

## LASSUS, O. de: Le Nozze in Baviera

8.579063

*Exploring Ritual, Race, Caricature, and Sexuality in 16th-Century Europe*

This recording originated from my curiosity about the *moresca*, an Italian musical genre that caricatured Black Africans. I wanted to know where, how, and for whom these pieces were performed; this recording of four vignettes from a 16th-century wedding is the result. Like most scholars and performers of early European music, I am a white person of privilege, and among the many things such privilege has afforded me is the opportunity to study and perform this music. While I do not claim any first-hand knowledge of exclusion due to my race, my gender, or the traditional beliefs of my ancestors, I am fervently interested in understanding racism, oppression, and their manifestations in cultures past and present. Oppression in music of the past is often simple erasure on the part of music historians and performers: the tacit denial that people of other races even existed in a particular time and place, either through neglect or refusal to bring their documented presence to light. Such erasure, in turn, has resulted in a lack of understanding of how music was used to perpetuate the myth of white European superiority. In this recording, I aim to show the presence of Black Africans in several 16th-century European musical works, to demonstrate how these works were used, and to invite our listeners to consider their various purposes, including the perpetuation of the white superiority myth. While I could have demonstrated such uses solely in the context of scholarly articles, these have less currency and immediacy than the act of listening – of bearing witness with the ears – to this music, which must first be performed by modern musicians. Indeed, many of these representations have to be heard in order to gain a robust understanding of how they function. This performance of Lassus's *moresche* in something like their original context does not constitute an endorsement of the views expressed in them, nor does it represent unambiguous advocacy for them as works of art. Though these pieces have been recorded before, little regard has been paid to the original context in which they were created and performed. This recording seeks to address that.

The 1568 wedding of Renate of Lorraine to Wilhelm V, heir to the throne of the Duke of Bavaria, occupied the Munich court and its guests from February 22 to March 10 – an 18-day celebration. Duke Albrecht V was determined to make his son's wedding an occasion on par with those at the best Italian courts. He had long sought to hire the best artists and musicians, and the Franco-Fleming Orlando de Lassus, known in Italian as 'Orlando di Lasso', had been his *maestro di cappella* since 1556. Lassus modelled Albrecht's musical establishment on those of various Italian courts, employing a mixture of Northern and Italian musicians. One of the Italians, Massimo Troiano, was charged with recording the event in a description published in the form of a dialogue in 1569. It is from Troiano's *Dialoghi* that we learn enough about the event to make a hypothetical reconstruction of some of Lassus's musical contributions to it, particularly those surrounding improvised comedy. Lassus's 1581 *Libro de villanelle, moresche, et altri canzoni* contains a number of works whose texts are associated with the *commedia dell'arte*; the volume is thus the principal source for the secular works on this recording. The book also contains a group of six *moresche* interspersed among the *commedia dell'arte* works. Our recording is an effort to assemble some of Lassus's works for the wedding celebration so that we can hear them in something like their original context. In so doing, we hope to shed light on some of the various meanings that the music had for its 16th-century listeners.

Our reconstruction comprises four vignettes from Troiano's description: the conclusion of the wedding ceremony itself, during which we hear Lassus's six-voice *Te Deum*; the performance of a motet that Lassus composed for the occasion during supper one week later; a Saturday evening performance of *moresche* in the bridal chamber 13 days after the wedding; and music heard during an improvisatory *commedia dell'arte* performance 15 days after the wedding. The last two vignettes are essentially burlesques, and the content of their texts range from mild innuendo in the *commedia dell'arte* works to blatantly sexual and/or scatological themes in the *moresche*. As will be discussed below, such contrasts pertain to the identity of the characters represented and presumably the purpose of the representations.

### 1. Sunday, 22 February 1568 – The Day of the Wedding The Conclusion of the Ceremony

We begin with the beginning of the celebration: the wedding ceremony itself. As with most solemn state events of the period, the ceremony concluded with the singing of the *Te Deum*. Troiano identifies a six-voice setting by Lassus as the work performed, and the piece appeared in print in Nuremberg the same year. Concerning the performance, Troiano wrote:

'... the Illustrious and Most Reverend Cardinal sang the prayer and the verses softly, as the scripture teaches, to which the usual music [sung by] the most illustrious cardinal sweetly answered, with a louder voice, with "Te Deum laudamus", and with high and cheerful voices, the singers continued with "Te Dominum confitemur" for six [voices], by Master Orlando di Lasso, and the greater the attention paid by the listeners, the more beautiful were the artful thirds and beautiful fourths, and they were sung by good and practiced voices.'

Though Troiano does not mention instruments, they could well have been used in such a festive context, and we have added them freely.

