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The Eye and the Ear: A Study of the Connections between Music and the Visual Arts in the Italian Baroque

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The seventeenth centaury is one of the most widely studied periods in the arts. Music, drama, architecture, and the visual arts flourished around Europe. In Italy especially, the seventeenth century was a time of innovation and flourishing of the arts, thanks to patronage of the papacy in Rome, powerful families funding the arts in cities such as Florence, and increased economic activity in cities such as Venice. Music and the visual arts in particular flourished during this period: from seventeenth century Italy emerged the genre of opera, the sculptures of Bernini, and countless other timeless works of art. Though scholarship and research are widely available on both art and music during this time, little work has been done exploring the connections between the two disciplines. Although both are often studied with an awareness of the surrounding culture and historical events, they are seldom studied with an eye towards the contemporary artists and trends in different areas or overarching artistic dialogue and culture. Opportunities for interdisciplinary studies of art and music are numerous and largely unexplored, despite the rich opportunity that the area holds. These areas of intersection between visual art and music become apparent with little digging: the emergence of opera represents a blending of the musical and visual, and upon further examination, other trends emerge connecting these different disciplines, such as points of inspiration and patrons.

This thesis will explore points of intersection between music and the visual arts in the seventeenth century in Italy. These points of intersection will include the emergence of the genre of opera as a blending of the musical and the visual with equal importance placed upon both, the influence of the arts of antiquity on the art and music of seventeenth century Italy, and the intended effect of both visual art and music on the audience. By careful examination of important

works of art emerging from the city centers of Italy, specifically Rome, Venice, and Florence, this thesis will demonstrate these lesser examined connections between the music and the visual arts from this period. This thesis will demonstrate specific and significant connections between the visual and musical cultures and trends in seventeenth century Italy through this focused interdisciplinary study.

Though these connections between art and music can be found through other time periods and geographic areas, this thesis will focus exclusively on these connections in the seventeenth century in Italy. Drawing similar conclusions encompassing any longer period of time or larger geographical area proves challenging as a result of stylistic changes and diversity within single artistic periods or different areas. As a result, this thesis will focus solely on the seventeenth century in Italy as a single example of the benefits of an applied interdisciplinary artistic lens. By limiting this study to the Italian seventeenth century, I hope to provide an example of an effective methodology to approach an interdisciplinary artistic study of a period or area by exploring theoretical, concrete, and projected similarities between these two disciplines.

The methodology of this thesis begins with in depth analysis of contemporary works of art and music, from which conclusions emerge about points of intersection between art and music. In each chapter, certain works, such as Peri's *Euridice* and Bernini's Ovidian works, are thoroughly examined to identify and prove points of intersection. Other works of art and music that demonstrate the same trend and points of intersection are highlighted, but less deeply analyzed. This thesis relies heavily on previous research done examining specific works of art and music and seeks to illuminate broader artistic trends by placing existing research on these works side by side.

The three cities on which this thesis will focus (Rome, Florence and Venice) functioned very differently in the early seventeenth century in terms of art patronage, government structure, geographical distance, and sacred or secular artistic leanings. These differences between cities are important to keep in mind when comparing the art emerging from each of them. As a result of these differences in structure, differences in artistic trends can be easily explained, but when similarities appear, they should not be ignored. These differences in structure add importance to similarities in art from these areas. Through differences in artistic trends can be easily explained by the differences in between the cities, similarities between art from different cities indicate broader artistic trends, spanning not just one area. The structure of an interdisciplinary study of art and music within this period and area allows these similarities to appear both between art and music and between the art and music of different cities. This benefit of a broader base to observe emerging trends of art and music from the same time period is one distinct benefit of the interdisciplinary approach that this thesis will take.

This thesis will also focus on more commonly studied works of the Italian seventeenth century rather than attempting to encompass lesser-known figures and elements, both for clarity and availability of sources. By limiting this study to commonly studied figures and works in the most important geographical areas of seventeenth century Italy, the individual works will be more fully examined, and the broader connections will be discussed more fully and clearly. Some of the works that will be analyzed are the early opera *Euridice* (1600), by Ottavio Rinuccini (1562-1621) and Jacopo Peri (1561-1633), produced in Florence, the works of the Roman composer and famed keyboardist Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643), the sculptures of Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680), and the ceilings found in the Palazzo Barberini, painted by Pietro da Cortona (1596-1669).

Although all of the points of intersection between music and art are connected, for the purpose of a productive and organized discussion, each of these elements will be discussed separately. Though, for example, the development of opera and its visual elements display the influence of elements of antiquity and the intention of creating a meaningful experience for the audience, this thesis will deal with each of these pieces separately in order to create a focused and organized argument. An artistic period is not divisible into individual elements easily, but it is important to extrapolate some basic elements from the web of the full artistic movement.

Literature Review

Scholarship on individual artists is both readily available and extensive, as is scholarship discussing the Baroque period in general, the Italian Baroque or even the Venetian, Florentine, or Roman Baroque. Despite this wealth of sources, there is little literature that takes an equal and interdisciplinary look at art history and music history together, a gap that this thesis will attempt to begin to fill. Research after the 1970's has consistently attempted to provide an interdisciplinary lens and context for the works and periods they discuss, but few sources focus exclusively on interdisciplinary connections. Reliable interdisciplinary-focused sources that are available are helpful, but difficult to find and limited in scope. Just as this paper is limited in scope, these limitations are understandable and necessary to create meaningful scholarship. *Arts and Ideas*, a well-known 1955 textbook by William Fleming, takes a look at the breadth of the output of Western civilization from antiquity to present, discussing music, art, architecture, literature and philosophy, effectively creating an exploration of the zeitgeist of the periods he discusses, but is unable to thoroughly delve into each section of each period as a result of the

ambitious scope of the work.[1] The scope and difficulty of addressing such an expansive topic is a main reason that few other in-depth sources exist on connections between art and music.

Only two comprehensive sources discussing art and music history exclusively and equally are available: H. W. Janson's 1968 book *A History of Art and Music*, and the tenth edition (1996) of *An Introduction to Music and Art in the Western World,* published by Brown and Benchmark.[2] Both of these sources take a chronological look at art history and music history, but instead of achieving any meaningful synthesis, or elaborating on how one discipline brings light to anything about the other, both these sources read as through someone has simply combined an art history textbook and a music history one. In addition, the methods and information in both were often dated. Although helpful, these sources do not draw meaningful parallels between the two disciplines or come to any new conclusions. In the case of the *An Introduction to Music and Art in the Western World*, much of the information is poorly cited, and makes dated claims about period divisions. Though helpful in tracing the history of art and music side by side, these textbooks draw no further conclusions about the material they relate. With this source material in mind, this thesis seeks to fill this gap in meaningful interdisciplinary studies of works of art and music in the Italian Baroque era though a study of art and music produced in the city centers of Italy in the seventeenth century.

Though few sources effectively study both art and music from the seventeenth century, many valuable studies of both of these areas provided invaluable research for this thesis to draw from and build upon. In examining opera, some of the most helpful sources included Fredrick

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[1] William Fleming, *Arts and Ideas* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1955).
[2] H. W. Janson, *A History of Art and Music* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1968), and Milo Wold, and Gary Martin, and James Miller, and Edmund Cykler, *An Introduction to Music and Art in the Western World.* 10th ed. (Dubuque, IA: Brown and Benchmark, 1996).

Hammond's *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome: Barberini Patronage under Pope Urban VIII* (1994), and Beth L. Glixon and Johnathan E. Glixon's book *The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth Century Venice* (2006). Hammond's interdisciplinarity look at the art produced in the court of Pope Urban VIII provided both valuable context and analysis of the Barberini Operas.[3] The Glixon's book *The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth Century Venice* provided similar information and social context for the commercial operas produced in Venice through the seventeenth century.[4] Both of these sources provided excellent context and documentation of opera in the seventeenth century, including information of scenery, costumes, and the visual elements of opera. In the discussion of the emergence of opera in Florence, Déborah Blocker's 2017 article, "The Accademia degli Alterati and the Invention of a New Form of Dramatic Experience: Myth, Allegory, and Theory in Jacopo Peri's and Ottavio Rinuccini's Euridice (1600)" provided important analysis of the role of the political and academic in Venice in the emergence of early opera.[5] In addition, Tim Carter and Richard A. Goldthwaite's 2013 book *Orpheus in the Marketplace: Jacopo Peri and the Economy of Late Renaissance Florence,* provided valuable context about the background of Jacopo Peri and further explanation of the role of the musician within the courts in seventeenth century Italy.[6] In discussion of Bernini's Ovidian works and themes, the work of art historian Paul Barolsky, in particular his chapter in the 2014 book *A Handbook to the Reception of Ovid*, titled "Ovid's Metamorphose and the

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[3]Fredrick Hammond, *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome: Barberini Patronage under Pope Urban VIII* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994).

[4] Beth L. Glixon and Jonathan E. Glixon, *The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth Century Venice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[5] Déborah Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati and the Invention of a New Form of Dramatic Experience: Myth, Allegory, and Theory in Jacopo Peri's and Ottavio Rinuccini's Euridice (1600)," in D*ramatic Experience: The Poetics of Drama and the Early Modern Public Sphere*, ed. Katja Gvozdeva, Tatiana Korneeva, Kirill Ospovat (Boston: Brill, 2017).

[6] Tim Carter and Richard A. Goldthwaite, *Orpheus in the Marketplace: Jacopo Peri and the Economy of Late Renaissance Florence.* (Harvard University Press, 2013).

History of Baroque Art," provided valuable context and analysis of these statues.[7] For the final

discussion of the experience of the audience of both art and music, Fredrick Hammond's 1983

book *Girolamo Frescobaldi: An Extended Biography* provided valuable analysis of the music of

Frescobaldi, and Rebecca Cypess's 2015 article "Frescobaldi's Toccate E Partite... Libro Primo

(1615–1616) as a Pedagogical Text. Artisanship, Imagination, and the Process of Learning"

provided deeper analysis and information of Frescobaldi's toccatas and their intended effect on

the audience.[8] This thesis is deeply indebted to this preceding research, and will combine and

build upon this existing scholarship in its use of the interdisciplinary lens brought to these works.

Objections to Methodology

Some theorists have posited that there is little to be gained by an interdisciplinary look at

art and music. In his book *A History of Baroque Music*, George Buellow makes brief reference to

the theories of Wölfflin in reference to the developments in Baroque music, but follows his

observations with "These, and other more or less artificial and unconvincing similarities between

[music and the visual arts] seem today to yield little that is helpful to an understanding of

musical styles."[9] As evidenced by the very narrow pool of literature on the topic, this surface

judgment of the lack of value in the examination of artistic intersections in visual art and music

has presumably been the prevailing scholarly view. This view, however, demonstrates a lack of

research into both disciplines together by those writing about them. When one digs deeper into

the works, treatises, and philosophies of the broad artistic periods, the similarities and parallels

become apparent. More than shared patronage, shared spaces, and shared names, music and

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[7] Barolsky, Paul. "Ovid's Metamorphose and the History of Baroque Art," in *A Handbook to the Reception of Ovid*, edited by John F. Miller and Carole E. Newlands (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2014).
[8] Fredrick Hammond, *Girolamo Frescobaldi: An Extended Biography*, (Harvard University Press, 1983, Last Modified 2019, http://girolamofrescobaldi.com), and Rebecca Cypess, "Frescobaldi's Toccate E Partite... Libro Primo (1615–1616) as a Pedagogical Text. Artisanship, Imagination, and the Process of Learning," in *Recercare* 27 (no. 1/2 (2015): 103-38, www.jstor.org/stable/26381196).
[9] George J. Buelow, *A History of Baroque Music*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004, 2.

visual arts throughout history share in a common artistic conversation, with each discipline influencing and shaping the other by their points of intersection, be they friendships between composers and artists, points of inspiration, or more definite intersections such as opera productions. Taken side by side, these areas have the possibility to illuminate qualities of each other.

Summary

Art and music have far more in common than is traditionally presented in the textbook or the classroom. In the case of seventeenth century Italy, the connections present themselves as points of intersection in opera scenery and costumes, the influence of antiquity, and the mediated audience experience. Though connections between the two disciplines differ between periods, this case study is just one demonstration of the valuable conclusions that can be drawn from examining art and music side by side. When studied in isolation, each discipline can seem only to be a string of operas or paintings to memorize, but together, they create a lively artistic dialogue of the past. By separating art and music, those who study them lose the bigger picture of the artistic community and culture. This thesis seeks to help heal this divide, as art and music studied together illuminate and inform one another, bringing deeper understanding of both. The study of both disciplines together brings a superior understanding of the times and attitudes that the art developed out of, and consequently, a far fuller understanding of the works of art themselves.

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Chapter II

TO DELIGHT AND ASTONISH: THE USE OF VISUAL EFFECT IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ITALIAN OPERA

Introduction

The most apparent intersection of music and the visual arts in seventeenth-century Italy is the use of visual effects in opera productions. As opera rose in popularity and spread throughout Italy, sets and costumes became more lavish, and theaters began to use complex machines to move sets and create astonishing effects. These visual effects supported and enhanced the drama of the music, dazzled the audience, and brought prestige to those who produced the opera. In the case of privately funded operas, specifically those funded by the Barberini family in Rome, the visual elements of opera elevated the appearance of the patron and enhanced the propagandic effect of the story and music. In the case of public operas, such as those in Venice, the visual elements drew greater crowds and renown to the theater itself, bringing financial profit. This chapter will discuss the visual elements of opera in two main centers of operatic production during this time, the Barberini operas in Rome and the commercial opera productions in Venice. This chapter will discuss the visual elements that were incorporated into opera production in both cities, and the purpose of the use of such elaborate (and expensive) visual effects. By the use of artistic techniques such as perspective illusion and new technology such as stage effect machines, the visual elements of opera production were used to enhance and elevate both opera production itself and other involved parties, generally either a patron or a theater, in Italy in the seventeenth century.

