

Music and Visual Culture in Renaissance Italy

Thursday 13 June

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| 10.00 | Registration and coffee |
| 11.00 – 12.30 | <p>Harmonious Composition (Chair: tbc)</p> <p>David E. Cohen, “A Body Composed of Many Parts: The Concept of Harmony in Leonardo da Vinci’s <i>Paragone</i>”</p> <p>Matthew Landrus, “Concordant Discord in Leonardo da Vinci’s <i>Last Supper</i>”</p> <p>Karolina Zgraja, “On the Relationship between Representations of Music and Architecture in Venetian Renaissance Altarpieces”</p> |
| 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch |
| 13.30 – 15:30 | <p>Sacred Interiors (Chair: tbc)</p> <p>Amy E. Gillette, “Musical Angel Machines in Renaissance Italy”</p> <p>Sophia D’Addio, “From Silence to Sound: Painted Organ Shutters in Motion”</p> <p>Joanne Allen, “‘Vadant ad cantandum in medio chori communiter’: Italian Renaissance Choir Stalls and Musical Performance”</p> <p>Francesco Martellotta and Lisa Pon, “Textiles, Sound, and Space: The Case of the Barberini Tapestries”</p> |
| 15.30 – 16.00 | Coffee |
| 16.00 – 18.00 | <p>Devotion (Chair: tbc)</p> <p>Laura Stefanescu, “Staging the Heavens: Art, Theatre and Music in Fifteenth-Century Italy”</p> <p>Serenella Sessini, tbc</p> <p>Katherine Powers, “Art and Music for Devotional <i>Contemplazione</i> in Dominican Circles”</p> <p>Sigrid Harris, “Transcending the Body: Music and Divine Ecstasy in Guido Reni’s <i>St Cecilia</i> (1606)”</p> |
| 18.00 – 19.00 | <p>Keynote 1: François Quiviger (Chair: tbc)</p> <p>“Turn On, Tune In: <i>Bourdons</i>, Drones and some Functions of the Representation of Sound in Renaissance Art”</p> |
| 19.00 – 20.00 | Reception sponsored by Harvey Miller |

Friday 14 June

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| 9.00 – 11.00 | Crossing Disciplines in Knowledge and Practice (Chair: tbc) Evan MacCarthy, “All Eyes and Ears: Sensory Erudition in Early Modern Italy” Samantha Chang, “The Presence of Absence: Music Inside the Painter’s Studio” Antonio Cascelli, “ <i>Il Figino</i> and the Paragone” Leslie Korrnick, “Dangerous Music at the Accademia di San Luca and Federico Zuccaro’s ‘Art’ of Censorship” |
| 11.00 – 11:30 | Coffee |
| 11:30 – 12.30 | Dance (Chair: tbc) Marina Nordera, “Dance, Liturgy and Visual Culture in 15 th -Century Florence: The Bas-reliefs of the <i>Cantorie</i> by Donatello and Della Robbia” Jasmine Marie Chiu, “A Union of Art and Dance: The Iconography of Dancing on Renaissance Wedding Chests” |
| 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch |
| 13.30 – 14.30 | Keynote 2: Nicoletta Guidobaldi (Chair: tbc) “Musical Images as ‘Symbolic Form’ in Courtly Iconographic Programmes of the Early Renaissance: Themes, Perspectives, Case Studies” |
| 14.30 – 16:00 | Ensemble and Community (Chair: tbc) Tim Shephard, “Aporia and the Harmonious Subject” Chrisinda Henry, “Music and Painting in the Venetian Studiolo, 1500-1520” Sanna Raninen, “Young Man’s Game: Men, Aging and Musical Interaction in Italian Renaissance Art” |
| 16.00 – 16.30 | Coffee |
| 16.30 – 18.30 | Gender and Sensuality (Chair: tbc) Bláithín Hurley, “The Changing Face of St Cecilia: Women and Music in Renaissance Italy” Jillianne Laceste, “Artistry or Domesticity?: Female Artists as Musicians in the Early Modern Era” Laura S. Ventura Nieto, “An Alluring Sight of Music: The Musical Courtesan in the <i>Cinquecento</i> ” Malachai Komanoff Bandy, “‘With the Base Viall Placed Between my Thighes’: Musical Instruments and Sexual Subtext in Titian’s <i>Venus with Musician Series</i> ” |
| 19.00 | Conference dinner |

Saturday 15 June

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| 9.30 – 10.30 | Looking at Music: Books (Chair: tbc) Stefano Lorenzetti, “Images of musical knowledge in Renaissance Treatises” Laurie Stras, “Antonio Moro’s Choirbooks from Mid-Sixteenth-Century Florence” Victor Coelho, “‘Lute-toons’: Images, Sketches and Cartoon Drawings in Italian Tablature Sources, 1517-1650” |
| 10.30 – 11.00 | Coffee |
| 11.00 – 12.00 | Looking at Music: Instruments (Chair: tbc) Emanuela Vai, “Visual Materialities of Renaissance Musical Instruments” Gioia Filocamo, “Can Musical Iconography Penetrate Emotions? A Tentative Seventeenth-Century Italian Case-Study” |
| 12.00 – 13.00 | Lunch |
| 13.00 – 14.00 | Keynote 3: Flora Dennis (Chair: tbc) “Music, the Visual and the Material in Italian Renaissance Culture” |
| 14.00 – 15.00 | Music and the Artist’s Conception (Chair: tbc) Daria Rose Foner, “Vocal Polyphony in the Paintings of Andrea del Sarto” Barnaby Nygren, “Singing Sibyls: Music, Revelation, Labour, and Art on the Sistine Chapel Ceiling” |
| 15.00 – 15.30 | Coffee |
| 15.30 – 17.00 | Portraits (Chair: tbc) Annabelle Page, “Music in Sigismondo Fanti’s <i>Triumpho di Fortuna</i> (1526)” Massimo Privitera, “Constructing Excellence: Portraits of Composers in Early Modern Music Books” Amy Brosius, “‘Il suon, lo sguardo, il canto’: The Function of Portraits of Mid-Seventeenth-Century <i>Virtuose</i> in Rome” |

Abstracts

Keynote 1: François Quiviger (Warburg Institute)

“Turn On, Tune In: *Bourdons*, Drones and some Functions of the Representation of Sound in Renaissance Art”

Renaissance allegories of the sense of hearing often include a figure tuning a stringed instrument to her voice. These figures come from the tuning angels of late medieval and Renaissance altarpieces, which in turn expand the theme of King David tuning his harp featuring at the beginning of many medieval Psalters. The function of the tuning figure is to prompt the spectator to tune in, prepare herself, literally to the oral recitation of the Psalms or imaginatively, as a prelude to prayer, by thinking of a continuous sound, composed at least of a voice and a plucked or bowed note. In musical terms this mental exercise amounts to imagining a *bourdon*, a concept referring to a continuous note being played with one or several voices at various intervals as support to the melody.

