia MO 0701 www.musicaomnia.org

Bossuet
Airs sérieux
Elizabeth Dobbin (soprano) Le Jardin Secret
Fuga Libera FUG 736 www.outthere-music/fugalibera.com

Various composers
I viaggi di Caravaggio: vocal music by Ferrari, Merula, Sances, Kapsberger and others.
Jessica Gould (soprano) Diego Cantalupi (lute/chitaromone)
MD Cremona MVC 017043

Other (may include lute)

Della Ciia
Lamentationi sagre (Venice, 1650).
Roberta Invernizzi (soprano) Laboratorio ‘600, Franco Pavan (director)
Glossa GCD 922903 (2 CD)
www.glossa.com

Various composers
In mirth and mourning
Lovekyn Consort
Loki Music LOKI 01 www.lokimusic.co.uk

Various composers
Mavra froudia (Black eyebrows).
Stelios Petrakis (lute/lyra) Efren López (lute etc.)
Bijan Chemirani (percussion)
Musièpoca MEPCD 003
www.steliospetrakis.com

Various composers
Nuevos mundos: de las musicas indigenes al Cotidiano.
Stelios Petrakis (lute/lyra) Efrén López (lute etc.)
I viaggi di Caravaggio: vocal music by Ferrari, Merula, Sances, Kapsberger and others.
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Nuevos mundos: de las musicas indigenes al Cotidiano.
CD REVIEWS  

Reviews are printed in roughly historical order of repertoire. The views expressed here do not represent any official view of the Lute Society. Any comments and queries should be sent to the editor at secretary@lutesociety.org not to individual reviewers.

Dicen que hay amor: tonos humanos del Cancionero de Mallorca y otros manuscritos, Maravi Blasco (soprano) Armoniosi Concerti, Juan Carlos Rivera (director), Lindoro NL 3032.

For economic reasons, no secular vocal music was printed in Spain during the 17th century. There is however an extensive and varied repertoire of tonos humanos, or secular arias, most of them connected in some way to stage performances, preserved in manuscript cancioneros. The Cancionero de Marin with its fully notated guitar part, copied between 1686 and 1694 by Martin Garcia de Olugue for the singer Miguel Martin, is by far and away the best known of these; three tonos from this source are included on the disc. However, readers may not be familiar with the Cancionero de Mallorca of the title. This manuscript (E-BcMus.3660), which was copied slightly later than the Marin manuscript, includes twenty-seven tonos with voice part, unfigured bass line and guitar part in Italian tablature. The guitar part is more complex than that of Marin, featuring four-four-part chords and occasionally five-part chords represented with Castilian cifras. Nine tonos from this source are included on the CD including items by Sebastián Durón, Juan Hidalgo, Francisco Monjo and Juan de Celis and five anonymous items. There are more four tonos by Hidalgo, the most distinguished composer of music for the theatre during the 17th century, taken from other sources. The guitar was the instrument of choice for accompanying the voice, especially for self-accompaniment although other plucked instruments were also included in the professional ensembles known as música de cuerdas.

Maravi Blasco is obviously the star of the recording. She has a lovely, clear voice which rings out effortlessly above the accompanying instruments capturing the different moods with skill and imagination. Many of the pieces are very demanding technically. Blasco negotiates the rhythmic complexity which is a feature of the repertoire with unerring accuracy and holds her own against the occasionally almost overwhelming string band providing the accompaniment with gusto. She gives a stunning performance of Duron’s ‘La borrachita de amor’ a paen to the intoxication of love. There are also many exquisitely tender numbers—the languishing beauty of Hidalgo’s ‘Ay amor ay ausencia’ with its violone obligato, the gentle simplicity of Marin’s ‘Tortolilla si no es por amor’ which concludes the recording and the piece which grabbed my attention most and which I listened to over and over again, the anonymous ‘Niña si encontrases durmiendo a Cupido’. A wonderful selection of fine music less well known than it should be, in accomplished performances.

The accompanying booklet includes an informative essay on the musical and sociological background to the repertoire by Francisco Valdivia, a leading authority on 17th century Spanish music, and the complete Spanish texts with English translations are also supplied—something which you can’t take for granted in the age of computer downloads.

