

## Electronic Resources in Seventeenth-Century Music

Jeffrey Kurtzman, Washington University in St. Louis

I've come today to talk about three different electronic resources in seventeenth-century music. The first two have been functioning for quite some time, the third is in the process of development.

The first two are both projects of the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music, founded in 1992 in the United States, but with an international membership.

**Link to Society Webpage:** <http://www.arts.uci.edu/sscm/>

The purpose of the Society is to promote research and publication in all aspects of seventeenth-century music, and in addition to a semi-annual Newsletter and an electronic news list, the Society publishes its own Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music and a Web Library of Seventeenth-Century Music.

**Link to Society Webpage:** <http://www.arts.uci.edu/sscm/>

The Journal, first edited by Kerala Snyder, with the generous technical assistance of Bob Judd and then Margaret Mikulska, and now edited by Bruce Gustafson, began publishing in 1995 and has produced at least one issue every year for the past twelve years. The Journal was the first online journal in musicology, and, I believe, the first exclusively online journal in music. From the outset, the policy of the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music has been that the Journal be accessible to all worldwide without charge. Its expenses are met entirely by the membership of the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music through annual dues and additional contributions. The Journal keeps a record of its hits and visits. A "visit" is a single workstation "hitting" any number of pages. That workstation isn't counted again as visiting unless two hours have elapsed since its last hit. In March 2006, the Journal had 25,618 visits to 39,317 pages. Visits include search engines, but from the number of hits per month to such items as musical examples, particular documents or images, and footnotes, much less likely to be visited by search engines, it is clear that the Journal reaches a very large audience all across the globe—far larger than any print journal in musicology.

In addition to being accessible free of cost, the policy of the Journal has been from the outset to model itself on the highest quality as well as the format of print journals. To that end, we are keeping the Journal as electronically simple as possible, for the ease of readers, the editor and copy editor, who are unpaid, and the technical support staff. The focus is on words and substance rather than images and splashy displays.

All articles are peer reviewed, and in addition to articles and communications, the journal publishes reviews, often extended, of recent relevant publications in all media. Two issues have been devoted to a single topic: papers from the 2000 conference on Early Opera and Monody at the University of Illinois, and Lully's *Persée*, centered around the

2000 production by Opera Atelier in Toronto. However, most issues, like the typical print journal, contain articles on a variety of subjects. Unlike a print journal, we do not have to aim at any particular size—one issue can be much larger than another.

The advantages of an online journal are obvious. Not only can the length of articles vary significantly, any article, communication or review can contain musical examples, black-and-white or color images, sound examples, and video examples. Much more background documentation in the form of extended footnotes or appendices than are feasible in a print journal, and extensive linking back and forth to footnotes, to various media and cross-referencing links are other advantages. The entire run of issues is word searchable.

The Journal was published on the Harvard University server, with John Howard as Web Master, until 2003, when its publishing was taken over by the University of Illinois Press on a contract basis. The editor of the Journal sends the University of Illinois Press MicrosoftWord files and the Press converts them to html. The editor then makes corrections in the html version through Dreamweaver connected to the Press' JSCM site. The Press deals with all technical issues. The Journal pays the Press a fee "per page," a "page" constituting a certain number of words; an annual maintenance fee; and a per-hour fee for mounting sound or video files. The editor of the Journal converts musical examples submitted in Finale or Sibelius to pdf files, and also makes tif files of visual images. There is currently no charge for mounting these files.

Audio files are downloadable to one's own computer and are playable on RealPlayer or any other standard player. Video files are currently streaming because of copyright issues and because the files are so large that they would not be usable by readers lacking a broadband connection. Copyright of articles belongs to the University of Illinois Press, but reverts to the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music if we should terminate our connection with the U of I Press. The Journal is archived in perpetuity via the Lockss network, which automatically collects each issue and stores it in a variety of library locations around the world.<sup>1</sup>

The Journal has just begun a new facet of its publications, comprising a separate body of materials entitled *Instrumenta*. The purpose of these publications is to provide data-oriented resources in seventeenth-century music, such as thematic catalogues. The first such catalogue to be published will be of the works of Chambonnières. Apart from the emphasis on data rather than narrative or analytical text, one of the reasons for creating this separate body of *Instrumenta* is to make them easily revisable by their authors. Articles and reviews in the Journal cannot be changed by their authors, although corrections or updates can be published in subsequent issues and linked to the original text, but data-oriented research often requires correction or updating as new data come to light.

The issues still being worked out for the first publication in *Instrumenta* involve the relationship between the html shell and the pdf files containing the data themselves. The objective is to achieve a balance between ease of revision by the author and ease of use

by the reader, while maintaining the Press' copyright, since separate pdf files will not be easily downloadable. Since this first of the Instrumenta will be a thematic catalogue, its thematic incipits are encoded so as to be searchable. The system is a simple one, widely employed in French Baroque studies and at the Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles. Pitches are recorded numerically according to the diatonic scale in the same manner as solfège syllables, starting with 1 as the tonic, 2 as the supertonic, 3 as the mediant etc. There is no indication of direction, so that the individual octave of a pitch is not recorded by the system. Additionally accidental inflections are ignored and there is no rhythmic notation except for spaces for barlines. The theme itself cannot be reconstructed from this system, but it is very useful in allowing for easy searching of concordances, especially since one can search individual measures separately in the event there is a difference between concordances in the first measure. Where there are variants in the first measure among known concordances, more than one thematic code is given for the same piece. This system works well for most seventeenth-century music, but doesn't work well for unmeasured music, since the barline is crucial, nor is it particularly useful for late eighteenth-century music where so many themes are triadic that the system makes little or no distinction among many separate themes.