Rome: The Barberini Operas: 1628-1643

When Cardinal Maffeo Barberini (1568-1644) was elected pope in 1623, taking the name Pope Urban VIII, he became the most powerful and influential individual in Rome. After his rise to the papal seat, Pope Urban VIII began to bring his family to Rome and place them in positions of power, both politically and within the church, consolidating power and influence in his own family. The Barberini family became the center of artistic patronage at this time, bringing to Rome and employing artists of all kinds, including musicians, sculptors, and painters, all with the goal of bringing prestige to the Catholic church and the family itself.[10] The members of the Barberini family brought to Rome by Maffeo included his two brothers, Carlo and Antonio, and nephews Francesco, Antonio (the younger), and Taddeo.[11] Of all these family members, the nephews are best remembered for their patronage of the arts, Francesco Barberini (1597-1679) in particular as an important patron of the Barberini operas. As the center of power and patronage in Rome at the time, it was only natural that opera should make its way into the festivities for which the Barberini family is so well remembered. These festivities contained both public and private portions, public segments ranging from religious processions to drama to dances, and during the Carnival season, included masquerades, hunts, and reenactments of water battles.[12] These Carnival events during the Barberini papacy were sponsored by the three nephews of the pope.[13] Though many of these entertainments were put on for the public, some of these dances and performances were private, by invitation only, often put on in the houses of various Barberini family members. Opera was one such private entertainment. Though opera was a fairly

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[10] Virginia Lamothe, *The Theater of Piety*, 20.

[11] Lamothe, *The Theater of Piety*, 17-19.

[12] Fredrick Hammond, *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome: Barberini Patronage under Pope Urban VIII*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994) 123-124.

[13] Margret Murata, *Operas for the Papal Court: 1631-1668* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1981), 13.

new genre, emerging at the beginning of the 17th century in Venice, it quickly made its way into the Barberini festivities. Through the 1620's, both Francesco and Antonio regularly attended opera productions both in and outside Rome, including *La catena d'Adone*, in Rome in 1626, and *La Giuditta*, later the same year in Florence.[14] In addition, in 1628, both Francesco and Antonio attended the operatic production given at the Medici-Faranase wedding, *Aminta*, by Tasso and Monteverdi. This production was also the brother's first introduction to set and machine designer Fancesco Guitti, who they would later bring to Rome to work on the 1633 production of *Ermina sul Giordiano.*[15] The first Barberini operas were produced in the late 1620's, likely inspired by the other productions attended by the two nephews. These little known early Barberini operas include *Marisa* (1628) by Ottavio Tronsarelli, and *Diana schernita* (1629) by Cornacchioli.[16] Perhaps the most famous of these early courtly operas is *Sant'Alessio*. With libretto by Stefano Landi and libretto by Guilio Rospigliossi, who would go on to later become Pope Cement IX, *Sant'Alessio* was produced twice, first in February of 1632 in honor of the visit of Prince Hans Ulrich von Eggenberg, and later in 1634 to celebrate the visit of Prince Alexander Charles of Poland.[17] Other surviving operas from the period before the death of Pope Urban VIII in 1644 include *Erminia sul Giordano* (1633), *Chi soffre speri* (1637), *San Bonifatio* (1638), and *Sant'Eustachio* (1643), among others. Though there were other operas put on after the death of Pope Urban VIII for the Barberini family, this chapter will focus on the operas put on before his death, between the late 1620's and 1644.

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[14] Murata, *Operas for the Papal Court*, 15-16.
[15] Murata, *Operas for the Papal Court*, 18-19.
[16] Hammond, *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome* 200-201.
[17] Pietro Weiss, *Opera: A History in Documents*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) 26.

Purpose of Barberini Operas

For the Barberini family, these operas, along with the other entertainments that they sponsored, provided an effective propaganda tool for the family. Often produced in honor of visiting political figures in the midst of the Thirty Years War, these operas offered the opportunity to for the Barberini to stress to these foreign ambassadors the importance of loyalty and obedience to the Catholic church in political decisions. The first production of *Il Sant'Alessio*, given in 1632 for the visit of Hans Ulrich von Eggenberg, for example, stressed themes of remaining firm in faith and obedience to the church at great risk. For Eggenberg, an advisor to the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II, these themes, presented in the form of entertainment, would have urged him to advise Ferdinand in accordance with the wishes of the papacy during this turning point in the Thirty Years War.[18] Other operas contained political messages for specific figures as well. *Santi Didimo et Teodora*, performed in 1635, had three performances given; one to which the ambassadors of France were invited, one to which Roman aristocrats were invited, and the third to which Spanish ambassadors were invited. One of the main themes of this opera was the importance of Catholic faith over political alliances. To these three parties, all of which were embroiled in political conflict, these themes would have sent a message not only of peace, but of the supremacy of the Catholic church and its unifying power.[19] Other Barberini operas, including *San Bonifatio* (1638), *Genoinda* (1641), and *Sant'Eustahio* (1643) contain similarly directed political messages to specific persons in the audience.[20]

In addition to their use as propaganda to influence the decisions of visiting political leaders, the Barberini operas were, in some cases, used to influence the perception of the family

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[18] Lamothe, *The Theater of Piety*, 32-34.
[19] Lamothe, *The Theater of Piety*, 43.
[20] Lamothe, *The Theater of Piety*, 42-44.

in Roman circles. For example, in the reworking of *Il Sant'Alessio* in 1634, funded by Francesco

Barberini, the prologue and themes stressed rule by love and clemency of those in absolute

power, suggesting to the audience that these qualities were priorities of the family. This was

likely in response to the negative perception of the family in academic circles of Rome after

Pope Urban VIII's treatment of Galileo. The swift publication and dissemination of the opera

seems to support the suggestion that it was a tool to control perception of the family.[21] Fredrick

Hammond calls the themes in the prologue of *Sant'Alessio* a "symbolic response" to the criticism

that the family faced from academic circles, who were advocating for more lenient treatment of

Galileo, despite the fact that the sentence was, in truth, quite lenient.[22] It was no more than, as

Hammond says, a "slap on the hand" for Galileo, whose heliocentric discoveries could have

undermined established Catholic doctrine and resulted in a death sentence.[23] The themes and

implications of ruling with clemency presented in *Sant'Alessio* served to highlight the mercy that

the Barberini family, the pope specifically, showed in their treatment of Galileo.

In addition to controlling the public perception of the family and sending political

messages to visiting dignitaries, these operas served as a tool to project the splendor and power

of the Barberini themselves to the general public. These operas were not the only way that the

Barberini family asserted their dominance: another important projection of power was in the

visual arts that the family funded, specifically the frescos. Ceiling frescos, specifically *The

Triumph of the Barberini* by Pietro da Cortona, are discussed at greater length in Chapter 4, but it

is worth pointing out here that these grand frescos and the spectacle of opera often served similar

purposes and employed similar strategies. Fredrick Hammond explains the purpose of the operas

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[21] Hammond, *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome,* 213.
[22] Fredrick Hammond, "Artistic Patronage of the Barberini and the Galileo Affair" in The Ruined Bridge: Studies in Barberini Patronage of Music and Spectacle,1631-1679 (Sterling Heights, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2010), 98-99.
[23] Hammond, "Artistic Patronage of the Barberini and the Galileo Affair," 92.

put on by the Barberini family by comparison to the other artistic projects they funded,

specifically frescos, explaining,

> "Operas produced by the Barberini can be thought of as analogous to the great frescos of their palace. Splendid examples of magnificence, both frescos and operas are monumental in scale and contain a vast and sometimes confusing array of characters, although visual composition provides an immediate coherence that music must attain through time by other means. The marvelous is a strong element in both opera and fresco, and many of their elements are similar; their decors abound in the same symbols and images. Both frescos and operas can be interpreted on a number of levels: representation, equivalence, analogy, allegory."[24]

Both frescos and operas project the power, influence, and goodness of the Barberini family

through the use of both complex allegory and symbolism, and through the spectacle of the gift of

a production of this grandeur to the world, as an artistic representation of their power and

influence.

The visual portion of these productions played an important part in effectively reaching

these goals and furthering the agenda of the Barberini family. By adding visual interest and

grandeur to the productions funded by the family, the sets, costumes, and visual effects added

gravitas to the themes and ideas that the story, music, and narrations were pushing in the interest

of the family. By elevating the production through visual spectacle, the themes and concepts

were elevated as well, bringing further prestige to the Barberini family itself. These visual effects

included not only lavish and expensive costuming and complex illusionary sets: these visual

effects also involved elaborate machines to create smooth changes of set, and machines to create

onstage effects, such as characters descending from the sky, revealing of the heavens, creating a

storm, complete with thunder and lightning, and other onstage marvels.[25]

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[24] Hammond *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome*, 60.
[25] Details of these visual effects can be found in Margret Murta, *Operas for the Papal Court: 1631-1668* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1981) and the primary sources from which we know about these effects and machines.

Visual Elements of Barberini Operas

In contrast to the early Florentine operas, operas produced by the Barberini family, from the early years of *Sant'Alessio*, were deeply visually striking. An eyewitness account of the 1632 production of *Sant'Alessio* by Jean-Jaques Bouchard (1606-1641), describes the visual aspects of the production:

"It was one of the finest spectacles produced in Rome, people said…The entire hall was draped in red, blue, and yellow satin, with a canopy above of the same material covering the entire hall."[26]

Bouchard indicates that it was not just the operas themselves that were visually striking- it was the entire setting of the performance. The palace, in which these operas were often produced, were decorated splendidly to add to the celebration, since these operas were produced for the Carnival season, or in celebration of visiting dignitaries. Bouchard continues with descriptions of the onstage sets:

"The stage had four scenes: the first represented the city of Rome with its palaces; the second Hell, from which emerged a quantity of devils; the third was the mausoleum or tomb of St. Alexis; and the fourth a glory of Paradise where one saw St. Alexis with a quantity of angels. The clouds parted and there appeared a place so resplendent and luminous that one could hardly bear to look at it."[27]

In addition to this lavish hall draped in satins, the stage itself was visually striking not only in the number of set changes, but also in the magnificent sets themselves. The final set, depicting the palace and paradise, featured a spectacular machine that allowed the clouds to part onstage, adding to the visual spectacle. It was not just the sets that created the onstage magnificence. Bouchard continues with his descriptions of the costumes:

"the costumes were worthy of note indeed, both for their richness and for the care with which they had been made, having been modeled after [ancient] statuary and medals."[28]

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[26] Weiss, *Opera: A History in Documents* 33.
[27] Weiss, *Opera: A History in Documents* 33.
[28] Weiss, *Opera: A History in Documents* 33.

The costumes completed the visual magnificence of these operas. The expense and elegance of the costumes both elevated the characters and added visual interest to the stage. Such an enthusiastic description of the splendor of one of the earlier Barberini operas demonstrates that these productions were striking both in their visual and musical splendor. The colorful satin decorations in the hall, the variety of scenes, the likely expensive machine that parted the clouds to reveal the heavens, and the display of lavish and expensive costumes would not only project the wealth and power of the Barberini family, but through the visual splendor of the production, add to the impact of the themes on their intended audience by creating a grand and memorable spectacle.

The main elements of this visual grandeur, as Bouchard relates, are the costumes and the sets. In the Barberini productions, costumes were created for effect and splendor rather than contextual accuracy, and with an awareness of how the costumes would look under the lights of a stage. So for example, although a butcher may wear an apron to indicate his profession, the apron might have been made of taffeta or silk, for the effect of such fine fabric under the stage light.[29] Though very fine, and likely very expensive, the costumes of principal singers were seldom reused, similar to the lack of reuse of costumes in later commercial productions in Venice.[30] Sets also added to the splendor and impact of the productions, using a combination of real and illusionary elements to create a world on the stage. Types of sets used during this time generally fell into one of two categories: *lontanaze,* translated literally as "distance", and *periaktoi. Lontanaze* were sets painted to give the illusion of perspective from the middle seat (where the patron generally sat), and featured sliding wings lining the sides of the stage to give the further illusion of a perspective receding back further than the reaches of the stage. *Periaktoi,*

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[29] Hammond *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome*, 190.
[30] Hammond *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome*, 190.

an alternate type of set design, featured rotating triangular sets that could be turned to produce three different scenes, and were used in place of sliding panels for the backdrop and wings.[31] Occasionally these illusionary sets were enhanced with real elements, such as a backdrop opening onto a real garden, or the use of real fountains on stage.[32] In some cases, the connections between opera and the visual arts extended even further than the visual design incorporated into the musical production: For the first production of *Sant'Alessio*, Pietro da Cortona was hired to create a set piece, specifically the "eye of the devil."[33] Cortona is perhaps best remembered for his work on the illusionistic ceiling "The Triumph of the Barberini," discussed at length in Chapter IV. This ceiling painting not only exhibits the same use of illusionistic perspective that was used in set painting for these operas, but is painted in the Palazzo Barberini alle Quattro Fontanae, the same palace in which some of the Barberini operas, including both productions of *Sant'Alessio* (1632 and 1634) and *Santi Didimo e Teodora* (1636), were performed.[34] This example of overlap of involved persons in opera production and the visual arts of the time is another notable point of intersection in the artistic productions in Rome at this time.

These visual elements and their impact on the audience were furthered by the use of special effects created by machines in productions. These machines were first used effectively on the Barberini stage at the 1633 Carnival in a production of *Ermina sul Giordiano.* The set and machine designer, Francesco Guitti, was a well-known and respected designer from Parma who had worked on sets for productions in the 1628 Medici-Faranese wedding. *Ermina sul Giordiano* featured machines that allowed characters to fly, a chariot that disappeared in a flash of lightning, the darkening of the sky for a storm, and machines for smooth transitions between

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[31] Hammond, *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome* 187.
[32] Hammond, *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome* 189.
[33] Hammond, *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome* 202.
[34] Lamothe, *The Theater of Piety*, 96-97.

sets.[35] Other subsequent Barberini operas included similarly impressive effects. Both *Il Sant'Alessio* and *Santi Didimo e Teodora* included storm effects, and the 1634 production *of Sant'Alessio* featured numerous other effects, including the transformation of the devil into a bear, angels and the heavens descending to the stage, and the devil falling into hell below.[36] The machines of *Santi Didimo e Teodora* represent a new level of integration of machines into the plot: rather than including effects just for "shock factor," the machines and effects used in *Santi Didimo e Teodora* are all directly relevant to the plot. For example, the angel who descends from the heavens is the only character who does so, and the lightning which strikes down the idols moves the plot forward in addition to astonishing the audience.[37] Though not every Barberini opera included such elaborate and impressive effects (*San Bonifatio* and *Il Sant'Eustachio* as notable examples of operas that included few or no effects), the machinery and elaborate effects featured in many of the Barberini operas were an important way to display the wealth and power of the patron and add splendor to the production itself.

