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Warriors and Musicians: Notes from the Colonna Family Archive*

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The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century décor and frescos in the main rooms of Rome's Galleria Colonna celebrate the military achievements of the sixteenth-century Colonna forebear credited with reviving the family fortunes. In the centre of the Sala della Colonna Bellica, a female personification of Rome stands atop a classically-inspired column, hand raised toward the heavens—or, perhaps, toward the marvellous ceiling frescos. In one of these, Hercules presents Rome's hero to the Virgin and gestures toward the seat awaiting him in heaven; the clouds supporting the men squash assorted Turks below, giving a clue to the man's identity: Marc'Antonio II Colonna (1535–1584), the leader of the papal forces in the Battle of Lepanto (1571) [illus. 1].[1] There are several portraits of Marc'Antonio II to be found elsewhere in the gallery. One full length portrait depicts him wearing armour; in another, he wears the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece given him in 1559 by Philip II of Spain.[2] Yet, as one might expect of the son of Giovanna d'Aragona and the nephew of the poet Vittoria Colonna, Marc'Antonio II was not all about the military. He attracted the attention of writers and musicians, particularly those with Spanish connections or from Spanish dominions, several of whom were also (or primarily) military men, keen to dedicate their works to a suitably illustrious person. A very brief foray into

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* University College Cork granted me a three-month sabbatical that enabled me to make a brief fishing trip to archives in Rome. I thank Dr Noel O'Regan for extending such warm hospitality to me during my stay and sharing with me his expertise and knowledge of Rome's archives—and for his 'Rome for musicologists' tour. I also thank the staff of the Library and Archive of the Monastery of Santa Scolastica, Subiaco, particularly Don Romano and Elio Mariano, for their extraordinary assistance.

[1] Eduard A. Safarik, *Palazzo Colonna* (Roma, 2009), pp. 139-41.

[2] Both portraits are by Scipione Pulzone: *Ritratto di Marcantonio II Colonna* (date unknown; Private Apartments, Palazzo Colonna, Rome); *Ritratto di Marcantonio II Colonna a figura intera* (1584), Galleria Colonna, Palazzo Colonna, Rome. Pulzone began the full-length painting just before Marc'Antonio's ill-fated trip to Spain (he was assassinated en route). Other artifacts associated with Marc'Antonio include a map of Meditteranean ports, paintings of the Lepanto battle, and a diploma in his memory from the Roman senate. See Eduard Safarik, ed., *Galleria Colonna in Roma: Dipinti* (Rome, 2003), pp. 107-9, and Safarik, *Palazzo Colonna*, pp. 30-4.

the family archives, now housed in the Monastero di Santa Scolastica at Subiaco, yielded a little documentation in support of one already-known link—that of Sebastián Raval—and turned up a new and seemingly unlikely connection in the 'incontinently peripatetic' warrior-courtier-singer, Giulio Cesare Brancaccio.[3]

Marc'Antonio II seems to have been something of a magnet for soldiers turned writers and musicians, some of whom served under him (or claimed to) at Lepanto.[4] At least two former soldiers—Miguel de Cervantes and Sebastián Raval—referred to their connection to Marc'Antonio II when seeking patronage from family members (and particularly from his son, Cardinal Ascanio Colonna). There is ample evidence to back up Cervantes' claim to have fought under Marc'Antonio II's command at Lepanto, but as yet little information to connect him to the Colonna family in anything more than a superficial way; archival investigations may yield documentation to corroborate his dedicatory statement.[5] Likewise, Sebastián Raval's claim to patronage in the dedication to his *Canzonette* (Venice, 1593), although never doubted, has not hitherto been supported by additional sources of evidence. The Colonna archives contain one autograph letter from Raval (discussed below); the account books and payment records may shed further light on Colonna patronage of Raval.