Monica Hall

In Mirth and Mourning, the Lovekyn Consort, Loki LOKI 01

This CD explores familiar territory of songs by Campion, Ford, Robert Johnson and a sprinkling of other pieces from anon and other composers. The Lovekyn Consort here features female voice, Patricia Hammond, recorders and flute played by Will Summers, with Stephen Carpenter on 5-course guitar and lute. The seventeen tracks consist of eleven songs, one set of recorder variations and five settings of masque dances for flute and lute. Programme notes are succinct and restricted to matters of instrumentation and style. Campion provides the larger part of the songs: ‘Never Weather Beaten Saile’, ‘Author of Light’, ‘What if a Day, a Month or a Yeare?’ ‘Thrice Tosome these Oaken Ashes in the Aire’ and ‘Oft Have I Sigh’d’. To these they add Bartlett’s ‘a Pretty Ducke’, Dowland’s ‘in Darknesse let me Dwell’ and Johnson’s ‘Tell me, Dearest’.

Overall, the ensemble is carefully balanced, tempi were well chosen and rhythms pointed. Patricia Hammond has added expressiveness in the form of tastefully chosen dynamics and occasional touches of vibrato and portamento. Her intonation is excellent and her diction is particularly clear to the point that I could understand all the songs without recourse to text. Will Summers’ choice of recorder(s) and flute provides some variety at the expense of slight intonation problems, almost always present with the renaissance flute, even in the hands of such professionals. He allows himself a longer and enjoyable, unaccompanied contribution with Jacob van Eyck’s ‘Under the Green Linden Tree’ on recorder.

‘The inclusion of two ‘rustic’ pieces, ‘A Country Lass’ and ‘Watkins Ale’, allows Stephen Carpenter to vary the sonority a little with 5-course guitar in place of lute and Patricia Hammond to indulge a smattering of drollery for variety. There are no unaccompanied lute or guitar pieces.

My wife, helpful as ever, commented that the programme was well performed but would benefit from a little more variety in texture and instrumentation, to which I would add ornamentation and division, also. How about adding a deeper lute, a citrین and a few more dances at the expense of one or two of the songs? That apart, I look forward to more from them—what about some Locke and Purcell songs with lutes, guitar, flutes, recorders, and bass viol for the next CD?

Eric Franklin
REGISTER OF INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

If you have a lute for sale, please let us know so that we can list it here (no charge to members). Most recent advertisements come first in each section, and we will continue to list instruments until we are advised that they are no longer available; for up to a year. All ads are posted to the Lute Society website.

United Kingdom

7c lute in F by Martin Shepherd. A fine, professional quality instrument(2005); excellent condition. 65cm, with velvet lined Kingham case. Can be viewed in London £9 and also at the Lute Society meeting on November 18. Pictures shortly available at www.gordongregory.co.uk. Gordon Gregory 07733 224933 and gordon@gordongregory.co.uk £3400

Outstanding 6c lute by Ivo Magherini (2014). Truly exceptional sound and projection, and first-rate craftsmanship. Made with a particularly beautiful piece of quilted maple, the bridge is jasmine tree, fretboard and soundboard edging, and pegs are in boxwood. Soundboard is spruce. Stopped string length 60cm. Excellent condition. Can be heard at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1uFfFrzN4Y with Kingham case, London, £3200 contact Zak Ozmor zak.ozmoz@yahoo.com Photos: https://www.dropbox.com/s/9c57bampaleqxb8e/AADehGduwhRbEF3_iyvoHQIFa?dl=0

Vihtuela by Toby Chapman, back and sides in fine flame maple, neck in pear. String length 60cm. Currently at 440, but works well at 415 too. Strung in nylgut. Parchment rosette. Diamond-shaped inlay on front and back. Sweet clear tone. Sadly without case. Reduced to £1500 for a quick sale, or may accept the right offer. Contact Simon Nisbett on 01723 658744.

