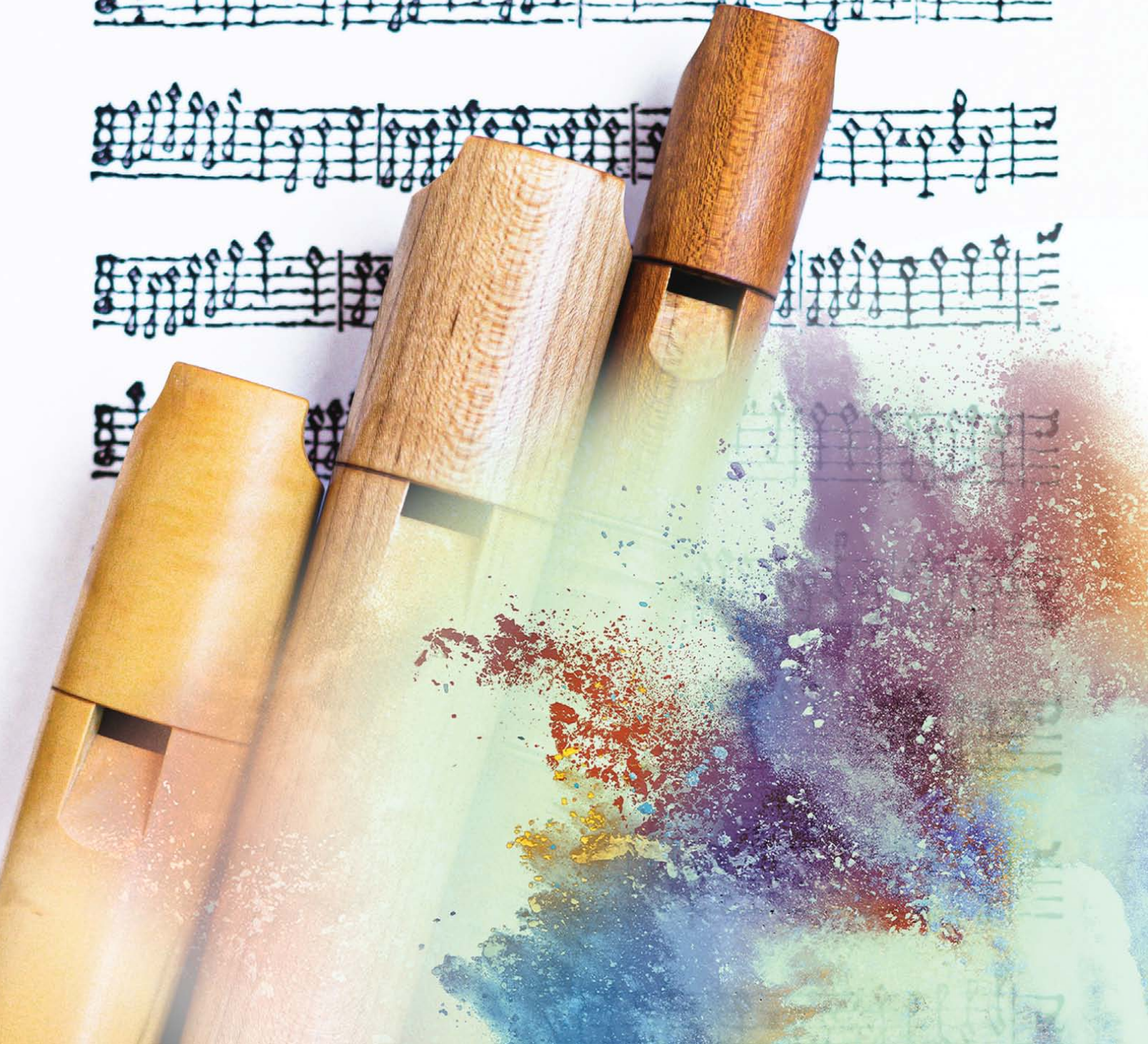


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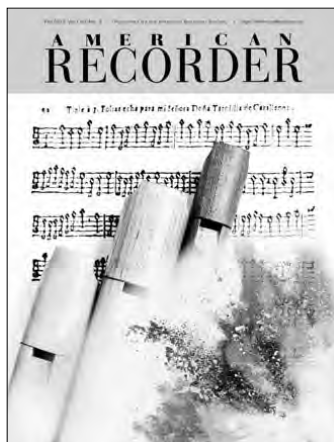
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ON THE COVER

“Under Pressure,” photo by Jennifer Carpenter. Cover ©2022, American Recorder Society.



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Editor's Note • GAIL NICKLESS

For this issue, in which David Podeschi writes his last message, I invite you to read of his recorder journey—and enjoy the folia and improv articles inside. ❁

President's Message • DAVID PODESCHI



A Milestone on an Interesting Journey, Part Two

It is interesting how we remember beginnings, isn't it? Last issue, I mentioned the Fall Texas Toot as part of my recorder journey. Soon before my second Fall Toot, after having taken lessons from Jennifer Carpenter for just 14 months, she said, "Frances Blaker is going to be at the Fall Toot. You need to take a lesson from her." A beginner taking a lesson with Frances Blaker? I was terrified, but arranged it. Frances started with "play something." I was working on *Paul's Steeple*, so I started in on the theme. After about four measures, Frances said, "Stop! You're making a clicking noise." She spent the rest of the half hour trying to teach me the cure.

Fast forward two years, during which I didn't see Frances. By then Alice Derbyshire and I were president and treasurer respectively of the Dallas (TX) Chapter. Alice convinced Tish Berlin and Frances to invite me to a workshop in Italy. I signed up and volunteered to be a driver. After a tortuous journey from Bologna to Florence, I retrieved my charges and headed to the workshop location, wondering if Frances would recall that clicking noise lesson. I hoped not.

Frances, Tish and the other teachers were sitting in the Tuscan sun preparing for the week when we arrived an hour early—which was, umm, discouraged. Frances turned around and without looking said, "You're early!" Then she spotted me and said, "I remember you." Great.

Like all of theirs, it was a spectacular workshop. Tish and Frances, awarded the 2022 ARS Distinguished Achievement Award, have since been an integral part of my recorder life. I've been to 11 more of their workshops, including eight Next Levels, where I met Tony Griffiths—who recruited me to the ARS Board, for which I am very grateful.

Ahh, the ARS Board, one of the most rewarding things I have ever done. I have had the privilege of working for eight years with the most amazing, dedicated and hardworking directors—every one of them. But in the interest of space, I will mention three who have been by my side the longest and closest, by virtue of serving on the executive committee (EC) and finance committee (FC).

Vice-president Ruth Seib is without peer; she gets more accomplished by accident than I do on purpose. She has made our bookkeeping more efficient and accurate, with more understandable, readable reports. She has rebuilt the website, and has served on and driven forward more subcommittees than I can recall. On the EC, she has been an outstanding sounding board—thinking things through thoroughly, identifying potential outcomes, always with a view to the impact on members and the ARS. I could not have done my job without her.

Barbara Prescott, former chair of fundraising and an FC member, has dragged us kicking and screaming into the future. She reworked our fundraising process based on best practices. The ARS today is stronger financially, able to offer more member benefits, and better prepared to withstand potential downturns—due to your generosity, and Barbara's diligence in implementing guidelines and documenting them for succeeding Boards. She convinced us to reimagine the look and feel of AR, and to continually improve its already excellent content. Barb

Continued on page 3, American Recorder Society NEWS & NOTES



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AMERICAN RECORDER SOCIETY

CHANGE

American Recorder Society hires Jennifer Carpenter as Marketing Manager

In September, Jennifer Carpenter will begin work as the ARS's part-time Marketing Manager.

Since 2020, Carpenter has already made a significant contribution to the ARS's presence during the pandemic by creating and compiling *Playing It Safe*, an e-newsletter sent out two times each month to keep everyone up to date on what programs are offered online. This new paid position will allow her to reach a new and potentially young audience via social media.

Carpenter created *Playing It Safe* on the heels of finishing eight years on the ARS Board. She is active as a per-

former, as well as a leader of chapter meetings and as a faculty member of workshops around the U.S.

Current ARS Board member Barbara Prescott elaborated, "Your ARS Board of Directors is bursting with ideas to bring the recorder to more players. The free beginner Zoom lessons, the play-along music library, the technique tip videos: all are new programs designed to make it easier for someone to learn recorder. Now we are thinking about [utilizing] TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. Fortunately, we have a secret weapon. Professional recorder performer and teacher Jennifer Carpenter has the skills to make our dream a reality." ❁

Jennifer Carpenter,
newsletter@americanrecorder.org



▲ Jennifer Carpenter.

President's Message, continued

lobbied for a marketing manager to improve our social media presence and reach new members—wrote the job description, posted it, conducted interviews and found Jennifer Carpenter.

Wendy Powers, treasurer, has been a diligent financial partner, carefully reviewing each month's financials and our investments, and bringing us to balanced, sensible budgets. She has continually pressed for and had the ideas for ways to improve our member benefits. As a busy recorder professional, she has kept us grounded in the realities of students, teachers, workshops, chapters and other musical organizations. She pushed to start a Diversity Committee, on which I will continue to serve. I have looked to Wendy for understanding of the big picture of our music world.

I've mentioned before that during my first year on the Board, the previous EC hired our current administrative director, Susan Burns. Susan is on the frontline of the organization and the person who knows everything that is going on. Although not a director, she is an integral part of the Board—and not just as a go-to for tasks and information, but as one who actively solves problems and generates ideas. The Zoom beginner classes that started during the pandemic, and have been so popular and successful, were Susan's idea!

When I joined the ARS Board, as Alice Derbyshire says, I'd found my people. Thank you for allowing me to participate these last eight years and I hope to see you at a workshop someday. ❁

CONTRIBUTIONS

ARS Donors

The following generous donors contributed between January 1 and June 30, 2022. With these funds, we are able to create a beautiful and informative magazine; offer scholarships and grants; offer helpful resources to our chapters, consorts and recorder orchestras; continue to add valuable content to our website; and much more. We can't offer all of these valuable educational and community-building programs without you. Thank you for your support! ❁

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Please check your email inbox. In April we began sending ARS members an almost-monthly email version of the newsletter, now called *ARS NEWS*. Each members-only issue of *ARS NEWS* is automatically emailed to those with an email address on file (rather than to any recorder enthusiasts who have subscribed to another e-newsletter from the ARS, such as *ARS NOVA*). *ARS NEWS* brings the same content you previously received in the *ARS Newsletter*, but is sent more often and features clickable links:

- news from the recorder world
- ARS announcements and reminders
- information on upcoming workshops, classes, and virtual events.

If the April, June and August issues of *ARS NEWS* didn't appear in your inbox or in your spam folder, and you don't soon receive a September issue, please contact the ARS office at: 1-704-509-1422 (tollfree 1-844-509-1422), director@americanrecorder.org. You can also read *ARS NEWS*, plus have access to PDFs for all back issues of the printed *ARS Newsletter*, at: <https://americanrecorder.org/newsletter>.

Notice of ARS Annual Meeting



The 2022 ARS Annual Members' Meeting, again accessible to all members with an Internet connection, is set for Saturday, October 15, 3 p.m. EDT on Zoom. The ARS President (to be elected during the Fall ARS Board meeting) will conduct the annual meeting. On the agenda:

- ARS financial report for fiscal year 2021-22
- ARS mission and key strategic initiatives
- Key member benefit initiatives
- Importance of membership growth and fundraising to our ability to remain strong and mission-focused
- Select questions from members

Please register to attend at <https://americanrecorder.org/annualmeeting2022>. An emailed reminder will be sent.

ON THE RECORD(ER)

News about the recorder

IN MEMORIAM

Charles Nagel (1934-2022)

Charles Nagel, proprietor of Cheap Trills Editions, died on May 6 on Vashon Island, WA (accessible only by ferry) in the home where he and his wife, Justine, lived for 60 years.

In 2015 *AR* music reviewer Suzanne Ferguson interviewed Nagel for the *VdGSA News* (of the Viola da Gamba Society of America, which has given kind permission for *AR* to use excerpts from their Summer 2022 tribute to Nagel).

Here are some of his words to Ferguson:

Music has been a part of my life ever since I can remember. My younger sister and I were reading music before we got to kindergarten. It was obvious from early on that I lacked the motor skills to have a career in music, but I was interested in science, so medicine seemed a natural choice for me.

At the University of Illinois, where I did my pre-med work, I found a couple of John Challis harpsichords; it was love at first touch—I was hooked on early music.

During the folk song revival of the 1960s, I took up recorders and still enjoy playing them. At a workshop in Portland, OR, about 1981, I had a long talk with viol teacher Carol Herman that pointed me in the direction of the viol. At age 50, I bought my first, a German-made student tenor, and began. That was over 30 years ago, and I think it was one of the happiest decisions of my life.

I've been very fortunate over the years to be able to make music with people who are both good friends and good

musicians. Except for a hiatus when I served as a doctor in the Navy during the Vietnam War, playing consorts has been a continuing experience.

For about 40 years a group has gathered to make music in our home on Vashon Island, and both Justine and I play regularly with groups in Seattle....The Thursday Morning Consort of viols has been together for at least 20 years. One Thursday someone happened to be in the house when we had a session; afterward, he asked, "Do you ever play much music, or do you mostly just laugh a lot?"

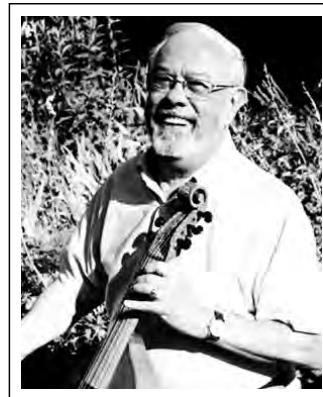
Works by a composer familiar to ARS members, Will Ayton, were published by Cheap Trills, including an annual *Christmas Letter* Ayton composed for Nagel. Ayton has composed a piece in memory of Nagel (reviewed in this *AR*); Ayton remembers:

If there was ever a man that personified the "Renaissance Man," it was Dr. Charles Nagel (Charlie).

In his professional life, he was an established and respected psychiatrist. As an undergraduate he majored in philosophy, which was a source for wonderful discussions his whole life.

He was always interested in the visual arts and, after establishing himself professionally, worked diligently to create rather large metal sculptures.

Unfortunately, the welding process caused the loss of a lung, but that only encouraged him to shift to a smaller (and safer) visual arts medium, working with polymer clay. A couple of weeks before his death, he mentioned the need to replenish the supply of his small sculptures at a local gallery that



▲ Charlie Nagel in the garden.

Photo by Brian Thompson.

was showing and selling his work.

And then there was music. For years Charlie frequented workshops on [recorders and viols] and he was a solid consort musician. He and Justine frequently held playing sessions in their home.

I remember Charlie mentioning a conversation that he had with Justine many years ago. He was complaining about having problems with ordering music that he wanted and Justine offered a suggestion. "Why don't you publish your own editions?"

That became the inspiration for Cheap Trills Editions. This was a chance for Charlie to exercise his passion for hunting down unpublished music. The enterprise also gave him another chance to exercise his love of visual images. One can, at a glance, pick out Cheap Trills Editions because of the covers. Charlie loved to create visual puns on them. Every image was a reference to something and it is always a fun challenge to figure out the connections.

My occasional visits to Charlie and Justine's home were a real treat.... What always impressed me the most was that Charlie and Justine provided a sanctuary for all of these wild folk, as well as human visitors like me.

We will miss Charlie. ❀

Will Ayton, aytonw1@gmail.com
www.cheaptrills.com

An Introduction to Early Music Improvisation

A modern early musician examines skills needed to learn how to improvise, using guidelines from the past.