In order to discuss and analyse these coincidences between sound and image this lecture proceeds in three parts: first an exposé of the iconography of tuning in Medieval and Renaissance art; second an overview of the function of *bourdons* and their Eastern versions, the drones of Indian classical music, in Western and Eastern philosophy of sound; and finally some observations on the application and adaptation of musical categories to Renaissance representations of sound and assumptions of spectatorship.

Keynote 2: Nicoletta Guidobaldi (Università di Bologna)

“Musical Images as ‘Symbolic Form’ in Courtly Iconographic Programmes of the Early Renaissance: Themes, Perspectives, Case Studies”

In early Renaissance decorative cycles adorning the interiors of Italian noble residences, visual representations of music progressively acquire a leading role.

Within music-iconographic programs intended to celebrate the prince and his court, sometimes elaborated by the most distinguished humanists of the time, references to instruments, musical praxis and favoured compositions not only illustrate courtly tastes and their aesthetic orientations, but are increasingly loaded with strong values of identification and symbolic meanings.

The paper will present an excursus on the galaxy of iconographic themes and of the meanings assigned to music in these contexts, in which figures, concepts and musical myths (often recovered from Antiquity), reinterpreted in light of the contemporary values prevailing at court, assume the role of ‘symbolic forms’ for the representation of new humanistic themes and myths.

Themes, questions and new research perspectives will be proposed in particular through case-studies of the iconographic programs created for the palaces of Federico da Montefeltro in Urbino and Gubbio, in which can be found many variations on the theme of court music as a mirror of the perfect Harmony that Federico—a ‘musician’ in the Platonic sense of the term—has achieved in his kingdom.

Keynote 3: Flora Dennis (University of Sussex)

“Music, the Visual and the Material in Italian Renaissance Culture”

The period between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries arguably witnessed the birth of consumer society. The economic boom following the devastation of the Black Death resulted in a significant increase in the production and consumption of material goods, which in turn took on increasing representational value, particularly within the home. What did it mean to represent music visually in this expanding and diversifying material landscape? How was music signified in images and why? Where were representations to be found and how did this change during this period? Focusing on the material culture of Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this paper will explore these questions in order to reflect on music's changing relationship to everyday life.

Harmonious Composition

“A Body Composed of Many Parts: The Concept of Harmony in Leonardo da Vinci's *Paragone*”

David E. Cohen (Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics)

As is well known, Leonardo wrote much of the *Paragone*—the texts arguing the superiority of painting to poetry, sculpture, and music assembled in the *prima parte* of the Urbino Codex— during his years at the ducal court of Milan, where he may well have known the cathedral's choirmaster, the composer and eminent music theorist, Franchino Gaffurio.

In the *Paragone*, Leonardo argues that painting excels poetry, in particular, because the painter exhibits the manifold distinct beauties of his subject simultaneously, thereby producing “harmonious proportions” like those of polyphonic music, while “the poet is ... unable to give an equivalent of musical harmony because it is beyond his power to say different things simultaneously as the painter does in his harmonious proportions, where the component parts are made to react simultaneously ...” (chap. 28).

As I show, the conception of musical harmony operative in passages such as this one, though similar to our current understanding, is one that appears in print for nearly the first time in Gaffurio's treatises on music theory written in Milan during the 1490s. In discussing this topic I correct a misinterpretation of Leonardo's dicta on this subject in the commentary on the *Paragone* by Claire Farago.

“Concordant Discord in Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*”

Matthew Landrus (University of Oxford)

At the request of Ludovico Sforza, Leonardo wrote in 1490-93 a book on painting that included a *paragone* which argued for the superiority of painting among the liberal arts. This was a formal manuscript known as the Codex Sforza, which is now lost. Portions of notes for the Codex were later included by Francesco Melzi,

his assistant, in a *Book on Painting* (c. 1540-60). Although Leonardo did not initially approach this as a humanist discourse, it was the kind of debate that would have put him in conversation with humanist scholars at the Sforza Court, and indeed Melzi's version of the book was organised in a humanist manner. By 1496, Leonardo had an opportunity to include in his Last Supper evidence of his earlier points about painting as a science that could include within a picture the other liberal arts. I will address this problem as a response to humanists at the Sforza Court, particularly with regard to Leonardo's method of portraying the Pythagorean/Empedoclean paradox of *concordia discors*, or harmony of discord. He organised the painting according to musical proportions and concepts that offered a visual example for his *paragone*. What he could tell certain viewers about the painting deserves additional consideration. As the work of a 'man without letters', this was a new type of sacred conversation.

"On the Relationship between Representations of Music and Architecture in Venetian Renaissance Altarpieces"

Karolina Zgraja (Universität Zurich)

In Venetian Renaissance altarpieces architectural projections appear simultaneously with representations of musical performance. Traceable back to the *Trecento*, this tradition seems to culminate in Giovanni Bellini's large altarpieces executed for the most important churches of the *Serenissima*. Music-making figures belong to the canonical repertoire of these paintings, most of which correspond to the iconographical type of the so called *sacra conversazione*: non-narrative representations of the Virgin Mary flanked by saints of heterogeneous origins and times. The figures coexist within a shared architectural space and appear to be in a state of profound religious contemplation. The monumental vaulted architectural spaces represented correspond to acoustical spaces for the depicted musical practice: sound evoked within an illusionistic painted space that cannot be experienced, a music that cannot be heard by the beholder. Architectural knowledge and especially a fine geometric analysis are indispensable for the projection onto a flat surface of three-dimensional architectural forms in correct perspective. What links the two disciplines of music and architecture is mathematical thought and acquaintance with humanistic philosophical literature. In fact, the term "harmony" was employed with regard to arithmetical laws of harmonics, and music theory played an important rôle in architectural treatises. The present study aims at an exploration of this concurrent phenomenon, with special focus on Venetian altarpieces, taking into account their devotional function and thus the transcendental content of the paintings.