At least one warrior musician is likely to have known Marc'Antonio II personally as an equal. Military expert, gentleman and singer, Giulio Cesare Brancaccio certainly had sufficiently high social standing to meet Marc'Antonio II socially. In Naples during the 1550s Brancaccio had attended the salon of Giovanna d'Aragona, Marc'Antonio II's mother—a significant patron whose

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[3] Richard Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer: Giulio Cesare Brancaccio and the Performance of Identity in the Late Renaissance* (Aldershot, 2007), p. xi.
[4] As Viceroy of Sicily, Marc'Antonio II established 'in embryonic form' the royal chapel at S. Pietro in Palermo. The church's finances were inadequate to hire professional musicians, so Marc'Antonio turned to musically able soldiers. Tiby lists seven musicians from four different military companies. Ottavio Tiby, 'La musica nella Real Cappella Palatina di Palermo', *Anuario Musical* 7 (1952), pp. 177-192 at pp. 179-181. On 26 March 1577, Marc'Antonio II paid for Giovanni Martinez *cantore* and company and Michele Monetes to go to Sicily to serve as musicians. I-SUss, Archivio Colonna, I B I, *Libro Mastro*, 1575-1579, ff. 94v and 105. This Giovanni Martinez may be the same as the Giovanni Martines Pellegrino whom Tiby mentions as one of the 'cantori della musica di Palazzo' (a tenor) in 1586.
[5] Fernando Cervantes, 'Cervantes in Italy: Christian Humanism and the Visual Impact of Renaissance Rome', *Journal of the History of Ideas* lxvi/iii (Jul. 2005), pp. 325-50, at pp. 325-6.

favoured writers found their works banned by Paul IV as part of Carafa's campaigns against Italian nobility loyal to Spain and against reformers (Giovanna d'Aragona fell into both categories).[6] Brancaccio subsequently ended up on the wrong side of Spain: he was linked to anti-Spanish factions in Naples, he talked himself out of life imprisonment (also in Naples) for the murder of a Spanish soldier, and in France he was a vocal supporter of Cardinal Carafa's anti-Spanish campaign—the very campaign in which the Pope excommunicated Giovanna d'Aragona's estranged husband Ascanio Colonna and their son Marc'Antonio II, and confiscated their lands.[7] By the 1570s, Brancaccio sought reconciliation with Spain. On 25 January 1572, Brancaccio addressed one of several job seeking letters that month to Marc'Antonio II, presumably because, as one of the masterminds behind the Lepanto victory, Marc'Antonio II was well placed to help Brancaccio achieve two of his goals: a much desired place fighting in the League, and an end to the quarrel with Spain.[8] In the event, Brancaccio's return to the Spanish fold was facilitated by the Medici[9] but nonetheless the link between Brancaccio and Marc'Antonio II beautifully illustrates the shifting allegiances of early modern Italy, and the pragmatic subordination of politics to personal need.

By the summer of 1573, Brancaccio had visited Naples and joined the fleet of Don Juan of Austria. Judging from two further autograph letters from Brancaccio to Marc'Antonio II, dated 18 January 1574 and 3 October 1574, Brancaccio appears to have played a role in negotiations between the two military leaders. The letters confirm Richard Wistreich's suspicion that Brancaccio was in Rome in 1574 and the January letter implies that he arrived there in late 1573.[10] In 1575 and 1576 Brancaccio received a number of payments from Marc'Antonio Colonna—for what services is not yet clear, but presumably they were military. Brancaccio's letters give little away about the

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[6] Diane Robin, *Publishing Women: Salons, the Presses and the Counter-Reformation in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Chicago, 2007), p. 102.
[7] Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer*, pp. 33 and 55.
[8] On Brancaccio's overtures for potential military deployment in the months after the Lepanto victory, see Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer*, p. 86. The letter can be found at I-SUss, Archivio Colonna, *Corrispondenza di Marcantonio II*, busta 44, letter 4444.
[9] Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer*, pp. 91-93.
[10] I-SUss, Arch. Colonna, *Corrispondenza di Marcantonio II*, busta 44, letters 4443 and 4445. On 2 October 1574 Brancaccio asked Mutio Maffei, a Rome-based Farnese agent, for a loan of 100 scudi (Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer*, p. 102).

life he was experiencing in Rome, but the tone of the letters is comfortable. That they do not start with obsequious flattery suggests a degree of familiarity between the men.