WRITTEN BY
TINA CHANCEY

Tina Chancey is director of HESPERUS, which performs early music soundtracks for classic silent films. Currently known for her work with early bowed strings, particularly viol and

pardessus de viole, she has also played recorders, shawm, krumhorn and rauschpfeife with her late husband Scott Reiss in the Folger Consort at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., as well as in the New York Renaissance Band, New York Ensemble for Early Music, and on tour with rocker Ritchie Blackmore in Blackmore's Night.

A prize-winning composer by the age of 15 at Interlochen National Music Camp, Chancey conducted her own double woodwind quintet at her high school graduation. She subsequently attended Oberlin College and received a Master of Arts in Performance from Queens College; a Master of Arts in Musicology from New York University; and a Ph.D. in Musicology, Music Technology and Women's Studies from the Union Institute. Chancey teaches, performs, improvises, produces recordings, composes and arranges, and spent the pandemic teaching Zoom classes in early music Improvisation to more than 100 students around the world. Her articles on playing by ear and improvisation appear in *AR* and *Early Music America* magazines, and she was the author of the popular *AR Practice Project* series that ran from Winter 2018 to Fall 2019, https://americanrecorder.org/practice_project.php. Her newest DVDs are film scores to the 1920s classics *Nosferatu* and *Häxan*, and she worked on a pardessus trio recording and a film score for *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* in summer 2022. Recent performances include a stint in the pit band for the In Series production of Toni Morrison's *Desdemona*, playing viol, kemenj (a three-stringed fiddle from Greece and Turkey, also called a kemence) and rebec with a jazz pianist and a kora player.

Recent artist residencies have taken Chancey to Geneva, Switzerland; Melbourne, Australia; Hamburg and Berlin, Germany; Oberlin College Conservatory; and Hong Kong. She has received an Early Music America Special Education Achievement Award, and four Wammies for best classical instrumentalist from the Washington Area Music Association.

Are you curious about improvising early music, but apprehensive? Let's talk about it. There are many kinds of early music improv that might be just right for you.

This article is designed to give you some context; a way of thinking about improvisation that might make it more possible for you to start experimenting with it. It's dedicated to all the students who have taken my improv classes over the last few years, from whom I've learned so much.

What skills do you have already, and what skills will you want to learn?

First, since you *play* pre-composed (written) music you *already have certain skills*. You can:

- Read music
- Play your instrument well enough to handle the technical and musical challenges
- Listen to others as you play, in order to stay together, tune and blend
- Show your readiness to interpret the composer's music, guided by the choices you collectively make in rehearsal.

These are the skills some of us learn in a music school or conservatory. Others tackle them later in life as musical amateurs.

To *improvise* music, you need other skills as well. You must:

- React quickly
- Listen actively (listen, make decisions and respond)
- Remember what you just played (so you can build on it)
- Be flexible (dare, take chances and make mistakes with equanimity).

Most conventional music instruction doesn't teach these skills; sometimes you learn them in a jazz band or folk music ensemble. Have you had any training in these skills?

On top of that, for *historical improvisation*, you'll need to:



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- Be comfortable manipulating historical models (playing, remembering and reproducing short patterns)
- Understand the styles and practices of the era in which you choose to work, selected from the six centuries of music we call early music, roughly 1150-1750.

Note: some people don't call it improvisation if you're sourcing models (musical fragments) from treatises. The way you use those models—how you put them together and connect them—can be just as artistic as making them up. In view of that, much current early music improv is what I'd call a spontaneous re-construction.

In summary, the skills to learn to improvise early music consist of general improv skills (spontaneous creativity), and those specific to the style and genre in which you're working (understanding the historical style/applying ideas from historical models in the treatises). Some early music styles are easier to absorb than others. Keep reading.

Different kinds of early music improv between 1150-1750

There was quite a variety of early music improv strategies—though by their very nature, improvised genres weren't necessarily documented in writing. Here are 10 of the most popular, listed chronologically from Medieval to Baroque periods, detailing which elements are new or pre-existing. Time periods are approximate and overlapping.

MEDIEVAL 1150-1450

- Improvised *Estampie* – creating a new melody, organized in a formal structure
- Improvised intro or interlude for a troubadour song – new and transformed melody
- Improv over a sustained *cantus firmus* – new melody, over a pre-existing tenor



The skills to learn to improvise early music consist of general improv skills (spontaneous creativity), and those specific to the style and genre in which you're working.

RENAISSANCE 1450-1650

- Divisions over a ground/ostinato bass – new melody plus pre-existing bass, later a pre-existing piece
- Divisions over one line of a madrigal/chanson/motet – pre-existing piece
- Divisions over multiple lines of a madrigal, etc., *viola bastarda* style (a highly virtuosic improvisation) – pre-existing piece
- Formal variations over a song/madrigal/dance tune – pre-existing piece

BAROQUE 1650-1750

- Ornamenting a melody with line- or note-ornaments, or a combination – pre-existing piece
- Realizing a figured bass on keyboard or plucked instrument – new melody, pre-existing piece and bass
- Unaccompanied prelude – new melody, free structure

All but the realization of a figured bass work well on recorder. I've added that one in case you're also a keyboard or plucked instrument player. Let's take a closer look.

Divisions

All four Renaissance genres (briefly repeated below) focus on divisions improvised over pre-existing material, a bass pattern or an entire piece:

- Divisions over a ground/ostinato bass
- Divisions over one line of a madrigal/chanson/motet
- Divisions over multiple lines

1

2

- ▲
- 1: 16th-note figuration.** Twiddles to use in improvising divisions.
2: Diego Ortiz's first divisions over the Passamezzo Moderno ground bass.

of a madrigal, etc.

- Formal variations over a song/madrigal/dance tune

To improvise divisions, you have to be comfortable playing *twiddles* (which is what I call 16th-note figuration grouped in fours). Twiddles can circle around a single note, lead to another, extend the range of the phrase, add *ficta* (pitches that lie outside the expected set of pitches in the piece, later just called accidentals), or build momentum into a cadence. In example 1, notice how each group of four 16ths in this example is shaped differently.

The entire first book of *Tratado de Glosas* (Rome, 1553) by Diego Ortiz

(1510-70) is full of exercises to get your fingers moving on twiddles. Divisions can be sporadic or continuous. At their most intense, they can preempt the tune, forming an entire new layer of melody atop the original one.

The divisions of the Renaissance give way to more formal, contrasting sectional variations in the late Renaissance and Baroque. John Playford's (1623-86) *Division Violin* (London, 1684) is a good example of these contrasting variations in the late Renaissance; J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and Marin Marais's *Variations on Les Folies d'Espagne* are excellent 18th-century examples.

New divisions vs. dividing a melody

What's the difference between creating totally new divisions and dividing a pre-existing melody? Less than you might think.

I always use some kind of *guidelines* for my melodic divisions. If they're over a bass, I follow Ortiz's lead and *create a melodic/rhythmic nugget* that changes according to the *chordal pattern* in the bass. Example 2 is the first eight measures of his divisions over a popular ground bass, the Passamezzo Moderno.

Notice how the top part's rhythm is basically the same in each of bars 1-6, and so is the tune's shape. What changes each time are the interval

The musical score for 'La Quinta Estampie Real' is written in 3/4 time and consists of six staves. It is marked with Roman numerals I through IV, indicating specific sections or ornaments. The notation includes various note values, rests, and repeat signs with first and second endings. The piece is in a major key, as indicated by the key signature.

3

The musical score for 'Prelude, modeste simplement' is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It is marked 'Moderé'. The score features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The piece is in a major key, as indicated by the key signature.

4



3: La Quinta Estampie Real. This dance follows a specific Estampie form, marked with Roman numerals. You could also think of this dance’s alternating puncta and endings as P1 E1 P1 E2; P2 E1 P2 E2; P3 E1 P3 E2; P4 E1 P4 E2.

4: First prelude in chapter 3 of L’art de Preluder (1719) by Jacques-Martin Hotteterre. This may be something like a poem in its improvised form.

between the two eighth notes on beat one, and the pitch of the figuration, which moves to correspond to the changing chords. In bars 7 and 8, Ortiz syncopates to celebrate the coming cadence, and then he anticipates the next point of imitation.

When adding *divisions to a line of a madrigal*, I stick closely to the rhythm of the original part instead of adding a new rhythmic nugget. I make sure my twiddles keep the melodic contour and don't obscure the original shape.

Working with new melodic material

Three of these genres focus upon new melodic material:

- *Estampie* – creating new melody
- Improvised intro or interlude in a troubadour song – new and transformed melody
- Unaccompanied prelude – new melody

These tunes can have tonal centers, but they aren't based on chord progressions.

To improvise an *Estampie/Istampitta/Danse Real*, your guideline is the *estampie form*—alternating sections or *puncta*:

- *Punctum 1* with first ending, repeated *Punctum 1* with second ending
- *Punctum 2* with same first ending, repeated *Punctum 2* with same second ending.

Continue until done; four-six *puncta* are the norm, and the form gets more complicated later in the 15th century. Since everything is improvised, the challenge is remembering the *punctum* upon repeat, and keeping track of which ending you're on. In example 3, each of the four sections represents a *punctum* with all of the variants written out.

We don't have detailed contemporary accounts about performance practice. But we think performers might have added devices like *intros*,

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Devising a free introduction to a Middle Eastern tune is like wandering through a new house to see what's in each room.

tags, interludes and postludes to a troubadour song. It makes sense that an accompanist would decorate and enhance the singer's part, and give her a chance to breathe.

My guidelines here are the *melody of the song and its mode* (musical scale, but not necessarily what we think of today for major and minor scales). It was explained to me once that devising a free introduction to a Middle Eastern tune is like wandering through a new house to see what's in each room. Between using snatches of the tune and fragments of the mode, you've got enough material for the instrumental fillers.

Improvised preludes weren't played only in the Middle Ages. Ortiz, French woodwind virtuoso Jacques-Martin Hotteterre (1674-1763) and many others describe different ways of structuring a free prelude.

Example 4 is one by Hotteterre. It's in French violin clef (effectively, bass clef). I think the guideline here is *verbal*: the rhythm of this prelude is so spontaneous and varied that, combined with the rising melody and breathless rests, it makes me think of a poem.

What's left?

The three unrelated genres still left are:

- Improv over a sustained *cantus firmus* – new melody, pre-existing tenor (a melody from plainchant, or at other times a popular tune)
- Ornamenting a melody with line- or note- ornaments, or a combo – pre-existing piece
- Realizing a figured bass on keyboard or plucked instrument – new right

hand, pre-existing piece and bass Improv over a *cantus firmus* is the only genre that features *improvisation of a tune over a tune*. Its most notable example is the *basse danse*. It's different from divisions on a ground—more like a duet than an accompanied melody, and that's the model I'd choose when improvising with a *cantus firmus* tenor line.

Ornamenting a melody is different from creating divisions because it decorates the tune without obscuring it. Whether you're using Italian Baroque line ornaments (Arcangelo Corelli, 1653-1713) or French Baroque note ornaments (Hotteterre), it's generally still easy to hear the skeleton of the tune. For guidelines, I'd suggest a *visual image* of a thin necklace studded with occasional large rubies.

Figured bass realization consists of deciding how to voice the chords whose figures (numerical intervals) appear beneath the notes in the bass line—incorporating some melodic elements from the solo lines of the piece, and making sure you don't get in their way.

Historical models from treatises

If you'd like some guidance on what to improvise, you're not alone. In the Renaissance, there must have been great demand for such training. Between 1535-1642, more than two dozen treatises were written on how to improvise divisions, also called diminutions and *passaggi*.

Most treatises contained a section with musical examples (models) of how to improvise ornamented cadences and how to decorate intervals. Students were meant to play them, memorize them, and learn to insert them in appropriate places in the tune. This is similar to the way jazz is taught these days.

Of the 10 genres above, two (creating an *estampie* and improvising over

a troubadour song) had no formal models. See the resources list at the end of this article for information about the other eight, listed with some of the theorists who wrote about them, or in other source material.

You may be familiar with some of these composers and sources. Don't be dismayed if you don't know many of them. Some composers, such as Ortiz, Riccardo Rognionio (c.1550-1620) and Giovanni Bassano (c.1560-1617) are known more for their diminution treatises than for their compositions we may have played. Also, some genres, like *basse dances*, have few written examples; I think we have at most four or five complete *basse dances* that consist of more than the original tune.

Ortiz and Playford

Ortiz's treatise on ornaments and cadences is a very convenient source. Its first book gives examples of improvisation over different intervals, short phrases and cadence patterns. The second book in Ortiz's treatise contains full pieces showing different kinds of improvisation—free, over a *cantus firmus*, over a line of a madrigal and chanson, and over an ostinato bass.

My other favorite source is Playford's *Division Violin*. It includes divisions over many different kinds of repeating basses, both shorter ostinato basses and longer bass patterns, with and without a familiar melody.

What's next?

If this is all very new to you and you don't feel confident, before you focus on early music improv in particular, consider spending some time immersed in general improv culture, by training in theater improv. Inventing music as you play takes some getting used to, and there are books to read and improv classes to attend in person and online that will help. Web sites offer a variety of

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Web sites ... can help develop those four new skills I mentioned above: reacting quickly, listening actively, remembering what you did, and taking risks.

fun, silly and useful games that can help develop those four new skills I mentioned above: reacting quickly, listening actively, remembering what you did, and taking risks. One technique used in theater improv that I particularly like is the practice of borrowing non-musical models; a favorite verbal one is telling a story, and there are visual models, linguistic models, sonic and dramatic models. I spent five years doing theater improv, and found it very freeing.

If you'd like to *improve your overall musicianship*, you may want to take some early music theory or skills classes at your favorite workshop or online: counterpoint, early notation, modal theory, *partimento*, *solfège*. They'll all help you improvise.

Finally, 21st century musicologist Martin Clayton (in his free course, *Composition and Improvisation in Cross-cultural Perspective*) confirms that most musical creation involves the interaction of models/fixed elements with variable elements. Those models can also be called guidelines or building blocks.

I think that the most important variable is your own imagination. When we perform written music, the primary fixed element is the score. In early music improv, often the score is only the skeleton, and it's up to us to contribute our own ideas and complete the piece. It's a moving and inspiring partnership, and a really enjoyable practice—one of the things that makes early music so special, and I hope you find a way to participate in it. ❁



▲ Antonio Vivaldi, c.1723

Spotlight on teaching improvisation, then and now

Originally, I conceived of this article as a comparison of current European and American methods of teaching early music improvisation. I read articles on every aspect of teaching, learning and performing various kinds of musical improvisation, and interviewed many delightful people.

In my informal survey of the field, I found that at the end of the 20th century, while there was a general move to reform and expand the teaching of improvisation, it led to different results in jazz and world music than it did in early music. Teachers of the former developed “practice-based learning,” a way to help understand the performance process by recording a student's improvisation, transcribing it, and then examining and describing the results. Ethnomusicologists then applied it to other popular music styles, and even to classical music.

INSIDER SECRETS

Things took a different turn in early music circles. In the second half of the 20th century, the standard early music improv training combined “what you hear + what you know,” teaching students to listen and respond with more acuity, and reinforcing what they knew with a serious study of early treatises. But in the 1940s, and again in the 1980s, music scholars

Gustav Fellerer and Rosa Cafiero wrote about a secret teaching method from the past called *partimento*. Scholars Robert Gjerdingen and Giorgio Sanguinetti began to research the topic in earnest around the turn of the 21st century, starting to publish in the second decade.

Students of music history know about Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) and his connection to the *Ospedale della Pietà*, an orphanage and music school for girls in Venice, Italy. In the current study of *partimento*, however, Gjerdingen and Sanguinetti discovered that *partimento* was *de rigueur* for all aspiring professional musicians in the Baroque era, and pointed to a surprising gap between the way they were trained and the process of training amateurs over the years.

Simply put, *partimenti* were short, unfigured bass lines used to teach keyboard harmony to young Italian orphans from the late 16th century into the 20th. Originally, “conservatories” were not specifically for teaching musicians but for “conserving” orphans. It was customary for European orphanages to teach a particular trade or craft so that the children could eventually make a living. One of these trades was music; as early as their sixth or seventh year, children started training to be working musicians at court and in church.

