

Harpsichord & fortepiano

Vol. 15, No. 1 Autumn, 2010

© Peacock Press.

Licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#).

You are free to share and adapt the content for non-commercial purposes, provided you give appropriate credit to Peacock Press and indicate if changes were made. Commercial use, redistribution for profit, or uses beyond this license require prior written permission from Peacock Press.

Musical Instrument Research Catalog
(MIRCat)

AN OVERVIEW OF THE KEYBOARD MUSIC OF BERNARDO PASQUINI

(1637-1710)

By John Collins

This year we commemorate the 300th anniversary of the death of Bernardo Pasquini. Although in the past few decades much attention has been given to Pasquini's dramatic and vocal music (including twelve operas, seven oratorios, many cantatas and motets), his extensive corpus of keyboard music has only recently received the attention it deserves. Considered as one of the major Italian composers for keyboard between Frescobaldi (d.1643) and Domenico Scarlatti (b.1685), Bernardo Pasquini, teacher of Francesco Gasparini¹, left well over 200 pieces for keyboard.

Original Sources

The great majority of Pasquini's works are conserved in just a few autograph manuscripts, including *Landsberg 215*, *MS 31501* Parts I to III, and *MS 36661*. There are 121 pieces in the autograph manuscript *Landsberg 215*. A further partial autograph section is included in *MS 31501, I-III*, housed at the British Library. In part I are the 14 sonatas for two basso continuo instruments and 14 sonatas for basso solo, a long Tastata, Passacaglias with 24 variations, a set of variations on *La Follia* and, at the end of the section, numerous short *arias*, more of which are in Part II. In Parts II and III are no fewer than 314 short *versi* also in figured bass format. A few toccatas are also to be found in British Library *MS 36661* in a hand which almost certainly predates the autographs by some years. Very few of his works were published during his lifetime; three pieces entitled *Sonata* ascribed to N.N. of Roma were included in a collection published by Aresti in 1697. Of these sonatas, two were included in an English "abridged" edition and some were included in a collection of toccatas and suites published by Roger of Amsterdam in 1698; these later appeared in England in 1719 and 1731. Others were included in assorted manuscripts (see bibliography for further details). In the preface to his edition of *MS 964* at Braga, Portugal, Gerhard Doderer has speculated that some of the over 30 Italian (mainly Roman) compositions included in this manuscript on folios 218-230

and 253-259 may well have been composed by the school of Pasquini, if not by Pasquini himself; certainly some of his compositions seem to have been known throughout Europe. Pasquini's compositions for keyboard cover all the main genres of his time, embracing some seventeen dance suites (although the term "suite" is not used in the manuscript) as well as single movements, about 14 variations on both self-composed arias and repeating bass patterns, four passacaglias, sonatas (including the 28 figured bass pieces), over 30 toccatas and tastatas, about a dozen contrapuntal works and a large amount of versos. His numerous pupils in Rome included Casini, Zipoli, and possibly Durante and Domenico Scarlatti, in addition to J.P.Krieger and Georg Muffat as well as Della Caja (who himself published a set of mercurial four-movement toccatas and retrospective ricercare and versos). It is highly probable that Handel met Pasquini in Rome in the early 1700s.

Modern Editions

In addition to the facsimile edition of *Landsberg 215*, there are two modern editions of his pieces. An edition by Maurice Brooks Haynes for the *Corpus of Early Keyboard Music, American Institute of Musicology* (AIM) was issued in seven volumes in 1964; this had the advantage of grouping pieces by genres rather than following the somewhat haphazard order in the manuscripts, but contained many printing errors and a somewhat sketchy approach to sources and evaluation.

A new seven-volume edition under the general editorship of Armando Carideo and Edoardo Bellotti has been issued from 2002. Volume I contains 59 Versets and a Pastorale from a manuscript recently discovered in Bologna and edited by Francesco Cera. The pieces from the *Landsberg 215* are included in volumes II-V with the pieces from *MS 31501* in volumes VI and VII. A further volume containing pieces from other sources including as yet unpublished fugues in three and four voices, as well as pieces of uncertain attribution, is in preparation. This

edition is far more accurate but unfortunately it is difficult to obtain in England and the U.S. – perhaps one reason why this composer has still not gained the reputation that he deserves; see the Bibliography at the end of this article for full details of these editions. Below I shall attempt to summarise Pasquini's extant keyboard music by genre; despite its shortcomings I have used the AIM edition, and all numbers and titles cited are from this edition. Because of their extremely limited interest to the average player, this discussion does not cover the fascinating figured-bass sonatas for one and for two players nor the figured-bass versos.