Barberini Opera Conclusions

All these elements, the costumes, sets, and machines served to add to the splendor of the operas produced by the Barberini family in seventeenth century Rome. Opera itself served as a way for the Barberini not only to elevate their appearance as generous aristocrats by providing lavish entertainment during the Carnival season, it also served as a propaganda tool, which they used to direct the public perception of the family, its actions, and current political events of the Thirty Years War. Though these political elements often showed up in the musical portion of the operas, specifically in the prologue and in the themes of the stories that the operas told, the visual

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[35] Hammond, *Music and Spectacle in Baroque Rome* 205-208.
[36] For storm effects, see Lamothe, *The Theater of Piety,* 128. For effects *in Sant'Alessio*, see Murata, *Operas for the Papal Court*, 23.
[37] Murata, *Operas for the Papal Court*, 31.

elements were an important part of the communication of the Barberini agenda. By the use of lavish visual elements, the Barberini operas caught and kept the attention of the public, demonstrated the power and wealth of the family, and added artistic gravitas to the propagandic messages that the operas conveyed. Both the operas and their visual effects therefore served as a way to elevate the both the Barberini family and the Catholic church. These operas elevated the Barberini family by gaining them public favor through their generosity and encouraging positive public opinion, and by demonstrating their power, wealth, and influence. As the head of the church, this elevation of the Barberini also served as elevation of the Catholic church, and by directing the themes of the operas towards visiting dignitaries, these operas and their elevation through scenery helped to further the political agenda of the church and assert its authority and centrality during the instability of the Thirty Years War.

Venetian Commercial Opera

Though opera flourished under Barberini patronage, the center of opera during the seventeenth century was Venice. Though opera originated in Florence as a result of the careful study of the works of antiquity by the academies there, opera found its true home during this time in the cosmopolitan center of Venice. The first opera produced in Venice was *Andromeda*, by librettist Benedetto Ferarri (c.1603-1681), during the Carnival of 1637.[38] As opera found its footing in Venice, it went through an important change: in its earlier forms, opera was produced and funded privately by patrons, such as Francesco Barberini, as discussed earlier. In Venice, opera became a commercial endeavor, dependent on the ticket sales to general public, the tourist and merchant culture, and the participation of aristocratic families to both fund and profit from opera productions.

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[38] Ellen Rosand, *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice: The Creation of a Genre* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991), 67.

Why Venetian Opera Worked

Venice proved to be a perfect home for the public opera because of the opportunistic nature of the aristocratic population, the economic culture in the city, and the nature of the Venetian people themselves. When opera was still a relatively new genre, the aristocrats in Venice saw the opportunity to profit by investing in, building, and funding theaters, either owned by the families themselves, or by investing in a box in the theater as a means of asserting social class. These boxes were bought by families as the opera house was being built to offset costs, and after the opera house was finished, they served as a sign of status and prestige.[39] Simon Towneley Worsthorn, in his article "Venetian Opera," points out that by the end of the seventeenth century, a box in the Venetian opera houses was such an important symbol of status that King George II of England held one, despite his apparent dislike of opera, poetry, and music itself.[40] The support of the aristocracy was only one part of the reason that opera flourished in Venice. The general Venetian public had a love of the arts, a fascination with novelty, and were presumably inclined to support the emerging public opera productions. In paying two admission fees, one for entry and another for a seat, sales to the public constituted much of the revenue for the theaters. The "public" refers not to the working man in Venice, as the cost of entry and a seat would have been more than the day's wages of a well-paid working class man, but refers to artisans, shopkeepers, clergy, and property-owing citizens.[41] In addition to the entrance fees of the public, fees from food vendors who would sell products during the productions provided another source of revenue.[42] Though these opera productions were open to the public, it was

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[39] Simon Towneley Worsthorn, "Venetian Theatres: 1637-1700" in *Music & Letters*, (Vol. 29, No. 3, 263-275), 265-266.
[40] Worsthorn, "Venetian Theatres," 268.
[41] Lorenzo Biaconi and Thomas Walker, "Production, Consumption, and Political Function of Seventeenth Century Opera" in *Early Music History* (Volume 4, 1948, 209-296), 227.
[42] Worsthorn, "Venetian Theatres," 267.

often the aristocrats, the boxholders, that provided much of the funding and attendance. In a case study of the production of *Antioco* at Teatro S. Cassiano in 1659, two thirds of those in attendance were boxholders or guests of boxholders.[43] It was not only the local residents of Venice that ensured the success of the public opera there. As a city center and a main place of trade and commerce, Venice attracted many tourists, merchants, and diplomats. The operas were supported both by the Venetian public and by those visiting the city. Despite this support from both the Venetian public and visitors, these operas were generally not expected to bring in great profits, following a common trend of the Venetian nobility often helping to subsidize their own entertainments.[44] It was not just the commercial nature of Venice that supported the opera: opera, as it grew, came to support the commercial nature of its mother city. Opera made Venice an even more attractive destination, for investors, foreign aristocrats, diplomats, and other tourists, especially during the Carnival season.[45] Opera, as it grew, became an important draw to the city itself.

Reason for Visual Effects

To attract this broad public audience, the Venetian operas needed to be lavish, shocking, and elaborate enough to win the money and attention of the public, season after season. Pietro Weiss points out that since opera originated in courts, at the beginning of the public run, opera was relatively small, with perhaps a few well-made sets, and one or two principal singers.[46] As opera grew as a business in Venice, rather than a show of personal prestige, as it was in the courts, the expectations of the public grew as well. To attract audiences, visual spectacle, such as

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[43]Biaconi and Walker, "Production, Consumption, and Political Function of Seventeenth Century Opera," 225-226.
[44] Biaconi and Walker, "Production, Consumption, and Political Function of Seventeenth Century Opera," 227.
[45] Weiss, *Opera: A History in Documents* 35.
[46] Weiss, *Opera: A History in Documents*, 39.

sets and machines, became much more important, as did the virtuoso singers.[47] From the advent

of opera in Venice, the public was dazzled by the visual elements, as an eyewitness account of

the performance of *Andromeda* in 1637 pays special attention to the sets, which transformed the

stage into a sea. As opera grew into a competitive business, so also did the extravagance of the

sets and other visual effects grow as well.[48] As opera further integrated itself into Venetian

culture, more and more opera houses appeared. By 1681, when theater chronicler Christoforo

Ivanovich published a list of the theaters in Venice and their productions since 1637, there were

12 different working theaters in the city producing various sorts of public productions, including

opera and other types of theater.[49] With this many opportunities for the public to partake in

performative arts, competition grew between the theaters to attract audiences. Theaters and their

producers used various means to attract the public and their money, but one of the most common

was the use of increasingly elaborate visual spectacle in addition to the drama and music. For

example, when *Callisto* opened at S. Apollinaire in 1651, impresario and librettist Giovanni

Faustini (1615-1651) used a few strategies in the hopes of attracting a great audience for a

successful season: the season was to open before the seasons of the other theaters in Venice,

Francesco Cavalli (1602-1676), the composer, was a well-known and prolific musician, and

exorbitant sums of money were spent on elaborate sets and machines to enhance the visual

aspect of the production.[50] Although *Callisto* was not as successful as Faustini had hoped, it is

just one example of the use of elaborate visual effects to attract an audience, with equal

importance placed on the visual effects and the musical quality of the performance.[51] With

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[47] Weiss, *Opera: A History in Documents* 39.
[48] Rosand, 70 for account of sets in Andromeda.
[49] Weiss, *Opera: A History in Documents* 36.
[50] Beth L. Glixon and Jonathan E. Glixon, "Marco Faustini and Venetian Opera Production in the 1650s: Recent Archival Discoveries" in *The Journal of Musicology* (Vol. 10, No. 1 (Winter, 1992), 48-73), 54-55.
[51] Glixon and Glixon, "Marco Faustini and Venetian Opera Production in the 1650s" 54-55.

heightened expectations of the public and competition between opera houses, spectacle and visual display became as important as the music itself.[52]

Costumes

The main elements of the visual spectacle in Venetian opera were costumes, sets, and effects. Of these, costuming is, perhaps, the most straightforward. Though no costumes from this period survive, both contemporary descriptions and sketches do, indicating that the costumes were lavish and extravagant, with the intention of elevating the singers visual appeal on stage.[53] Costumes for main characters in particular tended towards expense and extravagance: expense records show many different types of cloth used, including different colors and types of silk, and indicate that costumes were heavily embellished with additions such as lace, feathers, false jewels, and other accessories.[54] In the dim lighting of the theaters, these colorful, elaborate costumes would appear even more splendid and opulent on stage during the production.[55]

One excellent indication of the extravagance of the costumes used during this period is the monetary value of these costumes. The costumes were often used to pay painters, investors or other parties, including the singers at the close of a season.[56] The costumes were also a way to attract singers to the company, since the more lavish a costume was, the more important and elevated the singer became, and in some cases, if a singer felt that they had not received just payment, they would refuse to return the costume.[57] In addition to the monetary value of these costumes, though the clothing of important characters was lavish and expensive, costumes were

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[52] Beth L. Glixon and Jonathan E. Glixon, *The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth Century Venice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 227.
[53] Glixon and Glixon, The Impresario and His World, 277-278.
[54] Glixon and Glixon," *The Impresario and His World,* 281.
[55] Worsthorne "Venetian Theatres," 269 for lighting in the theaters.
[56] Glixon and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 289.
[57] Glixon and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 291.

generally not reused, since novelty was a top priority of the Venetian theaters at this time.[58]

These costumes were just the first piece of the visual spectacle that brought success to Venetian opera, and prestige and profit to individual companies. The extravagant amount of material and money that went into these costumes, only to be used for one production or season, indicate that costuming was an important part of the overall visual effect of the production.

Sets

The next piece of the visual spectacle of the seventeenth century Venetian opera productions was the set. These sets were a main indicator of the marvel and splendor that the theaters and productions relied on to bring in audiences. Similar to costumes, sets for productions were a draw to the public, and a massive expense as a result of the complexity and volume of elements in an effective set. The sets contributed to the overall visual spectacle that went hand in hand with the musical content by the use of perspective to create depth on stage, creating the illusion of larger, grander spaces in which the action took place, and the variety of individual sets that could appear in one opera. The production of *Bellerofonte* (1642) at Teatro Novissimo is one of many Venetian productions that featured these types of illusionistic sets depicting a wide variety of scenes. Sets for the production, designed by Giacomo Torelli (1608-1678), included a cave scene which featured different levels of perspective in one set, an island scene, a temple, gardens, a throne room and a city, all in one production.[59] This type of production, featuring a variety of complex sets, was another way that the visual spectacle of opera was elevated in Venice during this time.

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[58] Glixon and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 291.
[59] Glixon and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 233-236.

Number of Sets

As opera continued to grow, the amount of sets in a single production became an important part of the visual splendor and impact. When opera arrived in Venice in the 1630's, operas contained a modest amount of individual sets, but visual intrigue was created by other means, such as changing the backdrop only, parts of the sets, or, when the full sets were changed, changing the full sets quickly and smoothly by way of new innovations in theater design. By the 1650's, however, as opera reached its height, one production could easily call for between 13 and 15 individual sets.[60] Though occasionally fewer sets were used, or operas were framed to allow the repeated use of one set throughout, called a s*cena maestra,* the most common practice during this time was to use a large number of varied sets, none or few of which were used more than once in a single production.[61] In addition, these complex sets were often used for only one season. Though some theaters had a collection of sets, called a *dotazione*, most of the surviving contracts from this period specify that all sets for each season should be made new.[62] The importance of novelty in attracting the Venetian people to the theaters year after year, and the importance of the visual elements as a part of that novelty is clearly demonstrated through the fact that these sets were not reused. The use of a large amount of contrasting sets was another way that the visual elements of a production were given equal importance to the musical content in the Venetian operas. The complex nature of individual sets and their wings, coupled with the vast number of sets used, indicates the importance of broad scale visual splendor hand in hand with musical splendor to create the effect of the Venetian operas.

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[60] Glixon and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 240.
[61] Glixon and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 240-243.
[62] Glixon and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 273-274 and 276.

Illusion of Sets

Illusions of depth, similar to the illusions of depth that appeared on the ceilings of Roman churches, were a central part of the effect of the sets of Venetian seventeenth century opera. Illusionistic perspective on the operatic stage was achieved by a series of painted side wings, moving both closer in and towards the backdrop, and overhead elements hanging progressively lower as they moved towards the back of the stage. The wings were painted to create the illusion a larger space, extending out towards the painted backdrop.[63] The more painted wings there were on the sides of the stage, the deeper the space onstage appeared. As theaters began to use techniques and machinery that allowed all wings to move at the same time, the amount of wings used increased, often to the point of 8 or more on each side of the stage.[64] This technique of the use of wings and a backdrop to create the illusion of a larger stage space is called *scena corta.*[65] These types of illusionary sets were the most commonly used types of sets in Venetian opera productions. Operas that featured these types of sets included *La finta pazza* (1641, Teatro Novissimo), *Bellerofonte* (1642, Teatro Novissimo), *La Venere gelosa* (1642-1643, Teatro Novissimo) *Annibale in Capua* (1661, Teatro SS. Giovanni e Paolo), and many others.[66]

Another important opera set illusion during this time was the ability, in larger theaters with more sets of wings, to create scenes of varying depth by the use of intermediate backdrops. These intermediate backdrops were often open arches or doors, and through the opening, smaller wings and a final backdrop would sit behind the front backdrop to create more dramatic depth. One example of this type of two-tired depth would be a cave in the front backdrop, and through

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[63] Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World,* 229.
[64] Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World,* 231.
[65] Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World,* 237.
[66] For discussion of *La finta pazza*, see Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 231. For discussion of *Bellerofonte*, see Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World,* 323-328. For discussion of *Annibale in Capua*, see Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World,* 238.

the opening of the cave, the sight of a ship in the distance, created through the use of smaller wings behind the first backdrop of the cave.[67] The smaller wings behind the full size wings were called *lontani,* and this style of scenery that made use of multiple perspectives in one set was referred to as *scena corta.*[68] Though none of these sets survive, engravings of the sets of productions were often printed with the published libretto. One of the best documented examples of this use of multiple perspectives in one scene is in Torelli's set of *Bellerofonte*, the scene for the "Cave of Winds." The engraving shows that the forefront of the stage and the first few panels depict a cave, ending with an intermediate backdrop. Through openings in this intermediate backdrop, painted as openings in the cave, the ocean can be seen in the distance, with a sailing ship.[69] *Annibale in Capua* (1661, Teatro SS. Giovanni e Paolo) featured this same technique of multiple perspectives, including three different perspectives in a single scene. These three different perspectives were shown through an intermediate backdrop of three arches, through two of which appeared two different streets, and a third which likely showed a view into a building.[70] The use of illusionistic perspective is an extremely visual element, one that appears often in paintings in the 17th century, as well as earlier. This illusionistic perspective was utilized to its most full potential in the illusionistic ceilings, discussed in Chapter IV, to create the impression for the viewer of space extending to heaven and a connection to the divine. The adoption of this perspective technique by opera sets and the adaptation of the technique for the stage by adding wings and intermittent backdrops is a perfect example of the intersection of the techniques of visual art and the musical culture in Italy at the time.