Sacred Interiors

"Musical Angel Machines in Renaissance Italy"

Amy E. Gillette (Barnes Foundation)

During the Renaissance in Italy, many churches, piazzas, and palaces were animated by mechanized figures of angels that were, it seems, inevitably

accompanied by choral or instrumental music. In this paper, I survey the types of musical angel machines created in Renaissance Italy, and explore how one machine per category functioned, looked, and sounded (i.e., what kind of music did it produce or accompany), as well as the ways in which it interacted with its built and peopled environment. At Siena Cathedral in 1375, for example, a great baldachin was suspended from the vault over the high altar and featured carved angels that “floated” down during the performance of the *Sanctus* hymn, which the angelic hosts of heaven were believed to celebrate in concert with the human faithful. *Sacre rappresentazioni*—of which the best documented were those produced by Florentine lay confraternities in various churches in the 1400s-1500s—involved “Paradise machines” generally comprising a rotating domed superstructure (the “Heaven”) suspended from the rafters and containing an iron mandorla affixed to a pole that could be raised and lowered by a crane. These marvelous contraptions were packed with cotton-wool clouds, a huge amount of candles, and multiple boys strapped onto the moving parts who played the role of music-making angels. While airborne they celebrated the promise of Paradise regained with secular hymns and instrumental music. With respect to the secular context—in the Piazza S. Marco, Venice, angel machines in the guise of cosmic mechanics adorned ducal structures to analogize and glorify the doge and the city. Within the mechanism of the Torre dell’Orologio (late 1490s), for example, a trumpeting angel appeared with the three Magi each hour to salute the Madonna, accompanied by chiming bells. In 1513 the music of trumpets and pipes marked the installation of a gilt copper angel weathervane—with expanding wings to catch every wind!—on the S. Marco campanile. Ultimately I argue that musical angel machines were a late but consummate expression of applied angelology that engendered the dramatic reification of angels’ roles as mediators between the celestial and sublunary, sources of comfort, and apparitions of celestial bliss.

“From Silence to Sound: Painted Organ Shutters in Motion”

Sophia D’Addio (Columbia University)

During the Renaissance, the standard mode of organ decoration across northern Italy consisted of a sculptural case with painted shutters; these works are uniquely ‘musical’ among paintings for the sacred sphere, for not only were they conceived to decorate the instrument, but the images on their interior also provided a visual accompaniment to the music that emanated from its pipes. Akin to the wings of a folding triptych, organ shutters generally consist of large-scale canvas paintings mounted back-to-back using a shared wooden support and attached to the organ case with a hinging mechanism. Moreover, the door-like disposition of the shutter paintings offered fertile ground for artists and patrons to explore the thematic associations of the processes of opening and closing. The very act of opening creates a dialogue between the exterior and interior images that expresses and embodies notions of passage, concealment, and revelation, while also marking a moment of transition in preparation for the mass and the sacred music that would accompany it, thereby imbuing the interior images with what we might consider to be a sonorous dimension. This paper will explore these themes by examining organ shutter paintings in motion,

passing from the exterior to the interior and back again, and will highlight the way in which the interior images are further activated and enlivened through the performance of the organ.

“Vadant ad cantandum in medio chori communiter’: Italian Renaissance Choir Stalls and Musical Performance”

Joanne Allen (American University)

Church choir precincts represent some of the most elaborately decorated and rigorously organized settings for musical performance in Renaissance Italy. In this paper, I will discuss four aspects of the relationship between choir stalls and musical practice: the overall structural layout of choir precincts; ergonomic stall design; intarsia images of musical notation; and the impact of choir placement on acoustics.

In their traditional location in the upper nave, choirs were divided into two ranges, which facilitated processions, the antiphonal singing of psalms and the observation of hierarchy amongst the religious community. This bipartite division was also reflected in stall-back decoration which in some choirs featured iconographic pairings, further reinforcing hierarchical arrangements. Individual stall design also reflected the musical functions of the space. Furniture dimensions indicate that stall-backs, often inlaid with imagery, were designed to be visible while the stall was occupied by a seated figure. Indeed, Franciscan and Dominican ordinals gave permission for friars on one range of the choir to sit whilst friars on the opposite range sang the psalm, conditioning their viewing of images whilst listening to choral chant. Numerous inlaid depictions of musical notation suggest not only iconographical and symbolic relationships, but practical ones too. Stalls with musical iconography seem to have identified occupants who held particular roles in musical aspects of divine office.

When architectural and liturgical change prompted the removal of stalls from the nave to retrochoirs behind the high altar (in part so clergy could escape the noise of the laity), contemporaries noticed that their acoustical experience of choral music subtly shifted. Such changes elucidate the mutually reciprocal relationships that existed between the organizational structure of wooden seating, architectural space, and the performance of choral music in the Renaissance church interior.

“Textiles, Sound, and Space: The Case of the Barberini Tapestries”

Francesco Martellotta (Politecnico di Bari) and Lisa Pon (Southern Methodist University)

Tapestries hung for festive occasions added a temporary textile cladding that visually enriched a space—and also affected its acoustics. During the 2017 exhibition in New York City’s Cathedral of St. John the Divine of nine Baroque tapestries depicting the life of Christ, commissioned by Francesco Barberini, we carried out acoustical experiments to better understand how this ephemeral skin affects an interior space’s soundscape. The Barberini *Life of Christ* tapestry suite offers a remarkable opportunity to study these effects: more than 5 m in height,

designed by the painter Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, and expertly woven by the Barberini tapestry workshop, they can dominate many different architectural spaces. In St. John the Divine, they were hung in three separate neo-Gothic chapels, all partially open to St. John the Divine's vast interior. Absorption coefficients (indicating how much of a sound burst is absorbed rather than reflected) were measured in these chapels and subsequently used to aurally simulate the influence they may have played in the rooms where they were originally installed. Our research thus contributes to a multisensory understanding of architectural spaces, fully clad in or denuded of what Gottfried Semper called its *Festapparat*.