Contrapuntal works

Pasquini is known to have made copies of the works of Palestrina and Frescobaldi, the influence of the latter being identifiable in both the toccatas and contrapuntal works. Only 11 pieces that fall into this category seem to have survived and not all are complete; some are variable in quality but several (all in Volume I of the Haynes edition) demonstrate the survival of the variation technique so prevalent in Frescobaldi. Of the eleven contrapuntal pieces, nine appear in volume 1 of the series as no 1-9, plus the two ricercars in volume seven; pieces 10 and 11 of vol 1 are sonatas. The spreadsheet (<http://publications.earlymusica.org>) will make this clear.

The first piece, in D Minor, is entitled *Capriccio*. Fig.1a shows the opening. Its first section closes in the dominant and the second in the tonic; both sections move in mainly crotchets and quavers. In the third section (Fig. 1b) the subject is introduced in semiquavers, followed by a triple-time section in 3/2 with a minim beat (Fig. 1c). The piece concludes with a return to common time, this time with the subject accompanied by florid semiquavers (See Fig. 1d).

Of the three pieces entitled "Canzone Frances," the first in C Major is brief. The second (item no. 7 – See Fig. 2a) opens with the typical canzona rhythm of crotchet, two quavers and has a second section in 6/4. The third piece in A Minor (See Fig. 2b) opens with six repeated Es (the repeated note fugal subject being very common in Germany as well as Italy, with examples by Reincken and Pachelbel amongst others) and is a *moto perpetuo* which finally slows to quavers and crotchets briefly in b.56, the semiquavers taking over again in b.66. A slow down, achieved via a cadence, leads to a section in 3/4 (although headed 6/8). Of the next section entitled *Alio*

modo la tripla only seven bars survive, a great pity since this piece is of a high standard.



Fig. 2a. Canzona in F (item no. 7) with traditional dactyl rhythms



Fig. 2b. Canzona in A Minor (item no. 8), with repeated notes



Fig. 2c. Ricercar in G Minor (No. 140), trill with Lombardic rhythms.

The ninth piece, entitled "*Fuga*", is an example of very loosely imitative writing; the subject in the right hand has passagework beneath it immediately. Volume VII includes two more works considered contrapuntal. The two ricercars included as no. 139 and 140 are both in G Minor, the first one opening with a canzona rhythm and proceeding in mainly crotchet movement with a few quaver runs. There is a tonal ambiguity at the close of the subject which covers a descent from Eb to G via B-natural followed by Bb, which lends the piece charm. No. 140 is a longer piece which also proceeds mainly in crotchets with a further example of tonal ambiguity. Of interest are the written out trills: one commences on the upper note in b.19; the other is in the alto voice of the penultimate bar with its Lombardic rhythm in the first two beats. It might be worth mentioning two pieces included in the first volume, entitled *Sonata*, which are not strictly contrapuntal. The first is a further loosely fugal work. The second one opens with a short toccata-like flourish over a pedal point, followed by an imitative section; the subject of repeated notes in quavers has similarities to a Corellian fugue. Both were included under the name of 'N.N di Roma' in a collection of 17 sonatas for organ by various authors printed in Bologna in c.1697 of which 12, including no. 10 here, were included in a London reprint c.1710 by Walsh & Randall.