Diatonic cittern by Peter Forrester after Brussels 1524, string length 43.3mm., heard at a recent Lute Society meeting. Reduced to £2500 for quick sale, Kingham case included. UK or Europe preferred. Contact: peter.forrester@waitrose.com

1838 Louis Panormo guitar, restored in my workshop, is now available. The price of £4000 includes a hard wooden case and it can be shipped worldwide. A full set of photos is at: www.art-rob.co.uk/inst.html. A full description of the restoration, with photos, is at: www.art-rob.co.uk/pan_1838.html. Contact Arthur Robb at art@art-rob.co.uk or on 01666-822945.

Original engraving of Charles Mouton playing his lute. Elegantly framed. Offers please. Contact Douglas Wootten 07904114437 or email dougs_music@hotmail.com

7-course Barber & Harris student lute. 580mm, in G. Currently tuned to A440. Very good condition. Retefitted and restrung in 2016 with nylon gut and wound nylon gut strings. Kingham case with plush lining and strap included. Nice even sound – in fact, not very much student about it at all £2100. Photos on request. Contact Sarah Doig (Suffolk) on 01379 890215 or email sedoig@btinternet.com

Bandora, excellent instrument by Maith Weisman. Has wooden ‘cofin’ case. £2000 Contact: Douglas Wootten Email: dougs_music@hotmail.com Tel: 07904 114437 South East London

Lovely sonorous 7c lute by Anna Dolling who worked with Stephen Gottlieb. 66cm string length at A415 perfect for lute song. Some wear on varnish. Comes with hard Kingman case, £2200 Contact Douglas Wootten on 07904114437 dougs_music@hotmail.com

7c lute, 610mm, made about 2006 by Alexander Hopkins at the behest of a professor at Seville Conservatorio for a student of his. Pale woods throughout, 15 ribs with darker separating lines and binding to fingerboard. Pyramid strung, comes with a spare set of strings, and fretgut(natural). A simple instrument but very playable. ‘Perfection’ gig bag with 20mm padding. Price 1500GBP. Photos available from djenkins@tinyonline.co.uk. Is in Swansea.

10 course cittern in G, by John Gorret, made in 1798. String length 590mm. The 13 rib body is figured maple. The price of £800 includes a fibreglass case and it can be shipped worldwide. Photos at www.art-rob.co.uk/inst.html Contact Arthur Robb at art@art-rob.co.uk or on 01666-822945.

8c lute by Arthur Robb, (begun in 2013), 600mm in G. 13-rib body in figured English sycamore and the soundboard is Swiss pine. £3000 incl. Kingham (MTM) case and it can be shipped worldwide, photos at www.art-rob.co.uk/inst.html. Contact Arthur Robb at art@art-rob.co.uk or on 01666-822945.

Nice Turkish oud by Hasan Oksuz. Real Horn roses and soft case. £450 ono, Streatham London 07905 190 269 or email edmundpickeringtuners@gmail.com

6c lute price £1800, by Michele Farmer (2016), 640mm, after Frei. A flamed ash back, a spruce soundboard (the rose is hand carved), walnut fingerboard, and a sycamore neck and pegbox, fitted with boxwood pegs. Made under the tutelage of luther Pual Egholm of Barleymans. Without case. Pictures and film of it being played at bluebirddesign.co.uk/lute-making-2015-2016/ Contact flamenco32@yahoo.com

10c lute by Stephen Barber 1987, string length 61.7 cm, 11-rib maple back, excellent playing condition, Paxman case. £ 2100-. Property of Dennis Fairbanks, Denmark, the lute can be viewed at Klaus Jacobsen's workshop in North London, jacobsen.lute@gmail.com

14c theorbo made by Eric Stefanilli in 2002, 7 + 7, string lengths 80cm & 160cm. In very good condition and comes with hard case. Located in Reading area. Photos available. £3,750. Contact Peter Till at: peter.tille@pskt.com or call 0776 770 3449