When six-year-olds knew their note names, intervals and rhythmic notation, they learned *solfeggio*, sight-singing with syllables against a bass line. Then they learned *contrapunto fugato*, singing a freely-invented line with repeating motives against a second *cantus firmus* line in long notes plus the bass line. This was part of *contrapunto pensado*—composing in the mind, something between on-the-spot improvisation and written composition.

Students also learned *intavolatura* or intabulation: making a keyboard score by conflating the individual

parts, adding cadential ornaments and *musica ficta*. So a set of rules (*regole*), *solfeggio*, *contrapunto fugato* and *intavolatura* filled the student’s storehouse of memory, and *partimenti* gave the student hands-on practice in controlling and applying that treasure over the changing bass patterns in a *partimento* such as *La Folia*. They also played keyboard and an orchestral instrument.

As early as age 11 or 12, orphans were hired out as choristers or orchestral players. The resulting income supported the orphanage and made it possible to hire better teachers, attracting outside students and gradually making the conservatory into a respected professional training ground.

Once our 21st-century indignation over the exploitation of young children dies down, what remains is the realization that J.S. Bach, Mozart and Beethoven weren’t the only musicians who could sit down and improvise a five-voice fugue for the king. It was part of every professional musician’s background.

Often just a sketch, a simple bass line written on a single staff, *partimento* was meant to be an improvisation guide—a musical puzzle to be solved spontaneously. This was done by applying the *regole*. Students memorized musical examples, *schema*, then used the rules to apply them—in effect, improvising. The combination of rules, examples and keyboard facility gave the student an impressively complex understanding and command of musical style.

It can be tempting to think of this as a process of memorizing licks and then regurgitating them, as people sometimes characterize jazz training today. Gjerdingen asserts that, according to the way it was applied in the past, this kind of training led to mastery. He makes the distinction that a *schema* wasn’t a fixed lick, but was more like a framework on which

you could hang your memories as you build your piece. I call it a scaffolding: you use it to construct your improvisation and remove it when your musical ideas are in place.

Partimento and the accompanying skills were taught into the mid-20th century throughout Europe and as far afield as Russia (though not all training programs started with six-year-olds). Maurice Ravel, Dmitri Shostakovich, Luciano Berio, Pierre Boulez, Erik Satie and Nadia Boulanger all learned *partimento*. Boulanger taught it to my theory teacher, Bain Murray, and I learned some from him, as well as from Inda Howland, who taught “keyboard harmony” at Oberlin Conservatory. (Fifty years later I can still play and realize half a dozen of those bass patterns in any key you ask.)

In contrast, pretty consistently through the centuries, amateurs have been expected to know enough about music to appreciate it, to play or sing well enough to entertain after dinner, and that’s about it (the gap I mentioned in amateur training). They might learn a little music theory from their keyboard or voice teacher, take a year or two of theory in school, learn to write the inner parts of a Bach chorale, recognize sonata form and label the chords in a piece with Roman numerals. Sound familiar? But people who want to look under the hood, not just drive the car, need an entirely different level of training.

Until recently, the path of this professional training has been hidden from outsiders. The reason for this is not necessarily deep and paranoid: *partimento* wasn’t taught from books, but by interaction with a live teacher. Little was written down besides those short, unadorned musical fragments.

But now that we’re starting to learn more about this early music improvisation training, it has given us one more tool to unlock the creative processes of the distant, and not so distant, past. ❁

INFORMATION AND LINKS OF INTEREST:

A few ways to take the next step in improvising.

- First, read two short articles in this issue's LEARN department that I wrote on improv strategies—one using improv to tell a story, the other using the folia ostinato bass (also the topic of Jennifer Carpenter's FEATURE).
- Visit one of many information-packed websites with improv information (www.earlymusicsources.com is a great starting place); pages on Facebook like The Art of Improvisation and Early Music Improvisation; classes in person and online; books and articles. For a detailed list, contact me at tinachancey@cs.com.
- Improvisation exercises, www.hooplaimpro.com/improv-exercises-games-formats.html
- TeamRecorder's Sarah Jeffery interviews Erik Bosgraaf about improvisation in different styles, including over La Folia, www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Wec7gwWFIE
- A short list of treatises about improvising. All of the ones below, and many more, are available to the modern reader—either in facsimile (free at <https://imslp.org>) or often reprinted and sold online. Also visit the Wikipedia article on Diminution, for a list that you can click through, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diminution>.
 - Improv over a sustained *cantus firmus*: Diego Ortiz, *Tratado de Glosas et Clausulas* (1553)
 - Divisions over a ground/ostinato bass: Ortiz, John Playford's *Division Violin* (1684; it contains some of the same pieces as his *Division Flute*, including famous grounds such as Greensleeves and the Folia version called Faronell's Ground); also Christopher Simpson's *Division Viol* (1659)
 - Divisions over one line of a madrigal/chanson/motet: Ortiz, Giovanni Bassano, *Ricercate, passaggi et cadentie* (1585)
 - Divisions over multiple lines of a madrigal, etc., *viola bastarda*: Francesco Rognoni, *Selve de varii passaggi* (1620)
 - Formal variations over a song/madrigal/dance tune: *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (1562-c.1612)
 - Ornamenting a melody with line- or note-ornaments, or devising an unaccompanied prelude: Jacques-Martin Hotteterre, *L'Art de Preluder* (1719); also see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ornament_\(music\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ornament_(music)).
 - Realizing a figured bass on keyboard or plucked instrument: see the Wikipedia article on Partimento, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partimento>
- Cantus firmus, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cantus_firmus
- Musica ficta, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musica_ficta
- Modes (various historical church modes, plus links to modes of other cultures), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mode_\(music\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mode_(music))
- Gustav Fellerer, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Gustav_Fellerer
- The Art of Composing Podcast, John Brantingham: *Partimenti and the Secrets of the Greatest Composers—An interview with Robert Gjerdingen*, AOC011, March 14, 2016, www.artofcomposing.com/aoc-011-partimenti-and-the-secrets-of-the-greatest-composers-an-interview-with-robert-gjerdingen; also a web site on learning partimenti, edited by Robert Gjerdingen, https://partimenti.org/partimenti/about_parti/index.html

Books and articles

- Burke, Robert L. "Analysis and observations of pre-learned and idiosyncratic elements in improvisation: a reflective study in jazz performance," unpublished dissertation, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, 2013.
- Clayton, Martin. Free course entitled *Composition and Improvisation in Cross-cultural Perspective*, www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/music/composition-and-improvisation-cross-cultural-perspective/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab. A few of his books are listed at www.biblio.com/clayton-martin/author/67488.
- Després, Jean-Philippe, et al, "Expert Western Classical Music Improvisers' Strategies." *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 2017.
- Houry, Stephanie, "Partimento as Improvisation Pedagogy: Renewing a Lost Art," *InCantare*, vol. 6, December 2014.
- Mariani, Angela. *Improvisation and Inventio in the Performance of Medieval Music: A Practical Approach*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Miller, Sue. "Activating Improvisational Creativity in the Performance of 'World' and 'Popular' Music." Chapter 6 in *Activating Diverse Musical Creativities: Teaching and Learning in Higher Music Education*, Pamela Burnard and Elizabeth Haddon, editors. Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.
- Reviews in American Recorder CRITIQUE, in this issue as well as Spring 2022 AR (Recercada 1 & 2 by Diego Ortiz), https://americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_Spring_2022_body.pdf; Summer 2022 AR (Diminutionen by G.P. Palestrina), https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARsum22_body.pdf.
- "What, me improvise?" A Practical Introduction to Improvisation (including theater improv) by Robert de Bree, Summer 2019 AR, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARsum19body.pdf>

HISTORY

LA FOLIA: WHAT MADNESS!

BY JENNIFER CARPENTER

How La Folia became a timeless favorite and why we like repetitive music.



Jennifer Carpenter's love for the recorder began while earning her Bachelor of Music in clarinet

performance at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her pursuit of early music studies brought her to study at the University of North Texas, where she received a Master of Music degree in musicology with emphasis in early music performance and is "all but dissertation" for her Ph.D. in the same field. A resident of Colorado Springs, CO, she is a member of Parish House Baroque and Byrd on a Wire. She enjoys teaching as much as performing. In addition to teaching private lessons, both in person and online, Carpenter has been on the faculty of a number of early music workshops and directed chapter meetings throughout the U.S. Her enthusiasm for working with amateur recorder players led her to serve on the ARS Board of Directors (2012-20). She currently serves as music director for the Denver Recorder Society.

Albert Einstein quipped that insanity is doing something over and over again and expecting different results. Yet, that is exactly why musicians tend to love melodies and grounds that repeat themselves, and why we find ourselves repeatedly playing them!

As musicians, we delight in challenge and the ability to create something different on each repeat of a pattern. As listeners, we tend to gravitate toward music that repeats. Whether it be a familiar chorus, refrain, theme, or repeating harmonic/melodic pattern, we develop an intimacy with music that we know.

One such repeated musical pattern, known and loved by many of us, is La Folia—a musical framework used during the Baroque period for songs, dances and sets of variations. The term "folia" translates into English as "folly" or "madness."

The folia originated as a lively Portuguese dance best described by 17th-century writer Sebastián de Covarrubias (in *Tesoro de la lengua castellana*,

1611) as "very noisy, performed with tambourines and other instruments by disguised street-porters carrying young men in women's clothing on their shoulders." Covarrubias says the dancers "make gestures that awaken voluptuousness." He also explained that the name, "La Folia," was appropriate because the dance was so fast and noisy that the dancers seemed out of their minds.

Nearly a century later, the dance spread to Spain and then across the Mediterranean to Italy and beyond. Clearly, voluptuousness was popular!

Perhaps it is madness that pulls us into enjoying repetitive patterns. However, musicians understand that we actually can achieve different results by doing something over and over again. Repetitive music written hundreds of years ago still breathes new life and excites both listeners and performers. But why? Here, we will find help in the psychology of listening.

The case for repetition

Elizabeth Hellmuth Margulis is the director of the music cognition lab at Princeton University (NJ) and the author of *On Repeat: How Music Plays the Mind*, a book that helps us understand what makes repetition in music special compared to speech or the written word. Margulis (and prior to her, ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl) points out that repetition in music is a feature shared by cultures around the world. In Western music, we even have a sign within musical scores to denote repetition (♫/♫). It is not nearly as common in other forms of art—which leaves repetition as a great device in music that separates it from language, in particular.

In language, if you say a phrase over and over again, it starts to become a collection of sounds rather than meaning anything. This is referred to as “semantic satiation”: the moment a phrase is repeated to the point it slips out of the meaning-processing part of our brains.

This departure out of the semantic dimension is the point where musical meaning starts. Let’s think of it this way: repeat the word “settle”: at first, we think of the meaning of the word; then we may focus on the pronunciation of the “t” (are you pronouncing it as a “t” or “d”?). Where is your syllabic emphasis? Does your pitch change from the first to second syllable? The “t” or “d” may not be aesthetically relevant to the actual pronunciation of “settle;” but if focusing on these details is akin to the articulations a player uses—the slurring of two notes, or the bend of one pitch into another—then we start to see the critical expressive importance of the individual elements.

The speech-to-song illusion captures how simply repeating a word or phrase shifts the listeners’ attention to the pitch and temporal aspects of the sound. Then we start to understand how musicians can make minute

decisions that change the impact of repetitive patterns. As listeners, we learn to anticipate what is to come next. As performers, we can use that anticipation in order to surprise the listeners with something new.

Repetition gives rise to a kind of orientation to sounds that we think of as distinctively musical. We engage imaginatively with the syllable (or musically, the note) that is about to happen. This mode of listening ties in with our susceptibility to musical earworms, like the folia.

Studies like Margulis’s show that people tend to prefer things they’ve been exposed to before (psychologists call this the “mere-exposure effect”). There is something deeply compelling about musical repetition. Think about the Beatles’ “Ob-la-di, ob-la-da”—if you’ve heard this before, can you sing it without continuing on with “life goes on, brah, La-la, how their life goes on”? Or if you recently have had kids or grandkids, if you hear the cringe-worthy and interminable *Baby Shark*—how many of you immediately sing, “doo doo, doo doo doo doo” in spite of yourself? Repetition irresistibly connects each segment of music to the next.

In music, repetition is when sounds or sequences are used more than once during a piece. One last popular example: let’s think of Daft Punk’s song *Around the World*. It contains only one lyric (“Around the world”) and a repeating bass line. The entire song comprises repetition of simple elements, and yet it is a very popular song (even the music video picks up on this repetition with each of the characters representing one element of the music).

The combination of a simple melody and a repeating bass line brings us back to the ground bass patterns we know and love from the Renaissance and Baroque eras. There is something powerful about repetition. Margulis

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Repetition in music is a feature shared by cultures around the world.

proposes that we not only enjoy it, but also need it.

Repetition allows for simple pieces of music to take on new meaning. The notation can be the same from one measure to the next. But the timing, the outcome, nuances in personal styles of playing, semantic satiation or levels of attention—they can all vary greatly, which plays a part in how listeners perceive and perform repeated segments.

Patterns of repetition aren’t just musical techniques reserved for composers; they are invitations for the listener and performer to participate. As Margulis states:

Repetitiveness actually gives rise to the kind of listening that we think of as musical. It carves out a familiar, rewarding path in our minds, allowing us at once to anticipate and participate in each phrase as we listen [or perform]. That experience of being played by the music is what creates a sense of shared subjectivity with the sound, and with each other.

This is why repetitive tunes like the folia make us want to take part in the music. The simplicity of the repeating bass and melodic line allows our brains to focus and dissect the musical gestures (akin to semantics) and make them our own. The notes may be hundreds of years old and performed thousands of times prior to our reading—but we bring a focus to articulation, phrasing, dynamics and direction that are not only born out of our familiarity with the piece, but are created anew with each note we present (whether written out in variations or improvised).

The enduring La Folia

For centuries, composers and musicians have been dazzled by the seductive simplicity of the folia. It is an enduring melody that has been shaped by countless hands over its long history.

There are two folias: the earlier, faster and “voluptuous” dance-like version that originated in late 15th-century Portugal; and the later, more mellow, dignified version that became popular after 1650. The spirit of the Baroque prided itself on elegance and grace above peasant frolics; therefore, it is no surprise that musicians began bending the folia to fit changing musical tastes.

THE EARLY FOLIA

The earliest labeled folia appeared in 1577 in Spanish theorist and organist Francisco de Salinas’s treatise *De musica libri septem* (see examples 1 and 2 on page 18). The melody of *Veritate facta* becomes the folia melody that was the basis for folias for nearly a century.

In Italy we see the term “folia” first used in 1604 in a set of variations by G.G. Kapsberger (*Libro primo di intavolatura di chitarrone*). Shortly after, in the 17th century, Italy experienced an explosion of instrumental variations on the folia theme for guitar, chitarrone, keyboard and violin by Girolamo Frescobaldi (1615), Alessandro Piccinini (1623), Angelo Bartolotti (1640), Giovanni Foscarini (c.1640), Francesco Corbetta (1643, 1648, 1671, 1674), Andrea Falconieri (1650) and Bernardo Storace (1664). Because much of southern Italy was under Spanish rule during this time, which led to many Spanish musicians working in Italy, it is understandable that the cultural exchange between the two countries was rather fluid.

Around 1650, the hectic early folia matured into the melody that most of us know today. A number of popular Renaissance dance forms did not make



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Veritate facta cuncta cernis optime, Veritas manet mouentur haec, sed ordine.

Admonitū
autē lecto-
rem volu-

mus, in omnibus hypercatalecticis praeter silentium vnici temporis necessarium, pedē etiā integrum voluntarium fileri posse: vt quemadmodum prima dipodia cœpit à manus positione, ita & vltima in eandem desinat; vt ostenditur in vulgaribus, quas Lusitani, Follías, vocât, ad hoc metri genus & ad hunc canendi modum institutis, qualis est illa.

