A-R Online Music Anthology

Content Guide
The Baroque Period, Part 2: Developments in Instrumental Music

Jonathan Rhodes Lee is Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, with interests in both eighteenth-century topics (particularly the works of George Frideric Handel) and film music. His publications have appeared in the *Cambridge Opera Journal, Music and Letters, The Journal of Musicology, Eighteenth-Century Music,* and elsewhere. His book, *Film Music in the Sound Era: A Research Guide* appeared with Routledge in 2020. He is also the editor of the complete harpsichord works of La Font, published by A-R Editions.

by Jonathan Rhodes Lee
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Assigned Readings
> Core Survey
> Historical and Analytical Perspectives

Summary List
> Genres to Understand
> Musical Terms to Understand
> Contextual Terms, Figures, and Events
> Main Concepts

Scores and Recordings

Exercises

Content Guide
The Baroque Period, Part 2: Developments in Instrumental Music
Jonathan Rhodes Lee

Assigned Readings
Core Survey
- Jonathan Rhodes Lee, "The Baroque Era"
  - Focus on the following section:
    - New Instrumental Genres

Historical and Analytical Perspectives
- Kimberly Beck-Hieb, "Genres and Forms in the Baroque Era"
  - Focus on the following sections:
    - Instrumental Genres
    - Significant Forms
    - Conclusion

- Christopher Brody, "Analytical Approaches to Baroque Music"
  - Focus on the following sections:
    - Fugue and Imitative Counterpoint
    - Concerto
    - Chamber and Solo Instrumental Genres

Summary List
Genres to understand
- Concerto
  - Concerto grosso
  - Solo/ensemble concerto
  - Concerto da camera
  - Concerto da chiesa
  - Ritornello form
- Dance suite
  - The core dances:
    - Allemande
    - Courante
    - Sarabande
    - Gigue
- Fantasia (English "Fancy")
- Fugue
- Partita
- Prelude
- Ricercar
- Sonata
  - Solo sonata
  - Sonata da chiesa
  - Sonata da camera
  - Trio sonata
- Toccata

Musical terms to understand
- o binary form
- o ritornello form
- o tonal organization
- o *Affekt / Affetti* (English: affections)
- o The idea of "movement" (and why we today say that a sontata or concerto, for example, is in multiple "movements")

- o subject
- o ornamentation / *agréments*
- o basso continuo
- o Stile antico

Contextual Terms, Figures, and Events
- o Dario Castello
- o Arcangelo Corelli
- o Girolamo Frescobaldi
- o Giovanni Gabrieli
- o Denis Gaultier
- o Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre

- o

Main Concepts
1. The concept of abstract instrumental music, particularly the sonata and concerto principles. Be sure to understand the concepts of ritornello form, sonata da chiesa, sonata da camera, and the difference between the concerto grosso and the Venetian concerto.
2. The concepts of idiomaticity and idiomatic instrumental music
3. The ways that *prima pratica* ideals of contrapuntal discipline got taken up by instrumental composers of the baroque
4. The relationship between the *seconda pratica* developments in vocal music and the development of new instrumental approaches
5. The connection between improvisation and composition in this period
6. How music came to be organized by tonal area and by thematic section, and how these two methods of organization interact

Scores and Recordings

1. Girolamo Frescobaldi, Various toccatas
    o Toccata 3 (from *Toccate e partite d'intavolatura di cimbalo*, 1615, rev. 1637)
        • [Score](#)
        • Recording
    o Toccata 9 (from *Il secondo libro di toccate,* 1627)
        • [Score](#)
        • Recording
    o Toccata per la messa "In Dominicis infra annum" (from *Fiori musicali,* 1635)
        • [Score](#)
        • Recording
2. Ricercars, Fantasias, and other polyphonic instrumental works
    o Anonymous, Canzona per l'epistola
        • [Score](#)
    o Frescobaldi, Recercar dopo il Credo (from *Fiori musicali)*
        • [Score](#)
        • [Recording](#)
    o Andrea Gabrieli, Ricercar del duodecimo tuono
        • [Score](#)
        • [Recording](#)
    o Francesco Spinacino, Ricercar
        • [Score](#)
        • [Recording](#)
    o Jan Pieterzoon Sweelinck, Fantasia chromatica
        • [Score](#)
        • [Recording](#)
3. Dario Castello, *Sonate concertate in stil moderno,* book 2.
    o Score: The majority of these sonatas are available in Create Commons Licensing [from IMSLP](#)
    o [Recording](#)
4. J.J. Froberger, Suite in E Minor
    o [Score](#)
    o [Recording](#)
5. Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre, *Pièces de clavecin,* book 1.
    o A-R excerpt: [Suite in D minor](#)
    o Score of full book: [Creative Commons edition on IMSLP, edited by Steve Wiberg](#)
    o Recording: A complete recording of these works is available through the Naxos Music Library, recorded by Elizabeth Farr (CID 8.557654-S5)
6. Arcangelo Corelli, Sonatas, Op. 1 (sonatas da chiesa), 1681
    o [Score](#)
    o [Recording](#)