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[67] Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World,* 232-233.
[68] Glixon and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World*, 237.
[69] Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World,* 232-233.
[70] Glixon, and Glixon, *The Impresario and His World,* 238.

Venetian Opera Conclusions

The music and the visual came together on the Venetian opera stage to create a cohesive display of novelty, complexity, and splendor to attract audiences to the theaters. Though the musical elements often take center stage in discussion and analysis of opera, during the time of the opera productions in Venice, the visual elements, such as sets and costumes, were an equally important part of these productions. The final productions represent a concrete intersection and common goal of visual and musical elements during the height of opera production in Venice. Notable productions that utilized the musical and the visual elements of the production equally include *Bellerofonte* (1642, Teatro Novissimo), *Callisto* (1651, S. Apollinaire), and *Annibale in Capua* (1661, Teatro SS. Giovanni e Paolo). Regardless of the success of each of these productions (or lack therof, in the case of *Callisto*), these productions represent an intentional blending of the musical and the visual into a product to attract audiences to the theaters of Venice.

Conclusion

In seventeenth century Rome and Venice, opera represents a concrete intersection of music and the visual arts. In putting these two elements together on stage and using them to elevate one another and the production itself, when effectively combined, these elements brought success to the production. In Rome, a successful production brought honor and prestige to the patron who had funded it, and in Venice, a successful production brought monetary success and fame to the theater and impresario. In both places, the success of these elements together in the form of opera elevated the status of the interested parties. For the audiences, the final product represented a joining of the musical and visual into a final product that would not only delight and astonish but bring them back for more during the next season.

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CHAPTER III:

CLASSICAL SOURCES AND INSPIRATION

Introduction

The beginning development of opera signifies an important trend in early seventeenth-century Italian art: a turn among the arts to rediscover, imitate, and take inspiration from the work of antiquity, specifically of ancient Greece and Rome. Opera in particular is a good indicator of this tendency, because both the stories that opera told, and its music-drama form derive from the works of Ovid, Virgil, Aristotle, and other classical writers. This same trend also appears in the visual arts: sculpture worked to animate its subjects, drawing on ancient Greek techniques to move sculptures into action rather than remaining immobile, notably seen in the comparison between the *David* of Michelangelo (1501-1504), who stands motionless and the *David* of Bernini (1623-1624), caught in the middle of a physical action and animated by motion. Non-religious painting and sculpture often drew on ancient Greek and Roman literature for their subjects, as Bernini did in his statues based on the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. Since the study of works of antiquity was an integral part of education for the nobility, this turn back to the ancients for inspiration by artists would not have been lost on the patrons of this art at the time. The rise of educated societies in cities such as Florence provided a space for the aristocracy and artists together to dive further into these texts in pursuit of deeper understanding of the material, often leading to close analysis of the primary sources and subsequent impact on the arts.

Chapter Thesis

This chapter will explore the impact of classical models and sources on the music, sculpture, and painting emerging from Italy in the early part of the seventeenth century. Artists found inspiration for their subjects in the stories of ancient Greek and Roman literature and

found inspiration for form and structure in the form and structure of this ancient art. This chapter will demonstrate how careful study of ancient Greek and Roman material by both the artists and the patrons of seventeenth century Italy shaped artistic trends during this time. By examining Peri's *Euridice* (1600) and the sculptures of Bernini in comparison with the ancient sources on which they draw for both subject matter and form, this chapter will demonstrate how deeply the work of the ancient Greeks and Romans impacted this period in Italy. Although the discussion of the development of opera will focus on the academic and artistic culture in Florence, the undisputed center of artistic patronage and innovation at this time was Rome, especially in the visual arts. The culture and social structure of Florence in the seventeenth century created the academic and artistic environment appropriate for the development of opera but did not produce any other significant artistic innovations around this time. Consequently, this chapter will discuss the art of both Rome and Florence. That the trend of the use of the models of antiquity is present in both centers of patronage is an excellent indication of the prevalence and importance of this artistic tendency.

Introduction of Euridice

Euridice, a *favola in musica*, what we now know as the earliest surviving opera, is an excellent example of subject material inspired by ancient texts and imitation of the forms of the ancient Greeks and Romans. *Euridice* provides an important example of ancient inspiration both because of how deeply the Greek and Roman influence shaped the final opera, and because of *Euridice*'s far-reaching effects on the development of the genre of opera, demonstrating how these Greek and Roman sources shaped much of music history. *Euridice* was premiered in October of 1600 in celebration of the wedding of Maria de' Medici to King Henri IV of France. The production was funded by Jacopo Corsi (1561-1602), a prominent member of the Florentine

aristocracy who had played a diplomatic role in arranging the match. Corsi worked with Jacopo Peri (1561-1633) as composer and Ottavio Rinuccini (1562-1621) as librettist, both of whom were active members of the academic and artistic circles of Florence.[71] *Euridice* tells the story of Orpheus and Euridice, originally found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in a five-scene, music-drama format. Instead of simply speaking their lines with music and dancing in between scenes, characters in Euridice sing all of their lines in a recitative style, featuring accompanied monody though much of the drama with choral interludes. The opera relates the story of Orpheus, a demi-god with great musical abilities, and Euridice, his wife. After Euridice is bitten by a snake and dies, Orpheus, on the advice of Venus, goes to the underworld to try to persuade Pluto, the king of the underworld, to allow him to take Euridice back to the world of the living. Other supporting characters include various shepherds, including Arcetro and Tisri, as well as Caronte, the gatekeeper and ferryman to the underworld.[72] The first performance of Euridice was given in October of 1600, in the private apartments of Maria de' Medici's brother, Don Antonio de'Medici, with Peri himself singing the role of Orpheus.[73]

Introduction of the People and Societies Involved

The creative minds involved in the production- Corsi, Peri, and Rinuccini- had far more in common than their connections with the Florentine aristocracy. These three men were all deeply involved in the educated societies that began to appear in Florence at the time, called academies. These societies began to appear because the Medici family, in an effort to retain their democratic ideal of Florence, encouraged a flexible social structure in which both the aristocracy and untitled but educated citizens could move in many social circles, not bound according to

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[71] Howard Mayer Brown, and Barbara Russano Hanning, "Euridice," *Grove Music Online,* 2002; Accessed 28 Mar. 2020.
[72] Brown and Hanning, "Euridice."
[73] Brown and Hanning, "Euridice."

official status.[74] This malleable social structure gave rise to many learned societies during this time, made up of both the educated aristocracy and other educated tradesmen, most notably musicians.[75] The most discussed example of one of these societies is the Florentine *Camerata*, hosted by Count Giovanni de' Bardi (1534-1612). The group gathered in the house of Count Bardi to discuss literature, philosophy, politics, art, music, music theory, and the writings of antiquity.[76] In addition to examinations of texts and discussions and meetings among members, Bardi and Vincenzo Galilei (c. 1520-1591), a composer and music theorist, began a correspondence with a prominent classical scholar, Girolamo Mei (1519-1594), in an effort to better understand Greek music theory and drama.[77] Members of the *Camerata* included Rinuccini, Peri, and composers Giulio Caccini (1551-1618), and Emilio de' Cavalieri (c. 1550-1602). The discussions and correspondence of the *Camerata* led to new ideas on how Greek drama sounded, was performed and was structured, new ideas which later appeared in practice in Peri's opera.[78]

Although the *Camerata* is perhaps the best known of these societies, it was not the only learned society in Florence which both united the creators of *Euridice* and influenced their ideas. The *Accademia deglia Alterati* was another academic society in Florence to which Corsi, Peri, and Rinuccini all had connections, even if Rinuccini was the only fully-fledged member. The *Alterati* discussed similar concepts and ideas to the *Camerata.* Annotated copies of Aristotle's *Poetics*, from the meetings of the *Alterati* survive from their meetings, hence we know that the

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[74] Tim Carter and Richard A. Goldthwaite, *Orpheus in the Marketplace: Jacopo Peri and the Economy of Late Renaissance Florence*, Harvard University Press, 2013, 218.
[75] Carter and Goldthwaite, *Orpheus in the Marketplace*, 218.
[76] Claude V. Palisca, *The Florentine Camerata: Documentary Studies and Translations*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989, 1-4.
[77] Palisca, *The Florentine Camerata* 49-50.
[78] Palisca, *The Florentine Camerata* 1.

Alterati discussed it at length.[79] Although similar in academic focus to the *Camerata* and other learned societies, the *Alterati* functioned in a more private sector, as their members were primarily those who existed on the outer fringes of the Medici circle, or held alternate views.[80] The creation of *Euridice* then, by members of this private society, offered the opportunity for the members of *Alterati* to assert what they believed art and drama should be according to their studies, without directly publishing a manifesto or transcripts of their private conversations, but through the presentation of a fictional story.[81] Additionally, these views, expressed through the story, were legitimized by their performance in the house of and at the wedding of the Medici. In addition to asserting and legitimizing their own views on drama and setting them apart from the views held by other more Medici-controlled societies, the gift of this performance brought the members of the *Alterati*, Corsi, Rinuccini, and Peri, closer politically to the Medici circle, while still setting them apart in their philosophy of what drama should be.

Plot Sources

As a result of the influence and studies of these academies, the creators of *Euridice* turned to the works of antiquity for inspiration for both the stories to tell, and how to most effectively tell these stories. The most apparent way that Euridice draws on classical sources is in its subject material: the myth of Orpheus and Euridice is found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Virgil's *Georgics*, and was adapted by medieval poet Agnolo Ambrogini (1554-1594), known as Poliziano.[82] Though supporting characters are added to the opera *Euridice*, including Venus, Arecetro, and Tirsi, events are expanded upon, such as Venus's discussion with Orpheus to begin

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[79] Déborah Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati and the Invention of a New Form of Dramatic Experience: Myth, Allegory, and Theory in Jacopo Peri's and Ottavio Rinuccini's Euridice (1600)," in D*ramatic Experience: The Poetics of Drama and the Early Modern Public Sphere*, ed. Katja Gvozdeva, Tatiana Korneeva, Kirill Ospovat (Boston: Brill, 2017), 90.
[80] Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati," 86.
[81] Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati," 93.
[82] Brown and Hanning, "Euridice."

his journey to the underworld, and dialogue is lengthened for dramatic effect, the story told by Rinuccini remains close to its source material with regard to main characters, sequence and plot elements.

Plot Deviation from Sources

Until Scene V, the story of *Euridice* follows its sources closely, with only changes of dramatic effect and supporting characters. Although all original versions end in the tragedy of Orpheus succumbing to the temptation to look back upon Euridice as they leave the land of the dead, and his subsequent return to earth alone and mourning, this traditional ending was less than appropriate for the broader context of this performance. As a musical offering for a wedding celebration, a drama ending in mourning and tragedy would have been less than welcome. Consequently, Rinuccini altered the ending to the return to the land of the living for Orpheus and Euridice, transforming the tale into a celebration of the power of love. Even with this altered ending, Euridice still pushed the boundaries of what was normally expected for musical offerings at aristocratic celebrations: most often, plays and dramas in celebration of the aristocracy contained either direct allegory or outright praise of the family itself, and generally included interactive activities, such as group dancing interspersed though the performance, as was the preference of the Medici family.[83] Already breaking both of these conventions, to end the production on the traditional tragic note would have been unacceptable. By granting Orpheus a return to earth with his bride, Rinuccini not only created an appropriate story for the occasion, celebrating the triumph of Orpheus' love and bravery, but also opened the door within his

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[83] For more on d Discussion of conventions of praising the patron family in drama through allegory, see Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati," 116. For more on other preferred activities of the Medici celebrations, see Carter and Goldthwaite, *Orpheus in the Marketplace*, 248.

libretto to provide allegorical both commentary on the role of the musician within the political structure, and commentary on the role of the ruler.[84]

The Moral King

The first notable addition to the source material appears in Scene IV of *Euridice* as Pluto considers what he should do about the plight of Orpheus. Orpheus's plea for Euridice's life does indeed move Pluto, but he hesitates to grant Orpheus's request, citing laws already in place:

Ben di tua dura sorte	And yet hearing of your hard fate
Non so qual nuov' affitto	I do not know what new emotion
M'intenerisisc'il petto:	Softens in my breast:
Ma troppo dura legge	But most rigid laws,
Legge scolpita in rigido diamente	Laws wrought in hardest diamond,
Contrast'a' preghi tuoi, miser' amante.	Oppose your pleas, wretched lover.[85]

As the scene continues, Pluto is torn between his duties as king and the pity that he has for Orpheus. Pluto remains reluctant to act, because in allowing Euridice to leave the underworld, he, the ruler of the underworld, is breaking his own laws, which would be a "misuse of power" ("romper le proprei leggi, é vil possanza"). This concern about misuse of power seems, on first glance, out of place for the sovereign ruler of the underworld. This dialogue is not, however, intended to be a unique interpretation of Pluto, or to interest the broader audience, but to speak directly to Maria de' Medici herself. As she prepares marry the king of France, not only will she be the wife of a sovereign ruler, but her responsibly as queen will be to raise the next king of France and instruct him on how to be a good and moral ruler. This discussion of the limits of an all-powerful ruler contains a moralizing message for her: a ruler must use caution when

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[84] Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati,", 111-112.