1

2

i V i VII III

1. 2.

VII i V i V i

3

1: Excerpt from *De musica libri septem* (1577) by Francisco de Salinas.

2: Hypothetical harmonization using Salinas's folia melody in the tenor.

3: Scheme for the late folia.

4: *Folie d'Espagne*. Engraving from Lambranzi's *Neue und curieuse theatralische Tantz-Schul* (Nuremberg, 1716).



the transition into the Baroque, but somehow, the popular “mad” theme tumbled into a transformed existence.

THE LATE FOLIA

The late folia developed gradually—you can see hints of it in several of Corbetta's settings. Falconieri's *Folias echa para me Señora Doña de Carallenos* (in *Il primo libro de canzone, sinfonie, fantasie...*, Naples, 1650) for two violins and continuo has nearly all the features of the later folia except for the standard melody.

The French composer Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-87) gets the most credit for codifying the prototype for both the melody and chord progression for the late folia in his *Les Folies d'Espagne* (1672). Lully very likely collaborated on this publication with Jean Danican Philidor (c.1620-79), the wind-instrument specialist at Louis XIV's court where they both served; it's impossible to tell which of the composers brought to fruition the idea of using the folia.

To muddy the waters further, it was

fairly recently discovered that Marco Uccellini used the chord progression (and a similar melody) for the late folia in “Synfonia 5: A Padouana” from his *Synfonie Boscarecia, Op. 8* (Venice, 1660)—12 years prior to Lully's publication.

Regardless of who codified the late folia scheme, it quickly spread across continental Europe and beyond. It is referred to variously:

- in France, as “Folie(s) d'Espagne”
- in England as “Farinell(i)'s Ground”
- in Spain as “La Folia”

- in Italy and Portugal as “La Folia” (sometimes “Follia”).

By the 18th century, we find the late folia sneaking into a cantata by J.S. Bach (“Peasant Cantata,” BWV212) and a keyboard suite by G.F. Handel (Sarabande from his *Keyboard Suite in D minor, HWV437*), making it hard to discern how widespread it had become outside of folia-named compositions. In the decade between 1700 and 1710, around 20 composers including Arcangelo Corelli and Antonio Vivaldi tried taming the folia. By 1760, composers in Mexico and

►
Poster for Adam Grannick’s film, *La Folia* (2017).



INFORMATION AND LINKS OF INTEREST FOR FURTHER PLAYING, LISTENING AND READING:

- Do you want to play a folia on recorders? The late folias are the foundation for the theme and variation sets we tend to love. The American Recorder Society web site has some folia pieces in the Play-Along Music Library.
 - Anthony St. Pierre has a large collection of folia-themed pieces available on IMSLP and also in the ARS Play-Along Library, <https://americanrecorder.org/playalong>.
 - Jennifer Carpenter’s recorder arrangement (SAATB) of La Follia (based on Francesco Geminiani’s (1687-1762) *Concerto Grosso in D Minor, H.143*), is also available in the ARS music libraries.
- Many of the pieces below can be found free on IMSLP (https://imslp.org/wiki/List_of_compositions_with_the_theme_%22La_Folia%22), others for purchase. These include:
 - For solo recorder:
 - “Farrinel’s Ground” from John Playford’s *Apollo’s Banquet* (1669)
 - “Faronell’s Division on a Ground” from Playford’s *The Division Violin* (1684)
 - “Faronell’s Division on a Ground” from John Walsh’s *The Division Flute* (1706)
 - Matthias Maute’s *How I Love You, Sweet Folia!* (1986)
 - Hans Martin Linde’s *Una follia nuova* (1989)
 - For recorder and continuo: Arcangelo Corelli’s *Violin Sonata in D minor, Op. 5, no. 12 “La Folia”* (1700): there are arrangements for recorder available.
 - For two recorders and continuo: Antonio Vivaldi’s *Trio Sonata in D minor, RV63* (1705)
 - For five recorders (SAATB): Lance Eccles’s *Variations on La Folia* (1988, rev. 2001; Edition Walhall Flautando Edition FEA076), reviewed in Summer 2018 AR, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARsum18body.pdf> (with links to other references about folia).
- For 13 recorders (SSAAAATTBBgBcB, optional soprano and garklein: Victor Eijkhout’s *Ma Follia* (2006), [https://imslp.org/wiki/Ma_Follia_\(Eijkhout%2C_Victor\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Ma_Follia_(Eijkhout%2C_Victor))
- Some other recent American Recorder reviews of recorder music involving folias: *50 Renaissance & Baroque Standards, With Variants, Examples & Advice For Playing & Improvising On Any Instrument*, by Pascale Boquet and Gérard Rebours, Fuzeau Éditions Classique 5946, 2007 (for various melody instruments, with unrealized bc), January 2011 AR, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARjan11body.pdf>; for five recorders (S’o/S S/A A/T T/B B): Glen Shannon Music SMM140, 2006, www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipTXKoZX7Qc, reviewed in May 2009 AR, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARmay09body.pdf>
- Comprehensive list of folias with history: www.folias.nl
- Hudson, Richard. “The Folia Melodies.” *Acta Musicologica*, vol. 45 (1973), pp. 98-119.
- Margulis, Elizabeth Hellmuth. *On Repeat: How Music Plays with the Mind*. Oxford University Press, 2013.
- An interesting Radiolab episode on how humans perceive sound, plus more on semantic satiation: Musical Language (2007) on NPR’s Radiolab, <https://radiolab.org/episodes/91512-musical-language>.
- Daft Punk’s *Around the World*: listen and see how the videography also picks up on the repetition: www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOHSD_i2DvA
- Folia turned Swedish political ballad, *Sinclairsvisan* (words by 18th-century Swedish writer Anders Odel): www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfSWPQ4FvDg

Bolivia embraced the melody.

In the 18th century, love for the folia melody didn't stop with classical musicians. There's evidence of it slipping back to its peasant roots in children's songs, Swedish political ballads, Finnish folk tunes (*Lampaanpolska*), and even bawdy English operas. Through his doctoral research (2006), recorder player Erik Bosgraaf has shown us how the late folia found its way into the folk-song culture in the Low Countries. A number of spiritual and secular songs set to the tune of the "Folies d'Espagne" were published during the 18th century in the Netherlands.

Though popularity of the haunting folia waned after the 18th century, the flexibility to adapt the theme in striking new ways influenced Romantic composers Ludwig van Beethoven and Johannes Brahms in Germany, Hector Berlioz in France, Hungarian composer Franz Liszt, and Russia's Sergei Rachmaninoff to use the folia in their compositions.

In the 20th and 21st centuries, the folia jumped genres and has been adapted for performance on a variety of instruments including sitar, ukulele and electric guitars. We see it in popular music (notably Britney Spears's *Baby One More Time*) and film music. Adam Grannick, a contemporary filmmaker and folia devotee, used the folia variations by Francesco Gemini-ani as the backdrop of an experimental short film, *La Folia* (2017), to help weave together several short stories. "The idea is that I trusted the music to make it work," Grannick states. "In film there are certain rules of narrative arc you want to follow. But by following the dramatic arc of the music itself, I trusted that anything we did would bring the audience along." It worked. Grannick's film won "Best experimental short" at the 2017 Manhattan (NY) Film Festival.

When familiarity doesn't breed contempt

Has the folia melody endured the test of time because of nostalgia or even national pride? Because of the adaptability of the simple melody and chord structure? Or is it because of our love of repetition in music? The answer will never be simple, but we should not discount the power of the human mind.

Let's recall the "mere-exposure" effect. We tend to be naturally suspicious of new ideas, which is why advertisers, politicians—and yes, composers—use frequent contact to soften our acceptance. What's striking is that in formal studies people tend to misattribute their increased perceptual fluency—their improved ability to process the message, the picture or the melody—not to the prior experience, but to some quality of the object itself. Instead of recognizing familiarity with the object, they tend to ascribe value to the object: "Gee, I like that triangle. It makes me feel clever." This effect extends to musical listening.

There is a special role that repetition in music plays that distinguishes it from the other arts. A phrase heard once may sound arbitrary; repeat it again and we tend to hear the shape and the musicality present within the phrase. Music is in motion all of the time. Playing a melody more than once means each repetition will have a different impact—after all, your perception was altered after the first time you heard it.

Austrian-American 20th-century composer Arnold Schoenberg said, "Intelligibility in music seems to be impossible without repetition." However, we now know that exact repetition in music simply doesn't exist.

This means that listening to and playing tunes like *La Folia* aren't akin to insanity—but rather, they make us feel inspired by the possibilities. ❁



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Berkeley Festival 2022

Tom Bickley,
Greta Haug-Hryciw and
Glen Shannon report on
the first in-person festival
since 2019.

As excitement at the prospect of attending performances in person was slightly tempered with caution when new COVID variants emerged, the 17th biennial Berkeley (CA) Festival and Exhibition (BFX) was held June 5-12 with audiences masked and asked to show proof of vaccination.

Digital concert content—a first for BFX—is promised as an alternative for those unable to attend in person. This is a plus for *AR* readers, as there was also hesitation on the part of reporters willing to attend and write about events, of which a few of interest to recorder players are mentioned here.

This year marked the first in-person BFX under the artistic direction of Derek Tam, who became executive director in March 2019 of the festival

▼ Andrew Levy conducts a Spanish villancico played by the Junior Recorder Society. Photo by Greta Haug-Hryciw.



organizer, the San Francisco Early Music Society (SFEMS). Also for the first time since being founded in 1990, BFX expanded across the Bay for two days of events at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. During its eight days of BFX 2022, an exhibition of early music merchants and service organizations was held June 9-11.

A strength of the BFX is its Fringe concerts, a series of independently-produced performances by soloists and ensembles. The Fringe was where the recorder performances happened for BFX 2022, since recorder was lacking in the mainstage events. Reports on a few Fringe events follow.

JRS at BFX

The Junior Recorder Society (JRS) of the East Bay kicked off the Fringe events on Sunday, June 4. Seven young musicians played an assortment of pieces from the Renaissance, Baroque and contemporary eras in a 40-minute program that was held outdoors to promote safety from COVID-19. Audience members—masked and distanced—showed great appreciation for the skill and confidence with which the young musicians played.

The ensembles performed most of the pieces with minimal assistance from teachers Hanneke van Proosdij, Andrew Levy and Greta Haug-Hryciw. A highlight of the program was *Melody* by Ukrainian composer Miroslav Skoryk, arranged by van Proosdij for the JRS and performed in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

The resilience of the JRS members and their families through the season was remarkable. The photo at left exemplifies the conditions under which the JRS met all season—on some days, the participants had to bundle up and use lots of clothes pins to keep music from blowing away, and on other days when it was hot in the sun, they were grateful for the shade of the oak trees!

66

The Fringe was where the recorder performances happened for BFX 2022.

Mane Musica

On Monday, June 6, at the Christian Science Organization at University of California Berkeley, Mane Musica—Ronald Cohen, cornetto; Bruce von Kugelen, alto sackbut; Mary Ellen Reed, dulcian; and Brian Taylor, bass sackbut—offered a free program, “Quodlibets and More,” to a near capacity audience. The repertoire was drawn from 16th-century sources by composers Rossi, Busnois, Isaac, Josquin and Padovano. The pieces are ones played with great satisfaction on recorders (possibly at other times by performers on this concert, who also played recorder); it was a treat to hear them via the rowdier timbres of these instruments.

The quartet brought great energy and enthusiasm, gladly received by the audience. Slight imperfections in the playing of these challengingly complex scores did not keep the event from being satisfying and inspiring.

▼ Trio playing during The Great Recorder Payout.

(left to right) Cindy Keune, Mary Ellen Reed, Nancy Grant.



Calexstone

Thursday, June 9, brought to the stage of the Berkeley Piano Club the respected veterans of the early music scene, Calexstone—Letitia Berlin, recorders, douçaine, psaltery, voice; Frances Blaker, recorders; Shira Kammen, vielle, harp, voice; Allison Zelles Lloyd, voice, harp; with special guest Peter Maund, percussion. For “The Age of Boccaccio’s Decameron: Music of 14th Century Italy,” the ensemble used a multimedia approach to create a very engaging performance.

Each performer took the role of a divine figure—for instance, Calexstone, or Lady Nature—to present sections of a narrative poem by Lawrence Rosenwald, friend of the performers and colleague at the Amherst Early Music Festival. That poem framed the performance and provided the context for each of the pieces of Trecento period music. Scripts and visuals may be viewed at <https://calexstone.com/BFX22>.

Further enhancing the audience’s experience were projections of period illuminations with summaries of the song texts. As each new figure appeared in the spoken poem, a laurel wreath was donned by the speaker of

that role.

The full house reacted with particular delight to *O fallaza e ria Fortuna* by Robertus de Anglia, featuring Lloyd, Kammen and Berlin singing with Blaker playing recorder.

It was a warm afternoon, a very warm room, and a warmer yet reception for this event. (Calexstone is set to perform again on the San Francisco Early Music Society series, offering “Januario” December 2–4.)

The Great Recorder Payout

Saturday, June 11, at 9:30 a.m. at Loper Chapel, the East Bay Recorder Society put on The Great Recorder Payout, a mini-concert to fill in for the missing Recorder Relay (often sponsored by the ARS at that corresponding time and place). Five brief performances ranged from intricate *Ars subtilior* duos and trios from the 13th & 14th centuries, to bawdy French chansons in four parts from the Renaissance; a Baroque duo for traverso and voice flute by Jean-Baptiste Loeillet (probably “de Gant”); and an original soprano recorder solo played by its composer Glen Shannon.

Three Trapped Tigers

Later on Saturday, June 11, at St. Joseph of Arimathea, Three Trapped Tigers (David Barnett and Tom Bickley, recorders) performed an amazingly varied duo program entitled “It’s All Still Going On Out There.” The title of the program is taken from *Time Poem* by Philip Whalen (1923-2002), which the duo realized for recorders and performed, along with many other Medieval and contemporary compositions.

From the early music realm, they played works by Francesco Landini (c.1325-97) and Andre Pevernage (1542/43-91), as well as bicinia from Munich, *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Mus. Ms. 260*, c.1550. They mixed this with solos and duos by Gavin Byars

(born 1943), Sir Michael Tippett (1905-98), Roy Sansom (born 1955) and Nicola LeFanu (born 1947).

The opening set—in which anonymous 16th-century bicinia on Renaissance recorders framed late-20th-century bicinia by Swiss composer Ulrich Gasser (born 1950), played on modern altos—elicited very positive response from the listeners. Bickley's theatrical performance of Pauline Oliveros's (1932-2016) *In Consideration of the Earth* elicited energized reaction from the audience. Among the audience members were a few who had studied with or been mentored by Oliveros (as was Bickley) a number of years ago at the University of California-San Diego.

The arsenal of instruments played were Renaissance, Baroque and transitional recorders by Tom Prescott, Medieval recorders at A=460 in Pythagorean tuning by Bob Marvin, an Eagle alto by Adriana Breukink, and a Modern alto, Helder tenor and Canta bassett by Mollenhauer. The acoustics in St. Joseph of Arimathea are such that recorders resonate very well (especially the Eagle alto!), and the sound lingers in the walls long after the playing is done.

As an ending thought for the week, it was a festival where lingering sounds showed that “it's all still going on out there.” We all hope that future goings-on can be more widely attended, as audiences feel more comfortable in our endemic situation. ✨

LINKS OF INTEREST:

- Snapshots, recorded live highlights of Berkeley Festival 2022 (full package for \$50), <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?retail=sfems&rd=1>
- San Francisco Early Music Society upcoming season, <https://sfems.org/22-23-concert-season>

BEMF 2022: Engaging Communities Project, Part Two

Erik Bosgraaf and
Nina Stern lead two more
outreach sessions.

