

Playing from open score 1: Froberger's Fantasia, FbWV 206.

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Historically Johann Jacob Froberger (1616–1667) is the most important German composer of the seventeenth century, but, with notable exceptions in Cambridge and London¹, the 400th anniversary of Froberger's birth seems to be going off largely un-noticed in the concert life of the UK. The failure of his music to impact audiences (and many players) poses fascinating questions about its intrinsic nature and its reception during his lifetime and since his death. Froberger himself appears to have retreated from the public sphere after 1658 and throughout his life he kept his music out of the hands of the majority of players, whom he, and his disciples, considered ill-equipped to play it and, worse, so ignorant of his unique performance style that they would merely ruin its effect if they did so.

With this reputation in mind, one particular area of his output, the contrapuntal works, has preoccupied my thoughts and playing in 2016, and these, in my opinion, represents some of his best and most remarkable music. Within that genre, the fantasias and ricercars deserve special attention as they tend to be neglected in favour of the more obvious and rhythmically alert canzonas and capriccios, which, amongst players of stringed historical keyboard instruments at least, have themselves been eclipsed, and not without good reason, by the suites and lamentations. To a large extent, Froberger's fantasias and ricercars hide their wit and brilliance behind a deliberately serious costume of minims and semibreves (on first glance, appearing like a 'white' page of 'slow' notes). They are also extremely difficult to play well: their counterpoint must be totally understood and absorbed by the player, then fluently and musically transmuted into sound; their character requires a touch and articulation quite different to the toccata and dance styles; their sparse notation is devoid of further performance instructions (tempo, ornamentation, instrumentation, etc.); and their mode of expression is one of abstraction, complementing, of course, but also starkly contrasting, the personal and touching rubrics and clues contained within many of the suites and lamentations.

The notation of the contrapuntal music in the surviving autograph scores offers a vital but often ignored clue to its texture and performance. There, it is presented in a score of four-staves, not two. This makes the four equal parts, like the voices of a motet, visually explicit and their conceptual origins absolutely and

emphatically clear. Open score notation or *partitura* is the ideal musical format to convey contrapuntal structure and it is superior for study, practice and performance to the usual two-stave reduction used in all the modern editions. The tradition of presenting keyboard fugues in open score began with the Neapolitans and Rocco Rodio's *Libro di ricercate, a 4* (1575), and can be traced between Italy, France and Germany from the later sixteenth century until beyond the time of J.S. Bach (for example, *The Art of fugue*, BWV 1080). My forthcoming article 'Searching Fantasy: Froberger's Fantasias and Ricercars Four Centuries On' in the *Journal of the Royal College of Organists*, Volume 9, November 2016 examines the evidence and arguments behind these observations in more detail. This brief introduction to the topic and the accompanying transcription are offered to BCS Newsletter readers as encouragement to grapple with this taxing but ultimately more satisfying medium.

I have chosen the fantasia, FbWV 206, because of its clear construction and its position as the final and concluding fantasia in the carefully structured set of six which form the *Parte Seconda* of Froberger's *Libro Secondo* (1649). I have transcribed this fantasia directly from the original manuscript which is available online at <http://data.onb.ac.at/dtl/3684669> (image nos. 110–116), and well worth a visit. There, in beautiful colour digital images, we see the composer's clear and definite hand, with the added bonus of the extraordinary illustrated titles drawn by Froberger's childhood friend, Joannes Sautter. These gold and coloured ink embellishments reveal local contemporary taste in visual ornamentation and contrast starkly with the musical scores which are devoid of any embellishment or ornament symbols. The *Libro Secondo* is the first of three companion volumes in Vienna, all presentation copies, the *Libro Quarto* (1656), the *Libro di capricci, e ricercati* (c. 1658), and also of a further autograph volume, the *Liure Primiere. Des Fantasies, Caprices ...* (early 1660s), sold by Sotheby's, London 2006 but which has never been made publicly available.² All are holographs. The *Libro Secondo* has only two systems per page requiring frequent and awkward page turns. These can be easily avoided in modern type setting, however, and the version I offer shows one way this might be achieved. Froberger's contrapuntal keyboard music uses soprano, alto and tenor C-clefs for the upper three parts. Reading C-clefs can be tricky for the less experienced score reader and my transcription uses only the treble and bass clefs familiar to the majority of potential users. A version using the original clefs can be downloaded from my website at http://www.charlston.co.uk/free_sheet_music_downloads.htm.