#### [1] Te Deum laudamus

Te Deum laudamus:  
Te Dominum confitemur.  
Te æternum Patrem  
Omnis terra veneratur.  
Tibi omnes Angeli;  
Tibi coeli et universae potestates.  
Tibi Cherubim et Seraphim  
Incessabili voce proclamant:  
Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,  
[Dominus Deus Sabaoth.]

We praise thee, O God:  
We acknowledge thee to be the Lord.  
All the earth doth worship thee,  
The Father everlasting.  
To thee all Angels cry aloud:  
The Heavens, and all the powers therein.  
To thee Cherubim and Seraphim  
Continually do cry:  
Holy, Holy, Holy,  
Lord God of power and might.

Pleni sunt coeli  
 Et terra majestatis gloriæ tuæ.  
 Te gloriosus;  
 Apostolorum chorus  
 Te Prophetarum  
 Laudabilis numerus;  
 Te Martyrum candidatus  
 Laudat exercitus.  
 Te per orbem terrarum  
 Sancta confitetur Ecclesia:  
 Patrem immensæ majestatis;  
 Venerandum tuum verum  
 Et unicum Filium;  
 Sanctum quoque Paraclitum Spiritum.  
 Tu Rex gloriæ, Christe.  
 Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius.  
 Tu ad liberandum  
 Susceptorum hominem,  
 Non horruisti Virginis uterum.  
 Tu, devicto mortis aculeo,  
 Aperuisti credentibus regna coelorum.  
 Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes,  
 In gloria Patris.  
 Judex crederis esse venturus.  
 Te ergo quæsumus,  
 Tuis famulis subveni,  
 Quos pretioso sanguine redemisti.  
 Æterna fac cum sanctis tuis  
 In gloria numerari.  
 Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine,  
 Et benedic hæreditati tuæ.  
 Et rege eos,  
 Et extolle illos usque in æternum.  
 Per singulos dies benedicimus te.  
 Et laudamus nomen tuum in sæculum,  
 et in sæculum sæculi.  
 Dignare, Domine, die isto  
 Sine peccato nos custodire.  
 Miserere nostri, Domine,  
 Miserere nostri.  
 Fiat misericordia tua,  
 Domine, super nos,  
 Quemadmodum speravimus in te.  
 In te, Domine, speravi:  
 Non confundar in æternum.

Heaven and earth are full  
 Of the majesty of thy glory.  
 The glorious company  
 Of the Apostles praise thee.  
 The goodly fellowship of the  
 Prophets praise thee.  
 The noble army of Martyrs  
 Praise thee.  
 The holy Church throughout all  
 The world doth acknowledge thee:  
 The Father of an infinite Majesty;  
 Thine honourable, true,  
 And only Son;  
 Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.  
 Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ;  
 Thou the everlasting Son of the Father.  
 When thou tookest upon thee  
 To deliver man, thou didst not  
 Abhor the Virgin's womb.  
 Having overcome the sharpness of death,  
 Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.  
 Thou sittest at the right hand of  
 God in the glory of the Father.  
 We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge.  
 We therefore pray thee,  
 Help thy servants,  
 Whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.  
 Make them to be numbered with  
 Thy Saints in glory everlasting.  
 O Lord, save thy people  
 And bless thine heritage.  
 Govern them  
 And lift them up for ever.  
 Day by day, we magnify thee;  
 And we worship thy name ever,  
 World without end.  
 Vouchsafe, O Lord,  
 To keep us this day without sin.  
 O Lord, have mercy upon us;  
 Have mercy upon us.  
 O Lord, let thy mercy  
 Lighten upon us,  
 As our trust is in thee.  
 O Lord, in thee have I trusted;  
 Let me never be confounded.

Translation from  
*The Book of Common Prayer, 1662*

## 2. Sunday, 29 February 1568 – One Week After the Wedding Motet Performance During Supper

Lassus's *Gratia sola Dei* is a setting of an epithalamium – a poem written specifically for the bride on the way to her marital chamber. The poem is in dactylic hexameter, also known as 'heroic' hexameter, one of the classical poetry forms that had been revived in the Renaissance. Troiano points out the acrostic in which the first letters of each line spell out the Latin names of the wedding couple: 'GVILHELMVS RENEAE'. He describes the suppertime performance of the work as follows:

'... I cannot help but tell of a work by the famous Orlando Lasso, who had composed it in honour of the most felicitous wedding. He set a poem by the learned Mr. Nicholas Stoppio, a Fleming. The first part was sung by the whole group of singers; the second part by only four select voices. It was sung so sweetly, and the imitations and the artistic and beautiful passages held the ears of one after another of the listeners with such strength, that everyone, including his most serene prince and his most serene lady, stopped – with bites of food in their mouths – to hear the incomparable harmonies; and until this wonderful quartet was finished, not one of the servants moved from where they found themselves. After this, they continued the third part for six voices all together; and for this work, the excellent and famous Orlando – with a full mouth – was praised by all equally.'