Bosgraaf teaches music of Van Eyck

Dutch recorder luminary Erik Bosgraaf gave a fascinating Zoom class in May for the second recorder event of the Engaging Communities Project of the Boston (MA) Early Music Festival (BEMF). Although the project is targeted for kids, the session appeared to have a significant number of adults among the 50 or so participants. PDFs of the music were available for download.

Playing along with the class rather than using a recorded sound file gave Bosgraaf the flexibility to easily draw the listener's focus to intonation, and to analyze specific phrases. Bosgraaf chose music from the blind Dutch carillonneur Jacob van Eyck's familiar *Der Fluyten Lust-Hof* (the Flute's Pleasure Garden), adapted specifically for the recorder and published in Amsterdam in the mid-17th century. Van Eyck collected this music from various well-known Western music sources.

The opening section of each piece is relatively simple, then a set of elaborations systematically transforms each measure of the opening with progres-



1: Erik Bosgraaf. Photo by Marco Borggreve.

2: Nina Stern. Photo by William Stickney.

“

It was wonderful to see the pride and concentration of the young musicians, as well as the pride shown by their families and friends.

sively smaller note values—divisions, a kind of written-out development, perhaps suggesting that the performer is improvising. More to the point for this class, the structure of the music made it suitable for players of various ages with different levels of technical skill.

Boffons (clowns), the first work Bosgraaf considered, has a rhythmically simple eight-bar opening, followed by five increasingly complex variations. Bosgraaf played through just the opening section and the first variation at rehearsal tempo and made suggestions about how to practice.

If you have read previous articles about or by Bosgraaf in *AR*, some of his tips will be familiar. He finds the development of “mental representation” to be critical. That is, he considers it as important to get the music explicitly into the brain as well as into the fingers. Examples of how to do this include:

- play each measure four times before moving on
- practice in small chunks, taking a short break between each chunk
- play the first half of a measure, but only finger the second half while singing the pitches in your head.

To round out the session, Bosgraaf also led the class through Van Eyck’s *De Eerste licke-pot* and Tielman Susato’s *Hupauf* and *Narrenaufzug* (anonymous) in less detail.

All in all, I personally found the class to be very useful and very satisfying. Clearly his teaching is as skillful and interesting as are his performances.

Recorders Beyond Borders

Recorders Beyond Borders (RBB) returned as a June BEMF outreach event for its second year. A stimulating expanded program organized by New York-based Nina Stern featured young recorder players from four continents.

Stern, a renowned recorder performer, is the BEMF Director of Community Engagement. She is the artistic director of S’Cool Sounds, an organization that uses music to inspire, educate and connect children in the U.S. and Kenya. In 2021 she organized the first RBB session for BEMF, a Zoom event that featured students performing in recorder classes in the two countries.

For the 2022 BEMF-sponsored RBB Zoom event on June 4, she partnered with teaching artists from S’Cool Sounds (U.S. and Kenya); the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague (Netherlands); and the NEOJIBA, Alunos da Orquestra da Grota, and the *Música no Bairro/ Dorcas Project* (Brazil) to engage their young students with music from these many traditions. It

was interesting to hear the students in each of the four countries interpret the music of their own cultures, performing for each other, for a live audience of their teachers and families, as well as for a Zoom audience.

The intent of this ongoing program is to continue to create bonds and build community for the next generation of music lovers through the collaborative joy of music making. I joined the Zoom audience for this event and observed that upwards of 50 individuals watched a mix of children and some adults. Watching the various classes, it was wonderful to see the pride and concentration of the young musicians, as well as the pride shown by their families and friends.

The advocacy of Kathleen Fay, BEMF executive director, on behalf of this project has been invaluable since the inception of this program. The tech support for connecting and coordinating Zoom in multiple countries was largely successful, thanks to the wonderful BEMF technical staff. 🌟

Nancy M. Tooney, Brooklyn, NY

LINKS OF INTEREST:

- First event in Engaging Communities Project with Cléa Galhano, Summer 2022 AR, https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARsum22_body.pdf
- Boston Early Music Festival: <https://bemf.org/about-us/engaging-communities>.
- Erik Bosgraaf, www.erikbosgraaf.com
- Interview with Erik Bosgraaf (including his Thoughts on Practicing) and article on BEMF 2021, Summer 2021 AR, https://americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_Sum21_body.pdf
- Jacob van Eyck, *Der Fluyten Lust-Hof*, [https://imslp.org/wiki/Der_Fluyten_Lust-Hof_\(Eyck%2C_Jacob_van\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Der_Fluyten_Lust-Hof_(Eyck%2C_Jacob_van))
- Nina Stern, www.ninastern.com; S’Cool Sounds, www.scoolsounds.org; appointed BEMF Director of Community Engagement, Summer 2021 AR, https://americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_Sum21_body.pdf;
- Articles on BEMF and “The Power of the Recorder to Change Lives” (vignettes collected by Galhano about the recorder in Brazil, including *Música no Bairro/ Dorcas Project*), Fall 2021 AR, https://americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_fall21_body.pdf

Technique Tip: How to play air and finger vibrato



WRITTEN BY
**LOBKE
SPRENKELING**

Lobke Sprenkeling obtained her

Bachelor's and Master's degrees as a recorder player and theatrical performer at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague and Utrecht Conservatory, Netherlands. She continued her studies at the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Spain, with a national scholarship from the *Dutch Prince Bernhard Culture Fund*. In 2016 she earned her music Ph.D. *cum laude* at the Universidad Politècnica de València. She also studied multidisciplinary theater from a musical perspective (Carlos III University, Madrid, and the Yale University Summer Program); her specific interest in the relationship between musician and body has led to her performing in and creating multidisciplinary works. She taught recorder at the pre-conservatory program (ages 8-18) of Conservatorio Profesional of Valencia (2007-16), and has taught in Europe, Mexico and the U.S. (sessions with the recorder societies in Phoenix, AZ, and Seattle, WA, and for Amherst Early Music). She currently teaches recorder at the Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid. Info: <https://lobke.world>.

For the recorder, a historical instrument, the general assumption since the 1970s has grown to be that vibrato is not continuously produced in the sound of our instrument—even though we do play modern repertoire as well as early music. This is a conviction based on growing historical knowledge about vibrato.

The term “vibrato,” by the way, was only used from the 19th century on. Before that, the descriptions were more vague—however, the earlier sources make it clear that vibrato was not a continuous sound quality, but rather an ornament.

As Michael Lynn pointed out in his earlier LEARN article in *AR*, there aren't any historical treatises or music books that mention air vibrato on wind instruments; the ones about vibrato all refer to finger vibrato. However, in the 16th and 17th centuries, the human voice was considered the ideal, which the instruments imitated. When thinking of wind instruments as imitating the voice, I make a case for air vibrato as well.

Frederick K. Gable, in “Some Observations concerning Baroque and Modern Vibrato,” asks: “Is it possible that in the Baroque, the natural vocal vibrato was primarily produced as an intensity or loudness vibrato, while the ornamental vibrato was a pitch vibrato?” He gives an example from the year 1695: Roger North in his autobiographical *Notes of Me*, which shows the difference between the intensity vibrato (“waived”) and the clear pitch differences in the ornamental trill-like vibrato (as in example 1). Following this historical evidence of an ornamental intensity or loudness vibrato, it would definitely make sense to use it on the recorder as well, in the form of air vibrato where we blow more, less, more, less, etc.

Air vibrato is not throat vibrato. Throat vibrato has negative quali-

ties, since it's a kind of vibrato that's actively engaging (thus tensing) your throat—hard to undo once it's a stubborn habit. For these two reasons, it's definitely a kind of vibrato you will want to get rid of—or even better, prevent. We want to be able to make a nice, controlled, open and natural tone that can sound wonderfully smooth and vibrato-less. On top of this beautiful sound, you can consciously choose to add vibrato to certain notes; either air vibrato or finger vibrato.

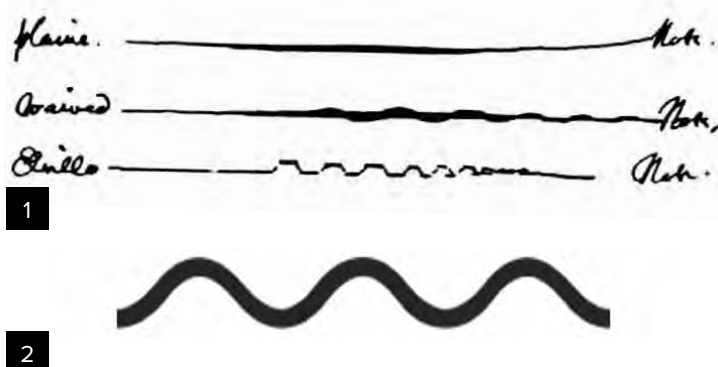
Air vibrato

Practicing air vibrato is actually a good strategy, because it improves your control and stamina if you work on vibrato regularly.

Normally when we play a long tone, we want to make sure it's really smooth. Let's begin there: try blowing a long note and see if you can maintain a tone that's not wobbly all the way through. This is a great test to see if your breath control is good, in the sense that your core muscles are really steady. That smooth tone is your basis, to which you can add air vibrato—or not. It's the reason why I always recommend doing a warm-up with long, smooth tone, before doing anything else.

What happens when we play air vibrato? We alternate faster and slower air in the form of waves: faster, slower, faster, slower, etc.

What we have to avoid is making impulses with our air. Air vibrato is not about the alternation between pushing out air and dropping it completely—that would just be alternating between blowing and not blowing. It would not result in a gentle sound at all, nor would it be controlled. When playing air vibrato the right way, we will be blowing all the time: even when we blow slower, we will still continue the air stream. We're looking for a wavy, gentle sound between blowing faster and slower.



1: Roger North's diagrams of vibrato. The top line is "plaine," then a "waived" version, and finally a pitch vibrato.

2: An example of a wave. Alternating fast and slow air—a good way to practice, but too regular and mechanical when actually playing music.

After we understand these mechanics, we can practice air vibrato without the recorder first.

We have to keep in mind all the time that the throat must be completely relaxed and open. It should not be involved or have any tension when you produce air vibrato.

True, it's hard to directly control the throat, but here is a trick: if you notice any tension, try to yawn. Also, when inhaling through the mouth, do so with the mouth forming the shape of "ah" or "oh"—this helps open up the throat.

Let's do the following sequence of exercises without the instrument:

1. Regular: We start the exercise by blowing faster, slower, faster, slower, in a very rhythmically

regular way. Think of wavy air streams, like example 2.

2. From slow to fast: Now we start slow and gradually go faster. In this way you can practice making a really fast air vibrato.
3. From fast to slow: The other way around—we start very fast and gradually slow down.
4. Slow-fast-slow: We start slow, then go faster, and we finish slow again.
5. Fast-slow-fast: Starting fast, we slow down, but we finish fast. This requires good timing!

From here on you can work on increasing the general speed of your air vibrato. It's core muscle training—and coordination—that doesn't come in one

This piece follows Sprenkeling's series of five technique tips.

PART 1: "Use of Air and Breath Control: The Respiratory System" / AR Spring 2021

The first installment covered use of air in everyday breathing and in producing good musical tone, with exercises aimed at correct breathing techniques.

PART 2: "More on Breathing plus Posture and Hands" / AR Summer 2021

added more breathing exercises, plus delved into good posture, embouchure and hand position.

PART 3: "Articulation" / AR Fall 2021

built on previous skills to work on articulation.

PART 4: "A Toolbox for Coordination of Air, Fingers and Articulation" / AR Winter 2021

pulled together all skills previously learned.

PART 5: "Daily study habits & how to work on a new piece of music." / AR Spring 2022

took those skills and applied them in daily practice.

LINKS OF INTEREST:

- Lobke Sprenkeling's web site: <https://lobke.world>
- Previous articles in her series on recorder technique: https://americanrecorder.org/american_recorder_magazine_ex.php
- Videos for this entire series of articles: www.youtube.com/americanrecordermag
- Both of the following academic sources likely require library access, through JSTOR or interlibrary loan. Gable, Frederick K., "Some Observations concerning Baroque and Modern Vibrato," *Performance Practice Review*, vol. 5, no. 1, Spring 1992.

- Millard, Peter, editor. *Notes of me: the autobiography of Roger North (1651-1734)*. University of Toronto Press, ISBN 0802044719. Or try Roger North, *Notes of Me* (1695), in Jonathan Lamb, *Recent Studies in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 41, no. 3. Rice University, 2001, www.jstor.org/stable/1556286.
- Michael Lynn, "Introduction to flâtement," Spring 2021 AR, https://americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_202103Spring_body.pdf.

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day, but eventually you will improve!

The next step, of course, is doing the entire sequence on the recorder. Here is where the real fun starts!

Listen very carefully to your sound while you practice this sequence. Keep relaxed and watch your good posture. If you can't go faster, don't force yourself. This comes with time.

This is a good warmup exercise before doing scales, patterns or studies and playing your repertoire! It's also a subtle way to add expression to your music.

Flattement

The other type of vibrato is finger vibrato or "flattement." It kind of works like a trill, but on the edge of the finger hole: slow and discrete, we are caressing the border of the finger hole.

Another approach would be the flat finger technique, casting just a slight shadow over the finger hole. However, since we try to play with round fingers, let's focus on the first technique. For example, with an E on the alto recorder, we would caress the border of the second finger hole.

What happens in finger vibrato? With part of the hole covered, the average pitch between E and this half-holed note moves toward a slightly lower pitch, so we will have to blow a little bit more in order to keep the E at the right pitch level. This means that when playing flattement, we will always have to combine it with some crescendo (and decrescendo when we return to normal E at the end of the note).

Also important to note: just like a trill on a long note, flattement is very organic. It starts slowly and ends a bit faster (not too fast, though). Think of it as a gummy ball that bounces faster and faster when you drop it. In our case we should stop making the flattement before it gets too fast.

A difference between the trill and the flattement—apart from covering the hole partially—is the ending: a trill resolves on the next note, with

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the finger down; the finger in a flattement lifts up again.

Which hole do we cover for each note? Sometimes it's practical to use the next finger hole, but at other times it's more convenient to skip a hole so that the flattement happens on the hole after the next one, or even to skip two finger holes. The further away the holes, the more you can cover them. For example, for the E on the alto recorder, we could also cover holes 4 and 5 and see how that works.

Each note has its own possibilities. For example, for D, if partially covering finger hole 3 is somewhat difficult, we might use a finger and a half on finger holes 4 and 5. Then for the C, we would perhaps use the middle finger on finger hole 5. However, for the high C, we couldn't do that, because the resulting sound would be a trill! For that high C, we might use half of finger hole 4 or 5, perhaps even 6.

Flattement is the type of vibrato to use when playing a French Baroque piece. Write down where you would place your flattement, and then figure out which finger holes you would use.

In general, we want to place the flattements on long notes. In the case of several subsequent long notes, it will be especially good to add flattement on long notes that have dissonance in the harmonies with the basso continuo—these have an extra rich sound color and intensity, so the flattement enhances the expression.

As with focusing on any technical aspect (posture, sound, articulation, coordination), the fastest way to learn these techniques is by listening not only with our ears, but also with our body. Be focused and be aware of everything that happens. How does it feel? How does it sound? What is happening exactly in your body?

The more aware we are, the easier it will be for our brain to create the right connections for muscle memory. ❁

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Improvisation: Basics for beginning improvisers; then ideas for intermediate improvisers using La Folia



WRITTEN BY TINA CHANCEY

Tina Chancey is director of HESPERUS, which performs early music soundtracks for classic silent films. Currently known for her work with early bowed strings, particularly viol and pardessus de viole, she has also played recorders, shawm,

krumhorn and rauschpfeife with her late husband Scott Reiss in the Folger Consort at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., as well as in the New York Renaissance Band, New York Ensemble for Early Music, and on tour with rocker Ritchie Blackmore in Blackmore's Night.