Sebastián Raval was a soldier turned professional musician—lower in status than Giulio Cesare Brancaccio but nonetheless a gentleman.[11] He sustained serious injuries at the siege of Maastricht in 1579 where he fought on the Spanish side under Alessandro Farnese. Seeking a vocation, he first joined the Capuchin order, but owing to his ill health he left that for the exclusive noble Order of St John of Jerusalem (the Knights of Malta) in 1592. Raval achieved this change with the support of Cardinal Montalto and expressed his gratitude with the dedication to Montalto of his first publication, the *Motectorum quinque vocum* (Rome, 1593).[12] Raval references three members of the Colonna family in music dedications. In the dedication to Marc'Antonio III Colonna of the *Canzonette* (Venice, 1593), Raval mentions his service to the dedicatee's grandfather, Marc'Antonio II, and to Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, Marc'Antonio II's second son and the uncle of the dedicatee.[13] Raval states that he served Marc'Antonio II during his time as Viceroy of Sicily (1577-1584); this may have been before Raval traveled to Maastricht and received his injury, for Marc'Antonio II awarded Raval a military promotion.[14] Raval's second period of Colonna family patronage lasted from 1592-95; during this time he seems to have

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[11] The brief biographical account in this article is drawn from three sources: Esperanza Rodríguez-García, 'Arrogance or Audacity?: The Music of Sebastián Raval (?-1604) with an Edition of his First Book of Motets' (PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 2010), which offers a reappraisal of Raval's work and significance; Raffaele Casimiri, 'Sebastiano Raval, musicista spagnolo del sec. XVI', *Note d'archivio per la storia musicale* viii/i (1931), pp. 1-20; and Ottavio Tiby, 'Sebastian Raval — A 16th-Century Spanish Musician in Italy', *Musica Disciplina* ii (1948), pp. 217-23. Raval is described as a Spanish gentleman on the title pages of his *Primo libro de madrigali a cinque voci* (Venice, 1593) and his *Madrigali a tre voci* (Rome, 1595) and as a Spanish noble on the title page of his *Lamentationes Hieremiae Prophetae* (Rome, 1594). Esperanza Rodríguez-García, 'Arrogance or Audacity?', p. 33, points out that his military service suggests a well-to-do background. Confirmation of Raval's nobility is found in the dispensation to join the Knights of Malta granted to Raval and transcribed in Casimiri, 'Sebastiano Raval', pp. 12-13 at p. 13.

[12] The dedication is transcribed in Rodríguez-García, 'Arrogance or Audacity?', pp. 259-60. In the same year, Raval dedicated his *Primo libro de madrigali a cinque voci* (Venice) to Montalto's brother Michele. See Rodríguez-García, 'Arrogance or Audacity?', pp. 272-73.

[13] For more information on Cardinal Ascanio's patronage, see Owen Rees, 'Printed Music, Portugese Musicians, Roman Patronage: Two Case Studies', in *Early Music Printing and Publishing in the Iberian World*, ed. Iain Fenlon and Tess Knighton, DeMusica 11 (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2006), pp. 275-98.

[14] Tiby, 'Sebastian Raval', p. 218; Rodríguez-García, 'Arrogance or Audacity?', p. 34.

moved between the households of Cardinal Ascanio Colonna and Marc'Antonio III.[15] On 21 February 1595, about two months before he became *maestro di cappella* of the royal chapel in Palermo, Raval mentioned plans to dedicate to Ascanio 'a set of masses for five and eight voices, with some canons in eight and sixteen voices' (una muta de Messe à cinque & a otto Voci, con alcuni canoni ad otto e sedici Voci) and in 1596 Raval implied that his twelve 'principles of the ricercar on twelve natural tones' (principii de ricercar sopra dodici toni naturali) were composed while in the Cardinal's service.[16]

The letter is written almost 16 years after the death of Marc'Antonio II. Raval's recounting of musicians' shared memory of Marc'Antonio II's generosity in showing his appreciation for them is presumably aimed at encouraging Cardinal Ascanio, Marc'Antonio II's second son, to continue their patronage relationship, perhaps by showing Raval hospitality when he makes his planned trip to Rome, or by taking in the young musician carrying Raval's letter.