This motet was printed in Munich in 1569, the year following the wedding. The print's title bears a common reference to instrumental performance of such works, noting that the music is 'most proper for performance on all kinds of instruments as well as the human voice' ('tum viva voce, tum omnis generis instrumentis cantata commodissimae'). Accordingly, while Troiano does not mention instruments, we have again included them. The second section of the motet, however, is performed by four individual voices a *cappella* as Troiano described; his is a rare description from the era of an alternation between multiple singers and one singer per part in such a context. The text of the third section of the motet refers to carnal love – a topic that runs through nearly all of the music in our recording, but generally with more colourful and explicit language than that of this motet.

**[2] Gratia sola Dei**

Gratia sola Dei pie in omnibus omnia adimplet  
 Virtute aeterna caelesti et amore creatis.  
 In nostris almus vigeat quoque cordibus ardor  
 Lege sacra statuit, cunctisque amor imperat unus,  
 Hinc reduces qui nos in caelo asserat, atque beatos  
 Efficiat. Virtus aequa almo in amore recumbit.

Legitimo ergo nihil natura invenit amore  
 Majus, connubii unde ferax fit copula fidi,  
 Vis sacra amicitiae, rata confirmatio amoris.  
 Solus amans, quod amare juvat, faeliciter ardet.

Res mira: ignoti quod et illaqueentur amore,  
 Emicat accensis per famam mentibus ardor,  
 Nocte silente magis, dum mutua flamma per artus  
 Errans alta trahit suspiria pectore ab imo;  
 Amplexus taedet longum expectare jugales.

The grace of God alone properly makes all perfect in all things  
 created by eternal virtue and heavenly love.  
 He has ordained by sacred law that a nurturing ardour thrive  
 also in our hearts, and that the ruler over all be one love,  
 which might bring us back home to heaven and render us  
 blessed. Just virtue reclines in nurturing love.

Therefore, nature finds nothing greater than proper love,  
 whence is made the fruitful union of faithful marriage, the  
 sacred strength of friendship, the valid confirmation of love.  
 Only the lover is inflamed auspiciously for that which he delights to love.

A marvellous thing: because even the unknowing are snared by  
 love, passion glows in the hearts aroused by its renown,  
 especially in the silent night, when a mutual flame wandering  
 through the limbs draws sighs from the depths of the heart;  
 it is wearisome long to await the embraces of married love.

Nicolò Stoppio (?–1570)  
 Translation by Peter Bergquist  
*Lassus: The Complete Motets* 6, R110 (1997)  
 A-R Editions, Middleton, Wisconsin, USA  
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### 3. Saturday, 6 March 1568 – 13 Days After the Wedding Evening Performance of Moresche

The genre of the *moresca* is related to the *villanella*, a song imitating lyric Neapolitan traditions of the street and countryside that became popular in the 1530s. The *moresca* portrays the speech of ‘moors’, who in this case are Africans (the word was used indiscriminately to refer to anyone from the Middle East or Africa, whether Muslim or not). With the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century, particularly after its conquest of Constantinople in 1453, enslaved people from the Balkans and other Eastern European regions (who were sold into Ottoman territories as often as into European ones) were no longer easily available. Italian traders began to seek slaves from the Barbary Coast and, most importantly, from substantial slave markets in Tripoli and Benghazi, which were end points for caravan routes from central Africa. Many of these enslaved people were from the Kanem–Bornu Empire, which surrounded Lake Chad from about 1380 until 1893. Bornu’s rulers tended to sell non-Muslims, criminals, or others from their territories, and these unfortunate individuals often became enslaved in Italy and German-speaking lands. Historian Sally McKee has shown that manumission in early modern Italy was not uncommon, and she notes that there is no evidence Black Africans were released less often than their eastern European counterparts, so some of the *moresca* texts can be read as representing free as well as enslaved people.