She has received an Early Music America Special Education Achievement Award, and four Wammies for best classical instrumentalist by the Washington Area Music Association.

See her FEATURE article on improvisation in this Fall 2022 AR for a more complete biography.

The first part of this column is geared for those who are beginners in improvisation, especially in the style of a particular time period. After that, we'll get into ideas for improvising on La Folia.

"Making stuff up" is the first step in the practice of "making stuff up in a particular historical style." All of us have our own issues within this continuum; let's spotlight one of the most common.

A few models to get you going, if you don't know what to say

You can approach improvisation verbally; common verbal models are a story, a meditation, an argument, a speech, a stand-up comedy routine, etc. Each model would sound distinctive, wouldn't it? What tone of voice, what shape of phrase, what length of sentence would you expect with a story? An argument? A comedy routine?

Try this: in two minutes, tell me the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk* in music, using just the first five notes of the C major scale (C, D, E, F, G in any octave). Hint: like most stories, it's in ABA form. First, the story is set in motion; then, Jack goes out and engages with the Giant; and finally, he comes home victorious. (In musical terms, that's Exposition-Development-Recapitulation.)

How will you use those five notes to tell the story? I bet you'll use compositional devices like repetition, sequence (repeating musical material somewhere else), fragmentation and extension. I also bet you'll vary the rhythm a lot. And I bet you'll save some notes for later—not use all five notes the same way all the time, but focus on different note patterns. Sneaky, how I gave you a few suggestions?

If you're still thinking, "How do I start?"—may I suggest an opening motive? Maybe the first one at right? Example 1 sounds heroic, like a fan-



1



2



3

fare (a good intro to the story). Then maybe you'd change to something waltz-like after that, like example 2, when the story is more downhearted.

What would you play when Jack is marching home with the goose and the harp? A march like example 3?

Melodic transformation is a big deal in free improvisation. These are just suggestions. Remember, happily, there is no “one right way” to do this.

Plan your improvisation

Did you think that all improvisation is totally spontaneous? Well, maybe it is in Free Improv (not necessarily tied to any models), but with an improv that tells a story, it never hurts to prepare a structure.

What elements of structure do you want to create? Perhaps you'll decide on the shape of the story? Make up a motive before you start? I'm assuming the story will be in your head, and you'll just tell it in music, but it's also possible to speak a few words of the story and then play them. Jot down some notes if you need to.

You might find yourself taking to

“

Happily, there is no “one right way” to do this.... If you want to improvise, it's not enough to play the notes well. You'll need to change the way you think about the notes.

this like a duck to water, or you might be thinking, “Hey, just give me a page of Telemann and I'll play it.”

But I imagine you may be reading this because someone asked you to ornament the Adagio of your Baroque sonata, or devise an interlude between verses of a Medieval troubadour song, or create some divisions the 15th time through a Playford dance tune.

If you want to improvise, it's not enough to play the notes well. You'll need to change the way you think about the notes—from fixed to flexible, from set in stone to open to change. And you'll need to start playing around with these new approaches.

◀

1: A simple motive. This one may be a sort of fanfare with a heroic mood.

2: Melodic transformation. In this case, the motive appears as a waltz.

3: Motive transformed again. Perhaps a march would accompany Jack marching home with the goose and the harp.

Recapitulation

Now go back to the original task, a two-minute musical retelling of *Jack and the Beanstalk*, using the first five notes of the C scale. Make a few decisions, give it a try. Record yourself.

Listen. Did it work for you? Change it. Try again. How about this time? What happens when you do this?

If you'd like to be reminded of the story, visit *The Story of Jack and the Beanstalk*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=zurz-pl-uzw. (Here's an interesting alternative to the original task: play the video, turn the sound off, and improvise an accompaniment to the picture show.)

And finally: this is an experimental, experiential (learn by doing) process. If you read this article, you'll learn something. If you try it, you'll learn more. If you don't succeed at first and try a few different things, you'll learn even more.

Think of it as a vehicle to take you somewhere, and you're the driver.

Read on if you still want some challenges in improvising.

If you've tried a few improvisations on your own (perhaps to the *Jack and the Beanstalk* assignment that starts this LEARN), now you may be ready to improvise on a specific piece.

Improvising variations over the folia ostinato bass pattern (discussed in a FEATURE article in this issue) was a rite of passage for three centuries of Renaissance and Baroque musicians throughout Europe and Great Britain. Like other repeating basses such as the Romanesca and Passamezzo Antico, La Folia's extended 16-bar repeating bass pattern was often associated with a tune. A simple version is at right in the first example. Visit the *AR Extras* page on the ARS website to hear all of these examples.

What would you do to vary that melody? You might repeat some of the notes in a catchy dance rhythm, like in the second example

Now you do it

Play examples 4 and 5 on the ARS website (in A minor at A=440). Since they're not very hard, listen as you play them for the way the melody and bass seem to dance with each other. Sometimes they go in the same direction from bar to bar, sometimes they go in the opposite direction. That's counterpoint in a nutshell.

In example 5, notice how the dotted quarters in the middle of bars 1, 3, 5, etc., seem really long. Then, bars 2, 4, 6, etc., have an answering rhythm. As a matter of fact, I hear two-bar phrases throughout the piece. Can you play example 5 again, and bring out those two-bar phrases?

The harmony takes a quick trip to the relative major

I like to compare this pattern—starting in A minor, taking a peek at C major and going right back to A minor—as peering over your bifocals, a sort of Bifocal Tonality. In much of the late Renaissance and early Baroque,

musicians managed to think both vertically, in chords, as well as horizontally, in melodic lines. That meant that, remarkably, some pieces were modal and tonal at the same time.

In the folia, the E major chord (as in measure 2) has a G[#]—the raised seventh note, or leading tone, in A minor—but at the same time, there's a G major chord in bar 4. It moves to C major, and then backtracks to A minor by bar 8, like a palindrome. It sounds pretty wonderful, arching up towards the middle of the phrase like a wave and then coming down to the V chord in bar 8.

Bars 9-16 repeat that pattern, cadencing in A minor to end. It creates a real sense of traveling away and then coming home.

Listen to this chord progression on the *AR Extras* page. When you improvise over the folia bass, it's important to listen for that short trip to C major. You'll be taking a melodic pattern and repeating it over the chord progression in the bass; you don't want to be surprised.

One way to improvise over the folia bass

Keeping the simple melody of example 4 as our template (starting point), let's improvise some variations. I like to start by creating a musical nugget: a combination of a short, memorable rhythm and a short, memorable melody. The nugget doesn't have to be too complicated—but if it's too simple you won't remember it, and neither will anyone else. And you've got to remember it so that you can vary it all the way through the 16-bar pattern.

Let's keep that two-bar phrasing we heard when we create our template. In example 6 are some suggestions, just using bars one and two of the piece.

You can tell I like going down to the E at the end of bar 2. I also like lengthening the second beat of bar 1, and I like to outline a chord with my melodies. You may like other things,



4: La Folia. A simplified version of the bass line with soprano line that fits the implied harmonies.

5: Rhythmic folia tune. Dance rhythms applied to the folia theme.

6: Possible nuggets for improvising over the first two measures of the folia bass line.

7: The entire 16-measure pattern in the folia theme. With the nugget adjusted to fit the harmonies.

Visit the ARS web site to hear and play along with these examples, https://americanrecorder.org/american_recorder_magazine_ex.php.

First system of musical notation, measures 1-8. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Bass clef accompaniment.

Second system of musical notation, measures 9-16. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Bass clef accompaniment.

4

Third system of musical notation, measures 17-24. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Bass clef accompaniment.

Fourth system of musical notation, measures 25-32. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Bass clef accompaniment.

5

Fifth system of musical notation, measures 33-40. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Bass clef accompaniment.

6

Sixth system of musical notation, measures 41-48. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Bass clef accompaniment. Includes the word "nugget" above the staff.

Seventh system of musical notation, measures 49-56. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Bass clef accompaniment.

7

“

Keep it simple to start with.

and your nuggets will be different from mine. You might want to make up some nuggets in advance, and then you can play with them when you improvise.

Just a word: if your nugget has lots of runs and skips, it will be hard to improvise over the chord pattern. I'd keep it simple to start with.

Once you've got a collection of nuggets, what do you do now? You play the nugget, adjusting it to the chords in the chord pattern. Sometimes improvisers change the pattern at the cadences: for instance, coming to a pause at the semi-cadence at bar 8, or adding a more active cadence pattern in bar 15. Sometimes they change the nugget a bit in the second eight bars of the pattern.

There are a lot of ways to do it, like those in example 7, but the most important thing is to make sure you move your nugget around so it harmonizes with the new chord in each bar. As you do that, a corner of your ear needs to make sure you stay in rhythm with your accompanist. No fair rushing.

Coda

Improvising over an ostinato bass isn't easy at first, but it's not impossible. If you listen to the final sound example on the ARS website, you'll hear a very slow version of the bass, so you can try your different nuggets. You can find the chords in the progression by ear, you can look at them in the sheet music or you can make yourself a lead sheet with just the chord names.

La Folia is a more intricate bass pattern than some, and you might find that you want to write down a few things in preparation. See if you can put them away as you get to know the piece better. Have fun! ❁

Music

A ground with variations, ornamentation advice, holiday music and titles from a new publisher

01	Paul's Steeple: Anonymous Variations on a Ground	edited by Joseph A. Loux, Jr
02	The Ornamentation of Baroque Music	by Manfredo Zimmerman
03	Azure Sky of Night	by Joseph A. Loux, Jr.
04	In Memoriam (for Charles Nagel)	In a set, written in memory of three musicians, by Will Ayton
05	Carols Around the World	arranged by Marg Hall
06	Motets for Four Voices, Volume 1	by Tomás Luis de Victoria, edited by Charles Nagel
07	In dir ist Freude (In Thee is Gladness)	by G.G. Gastoldi, arranged by Joseph A. Loux, Jr.
08	Music for Christmas	edited by Manfred Harras
09	Weihnachtslieder für Blockflöte: 20 leichte Lieder zu Winter, Advent und Weihnachten	edited by Klaus K. Weigele with Angela Schmauder-Scheytt

KEY: rec=recorder; S'o=sopranino; S=soprano; A=alto; T=tenor; B=bass; gB=great bass; cB=contra bass; Tr=treble; qrt=quartet; pf=piano; fwd=foreword; opt=optional; perc=percussion; pp=pages; sc=score; pt(s)=part(s); kbd=keyboard; bc=basso continuo; hc=harpsichord; P&H=postage/handling.

01

Paul's Steeple:

Anonymous Variations on a Ground

edited by Joseph A. Loux, Jr.

Loux Music Company LMP223, 2020.

Alto, ground bass. Two scores 2 pp ea
(plus original engraving, 1 p). \$9.95.www.recordershop.com

REVIEWED BY:

Beverly Lomer

Based on a 16th-century English ballad melody, the original tune for *Paul's Steeple* dates back to the time of Elizabeth I and appeared in both John Playford's *The Dancing Master* (1651) and in *The Division Flute, Part One* (1706) that was published in London by John Walsh. In Playford, it is presented as a country dance; and in *Division Flute* as a theme with seven divisions over a popular ground bass. The Loux edition is replicated from the latter.

The cover notes give a detailed history of the name. In *The Dancing Master*, it is referred to as "Pauls Steeple," as it had come to be associated with the lightning strike and subsequent fire suffered by the steeple of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Previously it had been called "I Am The Duke of Norfolk, Newly come to Suffolk" (spelling and capital letters as per the original) and "The Husbandman and Serving Man." It was linked to an ancient harvest time drinking ceremony, known as the Horkey.

This edition is very nicely presented. It includes two scores, and the continuo for the ground is found on the bottom of the second page. This consists of the bass line plus chords.

Each variation is numbered, and the measure numbers are continuous from the beginning to the end. According to the editor, the aim is to replicate the original closely—thus

there are no tempo indicators, articulations, trills, slurs, etc. The application of such is up to the performer.

The original engraving of the music is given on the back cover. It is done in modern notation, but it does include a *custos*—a marking typically found in original notations, that is located at the end of the line and signifies what the first pitch of the next line will be.

The level of difficulty is intermediate to advanced, depending on how much one wishes to elaborate on the bare score. Both the theme and the variations are quite tuneful and pleasing. This is a plus for many players, as Baroque music can be somewhat opaque, requiring advanced skills to identify phrases and phrase segments. Here they are fairly obvious.

Set in G minor, it lays well on the alto. Rhythmically it is straightforward. Most of it is in cut time, and the fifth variation changes to 12/8.

In the absence of a harpsichord or other continuo instrument, it is quite satisfying when played as an alto solo. ✨

Beverly R. Lomer, Ph.D., is an independent scholar and recorder player whose special interests include performance from original notations and early women's music. She is currently collaborating on the transcription of the *Symphonia of Hildegard of Bingen* for the International Society of Hildegard von Bingen Studies.

02

The Ornamentation**of Baroque Music** by Manfred Zimmermann

Music-Ornaments, 2019. 90 pp, paperback or PDF. Abt. \$30.

<https://elopage.com/s/music-ornaments/the-ornamentation-of-baroque-music> (PDF); <https://smile.amazon.com/Ornamentation-Baroque-Music-Manfredo-Zimmermann/dp/3739231971>

REVIEWED BY:

Beverly Lomer

The ornamentation and embellishment of Baroque and Renaissance music is an essential but often mysterious part of performing this repertoire. Manfred Zimmermann's *The Ornamentation of Baroque Music* is a "Guide for Independent Embellishing." The author has extensive experience as both a performer and instructor. He studied and taught at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz in Austria and earned a degree in traverso from the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Switzerland. Having held teaching positions in Switzerland at the Conservatory in Bern; and in Germany, the Cologne University of Music, State Music University in Trossingen and Robert Schumann Conservatory in Düsseldorf, he has also given master classes and training sessions for recorder players. He is the author of several other pedagogical books, including *In C*, a comprehensive method for C recorders (reviewed in the Spring 2022 AR, https://americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_Spring_2022_body.pdf).

Zimmermann's handbook is divided into 10 topical sections, with a preface that covers selected subjects related to the performance of music before 1800. These include the principle of inequality, dealing with dissonance, *messa di voce* (treatment of a single note), intonation as per the well-tempered system, modern and original editions (*Urtext*) of music, time signatures and the interpretation of note values, and the differences between the French and Italian styles.

“

Many musicians feel uncertain in their skill with free ornamentation.

His goal is to lay the groundwork for ornamentation by presenting the distinctions between the ways in which we have come to consider a score as a definitive performance guide and the sensibilities of the period in which performers were also interpreters/co-composers of the music. Hence effective interpretation of Baroque music today requires an understanding of the unwritten (in the musical score) principles and protocols that were foundational to performance in that era.

The first subject section, Essential Ornaments, covers: the trill, appoggiatura, mordent, turn, slide, chute, turn and accent. Each is defined, possible variations identified, and appropriate placement in the music, which is not always notated, discussed. For example, the trill is considerably more complex than many modern players might realize. Zimmerman gives its components as the introduction, actual trill motion, and ending. The trill's length depends on the length of the note; there can be different configurations for notes of a particular value. The trill must end according to particular conventions.

The discussion of each ornament is similarly comprehensive; all are accompanied by clear examples that illustrate points made in the narrative.

In addition to the standard ornaments with which most players are familiar, Zimmerman considers certain elements to be special ornaments: vibrato, cadences, tempo rubato and inequality. The coverage of these ornaments is similar to the treatment of the essential ornaments. He also gives the rationale for their use in some cases. For instance, vibrato is to be applied in accordance with the *Messa di voce* for

the delivery of affect. The discussion of cadences and *inégalité* are particularly detailed and also include illustrations from music of the period.