Froberger's Hexachord Fantasia (FbWV 201), the first in the *Parte Seconda* of his *Libro Secondo*, was probably his best known piece in the seventeenth century. It is

given pride of place as a paradigm 'to all composers of organ music, for imitation' in Athanasius Kircher's monumental *Musurgia universalis* (1650) and was widely copied and, presumably, played.³ Part two of this article, to appear in the next issue, will include an open score transcription of another 'model fugue' printed in the *Musurgia universalis*, Kerll's 'Ricercata in Cylindrum phonotacticum transferenda'. Froberger's Hexachord Fantasia (FbWV 201) is a logical setting off point from which to understand Froberger's other fantasias. It represents an older style of variation technique within its six contrasted fugal sections. The subject and its transformations are shown in Example 1. The variety of contrapuntal and thematic operations between each section is greater and more marked than with the other fantasias (or the ricercars). The other fantasias have fewer sections (either two or three) and show greater economy of ideas and material but a wider range of devices: fugal inversion, stretti, black-note notation, cantus firmus, double fugue and thematic evolution or transformation.

Example 1: Froberger, 'Hexachord' Fantasia, FbWV 201

Froberger's contrapuntal music synthesizes the nominal distinctiveness of the fantasia and ricercar into a single genre reflecting a general trend in which the terms became synonymous and interchangeable for counterpoint of the more serious type (the term 'fugue' was yet to emerge in its high Baroque meaning). Christoph Demantius gives this definition in 1632: "Fantasia is when one connects one fugue with another according to one's own pleasure and thus produces them artistically": a précis of Michael Praetorius and Thomas Morley.⁴ Demantius's definition of ricercar (also taken from Praetorius) concerns the creative effort or imagination of the composer or improviser and is more applicable to the typical Froberger fantasia or ricercar: "Ricerca is a composition whereby a good fugue [i.e. idea or subject] is industriously and thoroughly examined [and] in many ways combined with itself, interwoven, duplicated, etc., [in short,] brought together in an artistic and orderly way and carried through to the end."⁵ For Kircher, this is not just a type of piece but a style. About the *stylus phantasticus* he says: "It is the most free and unfettered method of composition, bound to nothing, neither to words, nor to a harmonious subject. It is organised with regard to manifest invention, the hidden reason of harmony, and an ingenious, skilled connection of harmonic phrases and fugues".⁶ An apprentice of Kircher, Froberger not surprisingly displays his unbounded 'fantasy' through all his keyboard music, not least by exploring the numerous possibilities of counterpoint. He chooses a different type of theme for each of his fantasias (and for the ricercars, for that matter) to generate a variety of polyphonic development and musical discourse. Each theme is an interrogative proposition to be considered from many angles and eloquently argued: an unresolved puzzle which cannot stand alone from the composition in which it is expressed.

Fantasia FbWV 206 and its immediate predecessor, FbWV 205, are both in the third psalm tone then used by the Roman Catholic Church which became the modern key of A minor.⁷ Such pairing of pieces within collections is quite common and Froberger reinforces it at deeper levels too. Both represent two different aspects of the old modal system, which contemporary contrapuntists would have been particularly alert to: the authentic and plagal form of each mode which carried with them distinct expectations of melodic shape and expressive mood. Zarlino, writing at the end of the sixteenth century, linked rising motion with the authentic mode and falling motion with the plagal, and, later, Bononcini characterises them "lively" and "sad".⁸ While Froberger's themes conduct a more subtle gamesmanship than these rather obvious statements suggest, FbWV 205 and 206 (see Examples 2 and 3) do indeed complement and comment upon each other, as do the other fantasias of the 1649 set when considered as a compendious unit.