#### **Link to Web Library for Seventeenth-Century Music**

**Webpage:** <http://aaswebsv.aas.duke.edu/wlscm/>

The Web Library of Seventeenth-Century Music was initiated in December of 2002 after several years of discussion and planning. Its purpose is to make available otherwise unpublished scores of seventeenth-century music in downloadable, though copyrighted, critical editions with introductory commentary and critical notes. The format is quite similar to such printed editions as *Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae* and A-R editions rather than attempting the kind of sophisticated interaction of elements Stefan described yesterday in connection with the Hildegard von Bingen edition. All editions are peer reviewed. If an editor wishes at some later point to publish in print his or her edition already on the Web Library, the editor may do so, but the edition will be withdrawn from the Web Library.

#### **Link to WLSCM**

**catalogue:** <http://aaswebsv.aas.duke.edu/wlscm/WLSCMcatalogue.html>

The number of editions published so far is limited, but there are a number of recent submissions that have been peer reviewed and should appear later this year. I myself plan to publish an entire early 17<sup>th</sup>-century print on the Web Library.

Recently, the Web Library added sound files of an unpublished recording of one of the compositions in its catalogue, the Scarlatti cantata. Like the *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music*, the Web Library is openly accessible to all without charge, and is supported by the dues of members of the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music and private donations.

The General Editor, Alexander Silbiger, accepts scores in either Finale or Sibelius, which are then converted to pdf files. The General Editor adds headers and footers. Introductory text and critical notes are submitted as Microsoft Word files and also converted to pdfs. Dreamweaver is used to upload all files to the server, which is located at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

The recently added sound recording is not downloadable, but can be accessed as streaming MP3 files.

The Editorial Board of the Web Library has discussed the possibility of adding another series of rough scores, in contrast to critical editions, without the apparatus and authority of a critical edition, which would certainly be useful to seventeenth-century scholars as research and reference materials. No decision has yet been reached on the criteria and format of such scores, though the desirability and value of making this kind of collection available is clear to the Editorial Board.

\* \* \* \*

The third resource I wish to discuss is a database still in progress and not yet available to the public. It is the fruit of research begun in 1973 and discussion involving David Bryant of the University of Venice and the Fondazione Cini in Venice, Anne Schnobelen of Rice University, Mary Lewis of the University of Pittsburgh, Jane Bernstein of Tufts University, Stanley Boorman of New York University and myself, beginning at the IMS meeting in Bologna in 1987.

This database, entitled *Bibliografia della musica sacra pubblicata in Italia fra il 1500 e il 1725 circa*, will include all sacred music printed in Italy from Petrucci through approximately 1725, by which time the publishing of sacred music in Italy had virtually ceased. Italian language, as well as Latin, sacred music, normally in the form of laudi and madrigali spirituali, will also be included.

The purpose of the database is to make available all preliminary and concluding textual material in a print, comprising title pages, dedications, laudatory poems, advice to users, imprimaturs, indices, and colophons. In its first phase, the database will contain in addition to the preliminary and final textual material a list of all surviving copies of a print and their locations, a list of compositions in each print (which sometimes differs from the index), and every composition except for mass movements will be identified by a minimum 10-word text incipit and a minimum 3-word text explicit, excluding any doxologies. Individual compositions will likewise be identified by a minimum 10-note musical incipit of the highest surviving voice in darms code, and any concordances with subsequent Italian editions or anthologies will also be indicated. Individual compositions with individual piece dedications, such as one frequently finds in Milan, will include those dedications. The list of contents may be a conflation of all part-books, based on the basso continuo part-book, if available.

Subsequent phases of the project will involve adding musical incipits for the remaining voices, adding performance, liturgical, and other rubrics conflated from the separate part-books, adding basic bibliographic information respecting the Italian SBN bibliographic standards, and adding any special notes or commentary on the print.

The size of this database, when completed, will be substantial. There are approximately 4000 surviving prints that will be included. The plan is to make this material available in stages; it is currently expected that approximately 500 prints will be publicly available online by the end of 2008. Completion of the first phase of the database is projected for 2012.

The database is housed on the server of the Fondazione Cini and is the property of the Fondazione Cini, Centro superiore di studi bibliografici ed archivistici sulla musica veneta. The manager of the database is David Bryant, Director of the Centro. The database uses the Access database program significantly modified and enhanced by Christian Bacchi to handle all of the relationships among numerous distinct fields of information. Thus the database will eventually be able to identify all prints dedicated to a certain individual, all prints published by members of a particular monastery, monastic order, or employees of a particular church, or all collections issued in a particular city. Users will be able to find all prints or compositions of a certain genre, all settings of a particular text, all settings for a particular liturgical element or event, check for concordances with manuscript music or northern European anthologies, find all compositions with specifically named string or wind parts, locate all compositions with transposition rubrics, etc.

In closing, I want to mention another database which is now in the prototype phase, **also** managed by David Bryant at the Fondazione Cini. This is a database of tens of thousands of documents regarding the use of sacred music in parish and monastic churches in the Veneto and other parts of Italy before the Napoleonic dissolution of the Italian monasteries, unearthed by Bryant, his wife and assistant Elena Quaranta, and teams of students from the University of Venice. The ultimate objective is to couple information about the publication of sacred music with the kinds of demands and market that existed in ecclesiastical institutions so that historians can correlate the interlocking and mutually supporting system of demand, production, and consumption of sacred music in specific locales and specific institutions.

Thank you.

---

<sup>i</sup> See [http://www.lockss.org/lockss/about\\_lockss](http://www.lockss.org/lockss/about_lockss).