7. Corelli, Sonatas, Op. 2 (sonatas da camera)
    o [Score](#)
    o [Recording](#)
8. Corelli, Sonatas op. 3, no. 2 (sonata da chiesa)
    o [A-R Excerpt: Op. 3, no. 2](#)
    o Score: Original and easy-to-read eighteenth-century editions of these sonatas are [freely available on IMSLP](#)
    o [Recording](#)
9. Corelli, Concertos op. 6
    o A-R excerpt: [Op. 6, no. 2](#)
    o Complete score of op.6: [available on IMSLP](#)
    o [Recording of Op. 6, no. 2](#)
10. Antonio Vivaldi, Violin Concerto in A Major, Op. 9, no. 2
    o [Score](#)
    o [Recording](#)
11. Antonio Vivaldi, Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 3, no. 6
    o [Score](#)
    o [Recording](#)

Exercises ([click here for key](#))

1. Analyze a toccata. Choose one of the toccatas from the list above. You will note a couple of things. First, it should be evident that this is a genre that is quasi-improvisatory; i.e., it is designed to sound like the types of improvisations that keyboardists specialized in during this period. It is written-out, but still requires of the player a great deal of flexibility and freedom to accomplish this effect. Secondly, the toccata is a sectional genre. Each section is capped by a little cadence, and each section dwells on a single musical idea (scalar passagework, arpeggios, chains of suspensions, etc.). The illusion created is a musician taking a little idea and playing with it for a few seconds before cadencing and then improvising for a little while on a new idea.

    You should now go through your toccata and make a little analytical list. Where does each section begin and end? What is the overriding technical idea that is explored in each section?

2. One of the great intellectual joys of keyboard composers of polyphonic traditions is the way that they experiment with counterpoint. [Brody](#) provides you with a model for analyzing this technique in chart form on p. 6. Try your hand at this analytical process for the Frescobaldi ricercar "dopo il credo." How many themes are there? Can you see how the themes are combined? Can you see when they are inverted? Do you now understand why such contrapuntal complexity would be appealing to baroque composers?

    (Note: Brody uses "S" and "CS" (for "subject" and "countersubject" in his analysis. The key to this exercise simply labels the themes using letters ("A," "B," etc.). Don't let this confuse you; the principle remains the same.)

3. Explore the French suite. Look through the set by Jacquet given as an example above. What is the common form that ties together all of the dances? What types of dances do you encounter most frequently in these dances? What are their meters? Their rhythmic or other characteristics? Their tempos? What is a prelude?

4. Explore the sonata principle of the eighteenth century. Look through the Corelli sets given as examples above. What differentiates a sonata da chiesa from a sonata da camera? How many movements do you encounter in the sonata da chiesa? Do they have regular metric patterns or tempos? In the sonatas, do any of the movements look like the French dances that you saw in Exercise #2 above?

5. Explore the sonata principle further. Compare the seventeenth-century sonata (exemplified here by the Castello set given above) with the Corelli sets. What links these pieces? What differentiates them (in other words, how is the seventeenth-century sonata similar and how different from the early eighteenth-century sonata?) Does the seventeenth-century sonata remind you of any other genres that we've looked at in the baroque units?