Example 2: Froberger, Fantasia, FbWV 205

Example 3: Froberger, Fantasia, FbWV 206

FbWV 206 is a little more straight-forward than its companions, and its two sections use the same duple metre. It is based upon a single, cross-shaped subject which is introduced rather conventionally in the first section and then developed more freely in the second. The subject is the most angular melody of the set and contains three melodic leaps, a minor sixth, a diminished fourth and a perfect fifth (cantus, bars 1–3). The three conjunct notes (*g*-sharp, *a*, and *b*) and the semitone step (*e* to *f*) form the kernel of the new idea in the second section, a regular countersubject which combines with the opening subject and itself (cantus, bars 32–34) and dominates the second section with close imitation and stretto. See Example 3. These motivic cells assume increasing importance as piece as it unfolds and were presumably a stock in trade of Froberger's extemporisations. Like the derivation of later material from the opening theme which is used, for example, in the preceding fantasia, FbWV 205, they are

fundamental to Froberger's compositional process. It is also typical of Froberger to repeat his melodic formulae, especially to begin successive phrases, the musical equivalent of *anaphora*, or *imitatione sciolta*, as Zarlino called it.⁹

The transcription uses accidentals according to seventeenth-century practise: each sharp applies for one note only, not the remainder of the bar. Cautionary accidentals are shown within round brackets. Whole bar rests expressed as two semibreve rests in the original (i.e. where the system ends halfway through the bar) have been suppressed throughout and replaced with a breve rest. The third cantus note in bar 48 (indicated in the score with an asterisk above) is erroneously given as d^2 in *Johann Jacob Froberger, Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke: Clavier- und Orgelwerke*, ed. Siegbert Rampe (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1993); vol. I, p. 43. As a general rule of thumb regarding the distribution of inner voices between the hands, I assume that the right hand will take the alto voice and the left hand the tenor. Where this is impossible, and for the initial alto entry, I have indicated some solutions with the letters 'R' and 'L'. Further judicious distribution between the hands can assist the flow of the music, for example, in the tenor at bars 9–10, 22, 38, and in the alto at bar 13. For players without a short octave keyboard the lower E in the bass at bar 31 can be replaced by the editorial note one octave higher. It also makes a good four-hands duet on a single keyboard or with two keyboards (a further potential of open score notation) and amateur players who are daunted by solo realisation of the transcription might ask a friend to join them in an 'ensemble' performance. Choice and steadiness of tempo are critical in this music: try playing both sections at the same tempo: minim equals 52 to 60 beats per minute. For those of you now hooked on open scores, you can find a transcription and short commentary on the Froberger's Ricercar, FbWV 412, in next month's *Clavichord International* (November, 2016). All these scores are freely available from my website. Over to you!

Fantasia FbWV 206

Transcription in open score with modern clefs

Source: *Libro Secondo* (1649), Parte Seconda, 'Fantasia: / pria + f+' [VI]

Johann Jacob Froberger (1616–1667)

A-Wn Mus. Hs. 18706, fols. 48v–51v.

fol. 48v

5 fol. 49r

9

13

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17 fol. 49v

21

25 fol. 50r

29

32 fol. 50v

Musical score for measures 32-34, fol. 50v. The system consists of four staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a whole note rest. The second staff is a treble clef with a whole note rest. The third staff is a bass clef with a whole note chord (F, C, G, Bb) and a fermata. The fourth staff is a bass clef with a whole note chord (F, C, G, Bb) and a fermata. A 'R' is written above the third staff at measure 33.

35

Musical score for measures 35-37. The system consists of four staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a whole note rest. The second staff is a treble clef with a whole note rest. The third staff is a bass clef with a whole note chord (F, C, G, Bb) and a fermata. The fourth staff is a bass clef with a whole note chord (F, C, G, Bb) and a fermata. A 'R' is written above the third staff at measure 36.