Suites, Individual Dances and Arias/Bizzarrias

The pieces discussed here are to be found in Volume II of the Brooks Haynes edition. Pasquini's 17 "suites" for keyboard are probably the first such examples in the Italian keyboard literature to fit this description. The term "suites" is not used in the manuscript but the movements are grouped by key and are probably intended to form unified groups as presented here. These suites comprise two, three or four movements in various combinations (See Table 1 in the internet appendix; the numbers are taken from the Haynes edition.). They include alemandas, correntes and gigas, based, however, not on the examples of Froberger and the French school but rather on Italian ensemble music. Several movements are untitled, others carry such terms as "bizzarria". Not all of the titles of the movements that he has included are to be found in the original print. Many untitled movements have a title supplied by the editor. However, the titles supplied are logical because the sequence of allemande - corrente - giga is to be found in Italian violin sonatas, notably in Corelli's op. 2. One suite opens with a short tastata probably intended to be played freely, and several include an aria as opening or closing movement. Five suites which include the alemanda, corrente and giga conclude with a binary-form untitled movement in common time. Some seven suites close with an untitled movement in common time that resembles an aria; it is possible that the second movement of Suite 27 may be intended as a variation of the first movement. It is interesting to note the complete absence of any sarabanda. The alemanda of the Suite labelled no. 13 in Haynes shows an awareness of *stile brisé* (see Fig. 3a) as, to a lesser extent, does the alemanda in no. 17, although this places greater emphasis on chords over semiquavers. The other allemandas have little in common with this technique; quaver movement including chords predominates, although several include semiquaver figuration. Upbeats to the first bar are found in all but no. 15, which imitates the opening phrase (see Fig 3b).



Fig. 3a. *Stile brisé* in the Alemanda, Suite no. 13.



Fig. 3b. Alemanda with imitative writing, Suite no. 5.

The correntes display a greater rhythmic variety, an upbeat beginning, occurring only in Suite no. 20, which is also imitative. Quaver movement in 3/4 and crotchets in 3/2 are common here, with dotted rhythms dominating in no. 17, no. 19 and the first half of no. 22, in which there is motivic imitation. (See Fig. 4a). In no. 13 (See Fig. 4b), 17, and 22 the correntes open with a chord in the left hand, the right hand entering on the second beat.



Fig. 4a: Corrente dotted rhythm with imitative writing, Suite no. 22



Fig. 4b: Corrente, Suite no. 13.]

The gigas consist mainly of continuous equal quaver movement in the right hand over dotted crotchet chords in the left (punctuated by rests in no. 23); those with the dotted "canarie" rhythms of no. 15 and 25, and imitative entries of no. 15 and 26 (including inversion of the theme in the second half), are the exception. (See Fig. 5a and 5b). In no. 22 and 24 writing develops into four parts towards the end of the second half. An upbeat quaver occurs in no. 26, and in no. 28 the opening bar is inverted at the start of the second half, a second part appearing on the second beat of this bar, and a further entry in the tenor appears in the third bar, but this is not developed, as in the manner of the German contemporaries of Buxtehude and Reincken. The arias and bizzarrias (and most of the untitled movements in this edition of the suites could be so described) exhibit examples of Pasquini's melodic gift; Volume II of the Haynes edition includes a further 26 binary form short

arias or bizzarias, all of which are attractive pieces of no great difficulty, full of melodic charm.



Fig. 5a: Giga with right hand equal quavers over left hand chords, Suite no. 17



Fig. 5b: Giga with imitative writing, Suite 15.

There are three individual alemandas that move in mainly quaver motion. The first one has chordal passages in the right hand; the second one is a variant of the movement that opens Suite 14. Other individual movements include a corrente in 3/4, a D Minor giga in 12/16 of only eight bars, and two further D Minor gigas in 6/8, the first having continuous quavers in the right hand over dotted crotchet chords in the left hand; the second one including adventurous syncopation in the right hand of the first half. A final giga in A Minor is in 6/8, with two equal halves totalling 16 bars.

Variations

The pieces discussed here are found in Volumes III and IV of the Brooks Haynes edition. The 22 sets of variations include four based on dance movements with just one or two variations, two sets on *La Follia*, two on *Bergamasca* with a further one on its saltarello, and four sets entitled “*Variationi*” based on aria/dance-like themes which may well have been by Pasquini himself. Further sets are entitled “*Capricciose*”, “*Inventione*” (perhaps implying an original theme), “*Partite diverse sopra Alemanda*” and “*Fioritas*”, with another set being entitled simply “*Variationi*” as distinct from the above. Four passagaglias complete this genre.