[85] Jacopo Peri, *Euridice: An Opera in One Act, Five Scenes*, trans. Howard Mayer Brown (Madison: A-R Editions Inc., 1981), xxix.

overstepping his own laws. As the discussion continues, Pluto eventually relents and allows Orpheus to take Euridice, but only after Orpheus points out that "To ease the anguish of the sorrowful/ is still the noble custom of the royal heart" ("Ma deggli affilitti consolar l'affanno/ É pur di regio cor gentil' usanza.").[86] Rinuccini is demonstrating to the princess that the welfare of those who are subject to the laws in place are more important than the laws themselves, and that in special cases, the law bends to the people. The deliberation of Pluto, not found in any of the sources Rinuccini drew upon, serves an important moralizing and teaching role in the context of the Medici wedding for those who would have been the audience for this new music drama, particularly the bride herself.

Arts and Power Dialogue

The second, and perhaps more notable deviation from the original source material lies in the outcome of the journey to the underworld. The tales of Virgil and Ovid both conclude as Orpheus's will crumbles and he looks back on Euridice, only to lose her for a second time to the land of the dead. In Rinuccini's story, however Orpheus returns, triumphant, to the world of the living in Scene V, bringing Euridice with him. This modified ending not only makes the story appropriate for a wedding, but also serves as a commentary on the relationship between musicians and rulers in the Medici court. Orpheus serves as a symbol for the court musicians under the Medici rulers. Through Orpheus, Rinuccini is asserting the place of the musician in the court and the musician's relationship to the political rulers.[87]

The first point that Orpheus demonstrates is the separation of political power and musical power. In the opera, Orpheus represents the musical sphere, and Pluto represents the political. Euridice, a normal mortal, and not musician, is fully subject to the laws of Pluto, the laws of life

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[86] Peri, trans. Brown, *Euridice: An Opera in One Act, Five Scenes*, xxxi.
[87] Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati," 116.

and death, demonstrated in her death early in the drama. Orpheus, however, a musician, has the power to circumvent the laws of Pluto in reaching the underworld as a living person through the power of his music, and leaving it alive. As a musician, Orpheus is granted this freedom of movement outside the laws that other mortals are subject to. A musician functioning in the Medici court, like Orpheus, would have the freedom to move around and through royal circles, just as Orpheus moved between the worlds of the living and of the dead. This mobility is seen in the personal lives of many musicians during this time, including Peri himself, who was often sent between courts, and occasionally did not return in as timely a manner as their patrons may have liked.

In addition to not being fully subject to the laws of the living and the dead, which serves as a metaphor for the musician not being fully subject to the political rulers, Orpheus demonstrates that musicians have the power to influence the political powers through his influence of Pluto. Through his music, Orpheus convinces Pluto to bend the laws of the living and dead and release Euridice to the land of the living. This decision is ultimately up to Pluto, demonstrating that Orpheus, though his power resides in music, still is subject in many ways to the political powers. Orpheus, however, still has the unusual power to influence Pluto to action through music by appealing to Pluto's emotions, moving him to change the laws of the living and dead.[88] By using his separate power (music) to influence another sphere of authority (the ruler and his laws), Orpheus asserts that musicians not only have power in their own right, but the power to influence the other powers of the court, specifically the ruling family.[89]

The modified ending asserts two things: first, that politics and music are separate spheres of power, second, that musicians, through their music and the independence and power it grants

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[88] Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati," 107.
[89] Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati," 111-112.

them, have immense and unusual power to influence politics and those in political power. This

power, independence, and influence is at the disposal of musicians functioning in the political

world because music and politics are two separate realms of authority, although the realm of

music is still technically subject to the realm of the law. Rinuccini, by using Orpheus as a

representation of the musicians at work in the Medici court, asserts that politics and art are

separate spheres, with the aristocracy in control of the politics, and musicians in charge of art.

Although these two spheres had influence on one another, neither was fully subject to the other.

As skilled and educated workers, musicians often traveled on behalf of their patron, and often

had the opportunity to accept work from institutions such as the Church, putting them in a

position in which they were not fully dependent on their main aristocratic patron. This system

granted the musicians an unusual degree of independence and mobility in seventeenth century

society.[90] In addition to mobility between jobs, in Florence, especially under Medici rule,

musicians also had the ability to move between social circles as well as cities and jobs.[91]

Musicians such as Peri were often sent between courts, as Tim Carter explains, as "tokens in the

exchange of courtly favors, with both honor and prestige resting on the outcome."[92] Peri himself

was occasionally sent to other courts by the Medici family while he worked under them as a

court musician. In addition, further mobility was afforded to court musicians as a result of the

needs of the court. Though musicians were busy at the courts during festival and feast times,

musicians were allowed to pursue other jobs and appointments, musical or non-musical, during

other times of the year.[93] By demonstrating this mobility and influence in the character of

Orpheus, Rinuccini asserts the power and independence of musicians in the court setting, the

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[90] Carter and Goldthwaite, Orpheus in the Marketplace, 219-222.
[91] Carter and Goldthwaite, *Orpheus in the Marketplace*, 219-222
[92] Carter and Goldthwaite, *Orpheus in the Marketplace,* 216.
[93] Carter and Goldthwaite, Orpheus in the Marketplace, 219-222.

environment in which Peri and Rinuccini were working. Just as Orpheus's song moves Pluto to action, music and therefore musicians had the unusual power to influence the ruling class. Like Orpheus bending the laws of the underworld and returning to the world of the living, musicians were not fully subject to the laws and whims of rulers.

Overall, the use of Orpheus as a representation of musicians working in the court encourages a specific dynamic between the court musicians and the ruling class. Through this fictional drama, Rinuccini and the other musicians assert that they have a degree of both power and independence within the Medici court and Florentine political scene.[94] By using Orpheus as a fictional representation of the position that Peri and Rinuccini themselves were in, the performance of *Euridice* in court provided a place for these men to subtly assert their own independence and power within social structure subject to the aristocracy. Despite these moralizing deviations, the source material of *Euridice*, found in the texts of Ovid and Virgil, points the listener back to the Greek story, and demonstrates clearly the turn among the educated citizens, noble patrons, and the artists to the works of antiquity for subject and inspiration.

Dafne

Euridice is not the only example of a turn back to antiquity in subject in the musical culture at this time: *Dafne* (1598), also by Peri and Rinuccini, follows the same pattern of turning back to ancient Greek stories, specifically those found in Ovid, for subject matter. In *Dafne,* the god Apollo falls in love with the human woman Dafne, but Dafne escapes the god's advances by her transformation into a laurel tree. This story is found in the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and in direct reference to the ancient Greek source, Ovid himself appears in the music drama,

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94 Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati," 111-112.

singing the prologue.[95] Although surviving only in fragments, *Dafne*, taken in conjunction with operas like *Euridice* and other arts of the time, demonstrates the musical trend to turn to ancient Greek subjects. Other operas written in the early part of the seventeenth century follow this trend as well, most notably Monteverdi and Striggio's *Orfeo*, produced in Mantua in 1607. Based on the same source material as *Euridice* (Virgil's *Georgics* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*) *Orfeo* was written and produced as entertainment for the Carnival in 1607.[96]

Aristotelian Influence

On a deeper level, however, Peri, Rinuccini, and Corsi drew far more than plot of *Euridice* from their ancient counterparts. *Euridice* was an experiment in how the form, ideas, and ideals of the Greek tragedy as explained by Aristotle in his *Poetics*, could play out in the art they created in the seventeenth century.[97] A closer look at Euridice shows just how closely the study of ancient texts, specifically Aristotle's *Poetics*, by the seventeenth century academic societies influenced their artistic output, and points to the attempt by artists of this time to recreate the types of art from antiquity. *Euridice* follows the Aristotelian model for tragedy laid out in the *Poetics* in both the structure of the story and the its musical setting. Just as the works of ancient writers like Ovid served as models for plots, Aristotle's *Poetics* served an instructional guide on how to create an effective tragedy. By following Aristotle's instructions for plot content, character construction, speech and singing, and other artistic stipulations, Rinuccini and Peri attempted to recreate the height of Greek tragedy in *Euridice*. *Euridice* follows the guidelines that the *Poetics* outline in the type character it portrays, subject and structure of the plot, use of

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[95] Barbara Russano Hanning, "Dafne," *Grove Music Online,* 2002; Accessed 28 Mar. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-5000901242.

[96] John Whenham, "Orfeo," *Grove Music Online,* 2002; Accessed 28 Mar. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-5000005849.

[97] Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati," 116.

music, inclusion of the chorus, and other theatric choices, including keeping action offstage and us of modest sets. By examining these elements of *Euridice* side by side with the instructions in *Poetics*, I will demonstrate how closely Rinuccini and Peri studied the *Poetics* and intentionally integrated Aristotle's ideas and concepts into their own work, *Euridice*.

Character

The guidelines that Aristotle lays out for the plot of a staged story are as follows: the plot must follow a mostly good man, thorough a complete and logical action over the course of one day, including a reversal of fortune or *peripeteia*, from good to bad, evoking strong feelings in the members of the audience.[98] All of these elements clearly are seen in Rinuccini's musical retelling of the classical myth. The main character, Orpheus, is a mostly good man, fallible only in his mortality, his loss of Euridice, and in his crippling grief that follows. He is, as Aristotle later stipulates, of a status appropriate to be the center of this story, because although he is a shepherd, he is the son of a god, making him of a type of "noble" class. Furthermore, his actions throughout the story are logical and consistent with his character, as all of his actions, from his weeping and mourning to his heroic journey, stem from his undying love for Euridice, another important point of character for Aristotle. Not only does the character of Orpheus follow Aristotle's guidelines, but the plot follows Aristotle's instructions as well.

Plot

The full plot of the story, including both the reversal of fate, or *peripeteia*, with the death of Euridice and her joyful return, also fit the time and breadth stipulations of plot that Aristotle outlines in his *Poetics*.[99] Aristotle states that in addition to spanning only one day, the plot must

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[98] Osborne Bennett Harrison Jr, *Aristotle's Poetics; a Translation and Commentary for Students of Literature* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1968).

[99] For discussion of *peripetia*, see Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics; a Translation and Commentary for Students of Literature,* Book X-XI, 17-19.

relate a single and complete action. The entirety of the plot, encompassing the happiness of the couple, the reversal of fortune brought about by the death of Euridice, Orpheus's journey to rescue her, and their triumphant return not only spans only one day, from morning until sundown, but also represents the complete action of the rescue of Euridice. This plot also adheres to Aristotle's two other main stipulations, that the actions related must logically arise from one another, and that they must arouse emotion, or *pathos*, in the spectator. Since all actions related in *Euridice* follow logically from one another, and the plight of Orpheus arouses grief and pity in the audience, *Euridice* fits both of these Aristotelian guidelines.

Despite the happy ending, *Euridice* still does still represent the tragic change from good to bad fortune of the main character, what Aristotle calls the *peripeteia*. Though the ending is altered to create an appropriate story for the Medici wedding, the death of Euridice functions as the main *peripeteia*. The contrast between Scenes I and III is striking: in Scene I, Orpheus rejoices at his love and wedding, but in Scene III, weeps into the pool of blood left by Euridice. The ending, then, Scene V, functions as a tacked-on apotheosis, leaving the audience with the joy of love, an appropriate emotion for the wedding of Maria de'Medici to Henri IV of France. This reversal of fortune from good to bad is the central plot feature of the tragedy and despite the added apotheosis, Rinuccini was careful to pick a story which featured this central reversal.

Speech, Diction, and Music

Aristotle's lengthy discussion of diction and speech can be seen in *Euridice* through Peri's careful musical treatment of the words written by Rinuccini. Aristotle indicates that the goal of diction is to ensure that the words are clear, but that these words should be elevated by vocal adornments, melody being the greatest of these potential adornments.[100] Other examples of

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[100] Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics; a Translation and Commentary for Students of Literature,* Book XXII.

adornments include simile, metaphor, and poetic devices. Peri's musical setting is carefully conceived with these instructions in mind: the use of accompanied monody throughout the scenes in no way obscures the words, only following and enhancing the natural flow of speech. The music remains completely subject to the words, both in mood and in practical elements such as rhythm. The vocal line over a chordal structured bass brings the words into clarity, both by not muddling the sound with other instruments or melodic lines and by providing only support to the vocal line.[101] The chords follow the melody line as the melody strives to imitate a natural pattern of speech. The use of music as the chosen adornment is important both because it adheres to the instructions in *Poetics*, which indicates that that Greek tragedies did indeed include singing, both by the chorus in between scenes, and as a way to elevate the language used. This choice to use music is also important because Rinuccini and Peri's realization of Aristotle's descriptions of the use of music in drama gave birth to what we now know as opera, specifically recitative style. Though it is important both historically and theoretically, the music is in no way the center of *Euridice*: its sole purpose is the enhance, support, and elevate the speech and thoughts of the characters into a more emotionally impactful experience of storytelling. The music itself has little autonomy or emotional role; it exists only to support the rest of the drama.

Role of the Chorus

In addition to the music, Rinuccini and Peri's inclusion of and use of the chorus throughout *Euridice* adheres to the guidelines in the *Poetics*. Aristotle, when he outlines the parts of the tragedy in Book XII of *Poetics*, indicates that the sections sung by the chorus include a *parode*, the song of the chorus appearing after the introduction, *stasimons*, songs of the chorus without anapests and trochees, and a *kommos,* laments in which the chorus and actors

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[101] Jacopo Peri, *Euridice: An Opera in One Act, Five Scenes*, trans. Howard Mayer Brown (Madison: A-R Editions Inc., 1981).

participate.[102] Aristotle indicates that full scenes appear between songs of the chorus, called "episodes."[103] Peri and Rinuccini adapt these roles of the chorus to fit the plot of *Euridice* by inserting the chorus in the places in which Aristotle indicates that they appeared in Greek tragedy. After the Prologue, sung by Tragedy herself, the chorus enters with a full statement, calling nymphs, shepherds, and the audience alike to enter the field in which the first scene takes place to celebrate the marriage of Orpheus and Euridice. This full statement introducing setting and plot functions as what Aristotle terms the *parode*, the first full choral statement after the prologue.[104] Through the rest of this first scene, the chorus and its members play a significant role, celebrating and singing in conversation with both major and minor characters. This treatment of the chorus as an involved "character" in the drama rather than simply separated commentators is again, at the instruction of Aristotle: in Book XVIII of the *Poetics*, he instructs that a tragedy should "consider the chorus as one of the actors and as an integral part of the drama."[105] Rather than a separate entity, Rinuccini and Peri are careful use the chorus as a supporting character, demonstrated by the integral role of the chorus in Scene I.