Devotion

“Staging the Heavens: Art, Theatre and Music in Fifteenth-Century Italy”

Laura Stefanescu (University of Sheffield)

During the Quattrocento one of the highlights of many religious plays and festivities occurred when the heavens opened up in front of the curious spectators, offering a glimpse of the sensory delights awaiting in the afterlife, among which were angelic concerts. The world of theatrical productions was a strong and influential voice in the culture of the time, particularly with regard to its visual impact. Lay society, organised into confraternities, was responsible for this embodiment of invisible and inaudible realms and ultimately for shaping the concept of the heavenly world in the Italian Renaissance.

The staged heavens influenced in their turn contemporary works of art depicting paradise, which responded to the visual language created during *feste* and *sacre rappresentazioni*. By analysing sources that testify to how music was used in the theatrical representation of heaven, I would like to discuss the impact that these practices had on the religious art of the time and to outline the creation of a paradise characterised by an augmented sensory experience, due to the imagination of a lay society in search of an afterlife of delight.

Serenella Sessini (V&A / University of Sheffield), title and abstract tbc

“Art and Music for Devotional *Contemplazione* in Dominican Circles”

Katherine Powers (Cal State Fullerton)

A disciple of Savonarola, Fra Serafino Razzi (1531-1611), Dominican prior and author, was a leading voice in the use of devotional music in Dominican circles. Armed with a thorough humanist education, Razzi produced over one hundred books on a variety of topics—philosophy, travel, poetry, theology, sermons—and several books of *laude*, i.e., devotional songs in Italian that he arranged, many from secular contrafacts. The focus of much of Razzi's work was the spiritual health of the nuns under his charge and the religious and laity within his influence. To them he advocated devotional exercises that caused a fervent, passionate, emotional response. Razzi's instructions on devotional exercise included encouraging the faithful towards the devotional state of

contemplazione: according to Razzi, singing *laude* and meditating on devotional images together encouraged the development of the state of *contemplazione*. Razzi's *laude* and his writings contribute to understanding of the aesthetics he promoted. This paper will describe the Dominican devotional *contemplazione*, its encouragement through music and visual art for devotional exercises, and the artistic styles that complemented it.

“Transcending the Body: Music and Divine Ecstasy in Guido Reni’s *St Cecilia* (1606)”

Sigrid Harris (University of New England)

In 1599, the tomb of St Cecilia was reopened. Cardinal Sfondrati subsequently commissioned Guido Reni to paint three portraits of the saint, including one known in English as *St Cecilia (Santa Cecilia con il violino, 1606)*. In this painting, the saint looks heavenwards while playing the violin; she uses music to transcend the material realm. This paper will place Reni's depiction of music-inspired ecstasy in the context of the Cecilian visual culture of the Renaissance; further, it will take into account CounterReformation views on materiality and transcendence in order to provide a fresh perspective on the saint's embodied performance. As a whole, the work—like St Cecilia's upward gaze—indicates a higher reality; it hints at the saint's unrepresentable, ineffable experience of God. In presenting the violin as a tool for invoking the divine, the painting articulates a significant message regarding the links between music and the numinous in early modern Italy.

Crossing Disciplines in Knowledge and Practice

“All Eyes and Ears: Sensory Erudition in Early Modern Italy”

Evan MacCarthy (West Virginia University)

After having removed all roughness or lack of refinement, and thereby ignorance, those possessing erudition claim expertise and authority over their field of study. The discerning judgements of the erudite, enabled by deep learning together with visual and aural (and other sensory) perception, have established long-held patterns and modes of literary and artistic taste, discretion, and ingenuity. The theoretical writings of specialists in music and the visual arts during this period frequently refer to training one's eyes or ears to become erudite, to championing those who possess them, or to acknowledging the discerning evaluations they facilitate. These texts also provide detailed comparisons of each organ's strengths and weaknesses as sources of knowledge, tools of judgement, and media of pleasure and devotion. But what ultimately constituted an "erudite" sense of sight or hearing, and how did ideas of earlier authorities inform these senses and their refinement toward a more advanced *giudizio dell'occhio* or *dell'orecchio*? Examining Latin and Italian treatises on music and the visual arts, this paper investigates the affinities between discourses concerning the ears and eyes of erudite listeners and viewers as the relationships between knowledge, perception, and beauty evolved in early modern Italy.

“The Presence of Absence: Music Inside the Painter’s Studio”

Samantha Chang (University of Toronto / University of Sheffield)

The presence of musical instruments inside the painter’s studio alludes to the concept of painting as a performed art. In Castiglione’s discussion on music, musicians, like painters, have distinctive styles in the act of performance (Sohm, 2001). Paolo Pino describes the parallel between painters and musical performers in his *Dialogo della pittura* of 1548, and states that artistic inventions can only be manifested through performance (Barocchi, 1960). The story of Barocci in Bellori’s *Le vite de’ pittori, scultori et architetti moderni* of 1672 recounts the painter referring to his work as “painting music” (*sto accordando questa musica*) (Bellori, 2005). While musical instruments often adopt and mirror the positions and shapes of the painter’s tools, there is a distinct absence of sheet music depicted in self-portraits and representations of the artist’s studio—an absence not found in portraits and domestic representations from the 16th and 17th century in Italy. What does the absence of sheet music allude to in reference to the artist’s identity and the act of painting? Through the presence of absence, painters fashioned themselves as musicians to establish their public persona, to emphasize the performance aspects of painting, and to reference the virtuosity of the performer: the painter-musician.

“*Il Figino* and the Paragone”

Antonio Cascelli (Maynooth University)

The treatise *Il Figino* (Mantova, 1591), about the purpose and definitions of arts, includes an interesting version of the paragone that, starting with Leonardo’s version, was quite pervasive throughout the sixteenth-century. The author, Comanini, refers to Arcimboldo who discovered how music harmonic proportions form the various chromatic shades of colours. This paragone has been the object of study of Caswell, who focused on the Pythagorean elements. Privitera highlights how Arcimboldo, by realising the equal division of the semitone in colours, something that was not possible to music theorists, suggests the superiority of painting over music. However, in order to understand the full implications of Comanini’s paragons, it should be read in the context of the treatise, whose aim is to establish whether the role of art is to teach or delight. The paragone is in fact mentioned in the sections discussing the elements common between literature/poetry and painting. But if the treatise ultimately suggests the substantial equivalence between literature/poetry and painting, a fundamental question emerges: if music is somehow a common element between the two arts, what does this mean for the role and purpose of music in a setting like Mantua, which will be the stage of one of the first ‘operatic’ experiments?

