

### Quiz 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 (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

### 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 *Lagrime mie* and at the beginning of the chorus in Carissimi’s *Historia di Jephthe*

### 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 Venice, 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.