Bentside spinet by Alex Hodson, 1954. This is a high-quality instrument built by one of the 20th century's most important makers. Mahogany case, four octaves and five Keys, with Blackwood and Boxwood accdents, inscribed 'Alec Hodson Lavenham fecit anno MCMLIV'. It is in excellent cosmetic and functional condition with a beautiful delicate sound. Full length 1.8m. £2,250, inc stand and padded carrying case. Photographs available from Andrew Benfield: andy.benfield@hotmail.co.uk / 01872 553414


7c lute after Venere in G, 59.5 cm scale, by George Stevens, Ribs in alternating English walnut and cherry. Spruce top, sycamore neck, pegbox and bridge. Mortised holly pegs, laumburn fingerboard, points and bridge cap. Other fittings in ebony and holly. £3140. Kingham case also available.

Long scale 5c cittern by George Stevens after primary and incomographical sources / my own design. 54 cm scale in G (mean lute pitch) open tuning. Pegbox, neck and body in sycamore, carved and hollowed with 'double lobe' relief carving on back after Hans Otct. 415. Spruce top with three layer rose in cherry and paper. Other fittings in laburnum, ebony and holly. £2650. Kingham case on request. Pictures of these are available among others under ‘for sale’ on my website, and at www.facebook.com/georgestevensluthier

New 11 course swan-neck lute based on Johann Zach/ Darchler(2) c.1691 Bresslau/ Michielle Harton, Padua (MR899) New multi-ribbed shallow body with veneered neck with holy lines, ebony fingerboard, pear wood bridge, maple soundboard neck, strung all in gut in f’ a=415Hz, new Kingham case, located in Derby. £ 4690. Pictures at http://buyinglute.blogspot.co.uk/08/blog-page_1.html. Contact info@instinstruments.com or call 01283 734388.

5c medieval lute in G by Stephen Barber and Sandi Harris. 60cm scale. Made in 2012. Fitted Kingham case. Immaculate condition. Pictures on Early Music market section of facebook. David Chatterley 07906 169323 davidchatterley@btinternet.com

14 course theorbo string lengths 88 and 159 cms. 6 + 8, by Michael Bishop, Beautifully made and decorated, body of Madagascan rosewood, Can be seen in NW Kent (Dartford/Gravesend area), £3000, without case, Contact: mikelbis@hotmail.com or phone 01474 872526
7c lute made by S.W. Oliver (1983) Original fine finish, after Ferdinand Wieanger / Gabrellt Buchstetter examples c.1550. Nine figured maple ribs, neck and pegbox, ebony fingerboard and side trim. 67cm, on small blemish, recently cleaned and restrung, metal frets, can be replaced with gut if desired. Very nice action and tone. Asking price £650, photos at: https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/232067846505 comparable in quality to a much more expensive professional lute! Located in Essex, contact geovuk@gmail.com. tel: 07595180138

8c student lute A well built Early Music Store UK (2014) kit lute after Hieber, 959mm, Rosewood / Lacewood rib set, rosewood pegbox / fret board, neck. Quality spruce soundboard. Satin tung oiled (except soundboard). Alternating rosewood / lacewood ribs, Improvements include properly fitted boxwood pegs (oversized, each reinforced beech dowelled in pegbox), carved rose, gut fretted. Boxwood 4 upper frets. Ebony strap peg. Restring with correct string set. This has nice (appropriate) action, a real nice tone, and well suited as quality student lute. photos at https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/232062348350 Original hard case included. £435 plus £25 shipping. Essex UK location contact: geovuk@gmail.com tel: 07595180138

INSTRUMENT CASE REPAIR Regent Repairs, 214 Green Lane Road, Leicester LE5 4PA, tel: 0116 276 9649 The Early Music Shop, Salts Mill, Victoria Road, Saltaire, W. Yorks BD18 3LA (t: +44/(0)1274 288100; f: 596220) e: sales@earlymusicshop.com www.e-m-s.com/strung.htm regularly stock lutes by various makers. They also sell second-hand instruments, as do Bridgewood and Neitzert (see Register of Makers, above), so if you have difficulty selling your instrument through these pages, this is another option.

