

## Exam III: Term List

## Jacopo Peri

Singer-composer and a member of the Florentine Camerata. One of the creative forces behind the 1589 Florentine Intermedi and the first operas (*Dafne* and *L'Euridice*) in Florence. Composed most of the music for *L'Euridice*

## Claudio Monteverdi

Northern Italian madrigal composer and composer of early operas. He first worked for the Gonzaga family in Mantua, where *L'Orfeo* was produced, then worked at St. Mark's in Venice. Wrote nine books of madrigals, including the fifth book where he defended his "seconda pratica" against the attacks of the music critic Artusi

## Monody

Solo singing with simple chordal accompaniment

## strophic aria

Arias at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century were, by definition, strophic (using several verses set to the same music) although they could be of different tempos and musical styles

## Ritornello

A tutti instrumental musical passage that returns between sections of a vocal work or solo instrumental work

## Sinfonia

An instrumental section of a vocal work

*L'Euridice* (1600)

One of the first operas; the libretto (by Ottavio Rinuccini) was set by both Caccini and Peri. Produced in Florence for a Medici wedding

*Dafne* (1597)

The earliest opera; produced in Florence and written by Jacopo Peri to a libretto by Rinuccini

*L'Orfeo* (1607)

Monteverdi's first opera and one of the earliest operas. The libretto was by Alessandro Striggio and was in some ways an expanded version of the libretto for *L'Euridice*. Produced in Mantua.

## organo di legno

an organ with wooden pipes; used in dramatic situations for its dark, sombre color

## chitarrone

a bass lute; Monteverdi uses this instrument, along with the organo di legno, as a continuo instrument in *Orfeo's* more tragic sections

## public opera

Opera began playing before a general public in Venice in 1637; from there Venetian operas toured Italy and areas beyond the Alps, bringing Venetian-style opera to other areas

## Antonio Cesti

One of the most celebrated composers of Venetian-style opera. After working in Italy he took a court appointment in Innsbruck and composed Italian operas for the court there (such as *Oronthea*)

*Oronthea*

## Opera by Cesti

## St. Mark's, Venice

Originally the church of the Doge (ruler) of Venice and thus the center of religious and civic public life. Boasted a very large stable of musicians and many of the major composers of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century made their careers there.

## Carnaval

A season in the Church year of feasting, high-living and lavish entertainments. It occurred between the end of Epiphany and the beginning of Lent, the penitential season immediately before Easter. The first public operas in Venice were held during Carnaval.

### Artusi

A music critic and author of *L'Artusi*, a treatise condemning the practices of modern (ca. 1600) madrigal composers, particularly Monteverdi and his madrigal "Cruda Amarilli."

### pastoral drama

a theatrical genre that goes back at least to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, featuring lightweight plots concerning nymphs and shepherds living in Arcadia, or a simple rural utopia. Inspired by pastoral literary genre of classical antiquity. Often featured singing and dancing.

### madrigal cycle

A group of madrigals performed as a set and linked by a common plot, creating a dramatic genre.

### Giulio Caccini

A composer, singer and author of *Le nuove musiche* (1602). He claimed to have invented figured bass (unlikely). Was a great advocate of the use of monody.

### prima pratica (first practice)

the term assigned to the style of Zarlino and Palestrina by Monteverdi and his brother. They called it this to distinguish it from their "seconda pratica"

### seconda pratica (second practice)

Monteverdi referred to his expressive madrigal style of writing in this way, claiming that he did not follow the rules advocated by composers of the "first practice" but followed rules dictated by the text, justifying as expressive any irregularities of harmony and voice leading he might use.

### solo madrigal

A madrigal written for a solo voice and instrumental accompaniment (as in monody). Caccini included several solo madrigals in *Le nuove musiche* and many multi-voiced madrigals were also published as solo madrigals

### Intermedio

A lighter dramatic genre featuring music, dance and spectacle and inserted in between the acts of a serious play. They usually come in sets of six, one between each act of a five act play and one on either end of it. The six are usually linked by their own plot.