6. There's an old joke that many musicians relish: "Vivaldi wrote the same concerto hundreds of times." There is a certain truth to this quip, in that Vivaldi's development of ritornello form and the standard three-movement concerto layout helped him to generate concertos in huge numbers for public performance in Venice. And yet close analysis shows that the most remarkable fact about Vivaldi is that despite his great output, he never replicated exactly the same procedure. One of Vivaldi's sources of creativity lies in his treatment of the ritornellos. Examine [Brody](#)'s analytical charts on pp. 10–12, and try

your own hand at making one of each type (table and score) for the first movement of Vivaldi's Op. 3, no. 6. Compare this chart to Brody's. How different are the harmonic schemes? The formal schemes? Vivaldi's use of Motto, Vordersatz, Fortspinnung, and Epilog? Comparing just two of these pieces, you should see numerous differences, and you should begin to get a sense of the wide range of creative possibilities at Vivaldi's disposal.

Key to Exercises

1. *Analyze a toccata. Choose one of the toccatas from the list above. You will note a couple of things. First, it should be evident that this is a genre that is quasi-improvisatory; i.e., it is designed to sound like the types of improvisations that keyboardists specialized in during this period. It is written-out, but still requires of the player a great deal of flexibility and freedom to accomplish this effect. Secondly, the toccata is a sectional genre. Each section is capped by a little cadence, and each section dwells on a single musical idea (scalar passagework, arpeggios, chains of suspensions, etc.). The illusion created is a musician taking a little idea and playing with it for a few seconds before cadencing and then improvising for a little while on a new idea.*

    You should now go through your toccata and make a little analytical list. Where does each section begin and end? What is the overriding technical idea that is explored in each section?

    Answers will vary. But all of Frescobaldi's toccatas proceed in sections of 8–24 measures, each clearly demarcated with a cadence. Each section will somewhat obsessively focus on a single figure or musical idea, too, and they should be easy to pinpoint.

2. *One of the great intellectual joys of keyboard composers of polyphonic traditions is the way that they experiment with counterpoint. Brody provides you with a model for analyzing this technique in chart form on p. 6. Try your hand at this analytical process for the Frescobaldi ricercar "dopo il credo." How many themes are there? Can you see how the themes are combined? Can you see when they are inverted? Do you now understand why such contrapuntal complexity would be appealing to baroque composers?*

    (Note: Brody uses "S" and "CS" (for "subject" and "countersubject" in his analysis. The key to this exercise simply labels the themes using letters ("A," "B," etc.). Don't let this confuse you; the principle remains the same.)

    In the ricercar under consideration, there are two themes. Let's call them Theme A and Theme B.

    Theme A:

    Theme B:

Frescobaldi inverts a modified form of Theme B as follows:

B̄:

These themes can work in double invertible counterpoint in combination with one another, right-side up or upside down. A full set of the possibilities of double invertible counterpoint would be as follows:

$$\begin{matrix} A & B \\ B & A \end{matrix} \parallel \begin{matrix} \forall & B \\ B & \forall \end{matrix} \parallel \begin{matrix} \bar{B} & A \\ A & \bar{B} \end{matrix} \parallel \begin{matrix} \forall & \bar{B} \\ B & \forall \end{matrix}$$

The chart below slightly modifies Brody's, showing the inversions and combinations that Frescobaldi employs. Superscript letters indicate the voice in which the theme occurs: S=soprano; A=alto; T=tenor; B=bass.

mm.	1–2	3–4	5–6	7	8	9	10	11–12	13	14–16	17–18	19–21	22
Themes	A^S				B^S →		A^S →		B^S			B^S→	
		B^A →		A^A →			B^A → A^T				A^A→	B^A→	B^A
		A^T	B^T →							B^T		A^T	
			A^B				B^B →			A^B→	B^B		

mm.	1–2	3–4	5–6	7	8	9	10	11–12	13	14–15	17–18	19–21	22	23–24
Themes	A^S				B^S →		A^S →		B^S			B^S→		Cadence
		B^A →		A^A →			B^A → A^T				A^A→	B^A→	B^A	
		A^T	B^T →							B^T→		A^T		
			A^B							A^B→	B^B			
							B^B							

mm.	24–26	27–31	32–37	38–39	40–46
Themes	B^S	A^{S*} →	‖:B^S:‖	B^S B̄^{S}	A^S
	A^{T*} ─ B̄^{A}	B̄^{A}	B̄^{A}	A^{A*}	
		B̄^{B}	B̄^{,T}	B̄^{,T}	T: Free counterpoint based on B and B̄
		B^T	A^{B*} →	B^B	B: Free counterpoint based on B and B̄