“Dangerous Music at the Accademia di San Luca and Federico Zuccaro’s ‘Art’ of Censorship”

Leslie Korrick (York University)

In later Renaissance Italy, relationships between music and painting were well established in both theory and practice within and beyond artistic circles. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, the Cinquecento produced abundant textual evidence verifying that these relationships were commonplace and served the aims and aspirations of each art equally well. Yet when the Florentine painter, Giovanni Balducci, declared that music was the “sister” of painting in a discourse delivered in 1594 at the Roman Accademia di San Luca, there was an immediate backlash—at least according to the academy’s official written record. What triggered this backlash? Why did it occur at this particular art academy and why at this late date, when it appears almost anachronistic? In seeking answers to these questions, I will focus on the orientation of the institution under its founder and first *principe*, painter Federico Zuccaro, as well as his ambitions as an art theorist and *letterato*. And I will suggest that Zuccaro could not acknowledge the sisterhood of music and painting without undermining a more personally satisfying argument he wished to make in support of the high status of the visual arts and intellectual practice of the artist. Thus, the danger of music at the academy.

Dance

“Dance, Liturgy and Visual Culture in 15th-Century Florence: The Bas-reliefs of the *Cantorie* by Donatello and Della Robbia”

Marina Nordera (Université Côte d’Azur)

The *Cantorie* were the marble balconies from which the choir sang liturgical music in Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral in Florence. The fact that the realization of these architectural and sculptural works was commissioned to such distinguished artists as Luca della Robbia for the *Sacrestia delle Messe* (1431-38) and Donatello for the *Sacrestia dei Canonici* (1433-39), demonstrates their functional and symbolic relevance in Florentine culture of the time. These two masterpieces, now visible in the Opera del Duomo Museum, share the same architectural and liturgical function, but they mobilize different references in the choice of iconographic program as well as in artistic conception and execution, especially concerning the representation of gestural expression, body dynamics and rhythm.

Through this case study, this contribution focuses on the representation of dance and music in 15th century Florence as part of a project of constructing a shared visual culture, contributing to the effectiveness of liturgical performance. In particular, it analyses the bas-reliefs in relation to the artistic codes and visual culture of the time, paying attention at the interaction between dance—action and kinaesthesia—and music—playing and listening—as they are theorized in treatises on dance and on education, in order to understand the function of dance imagery in performing “musical effect on visible things” (Pater).

“A Union of Art and Dance: The Iconography of Dancing on Renaissance Wedding Chests”

Jasmine Marie Chiu (University of Oxford)

This paper argues that the artistic representation of dance in late medieval and Renaissance societies both reflects a widespread social practice and is embedded with its own layers of visual expressiveness and symbolic meaning which inform, invigorate, bewilder, punctuate, and enhance painted and sculptural compositions. To further explore the layers of cultural meaning that dance iconography acquired and embodied in Renaissance Italy, this paper will explore the representation of dancing figures on the painted panels of 15th-century Tuscan *cassone* wedding chests, the historical and visual ties between dance and marriage, and the performative role of the *cassone* chests themselves in contemporary marriage rituals. The depiction of dancing couples in the wedding scenes of *cassone* decoration served as an effective symbolic reminder of the marriage and acted as a powerful and lasting visual expression of this union on objects which were commissioned as an integral part of 15th-century Tuscan marriage rituals.

Concert Paintings

“Aporia and the Harmonious Subject”

Tim Shephard (University of Sheffield)

Paintings and prints in which the absence of an obvious narrative subject is combined with a sense of psychological intensity, often characterised by scholars as poetic and ambiguous, are among the most celebrated novelties of North Italian art around 1500. Images in which the “subject” appears to be music-making, such as Costa’s London *Concert* and Giorgione’s *Three Ages of Man* in the Galleria Palatina, achieved widespread popularity as a part of that broader phenomenon. The vogue for these so-called “concert” pictures is usually explained in relation to either an assumed Venetian musical exceptionalism, or an improbably subtle investment in the neo-Platonic philosophy of cosmic harmony.

This paper proposes a different, more straightforward approach. Harmony—understood in the period as disparate elements brought into rational concord—was used right across Italian culture c.1500 as a ubiquitous metaphor for any system involving the proper arrangement of diversity. From the 1480s to the 1510s a whole series of print publications applied this metaphor to different aspects of image-making, including perspective composition and colouring. Simultaneously, and with no necessary reference to sophisticated neo-Platonic thought, musical harmony was widely considered exceptionally effective in representing and communicating psychological states.

For artists interested in looking beyond the narrative subject to new principles that might organise an image and give interior life to its protagonists, harnessing the metaphor of harmony must have seemed an obvious and promising strategy. Seen against this backdrop, the inclusion of a musical score, or any other apparatus of music-making, becomes a means of organising the viewer’s response to the disposition and colouring of the figures into an appreciation of the harmonious effect produced by the artist’s arrangement of diverse and even incongruous elements, and its vivid communication of psychological depth.

“Music and Painting in the Venetian Studiolo, 1500-1520”

Chrisinda Henry (McGill University)

This paper explores two intertwined phenomena related to domestic musical fellowship that emerged in Venice between 1500 and 1520. The first is the earliest traceable development of the humanist music studio as a site for the study and performance of music, while the second is the rise of the so-called “Concert” as a subject for cabinet paintings and other media such as engravings. While both phenomena appear as new to Venice just after the turn of the century, they draw on practices already well-established at the Italian mainland courts and in cities such as Florence. The paper examines how the Concert subject transforms within the unique cultural and social context of Venice. In particular, it traces both real and ideal expressions of social harmony as depicted in a pair of interior Concert scenes by Vittore Carpaccio and Titian. Both pictures figure intimate and informal “mixed” musical gatherings shared between religious and lay participants of varying age and gender. Both also evoke the studiolo as a unique context of fellowship, performance, and display where musicians, whether amateurs or professionals, scholarly pedagogues, and their patrons could meet as partners in a distinct and novel form of cultural production and social definition. Beyond a detailed analysis of the pictorial constructions of musical ensemble, the paper also uses the evidence of property inventories to reconstruct the ownership and display of Concert pictures, which often hung on the walls of rooms in which music was played.