38

Musical score for measures 38-41. The system consists of four staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a whole note rest. The second staff is a treble clef with a whole note rest. The third staff is a bass clef with a whole note chord (F, C, G, Bb) and a fermata. The fourth staff is a bass clef with a whole note chord (F, C, G, Bb) and a fermata. A 'R' is written above the third staff at measure 39.

42 fol. 51r

Musical score for measures 42-45, fol. 51r. The system consists of four staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a whole note rest. The second staff is a treble clef with a whole note rest. The third staff is a bass clef with a whole note chord (F, C, G, Bb) and a fermata. The fourth staff is a bass clef with a whole note chord (F, C, G, Bb) and a fermata. A 'R' is written above the third staff at measure 42, and an 'L' is written above the third staff at measure 44.

45

Musical score for measures 45-47. The system consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and ties.

48

Musical score for measures 48-50. The system consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. A fermata is present over the first measure of the top staff. A *rit.* marking is placed above the first measure of the third staff.

51

fol. 51v

Musical score for measures 51-54. The system consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music includes various rhythmic patterns and rests. The text "fol. 51v" is centered above the second staff.

55

Musical score for measures 55-58. The system consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. A *rit.* marking is placed above the first measure of the third staff.

¹ The Froberger Festival in Cambridge on 10 September will be reported in the next Newsletter. For the BCS Froberger Celebration on 19 November see p. XXX.

² Judging by the quantity of contrapuntal music present in the fourth Froberger manuscript, *Des Fantasies, Caprices ...*, fugue had assumed an even greater significance in Froberger's last years. The first twelve pieces are entirely new and otherwise unknown contrapuntal works, six fantasies and six caprices (FbWV 209–214 and 520–525, respectively). All are notated in open score. Further details, see, Simon Maguire, *Johann Jacob Froberger: A Hitherto Unrecorded Autograph Manuscript*, supplementary catalogue to the Music Catalogue detailing Lot 50 in the Sale of Music and Continental Manuscripts, L06409 held on Thursday 30 November 2006 Sotheby's, London (London: Sotheby's, 2006), <http://www.sscm-jscm.org/v13/no1/maguire.html>.

³ John Edward Fletcher, *A Study of the Life and Works of Athanasius Kircher, 'Germanus Incredibilis'* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. 90.

⁴ Christoph Demantius, *Isagoge*, 8th ed., fol. E8v, translation from Paul Mark Walker, *Theories of Fugue from the Age of Josquin to the Age of Bach* (Rochester NY: University of Rochester Press, 2000), p. 274; Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma musicum* (Wittenberg and Wolfenbüttel, 1614–19), III, p. 21 and translated Hans Lampl, Thesis, University of Southern Carolinam 1957, pp. 60–61; Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, (London: Peter Short, 1597), p. 162 and pp. 180–181.

⁵ Translation from Walker (2000), *op. cit.*, p. 271.

⁶ Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis* (1650), Book VII, p. 585, translation from Charles E. Brewer, *The Instrumental Music of Schmelzer, Biber, Muffat and their Contemporaries* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), p. 25; and Alexander Silbiger, 'Fantasy and craft: the solo instrumentalist', *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed Tim Carter and John Butt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 454.

⁷ Gregory Barnett, 'Tonal organization in seventeenth-century music theory' in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 419–427.

⁸ Gioseffo Zarlino, *Le institutioni harmoniche*, (Venice, 1558), Part IV, p. 130; Giovanni Maria Bononcini, *Musico pratico*, (Bologna, 1673), pp. 123–124. See Barnett (2002) *op. cit.*, p. 418.

⁹ Burmeister used the term *anaphora* to describe the imitation he found in Lassus's five-voice motet 'In me transierunt', see Joachim Burmeister, *Musica poetica* (1606), p. 73 and Gregory G. Butler, 'Fugue and Rhetoric', *Journal of Music Theory*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Spring, 1977), p. 58; Zarlino (1558) *op. cit.*, Part III, pp. 212–220.