*Le nuove musiche* (1602)

A publication by Giulio Caccini that included arias and solo madrigals, directions for singers on ornamentation and a theoretical justification for writing solo vocal music (which Caccini called “monody”)

## Recitar parlando or recitative

A style of monody (accompanied solo song) that was developed to imitate human speech. It was rhythmically and harmonically free.

## Chorus

In early Italian opera, a vocal ensemble or chorus was used in the same way a chorus was used in Greek tragedy: to react and comment on the main action.

## Madrigalism

A distinctive musical gesture that illustrates a striking image in the text of a madrigal (or similar Italian secular work).

Cantata (early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century)

A throughcomposed, sectional work for solo voice and continuo accompaniment setting secular Italian poetry. As in opera, the sections could alternate between recitative, aria and arioso, but the piece was in a single movement

## Barbara Strozzi

A 17<sup>th</sup>-century composer and singer; particularly composed a large number of cantatas.

## Oratorio

A dramatic, unstaged work usually based on a story from the Bible. Resembled operas in that they were musical dramas with arias and recitatives.

## Giacomo Carissimi

An early and highly prolific composer of oratorios; based in Rome.

## Historia di Jephthe

An oratorio by Carissimi; based on the story of Jephtha in the Old Testament.

#### Ostinato

Also called “Ground bass” in English: a short repeating bass line, over which can be written variations; good examples include the last section of the Marini sonata and the Chaconne in the Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre keyboard suite.

#### Tetrachord

Four consecutive pitches; a repeating descending tetrachord came to be a symbol of a lament in the Renaissance and Baroque and can be heard in *Lagrima mia* and at the beginning of the chorus in Carissimi’s *Historia di Jephtha*.

#### Arioso

This term means “like an aria”; it usually means a style of singing that is lyrical and measured like an aria but isn’t very long, so doesn’t form a complete aria.

#### Concerto (early 17<sup>th</sup> century)

At the beginning of the century, the word concerto simply meant different forces performing together (concerto means performing together). It usually meant voices and instruments performing together.

#### Florentine Camerata

A group of intellectuals and scholars in Florence who met to discuss poetry, music, the latest developments in science and scholarship; membership including Jacopo Peri, Giulio Caccini and other figures involved in the Florentine Intermedi of 1589 and the first operas in Florence

#### Encomiastic

A word that means “formally praising;” the Venetian Republic had many state entertainments in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, formally praising the Venetian republic and its values, its leaders and its government

#### Continuo or Basso continuo

System in which a bass line is written out and harmonies are filled in by instruments such as keyboard, lute, guitar by reading the figures written below the bass line. Any instrument that plays the bass line and/or the implied chords above it is part of the continuo group.

#### Figured bass

The notation that appears below a continuo bass line giving the intervals to be played above the bass

#### Heightened repetition

A technique in which text is repeated for dramatic effect and the melody repeats at a higher pitch level, also for greater dramatic intensity.

#### viol

A family of bowed stringed instruments generally having six strings and frets. These could vary in size and included the viola da braccia (played on the arm) and the viola da gamba (held between the legs like a modern cello).

#### unmeasured prelude

A prelude in which note duration is left up to the performer. Generally, preludes are free solo works, often originally improvisatory, and they often open French instrumental dance suites. Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre uses an unmeasured prelude in her suite for clavecin in A minor.

#### Oratorians

A lay religious order that enhanced their prayer services with religious musical dramas to help draw people in. This kind of religious theater, called oratorios, became popular in Rome in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

#### toccata

One of a number of sectional and/or imitative Italian keyboard genres; it began as an improvisatory genre. Frescobaldi, known as a keyboard virtuoso, was also known for his ability to improvise at the keyboard. He also published many of these works in a collection in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

#### ricercare

An Italian keyboard genre that is more strictly imitative than freer genres like the toccata. At first the toccata had several sections, each with its own theme to be imitated. It then developed into a form that used one theme that was treated imitatively throughout the work. This is the ancestor of the fugue.