In addition, one bizzaria has just one variation. In it the right hand has the semiquaver figuration in the first half, the left hand in the second. An untitled piece that is almost certainly an alemanda has two variations in flowing semiquavers. There is also a corrente mainly in crochets with its one variation in quavers. A sarabanda is mainly in crotchets, some dotted, with a variation in semiquavers in which parts appear and drop out at will. The set of variations on fioritas has only six variations but the manuscript contains the heading 7th which clearly implies that

Pasquini intended to write more. The “*Variationi Capricciose*”, another tuneful theme that may have been original, is in seven partite, the theme being regarded as the first, the second in 3/4 is headed “*in corrente*”, the fourth, *Sarabanda*, the fifth in 6/4 is in crotchet movement, the sixth in common time has an extended trill in the alto that lasts for four bars, and the final variation is in 3/4. Of much greater substance are the remaining three sets. In the *Variationi a Inventione* are 11 partite, but the theme is counted as the first variation. The first half of the theme has mainly chords in the right hand over a moving quaver bass, the second half has more semiquaver movement in the right hand over crotchet chords or moving quavers. The third variation is in 6/4 with crotchet movement in one part against dotted minim chords throughout, the fourth variation although headed 12/8 is barred in 3/4 and 6/4, this time with semiquaver passagework formed from a sequential figure against chords. The fifth to seventh sets are headed *Corrente* and are distinctly backward-looking, being similar to Frescobaldi’s *Corrente* in his two books of *Toccatas*. Broken chord figures feature in the sixth variation, and insistent quaver movement appears in the seventh.

In the eighth and ninth variations there is a further reminder of Frescobaldi in the time signatures. In the eighth variation the right hand is in common time against 6/4 in the left hand. In both hands quavers are grouped in duple as well as triple rhythms and the figure of dotted crotchet, two semiquavers is passed between the hands (see Fig. 6a). In the ninth variation the right hand is in 12/8 against a left hand of 8/8 with the insistent dotted quaver, semiquaver pattern (See Fig 6b).



Fig 6a: *Variationi a inventione* (no. 53): Partita 8 showing rhythmic differences between hands



Fig 6b: *Variationi a inventione* (no. 53): Partita 9 showing rhythmic differences between hands

The tenth Partita is headed 3/4 but barred as 6/4, again a corrente in form with more broken chord writing, sometimes in contrary motion between the hands. The final partita is headed *Gagliarda* and is unusually in common time

(examples in common time are also to be found in Pasquini's Spanish contemporary Juan Batista Cabanilles). Further broken chord figures and figures of ascending or descending thirds with the first note sustained occur throughout, and neat syncopations in thirds in the right hand appear towards the end of the second part.

The theme of the *Partite diverse sopra Alemanda* moves in crotchets but each half is followed by a written out repeat in quavers with imitation between the parts, broken chords and contrary motion. The theme is followed by seven partitas, the first of which is in semiquaver movement with the by now usual figuration. The second, in binary form, is another rhythmic conundrum with the right hand in C12/6 the left hand in C6/12; this can be played most successfully as 12/8, much of it being in two parts only. The third, fifth, sixth and seventh partitas are all headed 3/4 but barred in 6/4, the fourth actually being headed 6/4. In the third partita flowing quavers soon give way to treble and bass crotchets, with an alto quaver following a rest, a figure which becomes wearing when used so relentlessly as here.

The fourth partita moves in crotchets, the second half opening with one bar of quaver imitation before a figure of a rest followed by two crotchets is passed between the hands. The fifth partita has broken chord writing in the right hand over a crotchet bass, with the left hand also having broken chords in the repeats; in most of the piece the top and bottom notes of the figures are overlaid to produce a tonal build-up but this is relieved in the middle of the piece by only the bass notes being held; this has the effect of acceleration. The sixth partita is based around a five-note quaver figure passed between the hands while other parts have held minims or dotted minims; occasionally a third part in crotchets is used as well. The final partita has continuous mainly conjunct quaver motion against either full chords or just one other voice, concluding with a veritable virtuoso flourish of quavers in contrary motion.

The work entitled simply *Variationi* occupies some 20 pages in the modern edition, and consists of a theme in common time in mainly two-part texture in crotchets and quavers followed by thirteen partite. The first is mainly right hand quavers against left hand semiquavers, the second is in 3/4 and, although not headed as such, is a corrente with a preponderance of two-part writing. The third partita is headed *altro modo* and has far more arpeggiated quaver motion. The fourth is headed 3/4 but only two bars are in this rhythm, the rest being in 6/8, again with much

arpeggiated figuration beginning on the second quaver. The fifth variation is in semiquavers with frequent rhythmic imitation, and the sixth is in 3/4 with quavers, sometimes in broken chord format, against crotchets. The seventh variation has mainly conjunct quavers against crotchets in its first section, with arpeggiated quavers in its second section. The eighth variation is another Frescobaldian corrente with entirely crotchet movement, sometimes against dotted minims. The ninth has an oscillating semiquaver figure in the left hand with right hand quavers. The tenth is constructed entirely around a quaver in the right hand followed by two semiquavers in the left hand frequently in octaves. The eleventh variation (see Fig. 7) is another movement with extended trills; in the first section the alto trills throughout, whilst in the second section, the tenor trills just six beats before imitative passagework against minims.