*In augmentation

3. *Explore the French suite. Look through the set by Jacquet given as an example above. What is the common form that ties together all of the dances? What types of dances do you encounter most frequently in these dances? What are their meters? Their rhythmic or other characteristics? Their tempos? What is a prelude?*

The "core" dances of the French suite are the allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue. The other dances (which J.S. Bach charmingly referred to as "galanteries") are found with varying frequency in suites: gavottes, bourées, menuets, etc. All these

dances have instantly identifiable characteristics and tempos; they were so familiar to eighteenth-century musicians that composers would regularly use the terms "tempo di allemanda," "tempo di sarabanda," etc. to give players the basic speed of a piece. (This is a familiar practice to jazz musicians today; a foxtrot goes within a certain acceptable tempo range, for instance.) All of these dances are tied together with a common form: binary form, with each half repeated (‖:A:‖:B:‖). They cadence regularly, generally on the dominant at the end of the first half (or the parallel/relative major in a minor-mode dance), and then begin in the dominant and make their way back to the tonic by the end of the second half.

Here are the characteristics of the "core" dances:
- Allemande: C time; moderate tempo; often a "walking" bass line; a sense of constant motion at a "small" rhythmic demarcation (constant sixteenth notes, constant eighth notes, etc.).
- Courante: 3 time, but with a twist: the music moves in a sort of compound meter, what we would probably notate "6/4." Composers of the time used "3/2," meaning both what we would say in the modern sense (beat at the level of the half note) and something slightly different: each measure can be in either 2 or 3, depending on the composer's whim. (In simpler terms: it's a compound meter, but it doesn't look like one to the modern eye.) The courante is full of hemiolas, syncopations, and other "fancy" rhythmic gestures. It is a relatively quick dance.
- Sarabande: 3 time; moderately slow tempo (usually); frequently emphasizes the second beat of the measure; hemiolas at cadences; often a sparse style of writing, which leaves lots of room for the performers to improvise ornaments (and, indeed, it was expected that musicians with "good taste" would improvise ornaments in sarabandes).
- Gigue: A sprightly dance (the English "jig") in either in 6/8 time or 4/4 time. In both time signatures, one encounters common metric ideas:

  - Additionally, the gigue is generally a quasi-imitative genre; i.e., each half of the binary form begins with an imitative gesture; French composers will generally abandon the imitative approach by the second phrase of the piece, but the opening of each half with a point of imitation makes the gigue instantly identifiable.
- Prelude: A prelude comes from the Latin words for "before" and "playing". It is a free-form piece that emerges from tuning practices for lute: play a chord, tune a little, play another chord, tune a little, play a scale or two, tune a little. The preludes of the more French suite emerge from this tradition, and it shows: they are quasi-improvisatory, and are comprised primarily of chordal and

scalar pattern work, without too highly defined melodies or large-scale patterns of repetition. In the seventeenth-century French tradition, they are often notated without barlines or even specific rhythmic notation, adding to the improvisatory sense; you will have seen this specific subset of prelude, called the *prélude non mesurée* (unmeasured prelude) in Jacquet's pieces.
- For additional information on these dances and their characteristics, see Brody, pp. 15–16.

4. *Explore the sonata principle of the eighteenth century. Look through the Corelli sets given as examples above. What differentiates a sonata da chiesa from a sonata da camera? How many movements do you encounter in the sonata da chiesa? Do they have regular metric patterns or tempos? In the sonatas, do any of the movements look like the French dances that you saw in the exercise above?*

   The sonata da chiesa is typically in four movements. (Not quite always; Corelli's op. 5 contains sonatas da chiesa with five movements, because it is op. 5. Corelli was a clever guy.) These four movements are often in a predictable pattern. If you go through the set given as #5 above, you'll see that Corelli often violates the "rule" given below. But it is at least a pattern that one encounters often in sonatas da chiesa of the eighteenth century.
   - Mvt 1: In C time, adagio or grave, frequently contrapuntal using chains of suspensions, and with a bass line that moves at a different pace from the upper parts (walking bass lines are common).
   - Mvt 2: In C or cut time, allegro, with an imitative tendency throughout.
   - Mvt 3: In a slow 3. Often in a contrasting mode from the other movements, and sometimes in a different key (such as the relative minor). The harmonic scheme is often left "open" at the end; i.e., third movements frequently end on a half cadence, leaving a sense of suspense before the final movement.
   - Mvt 4: In 4 or 2 time, presto. Sometimes imitative, but not often. Generally characterized by running passagework. Sometimes in binary form and resembling a gigue (see above)

   The sonata da camera is a much looser genre. It is basically identical to the French suite, with Italianate titles: allemanda, corrente, gavotta, etc. The only predictable rules for sonatas da camera are that they begin with preludes (which often resemble the first movements of sonatas da chiesa) and they often end with gigue-like movements, making the conclusion of the sonatas da camera and the sonatas da chiesa really similar.