Though the chorus is treated as an integral part of the drama, according to Aristotle, it does not need to take a central role all the time, as the focus should be on the characters and actions.[106] Scene II is an example of what Aristotle terms an "episode:" a complete scene between songs of the chorus.[107] Having established the chorus as a character in Scene I, in Scene II, they step back in their role until the end of the scene, in which they sing a song with the refrain "Sigh, celestial breezes,/ Weep, woods and fields" ("Sospirate, aure celesti,/ Lacrimate, o

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102 Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics,* Book XII, 20-21.
103 Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics,* Book XII, 20-21.
104 Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics,* Book XII, 20-21.
105 Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics*, Book XVIII, 33.
106 Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics*, Book XVIII, 33.
107 Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics,* Book XII, 20-21.

selve, o campi"). This appearance of the chorus functions as a *stasimon*, a song of the chorus

between episodes. This same use of the choral *stasismon* appears at the end of the remaining

Scenes III, IV, and at the closing of the drama.

Rinuccini keeps the chorus integrated into the drama during the episodes by adding lines

for individual members of the chorus throughout the production, as in Scene V, which includes

lines for a "Shepard of the Chorus" and a "Nymph of the Chorus." The use of individual

members of the chorus is a careful choice to keep the chorus involved, while keeping the focus

on the plot and characters. This strategy of using singular members of the chorus rather than the

full chorus is also how Rinuccini incorporates the *kommos* discussed in Aristotle's *Poetics*; a

lament involving both the characters and chorus.[108] Through Scene III, in which Arcetro and

Daphne lament the fate of Euridice and the grief of Orpheus, individual shepherds and nymphs

of the chorus ask questions about the events of the plot, prompting the characters to explain. By

involving the chorus members in the relation of the events and their laments, Rinuccini creates a

modified *kommos* in which the chorus prompts the laments of the named characters.

Other Dramatic Devices

In addition to Aristotle's main points of instruction, such characters, as well as the speech

and singing style that appears in *Euridice*, many smaller details discussed by Aristotle appear

consistently in the drama. This attention to detail in the *Poetics* demonstrates the how carefully

the Florentine Academies studied the ancient texts, and how equally carefully they integrated

their findings and beliefs about these texts into the art that they were creating. Instead of only

drawing inspiration from the stories and main parts of the theoretical texts, such as the *Poetics*,

the precision with which Peri and Rinuccini attempt to imitate their ancient counterparts

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[108] Harrison, *Aristotle's Poetics,* Book XII, 20-21.

demonstrates how heavily these artists were relying upon their Greek source material in more ways than simply borrowing a story and adhering to the main points outlined in the *Poetics*.

Euridice follows the Greek tragic tradition of action occurring off-stage, demonstrating that diction, thought, and therefore rhetoric, takes a place of higher importance in arousing emotion than pure spectacle. Instead of seeing Euridice die on stage, the audience hears about it from the mourning Daphne. Other examples of the most dramatic actions happening off-stage include the arrival of Venus, and the height of the mourning of Orpheus, both of which are related to both the audience and the shepherds by Arcetro. In addition to following the precedent set by other Greek dramas, this choice to use offstage action adheres to Aristotle's thoughts that spectacle is a lesser way of bringing about cathartic emotions for the audience than narration by the characters. The moving speeches of Daphne and Arcetro telling of the events and demonstrating their inner throughs and feelings, take precedence over showing the most dramatic actions onstage. Instead of seeing Orpheus mourn on stage, hearing Arcetro eloquently describe him weeping into a pool of blood both follows the precedent set by other Greek dramas and philosophy of Aristotle. Inclusion of other less overtly stated traditions of Greek tragedy demonstrates the commitment that Peri, Rinuccini, and Corsi had to creating an accurate Greek drama, and care with which they analyzed and incorporated their sources.

The physical spectacle of the drama takes a secondary role to the more rhetorical elements, demonstrating the commitment of the artists at this time to adhering to Greek ideals rather than taking advantage of the full capacity of the possibility for spectacle. Though Chapter II of this thesis discusses the scenery and spectacle of operas later in the seventeenth century, *Euridice*'s libretto only indicates two distinct sets: a set depicting a field for Scenes I-III and V, and a set depicting the gates of the underworld for Scene IV. The consistent use of the same

scenery for most of the drama brings the focus of the audience not to the sets themselves, but to the singing of the actors, and the eloquence of their words, which Aristotle's *Poetics* maintains is the more important part of tragedy. Through this choice to use only modest scenery, Rinuccini is intentionally adhering Aristotle's hierarchy of importance of elements in a tragedy. All of these elements: plot, character, spectacle, and word, as they appeared in Greek tragedy, the work of Aristotle, and in a reinvented form in *Euridice*, demonstrate the depth of influence that the ideas of antiquity had on the artists of the early seventeenth century.

Final Musical Conclusions

In addition to having the records of discussions of the academic societies through letters with Mei from the *Camerata* and annotated copies of literature, including Aristotle's *Poetics*, from the *Alterati*, that this early opera aligns so thoroughly with the concepts laid out in the *Poetics* indicates how seriously these men took their studies and manifestations of their findings in their art. For the *Alterati* in particular, the performance of *Euridice* was far more important than simply a realization of their studies: for Corsi, Rinuccini, and Peri, the performance of *Euridice* offered an opportunity to disseminate their views (and the views of the societies that they were a part of) on what theater should look like, and its purpose. The performance of the opera under the umbrella of the Medici festivities offered the opportunity to both share and legitimize these views through the gift of a fictional drama, rather than publishing their dialogues or annotations. In addition, it brought the artists closer to the Medici circle, further legitimizing the views they were expressing on the importance of the influence of antiquity.

Visual Arts Introduction

This artistic trend of the use of classical form and source material in the seventeenth century was not limited to music. The world of the visual arts also drew on the ancient Greek and

Roman artistic traditions as inspirations and technical teachers. Though this influence can be seen in some religious artwork of the time, this trend becomes most apparent in the secular works of early seventeenth century. Similar to the trends in music, the most apparent influence of the work of antiquity on the visual arts is in the subject matter of the works of art. Another way that the influence of antiquity appears is in the influence of newly discovered works of art from classical Greece and Rome on the form of sculpture in the seventeenth century. As ancient statues were discovered, repaired, and displayed, artists in the seventeenth century began observing structural and stylistic elements of these earlier statues and incorporating them into their own work. Perhaps the greatest example of both subject matter and formal structure drawn from antiquity is found in the work of prolific sculptor and architect Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680). Although based in Rome rather than Florence, the use by Bernini of many of the same inspirational texts for his subjects and his exposure to Greek and Roman statues housed in the Vatican at the time points to the trend of antique influence in the visual arts as well as the musical in the seventeenth century.

Earlier Florentine Classical Influence

In the visual arts, the use of subject matter from ancient Greece and Rome was a prevalent trend even before the seventeenth century. Through the Renaissance in Italy, painters and sculptors drew on ancient Greek and Roman stories as inspiration for their subjects. In Florence, the use of subjects of antiquity spans from the work of Sandro Botticelli (c. 1445-1510) in the early Renaissance in his *Birth of Venus* and *Primavera* to later more stylistically divergent paintings in the sixteenth century Florence, such as Bronzino's (1503-1572) *Venus, Cupid, Folly, and Time*.[109] In sculpture as well, antique subjects abounded through the fifteenth

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[109] Paul Barolsky, "Ovid's Metamorphose and the History of Baroque Art," in *A Handbook to the Reception of Ovid*, ed. John F. Miller and Carole E. Newlands (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2014), 203.

century, for example, Bartolommeo Bandinelli's (1488-1560) *Hercules and Caucus*. More significantly than subject matter drawn from the ancients, architecture in the sixteenth century had already begun to incorporate models of ancient temples and structures into modern buildings, as other visual arts and music began to do in the seventeenth century. Fifteenth and sixteenth century architects, such as Donato Bramante (1444-1514) and Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), working in Rome and other parts of Italy modeled their work after the structures of the ancient Greeks and Romans. These earlier uses of classical models and stories in the visual arts in no way diminishes the importance of this influence stretching into the seventeenth century. Continued interest and dissemination of classical sources among various social classes and the formation of academic societies with an interest in learning more about these antique texts are just some of the reasons that the influence of antiquity persisted into the seventeenth century.[110] The use of the classical trends and models in the seventeenth century represents a natural continuation and maturation of these antique influences as they began to impact the visual arts more completely and expand their influence into musical form and structure of the seventeenth century.

Seventeenth Century Florence to Rome

Florence was a center for musical innovation in the early seventeenth century in the creation of what is called today opera through the first performances of *Euridice*. Florence did not, however, represent a center of innovation for the visual arts in the same way in the early seventeenth century. Artistic innovations and trends of examining the works of the Greeks and Romans and incorporating their elements into modern work emerged in the visual arts in Rome,

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[110] For circulation of antique sources in Italy, see Lorenzo Biaconi and Thomas Walker, "Production, Consumption, and Political Function of Seventeenth Century Opera" in *Early Music History* (Volume 4, 1948, 209-296), 253. For formation of academic societies, see Blocker, "The Accademia degli Alterati."

not Florence, during this time. Visual artists during the seventeenth century often traveled to

Rome to study and work there, as a result of both availability of patronage from the Vatican, and

the high demand for artistic output from individuals and powerful families centered in Rome.

Though these artists often traveled to Rome to work under religious figures, not all art in demand

at the time was overtly religious in nature. In addition to opportunities to work on religious

subjects to adorn chapels and churches, Rome offered the opportunity to take private

commissions from individuals who were often connected with the church. These individuals,

often cardinals or other higher-ranking church figures, often commissioned secular work to

adorn their private properties. It is in these non-religious works (though often created for

religious figures) that the influence of antiquity becomes most evident. Pope Urban VIII (r.1623-

1644), Maffeo Barberini, was an active patron of the arts during both his time as a cardinal, and

once he gained the papacy. During his reign, other cardinals in Rome, such as Cardinal Scipione

Borghese (1577-1633), and Cardinal Odoardo Farnese (1573-1626), also actively funded the

visual arts both publicly and personally. Additionally, Rome offered the opportunity to observe

and study the collections of ancient Greek and Roman art on display at the Vatican, including

works such as the *Apollo Belvedere,* a second century Roman copy of a lost Greek statue.[111]

Artists working in Rome had the unique opportunity to study and model their work off of the

Vatican's collection, and synthesize not only the stories of antiquity, but also techniques of

antiquity into their work. The combination of centralized patronage in one city and the unique

opportunity to study the work of ancient Rome and Greece, in some cases to working as a

"restorer of antiques," filling in missing portions of newly discovered ancient statues to be

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[111] Ann Thomas Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid: Expanding the Concept of Metamorphosis," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Winter, 2000): 390.

displayed, created an appealing environment for artists of the time.[112] As a result of this promising environment, artists were continually drawn to Rome during this time, and it became the center of innovation for the visual arts, just as Florence was for music. The most influential artistic trends in Italy during this period came from Rome and will be examined in the remainder of this chapter.

Bernini Introduction

One of the most important artists working in Rome through the seventeenth century was sculptor, architect, and painter Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680). Known for helping to establish what would become known as the Baroque sculpture style and for his extensive work for the papacy in Rome between the years of 1623 and 1665, including sculptures, work in Saint Peter's Basilica, and numerous fountains and other architectural features around Rome, Bernini stands out as the quintessential Roman artist of this period. Born in Naples, the young Bernini was brought to Rome at the age of 11 to be presented to the Pope Paul V as a child prodigy, and subsequently placed under the care of Cardinal Maffeo Barberini, (later become Pope Urban VIII), Bernini's most important patron. Bernini's education continued under the then-cardinal, and in addition to studies of ancient works of literature, Bernini was exposed to the collection of antique statues in Rome, and worked as a statue "restorer" during his earlier years in Rome, filling in missing portions of ancient statues.[113]

Bernini's Ovidian Subjects

Bernini's body of work is diverse, spanning both architecture and statue, with subjects both secular and religious. His statues inspired by the work of Ovid are some of the best examples of the use of subject and ideas of antiquity in the visual arts of the seventeenth century. The two

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[112] Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid," 393-394.
[113] Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid," 393-394.

best known of his Ovidian works are the statues *Apollo and Daphne* (1622-25), depicting the

moment in which Daphne, fleeing the god Apollo, cries out to her river-god father for an escape

and is turned into a laurel tree, found in Book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*, and *The Rape of*

Proserpina (1622), depicting Pluto's violent capture of the goddess Proserpina to take her to the

underworld to be his wife, found in Book 5 of the *Metamorphoses*, along with Ovid's *Fasti*, and

other ancient Greek sources, including the *Homeric Hymns*. These are not Bernini's only statues

inspired by the myths of the Greece and Rome. Bernini's earliest known sculpture, likely created

close to the time Bernini first came to Rome, is also antique in subject, depicting the infant Zeus,

called *The Goat Amalthea Nursing the Infant Zeus with a Faun* (c. 1609-1615).[114] In addition, his

bust of Medusa, statues *Aeneas, Anchises, and Ascanius* (1618-1619) and *Neptune and Triton*

(1622-1633), also depict subjects drawn from the stories of antiquity. The classical influence in

art from Rome during the seventeenth century emerged not only because of the art of antiquity

housed there, but because the intellectual climate in Rome was both familiar with the art and

literature of antiquity, and inclined to study and interpret it, similar to the trends of examining

ancient texts in the contemporary academic societies in Florence.[115]

Antique Subjects in Painting

The use of classical subjects by a Roman artist is not a unique feature of the work of

Bernini. The work of well-known painter Anibale Carracci (1560-1609), though slightly earlier

in the sixteenth century, features subjects drawn from the stories of antiquity, such as *Hercules at*

the Crossroads (1596), and *Venus, Adonis, and Cupid* (c.1595). Additionally, Carracci's best-

known group of frescos, decorating the ceiling of the Pallazzo Farnese in Rome depict scenes

from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the fresco group called *Loves of the Gods*, containing the fresco

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[114] Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid," 394-396.
[115] Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid," 384.