Fig. 7: *Variationi* (no. 55): Partita 11 showing internal trill.

Although the twelfth partita is headed *Sarabanda*, it has more in common with a corrente as it progresses in crotchet motion with several instances in the right hand of a dotted crotchet figure bearing a "t" (for trill), followed by two semiquavers and a crotchet. The final partita is in 3/4; after the first bar, it is in two parts of quaver figuration throughout, sometimes in contrary, sometimes in parallel motion, but also with one hand moving quite differently to the other; this virtuosic movement brings the work to a fine close.

There are four sets of variations based on aria/dance-like themes (along with Buxtehude's roughly contemporary *Arias*, they are some of the earliest examples of variations on original subjects to be composed after Frescobaldi's *Aria detta La Frescobalda*). They have six, five, eight and ten variations respectively, (although in the latter there seems to be an error in the Brooks Haynes edition: what looks like the second half of the binary form theme is headed variation 1; this would mean that there are actually only nine variations); the first three are in the rhythm of a gavotte.

All of the themes are in common time, but the first set contains variations in 3/4 and 6/8, the second has two in 6/8 including the final one,

the third has two in 6/8 (one headed as 3/4, which may just be a remnant of the tempo theory mentioned by Frescobaldi in his books relating time signatures to speeds), and the final one has variations in 3/4, 6/8, 3/8 and one which is in 3/8 in the manuscript although edited to 6/8. Again there is much variety of texture including pseudo-polyphony, violin-like figuration in the right hand, and sequential figuration. Several variations require an advanced technical ability.

The two sets based on *La Follia* are very different in character, the first one having 14 variations after the initial statement, displaying Pasquini's mastery in transferring the string idiom to the keyboard in a wide variety of rhythms. Noteworthy are the continuous triplet quavers in the right hand in variations 5 and 9 and the left hand in variation 6; the figure of three crotchets followed by a burst of semiquavers in the right hand of variation 7 (see Fig. 8); the virtuoso passagework for both hands in variation 10; the highly chromatic right hand in the thirteenth; and the written out trills and quaver figures in the final variation.



Fig. 8: *Partite diversi di Follia*: Variatione 7 showing violinistic figuration.

The second set has only three variations which move in quavers with thematic imitation prevalent in the first and second, and rhythmic imitation (crotchet or rest followed by two quavers and a crotchet) in the final variation. The *Bergamasca* sets are similarly varied, with eight and twenty-four in the common time sets, and seventeen in the Saltarello which is in 3/8 as would be expected. Dance variations do have a precedent in Bernardo Storace's *Passo e Mezzi* in his *Selva* of 1664 for including variations headed *Corrente* and *Gagliarda*. Although in the longer works some of the movements do not rise above the pedestrian and formulaic, there are many variations that carry the melodic freshness and tunefulness of an accomplished opera composer.

The four *Passagaglias* are a set of 20 variations in Bb, a set of 17 in C (with probably more either not transmitted or never completed), a set of 12 in the key of D Minor (again almost certainly incomplete) and a set of 24 in G Minor. All stress the second beat, and apart from the C Major set,

which is chordal (see Fig. 9a), and being in 3/2, closer to a *ciaccona*, they are melodic and in 3/4. The writing in the Bb and G Minor (see Fig. 9b) sets becomes increasingly virtuosic as they develop.



Fig 9a: Passagaglia in C (no. 67) showing chordal writing



Fig 9b: Passagaglia in G Minor (no. 69) showing melodic writing

Toccatas and Tastatas

In Volumes V And VI of the Haynes edition 34 pieces are entitled either *Toccata* (25) or *Tastata* (nine), there is one piece entitled *Preludio*, one *Sonata - Elevazione* and one entitled *Sonata* which is in two sections, the second headed *Pensiero*; two further *Toccatas* are included in Volume VII. The choice of keys is still very conservative, not exceeding two sharps or flats. Space does not permit a detailed discussion of this substantial contribution to the repertoire, therefore comments have been limited to generalisations and to those pieces which are of greater interest for whatever reason.