 INTERNATIONAL

14 course theorbo, by Marcos Kaiser Mori (2011) afre Martinus Kaiser 1609, single strung, 8 + 6, body and neck in sycamore, mint condition with Kinghorn case, 4000 Euro, in Milan, pictures on request, contact Giovanni Ciacoppio giocaopio@hotmail.com +39 328 684 8857

8-course tenor lute (in F) by Stephen Gottlieb, built in 1979, the exact era of https://vimeo.com/96809354 (if it wasn’t THE lute, hard to tell really, but looks like it) String length 67 cm with a very comfortable action. Multi ribbed back in yew. Mint condition! With fitted original Paxman case, also like new. This rare instrument is perfect for song accompaniment with counter tenors and is surprisingly easy to play. Asking price £1533 or email me: a.kempinski@gmx.de 74943449 or email me: a.kempinski@gmx.de

10-course tenor lute by Nico van der Waals (2001), beautiful instrument, rich, full tone, 62 cm, in at 415 Hz. Body based on 1555 Magno Tiefenbrucker, 9 ribs of figured maple with ebony spacers. Ebony veneered neck and fingerboard Ebony binding. Strung with nylon and bass wound strings. Excellent condition. Original owner, $4000 USD with case. Photos at www.dropbox.com/sh/pafpqg44tnljhd8/AA971P-ZnSpzag3Vb3NWSQZadr=0. Located in New Mexico, United States. Contact lutesforsale@outlook.com

5 course baroque guitar (2012) 64 cm, by Carlo Ceconi & Gianluca Cecconni (Tarquini - Italy) Voboam model with flat back, rosewood ribs and sides, white maple and ivory finitures, flat rose made in parchment and wood, spruce soundboard. € 3000,00 to be negotiated price includes (classical guitar) hard case, currently in Rome, Italy, photos at goo.gl/photos/cNv3bAt49jnt67of contact Simone Colavecchia, ingpmigo@gmail.com

New 7c lute after Venere, 60cm string length, 13 plum ribs with holy spacers, holly/ebony veneered neck and pegbox, plum pegs. £4000 including Kingham case. e:martin@luteshop.co.uk see http://www.luteshop.co.uk/lutes for details.

Bandora - excellent instrument by Maish Weisman. Has wooden ‘cofin’ case. £2000 Contact: Douglas Woolton Email: dougs_music@hotmail.com Tel: 07904114437 South East London.

7c lute by Marcus Mevisen (around 1990). String length 64 cm. Body: 11 ribs of prune wood, very elegant rose. Strong and full sound; in excellent state. Price €3200–, including lightweight case (Kingham). For more information and photographs: wmo0k@xs4all.nl

6c lute by Bert Claudius (1981) after Hans Frei (Bologna c1520); string length 66.8 cm. Very deep and clear sounding instrument, suited for tuning in F or E. In perfect condition. Price lowered to €3200,– (was €3750) including case. For more information and photographs: wmo0k@xs4all.nl

9c bass lute by Carol Huiskamp (2011), string length 76.0 cm; excellent action. Sonorous and strong instrument – listen to the 2CD Resveillez vous (music by Nicolas Vallet – both solo and in ensemble). Price lowered to €3100,– (was €3500) including case. For more information and photographs: wmo0k@xs4all.nl

Bass vihuela de mano by Carol Huiskamp (2009), string length 76.0 cm. Neck and pegbox in cherry. Elegant and deep sounding instrument. Price lowered to €2650,– (was €2900) including Kingham case. For more information and photographs: wmo0k@xs4all.nl

13 course baroque lute by Ian Watchorn in Melbourne, Australia in 1996, after Martin Hoffman, with a beautiful tone. The top is Swiss spruce (called ‘Bear Claw’), The back is of rosewood which was typical for 13 course baroque lutes around 1725. Hard case included. Price is New Zealand Dollars 4000.The lute is located in South Africa. debo rahwaikapohe@gmail.com

Websites listing lutes for sale around the world can be found on the Lute Society’s online resources portal, at: http://www.lutesociety.org/lute-portal/lutes-for-sale-and-wanted

LETTERS

A few more lutes in Florentine art

I read with interest Chris Goodwin’s article in Lute News 122 re: Florentine art and its relative lack of lutes. A further factor in this may have been, I believe, that many instruments, and depictions of them, probably went up in smoke during the Savonarolan years — the boxwork for the ‘Bonfire of the Vanities’ measured around 24ft square’. The lute, with its associations with sexual and sensual pleasures, would have been a prime target! However, I have found a few more lute images, though at least one by a non-Italian artist, and several from outside the the period of the Florentine renaissance which Chris Goodwin was mainly talking about.