The Triumph of Bacchus. This fresco group was commissioned by Cardinal Odoardo Farnese (1573-1626), a further example of how the patronage of the Vatican and its members drew artists to Rome. Carracci's student, Guido Reni (1575-1642) also demonstrates this classical influence, especially in his frescos commissioned between 1612 and 1614 by Cardinal Scipione Borghese. The center of the fresco group depicts the god Apollo in his chariot at dawn, another example of the use of a Greek subject in a seventeenth century work of art.

Influences of Form on Bernini's work

In addition to the influence of the myths of antiquity in subject matter of the visual arts, the sculptor Bernini had the opportunity to draw from the design and structure of ancient sculpture in his own work since he was working in Rome and had access to the Vatican's collection of sculptures. More than just the ability to study these works of art, Bernini had the opportunity to work closely with these ancient works, repairing broken parts and attempting to recreate missing parts.[116] Consequently, Bernini's mature work not only reflects subject matter drawn from the literature of antiquity, but stylistic characteristics mirroring the antique statues which he studied and repaired. One of the most obvious ways that Bernini draws from his forerunners is in his depiction of the character of Apollo. *Apollo Belvedere*, a statue of the god Apollo with which Bernini was surely familiar, is Roman copy of a lost Greek statue, and had been in the Vatican's collection since 1503.[117] Paul Barolsky points out that the similarities between the faces of *Apollo Belvedere* and Bernini's Apollo in his *Apollo and Daphne* leave no room to doubt that Bernini was at least in part influenced by his Roman forerunner. Barolsky points out, however, that rather than copying the stoic Roman Apollo, Bernini animates his Apollo in the action of his

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[116] Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid," 393-394.
[117] Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid," 390.

pursuit of Daphne.[118] This animated Apollo points to another trend that Bernini draws from antiquity: imbibing his statues with motion, sculpting them in this moment of motion.

The use of the figure in motion drawn from classical models is further exemplified in Bernini's depiction of the biblical character of David. Bernini's *David* (1623-1624) likely drew inspiration from the ancient Greek *Gladiator* statue found in the Borghese collection after its discovery in 1611.[119] This Greek statue depicts the life size figure caught in the middle of action. Similarly, the *David* of Bernini is portrayed as the figure moves to release and throw a stone forward. This trend of figures motion, as shown in ancient statues, is a sharp break from previous depictions of David from just the generation earlier: the two most famous David statues, the *David* of Donatello and the *David* of Michelangelo are both depicted standing motionless. That despite such models, Bernini chose to depict his David in motion similar to the Greek *Gladiator* statue points back to the incorporation of antique style elements into modern work in the seventeenth century. The same sculpting of human motion is found in Bernini's other works, including *Pluto and Proserpina*, which clearly depicts Proserpina's physical struggle against her abductor, the same physical motion found in earlier Greek statues.

Depiction of Moment of Transformation

In his Ovidian statues, Bernini not only incorporates the motion present in *David* and the Borghese *Gladiator*, but also carefully chooses the moment of the stories from which his subjects come to portray. In these type statues, specifically *Apollo and Daphne*, Bernini chooses to depict the exact moment of transformation, the moment when Daphne, fleeing from Apollo, begins to become a tree. The motion depicted in Apollo and Daphne is twofold: the first level of motion is the human motion of the physical chase, Apollo with one foot off the ground in pursuit

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[118] Barolsky, "Ovid's Metamorphose and the History of Baroque Art," 208.
[119] Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid," 394.

of Daphne. Daphne herself, however, contains this second layer of motion. In addition to fleeing

from her pursuer, the figure of Daphne stretches up, as she is transformed into the laurel tree, her

final escape from Apollo. The motion of Daphne is not only the physical strain of running away

from Apollo, but the process of the physical change that she undergoes. Art historian Paul

Barolsky points out that by depicting the moment of metamorphoses, Bernini plays into the

central Ovidian themes of change and transformation by suggesting multiple levels of

metamorphoses in his statues: first, the transformation of Daphne into the laurel tree, as Ovid

relates, but also of the stone of the sculpture into human flesh and blood. Barolsky goes on to

draw parallels between Bernini and Ovid's character Pygmalion, the sculptor who creates a

statue so life-like that he falls in love with it, only for it to be brought to life by Aphrodite, found

in Book 10 of the *Metamorphoses*. By transforming the stone into such lifelike figures, Barolsky

points out that Bernini not only seems to become a modern Pygmalion, but also a modern Ovid,

by both creating the story and the transformation within it.[120]

Conclusion

The innovations in opera in Florence and the trends in Roman sculpture during the

beginning of the seventeenth century demonstrate the trend of both music and art looking back to

the models of antiquity for inspiration. *Euridice* not only draws upon the story of Orpheus found

in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* for plot, but also attempts to recreate the style of theater of the Greeks

by meticulously following the directions for good story and production laid out by Aristotle in

the *Poetics*. A similar turn to the ancients appears in most prominent and innovative visual arts

of the same time: the non-religious sculptures of Bernini depict subjects also found in Ovid's

stories or other Greek literary sources, such as in his *Apollo and Daphne* and *Pluto and*

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[120] Paul Barolsky, "Bernini and Ovid," Notes in the History of Art, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Fall 1996): 29-31.

Proserpina, and the form of his work, specifically his depictions of figures in action, such as his

David, take inspiration from recently discovered Greek statues depicting figures in motion. That

this trend of antique influence appears in both music and the visual arts in the early seventeenth

century demonstrates a connection in the visual arts and musical culture of this time: that they

both turned to the Greece and Rome for inspiration and innovation in their work.

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CHAPTER IV:

Mediation to Meditation: The Development and Effects of the Mediated Audience Experience

Introduction

In his foundational art treatise *The Principles of Art History*, published in 1951, Heinrich Wölfflin posits a few changes that marked the transition from the Renaissance style to the Baroque style, including a transition from a linear style to a recessional style, and a transition from clarity to obscurity.[121] These changes created a unique viewing experience for the audience -- the eye was intentionally guided through the work and therefore through the mental act of processing and internalizing the work that the viewer was seeing. In other words, the viewer experience was intentionally mediated by the choices of the artist. One of the most apparent ways that the experience of the audience was directed in the visual arts was through the use of illusionary techniques to bring the viewer into a conscious experience with the painting. Mediation through illusion in Baroque art is impossible to escape. The rediscovery of perspective and other technical advances both in sculpting and paining have made illusion a defining feature in the art produced during the seventeenth century, especially in painting. The rediscovery of perspective, or what Wölfflin terms "recessional" tendencies, allowed the viewers perception of space to be exploited by the artist, controlling the experience of seeing and creating intentional interaction between the viewer and the art.

Although the viewer's experience of obscurity through mediation is discussed extensively for the Baroque visual arts, this same idea has received less attention in terms of music.[122] These

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[121] Heinrich Wölfflin, *The Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art*, trans. M. D. Hottinger (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1950), 14-15.

[122] Sources that address the mediated audience experience in the visual arts include Wölffin, *The Principles of Art History,* Martin, John Rupert Martin, "The Baroque from the Point of View of the Art Historian," in *The Journal of*

same principles of controlling the experience and mental process of the audience through obscurity are equally present in music, though temporally rather than visually. The rules of sixteenth-century counterpoint gave way to both melodic and harmonic complexity, new instrumental virtuosity, and new chamber group genres and styles in the seventeenth century. These changes challenged the listener to an aural exploration of the created harmonic world of the composer: obscurity, again mediated by the artist. In many ways, aural realization of the written music became as illusionary as the visual arts: as string instruments developed, a single instrument could "self accompany," creating the illusion of an underlying harmonic line. In small ensembles, range was exploited to create a tonal space for the listener, and with the development of theme and variation, themes gradually became more hidden, or obscured, as variations progressed. Just as in the visual arts, these approaches were made possible by new technical advances: to create dense and wandering harmonic progressions, with the illusion of moving back to tonic but escaping, tonality needed time to develop into what we know it as today, and for the instrumental illusions that have made Baroque pieces a favorite among string players (such as multiple stopping), the actual instruments needed to develop new versatility and precision.

This discussion of the mediated audience experience in both the visual arts and music is just one example of the importance and benefits of discussing the two disciplines side by side. Although audience experience, and how the eye and the brain process what is seen is widely discussed element of the visual baroque, there is very little work done on the same concept in the musical Baroque. Although the mediated audience experience permeates the music as much as

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Aesthetics and Art Criticism 14, (no. 2, 1955: 164-171), and Eric Van Shaak, *Baroque Art In Italy*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964).

the visual, it is an aspect easy to overlook unless musical study is taken in conjunction with similar studies of the visual arts.

Rome

In Rome during the early seventeenth century under the Catholic Church, the goal of the mediation of the audience experience was simple: to bring to the people a personal and involved religious experience. In the wake of the Protestant reformation, not only did the Catholic Church seek to strengthen the religious devotion of its faithful, but also sponsor majestic, awe-inspiring and deeply meditational art. The church and its ruling families also sought to reinforce their own power and authority through both thinly veiled cultural or political messages and by strengthening the religious faith and personal experience of the common people, all through art. The mediational experience of the audience appears in both art and music funded by the church and its powerful members in early seventeenth-century Rome. In the visual arts, one such common artistic strategy to direct the viewer experience was the use of illusion to create larger seeming spaces or pieces. To find this trend of illusion in the visual arts, one must only look up: ceiling paining, with perspective reaching to the sky and into the heavens pointed the viewer to mediation of the grander of the divine, to whom they themselves were connected through the church space itself. The mediated experience of music serves a similar purpose: to connect the audience to the religious experience by moving them to meditation through aural engagement.

Illusionistic Ceilings

It is in these illusionistic ceilings, both those for private families and those in churches, that the mediated viewer experience is most clearly demonstrated in the visual arts. In his article on the Baroque, art historian John Rupert Martin observes that these illusionistic ceiling paintings created an unbroken illusion of space reaching up to the heavens, creating an implied unity

between the heavens and the earth.[123] Consequently, the parishioner, as Martin writes,

"experiences something of the thrill of release from the narrow confines of the material world, by

subconsciously identifying himself with the figures who are represented as being swept upward

into the celestial glory" when viewing these works of art.[124] This was precisely the personal,

emotional religious experience that the Catholic church was attempting to create. Here, it

achieved this aim through the illusion of reaching to and connecting the viewer with the heavens.

Though the subjects and content of these paintings were detailed and ornate themselves, the

illusion of joining the earth to the heavens was by far the most important aspect- the aspect upon

which the mediated viewer experience and subsequent emotional response depended. The

effectiveness of the work depended entirely on the effectiveness of the illusion: artists were so

aware of this dependency that Pietro da Cortona, painter of the illusionistic ceiling in the

Barberini palace glorifying Pope Urban VIII, redid almost the entire ceiling when it was nearly

finished after seeing it from the floor, presumably after realizing that the illusionary aspect was

not convincing in connecting the viewer to the heavens from the ground.[125]

The illusion, however, is more complex than these ceilings simply extending up into

eternity: to create the illusion of unbroken space, continuations of the physical architecture are

pained into the ceiling, appearing to extend the actual physical structure of the church into the

sky as well, a practice called *trompe l'oeil*.[126] This principle of blending architecture with

painting so that it was often difficult to tell where one ended and the other began is a feature that

appears often in these large ceiling paintings in Rome during the first part of the seventeenth

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[123] John Rupert Martin, "The Baroque from the Point of View of the Art Historian," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 14, no. 2 (1955): 169.

[124] Martin, "The Baroque from the Point of View of the Art Historian," 169.

[125] John Beldon Scott, "The Art of the Painter's Scaffold, Pietro Da Cortona in the Barberini Salone." *The Burlington Magazine* 135, no. 1082 (1993): 334-336.

[126] Liselotte Anderson, *Baroque and Rococo Art*, (New York: Harry N. Abrahams Inc, 1969) 17.

century. Later, this technique spread to other areas, most notably Germany.[127] Though this type

of painting appears most often in Catholic Churches, the techniques spread both through and

beyond the Roman churches, into other facets of the Catholic Church and into privately funded

art. *The Triumph of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, a massive but slightly less effective illusionistic

ceiling painting (the church was so big that the illusion appeared wrong from most viewpoints)

adorns the ceiling of the central Jesuit church in Rome, the Church of St. Ignatius of Loyola.[128]

This ceiling painting is one of the most famous religious examples of these illusionistic

techniques.

These illusionary techniques were not confined only to churches: Pietro da Cortona's

Glorification of Urban VIII's Reign, is painted not in a church at all, but in the private palace of

the Barberini family. The ceiling takes an allegorical look at the successes of the most prominent

member of the family, Pope Urban VIII.[129] Although perhaps most apparent in these ceilings,

illusions of space in the visual arts in the early seventeenth century were not confined to just the

ceiling. Similar illusionary techniques to those used in ceiling painting, including illusion of

space and the combination of real and painted elements, appeared in opera scenery later in the

seventeenth century, discussed at length previously in Chapter II of this thesis. Other spatial

illusions permeated the visual arts, including the use of mirrors reflecting things outside the

frame of the paining, and elements which seem to move towards the viewer beyond the frame,

which both brought the viewer into the experience of the painting and guided his eye into and

through it.[130] Art historian John Rupert Martin points out that paintings by both Velasquez and

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[127] Ellis Waterhouse, *Italian Baroque Painting* (Greenwich, CT: Phaidon Publishers Inc., 1962), 69.

[128] Waterhouse, *Italian Baroque Painting*, 75.

[129] Eric Van Schaack, *Baroque Art in Italy* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), 39.

[130] Martin, "The Baroque from the Point of View of the Art Historian," 169.

Vermeer utilize mirrors to create spatial illusion.[131] Landscape painting also, including work by

Carracci and Poussin, exemplifies spatial illusions as the eye of the viewer is guided back

through the landscape to the horizon.[132] These ceilings are perhaps the best example of the

mediation of the viewer experience during this time, both as a result of the illusion of space and

the strong emotional response that the exploitation of perspective produced in the viewer. Upon

looking up, the viewer would see himself connected to the open heavens, inspiring a sense of

personal piety, religious connection, and devotion to the church proper, since it the church

building itself connected the viewer to the heavens.