“Young Man’s Game: Men, Aging and Musical Interaction in Italian Renaissance Art”

Sanna Raninen (Uppsala University)

Famously, music provides a popular allegory in art for love (whether attained or not) or the passing of time, neither of which flatter an aging person. Old age often relegates both men and women from an active role in musical pursuits to that of a passive listener; Castiglione in his *Il Cortegiano* ridicules the unpleasant sight of old men serenading in public. Yet, elderly gentlemen are not entirely erased from view in art, featuring only in images for the purposes of satire or fading into the background of an image filled with the beauty of youth: famous Classical didact Chiron on a rare occasion might carry a lyre as a sign of his wisdom and refinement, King David gets to keep his assortment of instruments even in his advanced years as the author of the psalms, and in contemporary images an elderly man can adopt a position of authority through musical devices, but in different ways to younger sitters. The means of musical interaction became limited through the advancement of age, but not forbidden outright. My presentation observes the ways in which elderly men are depicted in connection to musical subject matter and its reflection on the status of old age in the ideals and aesthetics of Italian Renaissance culture.

Gender and Sensuality

“The Changing Face of St Cecilia: Women and Music in Renaissance Italy”

Bláithín Hurley (University College Cork)

Women, music and religion have always been emotive subjects individually, but when all three are joined together the passions produced sometimes threaten to overwhelm both the subject and the observer. At no time were the combined subjects of women, music and religion more to the fore than in Renaissance Italy. This was an age of re-awakening and the re-evaluating of the issues relating to the individual and the arts after the Middle Ages; and St. Cecilia, the Patron Saint of Music, managed to unite these three aforementioned emotive subjects in one fell blow. St. Cecilia entered the Middle Ages as a martyr saint with no discernible characteristics, and emerged at the other side with the acquirement of the status of Patron Saint of Music. It was at this time that the place of music among the Liberal Arts was being reassessed and it was even becoming a suitable skill for women to attain. But, who was St Cecilia, and did the change in how she was portrayed in paintings mirror the transformation that was occurring in the role of the female musician in Italy at this time? Through the use of the paintings of the Italian Renaissance this paper shall investigate these changes and establish if painted portrayals of St. Cecilia accurately reflect what was happening in Italian music during the Renaissance, especially the rise in status of the female musician.

“Artistry or Domesticity?: Female Artists as Musicians in the Early Modern Era”

Jillianne Laceste (Boston University)

A number of self-portraits by Lavinia Fontana, Sofonisba Anguissola, and Marietta Tintoretto present these women artists as musicians rather than as painters, their actual professions. These images convey their status as artists who exceeded the constraints of their sex and also highlight their skills, intellect, and training. They also bring to mind Baldassare Castiglione’s definition of the proper lady, who was “to have knowledge of letters, of music, of painting, and know how to dance and how to be festive, adding a discreet modesty and the giving of a good impression of herself.” While the inclusion of the keyboard emphasizes the artists’ talents and knowledge, it also complicates the artists’ professional identities by placing them in a domestic setting.

In this paper, I seek to examine how the keyboards functioned in these self-portraits. As a representation of sound and music, the keyboard conveys sensory associations connected to the social realm of the domestic sphere. By discussing early modern domestic music, customs, and artistic agency, my analysis will work to understand the ways in which self-portraiture of women artists as musicians presents an understanding of sound as well as a balance between the professional and the domestic. Portraying themselves as musicians allowed these artists to convey to their intended viewers that although they were painters—a male-centric professional occupation—nonetheless, Anguissola, Fontana and Tintoretto were still women fulfilling their social roles in early modern society. The keyboard, as a tether to the domestic sphere, allowed the artist to show that she was able to mediate her professional accomplishments and social expectations of the female gender.

“An Alluring Sight of Music: The Musical Courtesan in the *Cinquecento*”

Laura S. Ventura Nieto (Royal Holloway University of London)

The courtesan, that enticing woman who lures men with her unlimited arts of seduction, was a ubiquitous character in the artistic productions of the Italian *Cinquecento*. Much more than a regular high-class prostitute, sixteenth-century sources construct the courtesan as a character that ‘[engaged] in relatively exclusive exchanges of artistic graces, elevated conversation, and sexual favors with male patrons’ (Feldman and Gordon 2006, 5). More than any other, the ‘musical courtesan’ became an archetype that has been widely used to qualify several depictions produced in the first half of the sixteenth century representing beautiful young women in different attires playing the lute.

What does the musical courtesan look like? What sets her apart from a regular prostitute, a courtly lady or the mistress of a powerful ruler? Who calls her a courtesan and why? Does her music-making change how a courtesan is depicted? By considering concepts such as professionalism, sensuality, virtuosity, performativity and agency, this paper aims to question the concept of the ‘musical courtesan’ as all-encompassing iconographical category.

“‘With the Base Viall Placed Between my Thighes’: Musical Instruments and Sexual Subtext in Titian’s *Venus with Musician Series*”

Malachai Komanoff Bandy (University of Southern California)

Late in his career, Titian (and workshop) treated the *Venus with Musician* theme in a series of five similar paintings of unconfirmed patronage. All show the goddess in reclined pose, but the musician at her feet transmutes over the course of the series from organist to lutenist, and subtly changes position in the frame. Recently, the paintings and their thematic origins have elicited much debate among art historians McIver, Goffen, and Falomir. But any mention of the paintings’ musical instruments remains confined to discussion of the works’ composition, perspective, or implicit Neoplatonic or Petrarchan sensory discourse. Particularly, conversation regarding Titian’s viol only highlights its crude form, as “proof” of the series’ completion, after Titian’s death, by a less skilled hand.

Despite its generally noble status throughout its lifespan, the viol became a widely sexualized object in Renaissance Italian literature; the first viol-centric sexual allusion comes from Straparola’s *Le piacevoli notti* (Venice, ca.1555), which exactly coincides in time and place with the viol’s appearance on Titian’s canvas. Especially considering the wealth of viol-sexualizing English poetry and drama in the following century, connections between Titian’s *Venus* and *Le piacevoli notti*, with its ultimate vogue in English *Transalpina* culture, warrants recognition and investigation.