After the sections on essential and special ornaments comes the heart of the project: free ornamentation or embellishments that are not notated or defined by a specific sign. The author cites J.J. Quantz (*Versuch*), who says, “I wish to give guidance to those who are still lacking the necessary knowledge and experience of how variations can be made in diverse ways through simple notes in most common intervals, without violating basic harmonic rules rooted in the voicing.” Zimmerman goes on to say that many musicians feel uncertain in their skill with free ornamentation and so resort to playing only what is written. He attempts to assure those players that free ornamentation “is not an insurmountable obstacle,” and facility can be gained through learning certain principles and practicing.

This section sets out rules that are based on two premises: free ornamentation must conform to the harmony (visible or implied) and is made up of a series of simple ornaments. The rules are followed by a lengthy set of exercises, which are essentially loops and variations on themes to be practiced. The intent is to become familiar with a set of fixed options that can become the building blocks for free improvisations.

The chapter ends with an interesting exercise: the student “reduces” an ornamented piece to its original, the aim of which is to assist in understanding the composer's ornamental strategy.

In addition to free ornamentation, cadenzas and divisions on a ground are also covered in substantial detail. The approach is similar: simple rules are set out, followed by exercises to be practiced. Because cadenzas and divisions are both similar to and different from free ornamentation, the treatment of these topics is tailored to their

specific characteristics.

The appendix includes several period works fully ornamented. It ends with a substantial bibliography containing both primary and secondary sources.

To sum up, the strategy based on following simple rules and a practice of what Zimmerman calls *lego* (building) blocks is a most approachable way for both beginners and more experienced musicians to start enhancing improvisatory skills. It is also a plus that the author includes the historical rationale and performance ideology behind ornamentation, which may not be familiar to all players. It is a handbook that can be highly recommended. ✨

03

Azure Sky of Night

by Joseph A. Loux, Jr.

Loux Music LCC31, 2020. Voice, soprano recorder (violin, oboe), BC. 2 pcs 3 pp ea, 2 pts 1 p ea. \$9.95.

www.recordershop.com

REVIEWED BY:

Suzanne Ferguson

Probably best known to American recorder players as a publisher of accessible, inexpensive sheet music for recorder ensembles, Joseph A. Loux, Jr., has also occasionally composed music, generally for religious services. *Azure Sky of Night* is an original carol for voice with the typical Baroque continuo ensemble plus a descant.

Having five short verses and interludes, it would be very suitable for a child soloist or children's choir with a descant instrument, soprano recorder preferred (though tenor recorder can be used, as well as violin or, less likely, oboe). The instrumental parts require an intermediate keyboard player; lower intermediate bass player—viola, cello, bass recorder or bassoon—and

player of the descant.

With a choir singing the text, it's possible that a small group of soprano recorders could play the descant together. (Note that the brief dissonances in measures 7-8 and 18-19 are deliberate: Loux calls them the "myrrh" of the piece, and encourages the recorder to play them "confidently.") Groups looking for carols to play for Christmas might find a number of appealing choices in the catalog of Loux Christmas Collections, in which *Azure Sky of Night* appears. ❁

Suzanne Ferguson is active as an early musician in Tucson, AZ. She served on the ARS Board in the 1980s and is past president of the Viola da Gamba Society of America.

04

In Memoriam (for Charles Nagel) In a set, written in memory of three musicians, by Will Ayton

Allyonwit Publications AWP0098, 2022. SATB (TrTnTnB viols). Abt. \$10.

<https://allyonwit.com/recorders-viols>

REVIEWED BY:
Suzanne Ferguson

Composer Will Ayton and Charles Nagel (1934-2022)—psychiatrist, composer, social player of recorders and viols, publisher of Cheap Trills Editions—were good friends for many years, though from opposite ends of the country: Ayton lives in Rhode Island, where he taught composition at Roger Williams University; Nagel on Vashon Island in the middle of Puget Sound. As Nagel aged, Ayton wrote a piece as a birthday present, every year since 2003. Some have been published by Ayton at his Allyonwit Publications, and some by Nagel at Cheap Trills.

I have reviewed several of Ayton's



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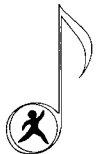
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"Ridiculously mellifluous, ridiculifluous?"—
unidentified VGRT user

pieces over the years, including *Of Time and Remembrance* in the Spring 2019 AR (Cheap Trills TR92), written for Nagel's 80th and 82nd birthdays—each birthday piece a three-movement suite.

Ayton has grouped this new piece in a suite of three pieces "written in memory of three musicians that I have admired." One was written for David Goldstein (1918-2003), a "cultivated amateur" recorder player who left his musical output to the ARS for publication. *In Memory of David Goldstein* is based on an original melody reflective of the Jewish musical tradition, and is published in the ARS *Members' Library* Editions (MLE39). The second piece of the three is dedicated to Margriet Tindemans (1951-2014), a legendary viol player devoted to her students and to sharing her enthusiasm for early music.

Ayton's music for recorders or viols often has a distinctive family resemblance: poignant harmonic patterns (for instance, sequences of seventh chords and major or minor sixths) and updated 17th-century polyphony. Pieces frequently begin with an introduction followed by a "song," repeated and varied, and closed with a coda.

The five published pieces for Nagel with which I'm most familiar seem to form a meditative group with slow and stately motion (except for two dances in 7/8 in *Of Time and Remembrance*), marked in scalar eighth-notes. Interpolated short sections are characterized by an anacrusis of three eighth notes leading to the main statement of the theme. *In Memoriam*, reviewed here, features a falling fourth or fifth in quarter notes in the bass, often with rests setting these off: I hear them as sighs or even muffled sobs.

With a playing time of about 3½ minutes, the piece is just 40 measures long, with a leisurely beginning (measures 1-20) and a middle in which flowing 16th notes become the dominant motion (to measure 28) before

returning to a reminiscence of the opening. Two brief phrases ending in fermatas (like thoughts caught and held) appear in measures 33 and 34, along with three repeated eighth notes as the piece slows to its end in little descending patterns, set off with rests.

The pieces for Nagel, including *In Memoriam*, are all intermediate in level, with melodic interest in all the parts. Because they are so slow, players must take care to distinguish the long and short notes and rests. They will also need recorders that speak easily and confidently in the lowest notes, and clearly and in tune in the upper register. Our group found the indicated tempo rather slow, and felt that a more flowing pattern of eighth notes was more satisfying—we thought of memories, not death.

When a meditative piece is needed, a group could benefit from working on and playing any of Ayton's pieces for Nagel, tributes to a friendship over the years and across the miles. They summon up Charlie's character—affectionate and intelligent, outgoing and welcoming. ❁

Interview with Will Ayton (also reviews of Ayton's Carols for Recorders or Viols, Vol. II, and Marian Antiphons transcribed by Charles Nagel), Fall 2020 AR, https://americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_Fall2020_body.pdf
Of Time and Remembrance, review, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARspring19body.pdf>
Memories of David Goldstein, May 2004 AR, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARmay04body.pdf>

05

Carols Around the World

arranged by Marg Hall
Peacock Press PB715a/b, n.d. [2020]
AT or SA. One sc 14 pp. Abt. \$6.25.

www.recordermail.co.uk

REVIEWED BY:

Suzanne Ferguson

This utterly charming collection of seven less-familiar international Christmas duets will delight children and adults, students and intermediate amateurs alike. So many of the musically interesting settings of carols currently on the market are for three or four recorders, but here is a volume for players who don't have a "consort": settings as intriguing melodically and harmonically as any I've played.

Scottish recorder composer, arranger and teacher Marg Hall has a pretty extensive collection of pieces for all seasons and various recorder combinations listed on her website (www.marghallmusic.co.uk). Many are clearly aimed at young or adult learners (she herself was one of the latter, she notes). After hearing these carols, players looking for new "easy listening" intermediate music may want to check out her other music.

The best known of these duets is the Neapolitan *Carol of the Bagpipers*, and the least (except to French Canadians or residents of Prairie du Rocher, IL, or Ste. Genevieve, MO—who all celebrate the ancient holiday) is likely *La Guignolée*, a sprightly New Year's Eve piece descended from the French Middle Ages. Particularly charming to my friend and me were the Czech *Cuckoo Carol*, with its echoing cuckoo cries, and the mazurka-like Polish *Jesus Malusienki* (Little Baby Jesus).

Pleasing counterpoint, solos for the "bass" instrument, and welcome articulation indications make these arrangements stand out. The only missing element was any sense of the words, but there is something about "Christmas" that announces itself, text or not.

The "bass" player, on tenor or alto, must have an instrument that speaks readily on the lowest two notes. (Another caveat: the measure numbers are off by one in *La Guignolée*.) ❁

06

Motets for Four Voices,

Volume 1 by Tomás Luis de Victoria,
edited by Charles Nagel

*Cheap Trills TR99, 2019. ATTB
(TrTnTnB viols). Sc 12 pp,
4 pts 4 pp ea. \$8.50.*

<http://cheaptrills.com>

REVIEWED BY:

Bruce Calvin

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611) was a Spanish composer during the late Renaissance, a contemporary of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina and Orlando di Lasso. An organist, singer and Roman Catholic priest, he is most famous as composer of luscious choral music for the Counter-Reformation.

This set of motets includes some of Victoria's best known works, which have been transcribed for recorders and/or viols. The editor provides an English translation of the Latin texts for each piece. The notes in the score mention that the editor's source was *Opera Omnia, Vol. 1* (Philippo Pedrell, editor, Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig, 1902).

The first motet, *Vera Languores Nostros*, was written for use on Maundy Thursday, with the translation beginning, "Truly, our failings he hast taken upon himself..." Primarily homophonic in structure, it shifts between sections where the parts are together to bring out the text, and independent sections utilizing imitation and polyphony.

Doctor Bonus begins with the text, "A virtuous teacher and friend of God, Andrew was led to the cross," and would have been used for St. Andrew's feast day (November 30). The top line leads with the melody; two measures later, the second line restates the melody, but a fourth higher, and is followed by the third line recalling the original melody line

“

When I told a member of the group that Victoria's music was part of the Counter-Reformation's "marketing,"... she said, "It might convert me!"

in measure six. In measure eight, the bass recalls the second line entrance.

The parts continue to develop the melody with imitations, until they reach the cadence: a half-note rest, and dramatic C chord on the words "Salve, Salve Crux" ("Hail, Hail Cross"). The third line begins a new melody, and further development, taking the work to the final chord.

The first tenor line's tessitura goes higher than the editor indicates at the beginning of the part, so that the range of that tenor line for *Doctor Bonus* fits better on an alto recorder.

O Vos Omnes is intended for use on Good Friday, when Jesus, on the cross, says, "O all you that pass me by, pay attention and see if there is any sorrow like to my sorrow." Among church choirs, this is one of the most famous and most often performed Victoria motets. It has a quiet meditative quality—mostly homophonic with staggered entrances providing gentle movement and shifting chords. Every time my group has played this piece, someone spontaneously has said, "That is beautiful." Playing Renaissance instruments, we preferred having a soprano on the top line, rather than alto up, especially with the frequency of the note G[#].

Intended for use on All Saint's Day (November 1), *Gaudent in Caelis* has a joyful sound reflecting the words, "The souls of the saints rejoice in heaven." After its beginning with staggered imitations, different parts pair up to emphasize the text, with one other part contrasting. Close to the

end, all parts join together for a triumphant “Christo, exultant sine fine.” This piece is trickier than the other three, with one measure of triplets played together by all the parts.

These motets would be appropriate for intermediate or higher skilled players. They include text underlay for all parts, which helps in knowing how to phrase the music and to find spots to breathe. The set includes separate parts for viols. It would be possible to have a combined ensemble of singers, recorders and viols, using the music provided.

Each time we play these pieces, the group is moved by their beauty. When I told a member of the group that Victoria’s music was part of the Counter-Reformation’s “marketing,” as a contrast to the plain, unornamented music of the Protestants, she said, “It might convert me!” ❁

Bruce Calvin has reviewed videos and books for professional library publications over the years. He has met weekly with a Washington, D.C., area group to play recorder music, Renaissance through contemporary, and performing occasionally for special church events.

07

In dir ist Freude (In Thee is Gladness) by G.G. Gastoldi, arranged by Joseph A. Loux, Jr.

Loux Music LCC32, 2021. SATB (+vocal/harpsichord score). Sc 3 pp, 4 pts 2 pp ea (3 kbd sc, 3 pp ea). \$12.

www.recordershop.com

REVIEWED BY:
Bruce Calvin

Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi (c.1554-1609) was an Italian composer and priest in Mantua. He is best known for his *balletti*, secular popular songs

that would later evolve into madrigals.

The tune for *In dir ist Freude* was originally published as *l’Innomorato* (The Suitor) in Gastoldi’s *Balletti a cinque voci* (Venice, 1591). This selection is part of the Christmas series published by Loux Music Company, of which Joseph A. Loux, Jr., is proprietor. He recently stepped down after 44 years as the artistic director of the Adirondack (NY) Baroque Consort.

In two pages of Edition Notes, Loux describes the history and cultural context of this tune, including its transition from Italian popular song by Johannes Lindemann into a German chorale prelude, and eventually a Lutheran Christmas carol. Loux notes, “I made my own arrangement of *In Thee is Gladness* ... noting that the melody over the centuries has been on a long and interesting journey.”

The arrangement is simple and clean: melody in the voice for the first verse over keyboard and/or recorder quartet, then repeated for the second verse. The two options for an instrumental version are keyboard with soprano recorder playing melody, or the version scored for recorder quartet.

There is not a clear road map for how each of the different sections are to be used, leaving it up to the performers to decide whether to use the recorder quartet as an introduction or between the verses, or to use the keyboard and soprano recorder solo in that way.

The three top recorder lines are easy to play, appropriate to a low intermediate level group; the bass line, which is very lively in sections and quite fun, would need an intermediate player.

The music is printed on a heavy white paper with large clear notes. Three copies of the score for voice line with keyboard are included.

This arrangement of this lovely Christmas carol provides a variety of performance options for church musicians, depending upon the instruments or vocalists that are available. ❁

08

Music for Christmas

edited by Manfred Harras

Basilisk RM01, 2021. SATB recorders, viols, other melody instruments, or mixed. Sc 18 pp, download alto up part at www.ogy.de/rm01, Abt. \$21.50. ARS member discount of 10% off through the end of 2022, use code: AmericanRecorderMagazin.

www.basilisk-edition.ch/product/weihnachtsmusik (click additional information for a full list of selections)

REVIEWED BY:
Valerie E. Hess

The introduction states that the Christmas chorales “typify the sacred vocals [sic] music of Protestant Germany in the 16th and 17th centuries.” Translation: with the exception of *Joseph, dearest Joseph mine*, these will not be familiar to most people.

Manfred Harras studied recorder at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis with Hans-Martin Linde. He has taught at the State University of Music in Heidelberg-Mannheim (Germany) and Biel/Bienne Conservatory (Switzerland). Besides concert activities in Europe and Israel; numerous radio and television shows and recordings; articles on the recorder and early music; and music publications (now with Raphael Benjamin Meyer as Basilisk Editions), he is a sought-after workshop leader.

Each piece has text in either German or Latin, and is presented as a mostly straightforward four-part arrangement—almost like one would find in a hymnal, but not quite. There is some canonic treatment, or two parts alternating with the other two parts. Each title is two pages long, set in big type.

A list of sources from which these 11 pieces were taken is given in the introduction. The QR code in the front of the edition allows one to

download a part for alto up, a nice thing to have if someone is less adept at mentally transposing alto up.

This edition would be great for an ARS chapter library—fun to play with a group of recorders, viols, singers, and/or whoever else shows up for a December chapter meeting. They would also make a nice set for a concert. ❁

Valerie E. Hess is an organist, harpsichordist and recorder player. In addition to music, she also writes and teaches on issues related to spiritual formation. She can be reached at hess.valerie@gmail.com.