Most of Pasquini's pieces are in one movement but at least five (no. 70, 98-101) are in several sections, of which no. 98-101 are included in the earlier British Library MS 36661. No. 71 and no. 99 (see Fig. 10a) open with two bars of chords suitable for arpeggiation (indeed, in no. 94 the instruction "arpeggio" is included, relating to the first two chords) before motifs are passed from hand to hand over long held pedal notes; also featured are passages in parallel tenths. There are several *Toccatas* which either open with chords or contain chordal passages within the piece. No. 70 (see Fig. 10b) is one of the most ambitious, the sections being in common time, 3/4, common time, and concluding with a binary-form *corrente*-like movement with a variation.

Pedals are also required in no. 101 throughout the first section (which is markedly similar to Frescobaldi's *Toccata Quinta* from his second book); the second section is imitative, starting in common time followed by a variation in 3/2 before

a short closing section in common time in which semiquaver passagework against crotchet chords is passed from hand to hand, the final four bars again requiring the pedals for the long held notes.

Several pieces include the old Frescobaldian written out accelerating trill commencing on the upper note (two semiquavers plus four demisemiquavers). In other passages it is implied via the letter “f” placed over the first note, normally a dotted quaver followed by a semiquaver one degree below. Although quite a few of Pasquini’s *Toccatas* do contain passages which remind the player of Frescobaldi’s writing, there is not the same degree of nervous discontinuity and there is far more reliance on sequential writing. It would seem unlikely that most of the suggestions on playing toccatas contained in Frescobaldi’s prefaces to his two books are applicable to these much later examples, although there is scope for shortening those pieces that are presented in sections; and some of Pasquini’s pieces do indeed carry the indication to arpeggiate minim chords. Certainly there does not seem to be any reason to adopt Frescobaldi’s suggestion of dotting semiquavers in those passages in which quavers in one hand are set against semiquavers in the other. However, his injunctions to treat the beat freely can be applied cautiously here, as well as the eminently sensible comments on pausing before beginning passages in semiquavers in both hands and to retard the tempo at cadences. Almost certainly all trills should commence on the main note, this being appropriate also for many compositional genres.

One of the most popular and virtuosic pieces is no. 81, the *Toccata con lo scherzo del cuoco* (see Fig. 10c), which is based on the descending minor third. The cuckoo call is heard in quavers against semiquaver passagework, punctuated by sections in minims marked arpeggio or by the nervous rhythms and modulations by chords of the seventh; at b.47 the right hand breaks briefly into triplets (although printed as demisemiquavers they are actually semiquavers), and from b. 79 onwards a long held “A” firstly in the tenor and then in the alto is marked *trillo continuo*; this poses a most severe test to the player to maintain whilst playing the other part with the same hand. This piece is not too dissimilar to Kerl’s own *Toccata* on the same theme.

The *Elevazione-Adagio* (no. 105) is also included in the Aresti publication, where it is entitled *Sonata*. After a slow introduction the writing continues in semiquaver figuration based effectively on sequences. The second piece entitled *Sonata*

(no.106) is in two sections:the first has 17 bars of semiquaver figures shared between the hands followed by a short chordal link marked *arpeggio* that leads to further sequential passages. The second section headed *Pensiero* (nothing like the intricate contrapuntal pieces of that name by Casini) opens with imitative passages before changing to passages derived from a succession of rhythmic motifs. The one piece entitled *Preludio*, no. 95 is also in two sections, the first alternating long held chords accompanied by semiquaver passagework with chords passed from hand to hand. The second section also features such passages, varying between conjunct movement and from later arpeggiated figures.



Fig 10a: Toccata showing chordal opening with implied arpeggiation (no. 99)



Fig 10b: Toccata showing written out and implied Frescobaldian trills (no. 70)



Fig 10c: Toccata con lo scherzo del Cucco showing internal trill (no. 81)



Fig. 10d. Toccata 104

The two *Toccatas* included in Volume VII (no. 141 and 142) are each in three sections. In each, an opening and closing section in common time enclose central sections in 12/8 and 3/2 respectively. Toccata no. 141 makes much of sequential figures and trills, both indicated and implied, the 12/8 section is homophonic and the final section includes many seventh chords before a brief coda. The coda’s rhythm is based on two semiquavers followed by a quaver with a written out trill in the left hand against this figure

being reminiscent of Frescobaldi. No. 142 opens with four bars of semiquavers cascading from treble G to tenor C before a passage over a held pedal note. After some chromatic progressions prefiguring the imitative triple time section, it closes over two bars in common time.