#### allemande

One of the standard dance types in a Baroque instrumental dance suite. The name literally means “German” although its geographical origin is unknown. It is one of the most figured dance types and is in a moderate duple or quadruple time. It was the most abstract and removed from actual dancing.

courante

One of the standard dance types in a Baroque instrumental dance suite. The courante is usually in a fast triple or compound meter. Often would include shifts between triple and duple called “hemiolas.”

sarabande

One of the standard dance types in a Baroque instrumental dance suite. Originally a suggestive dance from Latin America, in Europe it became a sedate dance in triple meter with the second beat accented.

gigue

One of the standard dance types in a Baroque instrumental dance suite. Originally from the British Isles (“jig”), the gigue is in a fast triple or compound meter, often with opening fugal treatment.

Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre

17<sup>th</sup>-century French harpsichord composer

Girolamo Frescobaldi

17<sup>th</sup>-century Italian harpsichord and organ virtuoso and composer.

Biagio Marini

Sonata

Originally (mid 17<sup>th</sup> century) a work for a solo instrument (sometimes two) and continuo. The sonata was heavily associated with the violin, the preferred melody instrument in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Italy. The work was like an instrumental cantata: throughcomposed, with contrasting sections that showed off the virtuosity of the performer.

By the end of the century the sonata had become a multi movement work and was typically in the form of a trio sonata, or two solo instruments plus continuo (the continuo line was often played by more than one instrument).

Trio sonata

A multi-movement instrumental work for two solo instruments in the upper register and continuo. The continuo part was typically played by a keyboard and a low bowed string instrument, like a cello.

sonata da camera

sonata da chiesa

Instrumental dance suite

a genre that began with lute players in 16<sup>th</sup>-century France; by the 17<sup>th</sup> century the genre was taken over by the harpsichord. Typically it opened with a prelude and included several dance movements, mostly in binary form. Virtually always included an allemande, a courante, a sarabande and a gigue.

agéments

Highly prescribed ornamentation used by French instrumental writers.

clavecin

French for harpsichord.

binary form

the form most commonly associated with dance forms in France in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Includes two sections, A and B, both of which repeat. Typically the A section begins in the tonic and cadences in the dominant. The B section returns at the end to the tonic.

lute

A pear-shaped plucked stringed instrument that has frets. Extremely popular in the Renaissance.

récitatif simple

A style of recitative developed by Lully for operas in French. Featured a system of shifting meters. The downbeat of each new measure corresponded to every strongly accented syllable of the French text.

récitatif mesuré

A style of recitative in French opera that uses a regularly recurring meter (unlike Italian recitative, which is typically unmeasured).

Académie Royale de Musique

The Academy of Music founded by Lully in 1672 and the institution responsible for the production of French operas in Paris. Has existed more or less continuously under different names depending on the government. Commonly referred to as the Paris Opera.

### recitativo secco

Italian recitative that only used harpsichord accompaniment; unlike earlier recitative, it was not meant to be expressive, but mainly to get across plot elements and ordinary dialogue.

### French Overture

The instrumental opening of a French opera (and other works as well). Typically consists of two contrasting parts: the first stately, slow and featuring dotted rhythms and the second faster and imitative. Sometimes an overture would return to the slow section at the end. See overture to *Armide*.

### Overdotting

A performance convention in French Baroque music. It consists of exaggerating dotted relationships so that the short notes are shorter and the long notes longer.

### Sinfonia

An instrumental movement in an Italian multi-movement work. Sinfonias can appear at the opening of a later cantata or of an opera.

### Jean-Baptiste Lully

Italian-born French composer and head of the musical establishment at the court of Louis XIV. The conductor of the “24 violins of the king” or the regular court orchestra. Secured exclusive licensing to present operas in French from the king in 1672. Shaped the style and forms of French opera for decades.

### Louis XIV

King of France from 1661 (effectively) until his death in 1715. Consolidated power from other members of French nobility such that he was able to rule with unprecedented centralized control, and is thus known as an “absolute monarch.” Employed 150-200 musicians in various capacities, including Jean-Baptiste Lully. An avid dancer.

### 24 violins of the king

The court orchestra of Louis XIV. The scoring was in five parts, with the treble and the bass line written out and the three inner parts realized above the bass line. The five-part scoring of various sizes of violins was also that used by Lully in much of his music (see overture to *Armide*).

### Tragédie-lyrique

The label given to opera in France. It emphasizes the general association people still made between opera and Greek tragedy, even at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.