Mediated Musical Experience

The mediated viewer experience, however, was not unique to the visual arts during this

time. Mediation in music was achieved through intentional use of musical form to direct the

listeners thoughts, the use of aural dimensionality, and the use of the improvisatory style. All of

these elements are clearly demonstrated in the music of Italian-born composer Girolamo

Frescobaldi (1583-1643). Through his use of both theme and variation and other effects,

including textural, spatial and ornamental, Frescobaldi creates an intentionally mediated listener

experience. Like painters discussed earlier in this chapter, such as Pietro da Cortona, Frescobaldi

spent the final portion of his life under Barberini patronage. Frescobaldi is best remembered for

his brilliant keyboard writing, as one of only a Roman few keyboard players that left behind any

significant body of written work. Alexander Silbiger posits that that most of the keyboard

tradition in Rome at the time was based upon improvisatory, and therefore un-notated, work.[133]

Frescobaldi's work, although notated, demonstrates the improvisatory style of contemporary

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[131] Martin, "The Baroque from the Point of View of the Art Historian," 169.

[132] Martin, "The Baroque from the Point of View of the Art Historian," 168-169.

[133] Alexander Silbiger, "The Roman Frescobaldi Tradition, C. 1640-1670," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 33, no. 1 (1980): 50.

keyboard music: the keyboard music that he is best remembered for, specifically his toccatas, worked to capture the idiomatic, improvisatory style in notated form. That the music was thought out and notated, however, is a crucial part of Frescobaldi's importance. By writing out the improvisatory style with clarity and intent, Frescobaldi elevated the solo keyboard style to a place of affective impact in which the musical experience of the listener was directed intentionally, or mediated, just as the experience of the viewer of the illusionistic ceilings was. Instead of only a technical, improvised piece, Frescobaldi transformed keyboard music into an *affective* tool to impact the listener, as the experience of the music was intentionally controlled by the composer.[134] The listener would be drawn into the soundscape that the music created, and into intentional meditation on the themes and materials within it.

Frescobaldi Examples

The genre of the toccata was one of the first genres of idiomatic piano music. The toccata was an improvisatory keyboard piece that alternated between fugal and chordal textures, functioning prior to Frescobaldi's influence as an improvisatory technical piece.[135] These toccatas had many functions in the seventeenth century: music for alms and liturgy, preludes to larger pieces, stand alone, or specifically the introductory toccatas (*intonazione*) set pitch for vocalists, appearing often in the church space and service.[136] Frescobaldi notated and published this previously improvisatory genre only, and in his notated form, captured the idiomatic improvisatory style on paper.[137] In capturing this idiomatic style on paper, Frescobaldi could then intentionally organize the elements of the improvisatory performance into an affective

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[134] Rebecca Cypess, "Frescobaldi's Toccate E Partite... Libro Primo (1615–1616) as a Pedagogical Text. Artisanship, Imagination, and the Process of Learning." *Recercare* 27, no. 1/2 (2015): 103. www.jstor.org/stable/26381196.
[135] Manfred F. Bukofzer, *Music in the Baroque Era: From Monteverdi to Bach* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company Inc. 1947), 47.
[136] Bukofzer, *Music in the Baroque Era,* 47.
[137] Cypess, "Frescobaldi's Toccate E Partite... Libro Primo (1615–1616) as a Pedagogical Text," 103.

musical composition. One way that Frescobaldi intentionally organized this improvisatory style

of playing was by moving the idiomatic elements of the toccata into a theme and variation form,

one change that will be important later in this discussion. In his notation of the toccata form and

intentional planning of its effect on the audience, Frescobaldi transformed the toccata form from

a technical piece to a piece of intentional emotional impact on the audience.[138] The canzona was

another important idiomatic keyboard genre transformed by Frescobaldi to create an

intentionally mediated experience for the audience. The canzona form was characterized by

contrasting sections of imitative and chordal themes, often featuring sprightly themes. These

contrasting sections coupled with multiple themes, however, often led to a complete lack of unity

within a piece.[139] In addition to imbibing the canzona genre with his masterful idiomatic writing,

Frescobaldi also introduced the theme and variation structure, also used in the toccatas, to the

canzonas to bring unity to the works.[140] A closer look at Frescobaldi's brilliant toccatas and

canzonas demonstrates the mediated audience experience through music in the seventeenth

century.

    Both the toccatas and Frescobaldi's lesser known, but still important instrumental canzonas

demonstrate what we may term illusions of aural dimensionality. Although often overshadowed

by discussions of chromaticism or form, the dimensionality of listening is an important factor in

the mediated affective power of Frescobaldi's music. Within the toccatas, Fredrick Hammond

briefly discusses range, or tonal space. For this discussion, range refers to the outer limits of the

pitches used within the piece, the tonal space within the piece resides. Frescobaldi's Toccata VI

will be used as a case study of how this concept of range is used in Frescobaldi's keyboard music

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[138] Bukofzer, *Music in the Baroque Era,* 47.
[139] Bukofzer, *Music in the Baroque Era,* 50.
[140] Bukofzer, *Music in the Baroque Era,* 50.

to create aural dimensionality. Hammond discusses how, in these seventeenth century keyboard toccatas, range was of new importance, and often established in the opening of each piece. With the establishment of this tonal space and limits, however, came the natural potential to break out of it to reach new heights, or in this case, new pitches. Hammond refers to Toccata VI as an example of a tonal space that is created at the outset, but exceeded (or, as Hammond writes, "shattered") later in the piece to great impact.[141] The affective experience that this breaking of tonal barriers creates for the listener is yet another example of intentional mediation of the listener experience by the composer. Compare this shattering of barriers of tonal space to the response of the listener to the illusionistic ceilings that exceed the boundaries of the room which they cover to stretch up to the heavens, drawing this viewer in and up. The effect of both on the listener is similar in music: when the tonal barriers are shattered through the intentional planning by the composer, the listener is drawn emotionally "up" to a place of mediation and spiritual awareness through the affective impact of the music.

The effects used in Frescobaldi's instrumental canzonas demonstrate a different kind of illusion of space than that of tonal space. Frescobaldi's canzonas emphasized new kinds of instrumental effects, the trill, for example, but the most important of these effects, it might be argued, is the use of the "echo effect." These canzonas mark the first time in Frescobaldi's output that dynamics appear in his music, side by side with other conversational, spatial, musical effects, such as passing of subject and countersubject between two parts.[142] These effects feature prominently throughout Frescobaldi's collections of canzonas, but appear most notably in the four-part canzonas added in a later edition of the works for the viol consort of Francesco

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[141] Fredrick Hammond, *Girolamo Frescobaldi: An Extended Biography* (Harvard University Press, 1983), last modified 2019, http://girolamofrescobaldi.com, 13.20.

[142] See Hammond, *Girolamo Frescobaldi*, 16.17, for discussion of dynamics in Frescobaldi's canzonas. See Hammond, *Girolamo Frescobaldi*, 16.20 for discussion of other spatial effects in Frescobaldi's canzonas.

Barberini, published in 1634.[143] The use of the echo technique to create the illusion of physical

space foreshadowed the use of this same technique in the slightly later concerto and concerto

grosso forms which developed through the rest of the Baroque period, and reflected similarities

to the effects used in contemporary polychoirs developed in Venice by Adrian Willaert and used

later by Giovanni Gabrieli.[144] Frescobaldi's canzonas, and other works that used similar effects

demonstrate the mediation of the composer subtly, but in an important way. By creating an aural

"space," Frescobaldi invites the listener to consciously enter the tonal space and actively engage

with the music.

These effects of dimensionality, both physical and tonal, serve the same purpose as the

grandeur of the illusionistic ceilings: to draw the listener in and, in the case of religious music,

such as the toccatas, to inspire devotion and meditation. During the services, most of the actions

performed by the priest were almost completely without congregational participation, with the

most sacred parts performed exclusively by the priest. During these non-participatory portions of

the service, music was played. Consequently, the job of the musician was to create an active

religious experience on which the public could focus their throughs, since they simply observed

most parts of the service.[145] It is only natural then, that the goal of the musical content of the

service, and therefore, the goal of the mediation of the composer, should be to inspire feelings of

personal religious meditation, to bring the thoughts of the congregation into the service. These

feelings of mediation and devotion served the same purpose as the illusionistic ceilings: to bring

the viewer into union with the divine, through mental participation in the service. Rebecca

Cypess discusses how the toccatas, specifically those toccatas in theme and variation form,

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[143] Hammond, *Girolamo Frescobaldi*, 16.39-16.41.
[144] Manfred F. Bukofzer, *Music in the Baroque Era: From Monteverdi to Bach*. (New York: W. W. Norton and Company Inc. 1947) 51.
[145] Hammond, *Girolamo Frescobaldi*, 3.19.

provide an example of how music could do more than simply bring the listener into conscious attention to the service and music – this music could inspire true religious mediation for the seventeenth century listener.[146] She posits that, as a result of new philosophies of learning developing in the seventeenth century, there was a move towards learning based repetition of the same idea in new ways, based on the newly popular idea that there are multiple and new ways to perceive the world.[147] The theme and variation form of the toccatas created this type of learning structure for the listener by teaching the theme to the audience as it was presented in many different ways through the techniques of variation. This process of meditating on the theme as it was disguised in variations reflected the emphasis of the time on learning through new perspectives.[148] It became the composer's job to guide the listener through this experience of mediation through listening to these theme and variation toccatas, and the toccatas themselves became a mediation and direction of the listeners experience. It was with these philosophies of learning and religious purposes in mind that Frescobaldi composed his theme and variation toccatas.

Although perhaps not one of the most thoroughly discussed aspects of either the visual or musical seventeenth-century artistic Italian trends, the use of an intentionally mediated audience experience through both musical form and illusions of space becomes apparent when observing the visual and musical output of the time. Despite differences in how this mediation is achieved, the goal is the same in both types of art: to draw in the audience into an involved experience with the art and to illicit feelings of response and participation. These feelings then inspire a strengthened devotion to the intended institution, who had often funded this art -- most

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[146] Cypess, "Frescobaldi's Toccate E Partite... Libro Primo (1615–1616) as a Pedagogical Text," 125-126.
[147] Cypess, "Frescobaldi's Toccate E Partite... Libro Primo (1615–1616) as a Pedagogical Text," 123.
[148] Cypess, "Frescobaldi's Toccate E Partite... Libro Primo (1615–1616) as a Pedagogical Text," 138.

often the Catholic Church, but occasionally, as in the case of the Cortona ceiling, the Barberini

family. In the case of the ceilings, the viewer is drawn up into union with the divine heavens, and

in the case of music, the listener is drawn into participation with the church, the earthly reflection

of the divine. This personal, involved experience was in no way an accident: through carefully

curated paintings and music, the artist, be he composer, painter, or even performer, mediates and

directs the experience of the audience to these lofty goals. The mediation of both the musical and

the artistic experience served to produce feeling of intensity, devotion, and wonder in their

audiences.

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Chapter V

CONCLUSION

Though art and music are often studied separately, a study of the two together illuminates similarities between them that are often missed otherwise. This combined study is especially fruitful in looking at the arts of seventeenth century Italy. A close study of the arts and music of seventeenth century Italy demonstrates multiple points of intersection between these two areas. One of the most apparent intersections of the music and the visual is in the development of opera. By the time opera reached its height in Venice, the musical and visual elements of opera were of equal importance in drawing audiences to competing theaters. For the Barberini court operas, the visual served an important function—to add memorability and gravitas to the themes of the performance, which were often directed to specific dignitaries in order to influence their actions in the uncertain political climate of the seventeenth century. Opera represents an intentional blending of the musical and the visual into a cohesive artistic product that could then be used as propaganda, entertainment, or commodity. Although opera is perhaps the most apparent point of intersection between the music and the visual in seventeenth century Italy, it was by no means the only connection.

The influence of and use of material of antiquity is another important point of intersection in music and art of the seventeenth century. Many early operas, including *Euridice*, *Dafne*, and Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* drew their subject material from Greek and Roman sources. In addition, the genre of opera emerged as an attempt to recreate the theater of the ancient Greeks based upon close reading of Aristotle's *Poetics*. The visual arts too were influenced by the arts of antiquity. Subjects of paintings and sculptures were often drawn from ancient Greek and Roman literature, notably Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. One important example of these antique subjects portrayed in

the visual arts are Bernini's Ovidian sculptures, which include *Pluto and Proserpine* and *Apollo and Daphne*. In addition, like musicians who created the opera form, the actual forms of these statues based on antique subjects often integrated technical and aesthetic elements found in Greek and Roman statues. The facial features of Bernini's Apollo in *Apollo and Daphne*, for example, bear a distinct resemblance to the ancient Roman *Apollo Belvedere*, which was on display in Rome, and with which Bernini would have been familiar with. This influence of antiquity on both music and art in seventeenth century Italy is another important point of intersection between the two art forms.

A final important point of intersection between art and music in seventeenth century Italy is the intended impact of the art on the audience. Through techniques such as theme and variation in music and illusionistic perspective in painting, the audience was guided through the experience of the work. This guided experience through the work of art, often in the context of the church, then inspired heightened religious experience and devotion in the audience. In church music, the toccatas of Girolamo Frescobaldi are an important example of the theme and variation technique and the use of aural dimensionality to create this experience through music within the church setting. This experience of being guided through the music in a church setting would bring the audience to a point of meditation and connection to the rites of the church. Illusionistic ceilings, such as those that appeared both in churches and in the Barberini Palace inspired similar feelings of meditation and devotion in the audience by visually connecting the viewer to heaven and therefore to the divinity.

The rise of opera, turn to classical sources for inspiration, and intentional mediation of audience experience by artists are just a few of the intersections between music and the visual arts in the seventeenth century in Italy. Though this is not an exhaustive study of all points of

intersection between the two arts, this thesis demonstrates that there are valuable points to be uncovered in a side-by-side study of both music and the visual. Though these areas of interdisciplinary study are largely unexplored area, the Italian baroque is an area where these connections create valuable opportunities to draw connections between these art forms. The seventeenth century in Italy offers many valuable points of intersection between both music and the visual arts.