Also included in Volume VII are ten short pieces (from four to fifteen bars) without title which are aria-like in composition, ten very short *Accadenze* (or cadences) and a *Pastorale* which opens with a repeated multi-section movement in 3/2 leading to a movement in common time full of dactyl rhythms, and a traditional drone bass that disappears and reappears at will.

Performance Practice

A few general notes on performance practice relating to Italian keyboard music of the seventeenth century may well be helpful in determining answers to some frequently asked questions. The only ornament sign found in Pasquini's pieces is the letter "t" which occurs on note values down to a semiquaver. It is found frequently over the first note of a dotted quaver-semiquaver pair (and can probably be added even when not specifically indicated) and indicates a trill, probably best commencing on the main note, especially in the more retrospective pieces. It is worth mentioning however that Lorenzo Penna does describe the trill beginning on the upper auxiliary in his *Li Primi Albori Musicali* of 1656, reprinted in 1672, 1684 and 1696. On short notes only three notes (e.g. CDC) can be played; on longer values more repercussions are possible, perhaps pausing on the main note before trilling. It is also possible that an ornament equivalent to the mordent or *pincé* with the lower auxiliary, (e.g. CBC) could be used in ascending passages, particularly in pieces in the French style. In two pieces (*Variazioni* (no.11) and *Toccata con lo scherzo del cucci*) the comment "*trillo continuo*" is found. The instruction "*arpeggio*" is found in some of the toccatas. Naturally there are possibilities for adding further ornaments when not expressly marked, although care should be taken not to use anachronisms such as the turn.

Fingering was still based on the concept of "good and bad" fingers for strong and weak beats which was described in great detail by Diruta in *Il Transilvano* in 1593 and 1609. Diruta proposed using 2 and 4 as strong fingers. This directly contrasts with other European treatises of the period, but during the seventeenth century more theorists, including Bismantova (*Compendio Musicali*, 1677) and Penna were following

Banchieri's *L'Organo Suonarino* of 1605. These include advice for passages starting on strong beats: Right hand ascending 3-4/ descending 3-2 (left hand 3-2 ascending / 3-4 descending). For a passage beginning between strong beats or on an off-beat, they recommend right hand 2 or 4 ascending / 4 for descending (left hand 2 or 4 on weak beats). Also recommended were 1-2-3-4 repeated or 1-2-3-4, 3-4 for right hand ascending and 4-3-2-1 repeated descending; the left hand would use 4-3-2-1 repeated or 4-3-2-1, 2-1 for ascending and 1-2-3-4 repeated or 1-2-3-4, 3-4 for descending. With regard to touch, whilst non-legato was still the norm, apart from rapid divisions and passagework, the gaps between notes should be noticeably less on the organ than on the harpsichord as described by Diruta. Not until well into the eighteenth century did a predominantly legato touch become the norm.

In dealing with tempo and notation, there is an interesting description of how to play triple time (including 6/4 but not 12/8) sections in Frescobaldi's prefaces to his books of Toccatas and Capricci, which, contrary to other theorists' work, are *not* based on exact proportional interpretation but on speed classified by time signatures ranging from *adagio* for 3/1 to *allegro* in 6/4. There is no evidence from later theorists as to how proportions were treated; a mathematical rhythmic proportion can be applied successfully in Pasquini's contrapuntal pieces far more readily than in his toccatas.

The great majority of Pasquini's works can be performed successfully on harpsichord, organ or clavichord, although the suites and dance movements are clearly better suited to the stringed keyboard instruments. Many are not overly difficult and their melodic charm will provide many hours of pleasure to players from informed amateurs to professionals. In this anniversary year of his death the best possible commemoration would be for his pieces to take their place in concerts.

I am extremely grateful to Terence Charlston for his invaluable assistance in identifying the pieces by Pasquini in the above editions by Silbiger and for alerting me to the pieces in the Woodcock MS and the MS21 in the Library of Congress. Editor's Note: John Collins' Pasquini article appeared in the August 2010 issue of The Diapason and is printed here - in altered form - with kind permission. For a list of Pasquini's works and an annotated Bibliography compiled by the author visit
<http://publications.earlymusica.org>.