> To the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Lord the Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, my lord
>
> So fresh are, and will be immortal, the fame, greatness, and imperial valour of the most illustrious and most excellent lord Marc'Antonio [II Colonna], father of Your Most Illustrious Lordship, in the minds of all people at large, that they double an immense feeling in me, and musicians, instead of singing, weep to [i.e. tearfully implore] me, remembering the manna from heaven of his gratuities, not counting their ordinary salaries, to fall down in esteeming, enjoying, and elevating [i.e. in adoration of] the virtue of music, and it increases so much the more as I gradually rehearse them in various and unheard [*inaudidas*] compositions. I think I should

[15] Rees suggests that Raval replaced a Portugese musician, Pedro Álvares de Moura, in Ascanio Colonna's service in 1592. Rees, 'Printed Music, Portugese Musicians, Roman Patronage', p. 293.
[16] Raval held his post in the royal chapel of S. Pietro in Palermo from 28 April 1595 until his death in 1604. For information on his salary, see Tiby, 'Sebastian Raval', pp. 221-22. The list of forthcoming works appears in the dedication to Raval's *Madrigali a tre voci* (Rome, 1595), transcribed in Rodríguez-García, 'Arrogance or Audacity?', p. 281. The ricercars are mentioned in the dedication to Raval's *Primo libro di ricercari a quattro voci cantabili* (Palermo, 1596), signed on 29 November 1596 and transcribed in Rodríguez-García, 'Arrogance or Audacity?', pp. 289-90.

cut short this tragic opening, since for my ultimate consolation I am sustained only by the firm hope I have in God, that he will grant to my entreaties, so just as they are, my prayer together with that of St Simeon [the Nunc Dimittis], to kiss the feet and hands, and the earth they tread on, of Your Most Illustrious Lordship, my ancient and natural lord, whom I [in that case] should adore, and any excess would seem little or nothing to me besides such lofty obligations to so sovereign a prince. Today, this very day, I have delivered a petition to the lord Duke of Maqueda [Bernardino de Cárdenas y Portugal], that he may grant me licence to go to Rome to print the royal funeral music [for Philip II] and the nine Lamentations of Jeremiah and many other works, and that my place may be kept for me as Seville used to do for Francisco Guerrero and Salamanca for [Juan] Navarro. I pray to God that he [Maqueda] do not deny it, for his abounding love [for me] as my friends say or for appearance' sake so as not to obstruct so just a request since they are to be addressed to His Majesty.

The boy who will give Your Most Illustrious Lordship this [letter] is the son of very honourable parents. I have had him with me and taught him. He is very clever, he sings a baritone that is a marvel in company. He plays the harpsichord [*cembalo*] in a most elegant manner, [he is a] fine scholar, and has the presence that Your Most Illustrious Lordship will see; a brother of his who is a priest tells me that he left him with a recommendation in the house of the Most Illustrious Gesualdo. He has thought it right that I recommend him to Your Most Illustrious Lordship, as I most humbly do and beg as much as I humanly can. I offer him to Your Most Illustrious Lordship's service as a person who in a few days, when he hears some good organists, will embellish any work or fantasy to Your Most Illustrious Lordship's taste, and since my wish is only to give him to Your Most Illustrious Lordship, I offer myself once again as your old [and] most faithful [servant], and may Our Lord keep for you, as I desire, many very happy years.

Palermo, 7 April 1600

Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Lord I kiss [your] feet and hands

Your Most Illustrious Lordship's

most humble servant

Brother [Fray] Sebastián Raval +

of the Order of St John [of Jerusalem]