5. *Explore the sonata principle further. Compare the seventeenth-century sonata (exemplified here by the Castello set given above) with the Corelli sets. What links these pieces? What differentiates them (in other words, how is the seventeenth-century sonata similar and how different from the early eighteenth-century sonata?) Does the seventeenth-century sonata remind you of any other genres that we've looked at in the baroque units?*

The seventeenth-century sonata is a much more flexible affair than the codified sonatas da chiesa and da camera of the eighteenth century. At first glance, the seventeenth-century sonata appears to be a single-movement genre. On closer inspection, one will realize that there are, in fact, multiple movements, in the truest sense of the term; the seventeenth-century sonata swings back and forth between different speeds and different meters. Thus, there is a continuity of formal approach, with the eighteenth-century variety a "developed" sort of sonata.

But the main affective sense of the seventeenth-century sonata is that it is a more spontaneous, expressive genre. Castello's approach of having sonatas for one soloist, two soloists, three soloists, four soloists, etc. is indicative of the creative freedom that composers found in the genre. And the most common genre that the early sonata is compared with is monody—so much so that the early sonata is sometimes referred to as "instrumental monody." Clearly, the new, chordal conceptualization of music using continuo and independent solo lines freed composers to experiment in new ways.

6. *There's an old joke that many musicians relish: "Vivaldi wrote the same concerto hundreds of times." There is a certain truth to this quip, in that Vivaldi's development of ritornello form and the standard three-movement concerto layout helped him to generate concertos in huge numbers for public performance in Venice. And yet close analysis shows that the most remarkable fact about Vivaldi is that despite his great output, he never replicated exactly the same procedure. One of Vivaldi's sources of creativity lies in his treatment of the ritornellos. Examine [Brody](link)'s analytical charts on pp. 10–12, and try your own hand at making one of each type (table and score) for the first movement of Vivaldi's Op. 3, no. 6. Compare this chart to Brody's. How different are the harmonic schemes? The formal schemes? Vivaldi's use of Motto, Vordersatz, Fortspinnung, and Epilog? Comparing just two of these pieces, you should see numerous differences, and you should begin to get a sense of the wide range of creative possibilities at Vivaldi's disposal.*

There are three main phrases in the ritornello for this movement, shown below. "A" corresponds with the "Vordersatz" designation, "B" with "Fortspinnung," and C with "Epilog":

A:

B:

C:

At the simplest level of analysis, this piece proceeds simply by alternating ritornello and solo episode: Rit—Solo—Rit—Solo—Rit etc., or ABACADA etc. But at a deeper level, we can examine just how creative Vivaldi was in his implementation of the various small themes, resisting the desire to present all three themes in any ritornello other than the first (measure numbers omitted here, so that you can inspect the score yourself for these patterns):

Rit	—	Solo	—	Rit	—	Solo	—	Rit	—	Solo	—	Rit	—	Solo	—	Rit	—	Solo	—	Rit
abc		a'		a''		x+b'		aba'''		a''''b''		a		b'''		c		y		c
a:				a:				e:				a:								

Two facts here are particularly notable and common in Vivaldi's output. First is the fact that the C (or Epilog) theme of the ritornello is repressed until the very end of the movement. Vivaldi draws freely on the A and B thematic material in both the solo and ritornellos, but he omits the C until the very end; this strategy of withholding the final chunk of the ritornello helps give the movement a sense of finality and roundedness, mimicking the shape of the ritornello itself, as does the repetition of the C theme at the work's end, like a little prize after so much denial (another of Vivaldi's favorite tricks).

Secondly, students should note the confluence of the return to the home key and the complete restatement of the ritornello. Vivaldi's pairing of theme and key area foreshadows the principle of "double return" that became a principle of instrumental music in later decades of the eighteenth century. It is this sort of formal sophistication music that seems to have drawn J.S. Bach and other later baroque composers so enthusiastically to Vivaldi's music.