09

Weihnachtslieder für

Blockflöte: 20 leichte Lieder zu Winter, Advent und Weihnachten

edited by Klaus K. Weigele with Angela Schmauder-Scheytt. *Carus-*

Verlag 2.463, 2020. S kbd (some SSS/A). Sc 25 pp, pt 25 pp. Abt. \$20.

www.carus-verlag.com/en/music-scores-and-recordings/weihnachtslieder-fuer-blockfloete-246300.html

REVIEWED BY:

Valerie E. Hess

I laughed out loud when going through this collection. It is from Germany; all of the introductory materials are in German and many of the carols are in German. However, I turned the page and discovered titles like *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, *Mary Had a Baby*, *Away in a Manger*, *The First Nowell*, *Jingle Bells* and *Go Tell It on the Mountain* sprinkled in amongst *O Tannenbaum*, *Vom Himmel Hoch* and *Macht Hoch die Tür*.

The expanded title translates as,

“Christmas Carols for recorder: 20 easy carols for Winter, Advent and Christmas for 1–3 recorders and piano or play-along.” Some of the pieces have descants, of which some of those are duets. In the play-along part book, the pieces are laid out with one to two descants and the melody, so that three recorder players could perform the carol. All of them include words and a melody line to sing along in either German or English, depending on the source of the carol.

This is a very useful volume. It is for both beginners and more advanced players. It comes with a piano accompaniment as well as a scannable QR code or two for each piece to hear an electronic version of the accompaniment.

This book offers everyone options to play sacred and secular seasonal music, making it good for the whole family or for a recorder teacher’s studio. ❁



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Recording

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02 J.S. Bach: Two-Part Inventions, Sinfonias, Trio Sonata No. 3 and Goldberg Aria

Duo and trio adaptations of some of Bach's more intimate repertoire, played by Emma Murphy and Incantati.

03 Storie di Napoli

La Festa Musicale gives a musical encapsulation of the spirit and history of Naples.

04 John Turner's A Garland for Ukraine

A video of commissioned works for recorder, to support Ukraine.



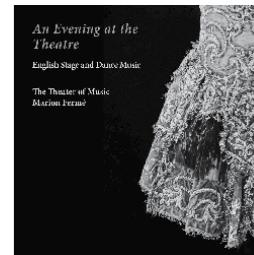
REVIEWED BY TOM BICKLEY

American Recorder Recording Reviews Editor Tom Bickley is a multi-instrumentalist/composer/teacher in Berkeley, CA. He grew up in Houston, TX; studied in Washington, D.C. (recorder with Scott Reiss, musicology with Ruth Steiner,

and listening/composition with Pauline Oliveros); and came to California as a composer-in-residence at Mills College.

A frequent workshop faculty member and leader at chapter meetings, he teaches recorder at the Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training; and Deep Listening for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. His academic library career included service with the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, the National Endowment for the Arts, and California State University East Bay (as their Performing and Visual Arts Librarian). He performs with Three Trapped Tigers (with recorder player David Barnett), Gusty Winds May Exist (with shakuhachi player Nancy Beckman), Doug Van Nort's Electro-Acoustic Orchestra, and he directs the Cornelius Cardew Choir.

His work can be heard at <https://soundcloud.com/tom-bickley>, and is available on CD on Koberecs, Quarterstick and Metatron Press. Visit his web site at <https://tigergarage.org>.



01

An Evening at the Theatre: English Stage and Dance Music

Recorder player and director Marion Fermé and her ensemble The Theater of Music gather late 17th-century English stage and dance music into a virtual masque, to great effect. The delightful performances are charming and polished. In these 41 well-sequenced tracks we hear the musical portion of what one might well have heard as part of a masque—a 16th- and 17th-century English variety show characterized by lively dancing, music that often contains tunes of folk origin as well as newly composed pieces, and sumptuous sets and costumes. These were large-budget entertainments for the nobility.

A reasonably large body of music exists from these occasions, though the nature of the format means we don't have a unified score for a single masque. Thus Fermé and colleagues developed this recording and concert program in the spirit of these entertainments. What's missing is the dialogue, jokes, etc. between sections of the dance and music. (I'm not confident that we would now understand the jokes in the spoken sections anyway, without a lot of guidance.)

The variety show element makes a great opportunity to enjoy more learned pieces—for instance, Matthew Locke's (1621-77) *Suite in e minor* (tracks 24-27), as well as the vernacular dances and songs from 17th-century publisher John Playford (1623-86) and others (tracks 5-14 and 32-41).

Of particular interest to recorder players is the incorporation by Fermé of Jacob van Eyck's divisions on the tunes *Eerste Carileen* (track 1), *When Daphne from fair Phoebus did flie* (track 5), and *Tweede Carileen* (track 23). On those, she layers the solos from Van Eyck (c.1590-1657) in with ensemble versions of those tunes.

This is the first recording I've encountered in which all 12 verses of *When Daphne...* are performed. Soprano singer Jeanne Zaepffel's vocal efforts fit the style beautifully, and she makes the text audible and understandable! Additionally, it's a treat to hear percussionist Nadja Benjaballah's appropriate and engaging additions in the pieces on which she plays.

The recordings, made in February 2020 in the Abbay de Port-Royal des Champs in France, sound great on CD, and are still listenable on the Apple Music stream. The essay by Fermé stands on its own as worthy reading and is also a great guide for the listener to maximize enjoyment of this recording. In the booklet you'll find a complete list of instruments used, plus full texts for *When Daphne...* and *John Come Kiss Me Now* (all four lines of the chorus in the latter case). The booklet provides a list of sources of the music as well as references for more information about *John Come Kiss Me Now* and *Doen Daphne*.

The packaging combines restraint and elegance. I recommend this recording very highly. ✿

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

An Evening at the Theatre: English Stage and Dance Music. The Theater of Music (Marion Fermé, recorders and direction; Jeanne Zaepffel, soprano voice; Sandrine Dupé, violin; Isabelle Brouzes, viol; Victorien Disse, guitar and theorbo; Yvan Garcia, virginals; Nadja Benjaballah, percussion). 2021, 1 CD, 76:47. Ramée RAM2002, <https://marionferme.net>,

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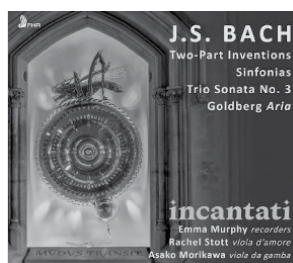
Of particular interest to recorder players is the incorporation by Fermé of Jacob van Eyck's divisions.... She layers the solos from Van Eyck in with ensemble versions of those tunes.

<https://en.theaterofmusic.com>

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02

J.S. Bach:

Two-Part Inventions, Sinfonias, Trio Sonata No. 3 and Goldberg Aria

Emma Murphy, an English recorder performer, teacher and composer, joins with Rachel Stott, viola d'amore, and Asako Morikawa, gamba, to present a selection of J.S. Bach's two-part inventions, sinfonias and other works, skillfully arranged for their trio.

As I listen to this disc, having given close attention earlier to The Theater of Music's wonderfully rowdy and sumptuous masque emulation, the intimacy of these Bach pieces and renditions provides a fine complement.

Many people encounter Bach inventions and sinfonias during their piano

lessons. Here the two-part inventions are played by two instruments, while the three-part sinfonias employ the full trio. Murphy uses five recorders: soprano, alto, two voice flutes (a recorder in D, between a tenor and alto), and tenor, with details on the instruments in the CD booklet. They are deployed in various combinations with the bowed strings.

Intermingled with the abstract inventions and sinfonias are Bach's settings of various Reformation chorales (for example, *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr*, BWV716, track 7). These chorales, which are settings of melodies that bear emotionally rich texts, offer a subtle but welcome contrast of energy and affect.

The disc ends with the *Trio Sonata No. 3 in a minor*, BWV527 (tracks 20-22) and the "Aria: Andante espressivo" from the *Goldberg Variations*, BWV988 (track 23). Both are weightier works, which anchor the disc well. Murphy's choice of alto, tenor and soprano in that order for the trio sonata movements emphasizes the energetic aspects of the movements. Choice of the tenor recorder for the Goldberg aria brings the disc to an appropriate sense of settling down.

I really like the placement of the instruments in the stereo field, and the sense of presence in this recording. I recommend listening on headphones/earbuds to enhance your engagement with the sound. Ivan Moody's notes give useful details about the pieces, but are not essential for the listener.

Though the packaging for this disc is especially environmentally conscientious, given the cost of shipping for the CD, I encourage listening via the highest quality stream that you can. ✿

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

J.S. Bach: Two-Part Inventions, Sinfonias, Trio Sonata No. 3, and Goldberg Aria. Incantati (Emma Murphy, recorders; Rachel Stott,

viola d'amore; Asako Morikawa, viola da gamba). 2022, 1 CD, 59:57. First Hand Records FHR122, www.incantati.co.uk (includes videos, link to purchase CD) and www.emmamurphyrecorders.org. Available from <https://firsthandrecords.com/products-page/album/j-s-bach-two-part-inventions-sinfonias-trio-sonata-no-3> (CD abt. \$21.30 including S&H to U.S.; audio excerpts, videos available); mp3, \$9.99 via iTunes. Stream via Spotify, Apple Music, Idagio, etc. For a review of Eric Haas's versions of Bach's two-part inventions (plus a different volume by Ulrich Hermann including *La Follia* for solo recorder), see the Summer 2013 AR, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARsum13body.pdf>.



03

Storie di Napoli

The 10 musicians of La Festa Musicale, based in Hanover in northern Germany, perform 11 pieces on their third disc to tell “Stories of Napoli.” With German recorder player Barbara Heindlmeier and soprano singer Maria Ladurner as main soloists, we hear four recorder concerti, a concerto for three violins, five arias plus recitatives and arias, and one *Tarantella napoletana* for full instrumental ensemble.

This repertoire is from the high Baroque, conveying great energy and passion. The concerti for recorder are no less dramatic than the vocal works. This ensemble accomplishes its goal (stated by Heindlmeier in her essay) of encapsulating the spirit and history

of Naples via this selection of music. The sequence of pieces moves from the founding of Naples at the siren Parthenope's death, through the mysteries of the Neapolitan underworld, to the lively festivities of that city.

Of the recorder works, the Francesco Mancini (1672-1737) *Concerto VIII in c minor* (tracks 1 and 3-6) is somewhat familiar to audiences, while other concerti are likely new to many ears: ones by Nicola Fiorenza (c.1700-64, on tracks 11-12 and 15), and Domenico Sarro (1679-1744, on tracks 18-21). Heindlmeier displays an impressive range of articulations and polished technique as soloist on alto recorders in F and G.

Also meriting mention is her duo on sopranino with Christian Heim, soprano recorder, on the aria “Che dolce simpatia” (track 17) from the opera *Il Giardino di Rose* by Alessandro Scarlatti (1660–1725). Though not a concerto, the final track, the traditional *Tarantella napoletana*, features remarkable passages played by Heindlmeier on soprano recorder. The piece is arranged by La Festa Musicale in a manner that conveys a festival procession approaching, growing in volume and energy, and gradually moving away from the listener.

Heindlmeier deserves much praise for her conception and direction of this project, as well as for her stellar recorder playing. The sessions from early 2021 sound great on CD and are worth the listener investing in that format or listening via the FLAC format downloads or high quality stream. Her essay in the booklet (available at no charge) really enhances the experience of listening. ❁

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Storie di Napoli. La Festa Musicale (Barbara Heindlmeier, recorders; Maria Ladurner, soprano voice; Anne Marie Harer, Iris Maron, Karoline Stemberg, Baroque violin; Maria

Pache, Baroque viola; Christoph Harer, Baroque cello; Christian Heim, violone and recorders [alto, track 2; soprano, track 17]; Avinoam Shalev, harpsichord and chamber organ; Simon Linné, archlute and Baroque guitar). 2022, 1 CD, 58:27. Audite 97.800, www.barbaraheindlmeier.de, www.lafestamusicale.de/en/home. Available from https://audite.de/en/product/CD/97800-storie_di_napoli.html (CD abt. \$30 including S&H to U.S.; downloads, mp3 abt. \$4.85, FLAC abt. \$6.60; booklet available at no charge; promotional video and audio excerpts also available). Also at www.prestomusic.com/classical/products/9268502--storie-di-napoli (CD \$14.75+\$6.30S&H; downloads, mp3, \$10, FLAC, \$12; includes digital booklet); <https://arkivmusic.com/products/la-festa-musicale-storie-di-napoli> (CD \$18.99+S&H). Also mp3 via iTunes, \$10.99, includes digital booklet. Stream via Apple Music, Naxos Music, Spotify, etc.



04

John Turner's A Garland for Ukraine

A timely humanitarian project by the English recorder virtuoso and composer John Turner is available via a 26-minute video. In this project, *A Garland for Ukraine*, Turner gathers 10 short works by 10 composers, including Fulvio Caldini and Turner himself, to “show their admiration and support for the Ukrainian nation and its brave and delightful people in this their hour of need.” I realize as I

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A number of the works refer to the Ukrainian national anthem or to Mykola Lysenko's Prayer for Ukraine, often called the country's spiritual anthem.

write my comments that these words will be published in Fall 2022—yet support still will be needed then, no matter the state of the current war.

Pianists Susan Bettaney and Jeremy Pike join Turner, who plays alto and tenor recorders. A number of the works refer to the Ukrainian national anthem or to Mykola Lysenko's *Prayer for Ukraine*, often called the country's spiritual anthem. While overall the affect of the works is one of determination, there is a range of emotions expressed; the collection embraces mourning and melancholy, but also deeply rooted hopefulness. The pieces are all lyrical and thoroughly accessible.

Recorded in St. Paul's Church, Heaton Moor, Stockport, UK, on April 21, 2022, the audio quality is quite listenable (even if not to the highest studio standards), and it is good to see Turner, Bettaney and Pike in the video. Each selection in the video is preceded by a line of text about the work. Turner's *A Sad Pavane for Ukraine* effectively evokes Thomas Tomkins's 17th-century work *A Sad Paven for these Distracted Times*. Jacob Fitzgerald's *Prayer* ends in a lovely touch, the final recorder note resonating in the piano strings. Jeremy Pike's *Elegy* uses the alto recorder for the vigorous center section, framed by more contemplative writing for tenor recorder.

In *Hollow*, American composer Carson Cooman, whose writings have appeared in *American Recorder*, places the piano and recorder in a sort of call and response mode through-

out. In Robert Matthew-Walker's *Orationem Brevem ad Pacem*, the composer weaves together the familiar *Ode to Joy* melody from Ludwig van Beethoven's ninth symphony with the Ukrainian national anthem. Sasha Johnson Manning's haunting *Prayer for Ukraine* opens and closes the video.

Viewers of this compilation of pieces are encouraged to contribute to the Disasters Emergency Committee for the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal (www.dec.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal) or to any charity assisting Ukrainians. Specifically mentioned is the Razumovsky Trust (<https://razumovsky.co.uk/donate/help-ukraine-appeal>), which is Ukrainian cellist Oleg Kogan's effort to support Ukrainian musicians.

Turner and all involved in this worthy project deserve our gratitude and respect, plus our support of this cause. ❁

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

A Garland for Ukraine. John Turner, recorders; Susan Bettaney, Jeremy Pike, piano. 2022, 26 minutes. Free. View at www.britishmusicsociety.co.uk/2022/05/a-garland-for-ukraine, <https://recorderist.co.uk> (scroll down the home page to find the video). *Mykola Lysenko, Prayer for Ukraine*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prayer_for_Ukraine (also YouTube recordings by various groups ranging from the U.S. Air Force Band to choirs) *John Turner at 70: An Interview by Carson Cooman, Winter 2013 AR*, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARwin13body.pdf>

Correction

In the Summer 2022 AR, two pieces (*Brief Encounter* and *Fantasia on Ca the Yowes*) were attributed to John Manduell, but are actually by Gordon Crosse (1937-2021). Our thanks to John Turner for pointing this out. ❁

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