7 April 1600 From Palermo Dr Fray Sebastián Raval[17]

Raval's request for time off to travel to Rome was granted and on 6 May 1600 the Viceroy agreed that Raval could receive six months salary in advance.[18] However, it is not clear when, or whether, Raval travelled to Rome, or whether his endeavour to publish there was successful, for none of the works namechecked here survive and Raval's extant publications from 1600 and later did not come from Roman presses.[19] The trip may have been delayed by Raval's series of composition competitions with Achille Falcone. The first round, which Fra Nicolò Toscano judged in Falcone's favour, ended on 18 April 1600. Raval was still in Palermo on 25 June when he signed the dedication to the Duchess of Maqueda, Señora Doña Luisa Manrique de Lara of his *Motecta selecta organo accommodata*. The second round of the composition competition, in which Raval was victorious, was held in July with pieces performed before the Viceroy. Falcone challenged Raval to a third round, to be held in October in Rome, thus circumventing the second judgement's ban on Falcone's participation in further competitions in Sicily; that round, however, did not take place because Falcone became ill in August and died in November. Raval may have been in Rome by that stage. According to an account of the dispute by Achiile's father Antonio Falcone, in 1600 Raval published music from the competition; that has not survived but perhaps

[17] The translation is by Leofranc Holford-Strevens with some minor corrections by myself and Esperanza Rodríguez-García. I thank them for their generous assistance. The letter is transcribed in the appendix and the original may be found at I-SUss, Arch. Colonna, *Corrispondenza di Cardinale Ascanio Colonna, 1600, mittente Sebastian Raval*.
[18] Tiby, 'Sebastian Raval', p. 221
[19] Rodríguez-García lists Raval's extant publications with their dedications and some points of interest in appendix I to her doctoral thesis, 'Arrogance or Audacity?', pp. 257-307.

was among the 'many other works' Raval mentions in passing.[20] Raval's only known publication of Lamentations (in memory of Duke Alessandro Farnese, under whom he had soldiered) predates this letter by six years. Raval might have planned to arrange a second edition but it is possible that this was a new set in honour of Philip II of Spain (d. 1598). Raval seems to have composed music for a Sicilian funeral for Philip II—funerals were held in Florence, Ferrara and other duchies and city-states; Sicily, a Spanish territory, must also have held a funeral. Commemmoration of Philip II was something Raval and the cardinal had in common: Ascanio owed his red hat to the support of Philip II and composed, on the king's death, a glowing oration that was published in 1599.[21]

But perhaps more curious than the information about Raval's own composition is the boy wonder to whom he refers. Unfortunately (and frustratingly), Raval does not identify this marvelous young musician and to date it has not been possible to clear up the mystery.[22] The boy is from an 'honourable family', which may imply it is good but not noble; he is young but since he sings baritone he is old enough for his voice to have broken. He plays the harpsichord and organ well, and he learns quickly. Raval's description of the boy as a 'fine scholar' may simply mean that he could understand Latin.[23] Given the involvement of Cardinal Gesualdo and Raval, perhaps the young musician is from Naples or Sicily.[24] Raval's description gives a clear idea of the elements he

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[20] Rodríguez-García, 'Arrogance or Audacity?', p. 300, suggests Rome as a likely place of publication.
[21] Ascanio Colonna, *Oratio in funere Philippi II catholici regis* (Rome, 1599). For a biography of the cardinal, see F. Petrucci, 'Colonna, Ascanio', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, 1982), xxvii, pp. 275-8.
[22] I am grateful to Christopher Stembridge, Alexander Silbiger, Frederick Hammond and Anthony Newcomb for generously sharing their thoughts. With their help, it has been possible to rule out one musician who by coincidence meets several elements of Raval's description. Girolamo Frescobaldi was about the right age in 1600 to be young but have an adult voice; his family was honourable, with a coat of arms, but not noble, and he had a half-brother. However, Cesare Frescobaldi was younger so could not have performed the role outlined here. Other than Raval's dedications to Montalto and his brother while in the service of the Colonna family, which may have had more to do with personal gratitude than with a Colonna family strategy, there seem to have been few links between Cardinals Gesualdo and Colonna and the circles around the Bentivoglio family and Cardinals Aldobrandini and Montalto in which Frescobaldi moved.
[23] My thanks to Leofranc Holford-Strevens for this observation.
[24] Sigismondo d'India was born in Palermo and would have been about twenty years old in 1600. He described himself as a nobleman on the title pages of several publications. However, there is as yet little information about his early years. I thank John Joyce (Tulane University) for his evaluation of this possibility.