Looking at Music: Books

“Images of Musical Knowledge in Renaissance Treatises”

Stefano Lorenzetti (Conservatory of Music of Vicenza)

How is musical knowledge transmitted through images? What is the relationship between the written text and its translation into images?

The images that counterpoint the musical treatises of the Renaissance fulfil a complex paradigm of functions and meanings: memorization and codification of musical knowledge, first of all, but also the experience of an emotional involvement, of a translation of thought in the sense, of the concept in the icon, which substantially modifies the learning, use and structuring of the memory of the musical language.

“Antonio Moro’s Choirbooks from Mid-Sixteenth-Century Florence”

Laurie Stras (University of Huddersfield)

In 1559 and 1560 the Florentine copyist Antonio Moro produced two choirbook format collections of sacred polyphony, B-Bc 27766 and I-Fn II.I.285. The contents of the two manuscripts ostensibly have little in common—one primarily comprising office polyphony, the other Lamentations verses for Holy Week—apart from the predominance of works for four equal voices in both. But when viewed together, the books reveal a number of shared characteristics that go beyond generic qualities. Most evidently, they share a visual aesthetic. In particular, they sport decorated *cadellae*, some of which are personalised for the manuscript’s patron(s). The books also communicate the wit of the copyist, through both the caricatures that people the *cadellae* and the rubrics that replace vocal parts when a section of a work is in reduced voices.

There are other shared aspects of these two books that suggest they had at least two purposes, if not more. While both are sufficiently large for a small ensemble to sing from if set on a book stand, and the disposition of the parts on the pages is, for the most part, favourable, the personalised decorations cannot be enjoyed except at close range: not only are they often in miniature, they are also frequently cryptic, requiring some thought and ingenuity to decipher. The collections also bring together repertoire that dates from the last decades of the fifteenth century to the middle decades of the sixteenth, suggesting that the books are intended to conserve or preserve the music they contain.

This paper will, therefore, consider what paratextual and visual elements say about the music, the copyist, the patrons who commissioned the books, and the environment that might have given rise to their preparation.

“‘Lute-toons’: Images, Sketches and Cartoon Drawings in Italian Tablature Sources, 1517-1650”

Victor Coelho (Boston University)

Images of lutes and lutenists in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century paintings are among the most frequently studied subjects of musical iconography. They have brought both wide-angled perspectives on the symbolism of the lute (such as the theme of *vanitas*), cultural settings, class and social rank, and issues dealing with gender and sexuality, as well as more narrowly focused looks at issues of performance technique and context, organology, stringing and lutherie,

repertoire (when inscriptions can be accurately deciphered), and, in some cases, identifications of the players themselves. For those studying scholarly and performance issues in lute music, the field of iconography is both essential and indispensable.

Far less studied—if considered at all—is the large corpus of fugitive drawings, cartoons, sketched likenesses, and even painted images that appear in manuscript lute tablatures on flyleaves, bindings, as marginalia, and as illustrations. Comprising animals, humans, buildings, instruments, and mythical or fantastical scenes, this visual material offers a type of forensic evidence for specifics of dating (of the user or manuscript), clothing, ownership and provenance, architecture, and even location of the source. While much of this material is rendered crudely and, it would seem, hastily, there are also drawings of professional quality in these tablatures, as well as sketches that inform about the users, copyists, and instruments used for these manuscripts.

In this paper I will draw on a selection of 16th and 17th-century Italian lute tablatures in order to construct a typology of the kinds of images that are found in these sources, followed by a focus on several case studies in which these images and cartoons offer specific and substantial information about both the source and its user.

Looking at Music: Instruments

“Visual Materialities of Renaissance Musical Instruments”

Emanuela Vai (University of York and Villa I Tatti)

Renaissance musical instruments were frequently decorated with masterfully carved figures of human and nonhuman forms. The headstocks and scrolls of stringed instruments often featured sculptured anthropomorphic and zoomorphic finials while ivory inlays and elaborate surface carvings in wood adorned spinets and other period keyboard instruments. Often approached as secondary to the musicality of the instrument itself, these decorative aspects have eluded critical attention, typically mentioned only insofar as they are ‘ornate’. Drawing on examples from different museum collections, this paper explores the visual and material elements of musical instruments as points of valuable historical enquiry. Designed as much to be seen as sounded, instruments appeared in a variety of viewing contexts, from private collections to public performances. An analysis of Renaissance musical instruments as visual and material objects turns our attention towards tensions between practices of ‘playing’ and ‘displaying’ musical instruments, and invites us to further explore the non-auditory dimensions of Renaissance musical culture.

“Can Musical Iconography Penetrate Emotions? A Tentative Seventeenth-Century Italian Case-Study”

Gioia Filocamo (Istituto superiore di Studi musicali di Terni)

Can musical iconography penetrate emotions? How can a musical subject reflect an extramusical perception of the world? How can silence be sensibly combined

with the image of musical instruments? My paper offers an unprecedented reflection on famous still-life paintings, which starts from the artist's reality and reaches the feelings of his public.

Still-life paintings of musical instruments, which flourished in early-modern northern Europe, were typically associated with the theme of *vanitas* (*Eccl.* 1:2, 12:8): time, leading inexorably to death, urges us not to live at the mercy of the senses. Musical instruments embody this symbology: what could be more ephemeral than the sound that vanishes away as it has been produced?

Evaristo Baschenis (1607-1677) was the first painter to make musical instruments the overall protagonists of still-life paintings. His experience of priest and musicians, I believe, influenced his paintings, which 'photograph' not only the notion of time transient, but also a ritualized 'emotional time' that expands during the musical flow and stops precisely where the common naturalistic time suggests the flow. This view reverses the meaning normally given to pictorial images that depict various aspects of *vanitas*: the alive and flowing as the time of musical performance ('emotional time'); inert as emotionless, i.e. the time when musical instruments are inactive ('naturalistic time').

This 'dramaturgy of time' closely resembles the one managed in the newborn Italian opera, made of extreme dilatations alternating with accelerations.