1) The Corsi Collection, housed at the Bardini Museum, has a 15th century Florentine Madonna and Child with angels, and one of the said angels is playing a lute.

2)–4) Three more in the Uffizi. Bernardo Daddi’s Polyptych of S. Pancrazio has a predella scene of the nativity, with an angel lutenist. Fra Angelico’s Coronation of the Virgin likewise has an angel lutenist, and then there is Gerrit von Honthorst’s Dinner with Lute Player, commissioned by Costimo II to illustrate the moral that lute and candlelight seduce!

5) The Palatine Gallery has an Anton Domenico Gabbiani’s Prince Ferdinando de’ Medici and his Court Musicians, with one of them holding a theorbo. This late 17th century work was discussed in L'N 104 [and again in this issue] in connection with the court theorboists activities as a mandolin player. The Gallery also has several works on loan to the Accademia which are pertinent (see below).
6) At the Pitti Palace, one of the rooms constituting the Argenti Museum has, among its frescoed decoration, a depiction of a group of musicians sitting on the edge of the balcony, up near the ceiling, and one of them is a lutenist (I can’t remember whether it’s the third or fourth room along).

7) At the Casa Buonarroti, in the ‘Camera della notte e del di’, there’s a lovely fresco of a lutenist.

8) - 9) The Accademia has Perugino’s Assumption of the Virgin and Giovanni dal Ponte’s Coronation of the Virgin, both with angel lutenists.

10) Associated with the Collection of Musical Instruments at the Accademia, there is Marco Ricci’s Musical Gathering, complete with theorist. There’s also a Still Life by an imitator of Baschenis, which includes two lutes (on loan from the Palatine Gallery), Gabbiani’s Portrait of a musician with lute (on loan from Poggio Imperiale), and a number of other Still Life paintings with lutes by the Baschenis imitator by Bartolomeo Bimbi and Cristoforo Munari (on loan from the Palatine and the Uffizi, the latter all it appears, from Vasari’s Corridor).

Whether this constitutes enough swallows to make a summer, amidst the vast number of art works in the city, other visitors to Florence may judge!

Sue Davies

Editor’s P.S.—now I come to think of it, lutes do appear on one or two Florentine wedding chests, when the erotic associations of the instrument would have been more than excusable.

Jiggy-joggy=The Blind beggar of Bethnal Green

Just a note to say that I have noticed that ‘Jiggy joggy’ from the Lutezine to Lute News 122 has practically the same melody as ‘Blind beggar of Bethnal Green’ from Lutezine to Lute News 117.

Mike Beauvois

Well spotted! Jiggy-joggy was included many years ago in Diana Poulton’s album of English Ballad Tunes for the Lute, and Peter Holman’s discovery of a melody for the Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green in the Westminster lute fragment appeared in our pages some years ago, so one hangs one’s head in shame not to have noticed this!—Ed.

‘Letter-box’ or ‘umlenkkonstruktion’ lutes

Anthony Bailes and Andreas Schleegel have drawn attention to a kind of lute seen in the iconography but seldom today, which instead of the usual bent-back pegbox, has the strings going round 180° bend, through a little slot at the top of the neck to a pegbox inside the top of the neck (see Lute News 119, p. 15). This avoids having a pegbox, which can be awkward and vulnerable to damage, and means that it is easier to reach the pegs. In case you were wondering whether anyone has reconstructed these in modern times, yes they have, and Leonardo Pallotta played his in the European Lute Orchestra concert this summer. He reports that it doesn’t have any kind of roller or bobbin mechanism to help the strings turn the corner, and does not pose any special problems in tuning.
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