expects to stand in the favour of a young man seeking his place in the world, with the focus on birth, education, musical ability, and bearing. In short, the boy has a certain amount of cultural capital in an embodied state—his presence, his Latin literacy, his musical skills, and his capacity to learn are 'long lasting dispositions of the mind and body'—and a certain amount of social capital (his connections with Cardinal Gesualdo's household, his family background, and of course Raval).[25]

Whoever he was, Raval introduced him to an excellent potential patron. The details Raval provides indicate that Ascanio Colonna was quite knowledgable about keyboard music—or, rather, that he had developed taste. This is confirmed by various sources. Payments to several organists for teaching Ascanio in the family home at Marino and while he was in Spain appear in the family accounts, so apparently he was a player as well as a listener and patron.[26] It seems he kept up his interest: Raval mentioned him in connection with his twelve ricercars of 1596, and in 1586 the cardinal made a gift of a beautiful harpsichord to Japanese legates then visiting Italy.[27] Ascanio could therefore be expected to appreciate a talented harpsichord player.

In facilitating the introduction of a young musician to a potential patron, Raval made use of his own cultural and social capital to the benefit of all concerned. The presentation of the young musician served to strengthen Raval's existing networks in a way that might ultimately help to improve his standing. Clearly, Raval was adept at leveraging connections and capital. In 1592 he used his contacts to achieve the considerable status of membership in an exclusive order, the Knights of Malta (an instutional form of cultural capital), returning the favour in the form of

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[25] Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital', trans. Richard Nice, in *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education* ed. J. E. Richardson (Westport, CT., 1986), pp. 241-58, reprinted in *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Sociology of Education*, ed. Stephen J. Ball (London, 2004) pp. 15-29 at p. 17. Bearing and manners may also be understood as social capital (ibid., p. 27, n. 13). Michael Gale's doctoral research examines the ways in which musical skills and learning operated as non-economic forms of capital in early modern England: Gale, 'Learning the Lute in Early Modern England', PhD Thesis, University of Southampton, in progress.

[26] Ascanio received organ lessons in Marino in 1575 from 'Nicolo organista' and while in Spain from 'Marco flamingo' in 1576 and 1577: I-SUss, Arch. Colonna, IB I, *Libro Mastro* 1575-79, ff. 2v, 69, 99v.

[27] On the harpsichord gift, see Ian Woodfield, 'The Keyboard Recital in Oriental Diplomacy, 1520-1620', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, clv/i (1990), pp. 33-62 at p. 36.

music book dedications (objectified forms of cultural capital).[28] Raval's cultural capital appears to have been high: during his tenure as *maestro di cappella* at the royal chapel of S. Pietro in Palermo, he received several salary increases, and he had the support of the Viceroy of Sicily which may have been instrumental in Raval's victory in the second round of the competition with Achille Falcone. Raval's letter to Cardinal Colonna, then, is rare documentation of the transmission of cultural capital in progress. In addition to providing evidence of the movement of musicians within a network, Raval's letter demonstrates the circulation of shared cultural values.

The Colonna family's interest in music has not entirely escaped musicologists thus far, but there is clearly scope for a full length study of their patronage in the sixteenth century. Among the professional musicians linked to them are Vicente Lusitano, Giovanthomaso Cimello, Mauro Chiaula, Pietro Vinci; and as members of an important Roman family, the Colonna were often among those receiving dedications of individual songs in Roman music anthologies. The family may not have had canonic figures of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century music directly in their employ, yet there is still an interesting story to discover about their patronage, and about relations between noblemen, gentlemen and musicians—enthusiasts and professionals.

[28] The dedications to Cardinal Montalto and his brother mentioned in note 12 above.