Music and the Artist's Conception

"Vocal Polyphony in the Paintings of Andrea del Sarto"

Daria Rose Foner (Columbia University)

On the far right of Andrea del Sarto's *Journey of the Magi* fresco in Santissima Annunziata's entrance cloister stand three men removed from the pictorial narrative: a self-portrait of the painter accompanied by the sculptor Jacopo Sansovino and the musician Francesco d'Aiolle. By embedding such a collegial relationship in the painting, Andrea del Sarto displayed an expanded definition of image making, one predicated on a kind of relational discourse within a creative community that transcended medium and discipline. This paper explores possible artistic implications of the Florentine church's richly musical environment in which Andrea del Sarto and his collaborators found themselves immersed. It examines creative affinities shared by the painter and composer as manifested in the large Marian fresco cycle that fills one side of the cloister. Considering the frescoes in relation to musical ideas of harmony and counterpoint, the paper uses musical polyphony as a metaphorical framework to understand the collaborative relationships iterated in the portrait trio of painter, sculptor, and composer.

"Singing Sibyls: Music, Revelation, Labour, and Art on the Sistine Chapel Ceiling"

Barnaby Nygren (Loyola University)

Although it has escaped scholarly notice, two of the sibyls on the Sistine ceiling are associated with music. The *Persian Sibyl* is shown myopically reading a

partbook, while the *Erythraean Sibyl* turns the pages of what is likely a choirbook. The presence of these musical texts testify both to the importance of music in the chapel (and to the Della Rovere) and to the textual tradition that described the sibyls' prophecies in musical terms, but it might also have other resonances. Given the privileged role that music played in Neo-Platonic accounts of divine frenzy, in comparison to the more problematic place of such inspiration in the visual arts, this paper will argue that these musical texts referenced a potential tension between the divine fury of musical prophecy and the physical production of music itself. As this tension is analogous to one that appears in Michelangelo's writings, in which the inspiration of art is contrasted with its difficult labor, this paper will suggest that, given both the struggles of painting the ceiling and the divine power of Michelangelo's inventions there, these inclusions functioned as metaphorical musings on the relationship between inspired artistic invention and laborious execution.

Portraits

"Music in Sigismondo Fanti's *Triumpho di Fortuna* (1526)"

Annabelle Page (University of Oxford)

The *Triumpho di Fortuna* is a curious book. Not only does it exhibit an elaborately multifaceted functionality as a fortune-telling game, but its many contextual references offer the twenty-first-century reader a fascinating insight into the role played by music within the great tapestry of Renaissance Italian culture. Sigismondo Fanti painstakingly calculated and constructed the *Triumpho di Fortuna*, with the purpose of enlightening its reader as to their fortunes following certain actions and events. Every step along the somewhat convoluted journey toward discovering one's fortune is accompanied by richly meaningful imagery. The illustrations not only, in some cases, directly summarise the text, but also add an extra layer of cultural references for practical, humorous and artistic effect.

The musical representations come in multiple forms, including portraits of lutenists, lira da braccio players and organists, from figures of mythology and antiquity, up to Fanti's contemporaries. Music also plays a role in the very fabric of the game, through its ancient association with astrological order. This paper will explore these musical references, discussing their function within the game, and ascertaining their meaning, through peeling back the layers of symbolism and metaphor, in order to expose the cultural significance and function that music held in Renaissance Italian society. Fundamentally, however, this will be the first study to analyse the *Triumpho di Fortuna* in its entirety from a musical perspective, and to expose its worth as a rich multidisciplinary source.

"Constructing Excellence: Portraits of Composers in Early Modern Music Books"

Massimo Privitera (Università degli Studi di Palermo)

During the sixteenth century the figure of the composer acquires a new social relevance, as is witnessed by the rise after the mid-century "of the maestri di cappella in terms of salaries and social status" (Morelli 2007).

Composers start looking for different strategies to affirm their status on a par with *literati*, and they find extraordinary help from music printing. Thus, as the Cinquecento flows into the Seicento, books of music tend more and more to resemble books of poetry. They adopt refined typographical elements, and include poems in praise of the author. They proclaim the names of the poets, and invent projects based on the structural and professed intertwining of poetry and music (the *Corona di sonetti* for Bianca Cappello, 1583; *L'amorosa Ero*, 1588; *Il Bon bacio*, 1594; *Il trionfo di Dori*, 1599, etc.) (Giuliani 1990).

Portraits of composers are also included in music collections, at first adopting the iconographic scheme of Masses offered to the Pope by Andrea Antico in 1515 (Morales' collection of 1544, Palestrina's of 1554). Subsequently, individual portraits analogous to those of the poets will appear.

In my paper I will deal with this last aspect, examining books with portraits of Willaert (1559), Lasso (1571), Caputi (1593), Banchieri (1614) and the intriguing case of Castaldi (1622) (Dolata 2005, 2007). The portraits will be considered within their context and in relation to each other, and will then be compared to the engravings used in books of poetry.

The phenomenon will be also inserted into the category of the "portrait of a musician", which takes hold during the Cinquecento as a part of the genre of the portrait (Morelli 2007; Hortschansky et al. 1987; Seebas 1988; Czewenka-Papadopoulos 2007).

"'Il suon, lo sguardo, il canto': The Function of Portraits of Mid-Seventeenth-Century *Virtuose* in Rome"

Amy Brosius (University of Birmingham)

This paper addresses the function of portraits of *virtuose* in seventeenth-century Roman court culture, focussing on the portraits of Leonora Baroni, Anna Francesca Costa and Margherita Costa. By situating these images in contemporary views on portraiture, gender, social status, embodiment and selfhood I will explore the different ways portraits were valued and utilised by *virtuose* and their patrons.

Performing in court society often had a paradoxical effect upon the social status of *virtuose*. While it placed them in social situations that facilitated upward mobility, the relationship of vocal performance to somatic acts such as sex had the potential to inhibit acceptability. Portraits played an important role in self-fashioning the public personae of *virtuose*, enabling them to maintain their role in court culture. As such, their portraits reflect the diverse positions they maintained in the social and gender hierarchies and reveal the cultural anxieties they provoked.

The mechanistic understanding of the early modern body and soul meant that portraits of *virtuose* could function in performative ways, causing viewers to interact with portraits as they would with the embodied singers. Portraits provided permanent simulacra of the *virtuose* and the physical and psychological transformations that their performances engendered in their audience, becoming inspiration for embodied fantasies about female performance.