Appendix: Transcription

Al Ill.mo y R.mo S.or El Cardenal

Ascanio Colona mi señor

16 Roma

Al VII de Abril MDC De Palermo

El doctor Fray Sebastian Raual

Esta tan reçiente y sera inmortal la fama grandeça y imperial
valor. del Ill.mo y Ecc.mo S.or Marco Antonio padre de V. S. Ill.ma
en los animos de todos en general. que doblan en mi gra*n* sentimiento
y los musicos en vez de cantar me lloran, acordandose, de la mana
del çielo de las graçias sin sus pagas ordinarias que caya preciando
gusta*n*do y sublimando la virtud de la musica. y tanto mas creçe qua*n*to
por momentos los ejerçito con diferentes y inaudidas composiçiones.
Pareçeme troncar este prinçipio de tragedia, pues para mi ultimo
consuelo, solo me mantienen la firme esperança que tengo en Dios, que
a mis ruegos ta*n* justos conçedera mi petiçion con la del santo simeon
besar los pies y manos y la tierra que pisan de V. S. Ill.ma mi antiguo y
natural señor, que le adoraria y me pareçeria qualquiera exçesso
poco y nada a ta*n* excelsas obligaçiones. A si soberano prinçipe. Oy en este
dia e dado un memorial al señor duque de Maqueda para que me
conçeda liçençia de yr a Roma a esta*m*par las Essequias Reales y las
nueve lamentaçiones de Jeremias. y otras muchas obras y me corra
mi plaça, como lo haçia Sevilla con Fr*ancis*co Guerrero. y Salamanca con
Navarro. Ruego a Ddios no la niegue por sobrado amor como diçen
mis amigos. o por semejança por no incurrir a la demanda tan justa
haviendo de dirijillas a su Ma*jest*ad. El mochacho que dara a V. S. Ill.ma
esta es hijo de padres muy honrrados le he tenido co*n*migo y le <he> enseñado

es muy diestro canta un bajeto ques maravilla en conversaçion. Toca
de çimbalo de lindissimo aire, gentil humanista, y de la presençia que
V. S. Ill.ma vera, un hermano suyo saçerdote me diçe que le dexo en-
comendado en casa del Ill.mo Jesualdo. A le pareçido lo encomiende a V. S.
Ill.ma como humilissimamente hago y suplico qua<n>to humanamente
puedo, lo ofrezco al serviçio de V. S. Ill.ma como sujeto que en pocos

[2v]

dias quanto oyra algunos organistas bravos pulira qual
quiera obra y fantasia al gusto de V. S. Ill.ma y no siendo mi deseo
sino darlo a V. S. Ill.ma me ofrezco de nuevo como antiguo fielissimo
de V. S. Ill.ma y guarde n*ues*tro señor, como deseo muchos y felicissimos años
de Palermo a 7 de abril del 1600

Ill.mo y R.mo S.or besso los pies y manos
de V. S. Ill.ma
humillissimo criado,
F. Sebastian Raval +
del orden de S. Ju*an*.

Abstract

The Colonna family was one of the most important in sixteenth-century Rome yet its music patronage activities at that time have largely escaped the attention of musicologists. Marc'Antonio II Colonna, perhaps best known for his leadership at the Battle of Lepanto, was connected to a number of musicians, several of whom were (or had been) military men. The archive contains a number of autograph letters from musicians, including three letters from Giulio Cesare Brancaccio, warrior and bass singer, of which two place him in Rome in 1574 as Richard Wistreich surmised, and an interesting letter from composer Sebastian Raval to Marc'Antonio's son, Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, mentioning planned publications and recommending a young (and unfortunately unidentified) harpsichord player.

Keywords: Marc'Antonio II Colonna, Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, Sebastián Raval, Giulio Cesare Brancaccio, Rome, cultural capital

Biography

Dr Melanie L. Marshall is a musicologist at University College Cork whose research focuses on gender, sexuality and eroticism in early modern Italian vocal music. She is co-editing (with Prof. Linda Carroll, an Italianist at Tulane University, and Prof. Katherine McIver, an art historian at the University of Alabama at Birmingham) an interdisciplinary essay collection provisionally titled *Playing with Boundaries: Sexualities, Textualities, Art and Music in Early Modern Italy*. She is currently negotiating a three-year Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowship that will enable her to research and write a monograph on music and eroticism in sixteenth-century Rome.

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Illus. 1, Giuseppe Bartolomeo Chiari, *L'Apoteosi di Marcantonio II Colonna* (1700) not included in this version.