Many of the *moresca* texts are macaronic, combining Italian, Neapolitan, and Kanuri, the main language of the Kanem–Bornu Empire, which is spoken today by around four million people in the African countries of Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. 20th-century scholars did not appreciate that Kanuri was among the languages of the texts. A complicating factor is that both Kanuri and Neapolitan often employ ideophones, particularly in jocular contexts; examples from the *moresca* texts are ‘tanbilibilibili!’ representing drumming and ‘gua, gual!’ representing stomping. The Kanuri words were not distinguished from such ideophones until Gianfranco Salvatore explained the situation in a ground-breaking study in 2012. In addition, the authors of the texts intended to represent an African inflection in Italian or Neapolitan – substituting ‘L’ for ‘R’ (as in ‘clepare’ instead of ‘crepare’) and ‘B’ for ‘V’ (as in ‘bede’ for ‘vede’). As one might expect from authors attempting to represent a language with which their experience was limited, the syntax of the Kanuri phrases is inconsistent at best. These factors, combined with the nonstandard spelling of the time, make strictly accurate translations of these texts extremely difficult. The use of Kanuri nevertheless represents a striking authenticity and demonstrates that residents of Naples (and possibly Munich) knew enough of the language to recognise the words and to associate them with people from Bornu. (In the texts printed in these notes, words derived from Kanuri are printed in bold italics.)

The Bornu themselves are represented as fiercely proud people who frequently celebrate their identities with references to Allah and their origins. They are often placed in the same situations as other comedic characters of the period, notably those of the *commedia dell’arte* works heard in the next section of the recording. The hapless Giorgio, for example, constantly serenades unappreciative Lucia and Katarina. All the enslaved people are more highly sexualized than other stock characters in the same situations, and the texts make use of many sexual puns and profanity. Gender seems to be deliberately obfuscated by both poet and composer: the Neapolitan dialect feminizes the endings of masculine names (‘Georgia’ for ‘Georgio’ and ‘Martina’ for ‘Martino’), and the music of the dialogues is not composed with any differentiation between high and low voices to signify gender.

Lassus served as a singer in Italy during his youth (1544–54) and spent at least two years (1549–51) in Naples itself, where he learned the local dialect and probably heard the earliest examples of the *moresca* by composers of the previous generation. His grand reworkings of these earlier songs are primarily for four and six voices, but *O Lucia, miau, miau* is an early example (published in 1560) for three voices that demonstrates the original texture and character of the songs.

All of the *moresche* but *O Lucia* were printed in Lassus’s 1581 *Libro*. Troiano’s description makes it clear that an evening was devoted to hearing Lassus’s *moresche*: ‘On Saturday, they did not depart from the palace, and after dinner they played cards in the chamber of the most illustrious wife; and wind instruments entertained the most serene persons for an hour with the *moresche* for six voices by Orlando Lasso, with six wind players [*tifferi*] together with six select and sonorous voices.’ Our performance incorporates the instrumentation Troiano observed, which serves to underscore this music’s burlesque quality. The rhythmic play of the traditional three-voice *moresche* from the 1530s is present, but the harmony – set in four- and six-

voice textures – is especially lush, lacking the rustic character of the original genre. The harmony does retain a comedic quality, however, turning to unexpected, often ridiculous chords.

What are we to make of these racially- and sexually-charged representations performed as part of a wedding celebration? The sexual content of these works surely played a role in the decision to perform them and other burlesque pieces heard in the postwedding celebrations. They may have served as a kind of variant on the *charivari*, a loud mock parade and wedding activity to celebrate the nuptials after the vows had been taken. Such use of highly 'othered' yet recognisable stock characters as surrogates for the couple would have deflected some of the couple's embarrassment and perhaps also some of their ire at the architects of these celebrations. Despite the innuendo, which was undoubtedly underscored by the fact that performance was in the couple's bedroom, the bridal pair itself was not represented. Indeed, in their own minds, representations of the Bornu were likely about as far from representations of a white German noble couple as one could get.

### [3] Álla la pia calia

**Álla la pia calia,**  
Siamo **bernagualà!**  
Tanbilibilibi, libili!

**Schinchina bacu,** santa gamba,  
**Gli, gli pampana calia!**  
**Ciancian, nini gua gua!**  
**Ania catuba!**

**Chilingua cina bacu.**  
**Lapia clama, gurch!**

He, he, he, he, ha, ha, ho, ho!

**Cu cana calia rite api ces cu tutu ni**  
**La pia piche;**  
**Berlinguaminu chara chire,**  
Et non gente gnam, gnam, gnam,  
Ch'ama figlia gentiliuom!

Non curare **berlingaminum**  
Ch'amar fosse chissa hominum.  
**Are buscani,**  
**Alla cura chi de cua!**  
**Are pati chache** siamo **beschin!**

Álla la pia calia ...

Hail Allah, slave,  
We are from Bornu!  
Tanbilibilibi, libili!

Curious one, [this is] not a holy leg/an old handout,  
Learn it, scorch it, slave!  
Curiosity, observe carefully, stomp, stomp!  
Dance the Catuba!

I am not happy [with this] door.  
Hey, I'm just like you, grrr!

Hey, hey, hey, ha, ha, ha, ho, ho, ho!

Today, hungry slave, why fear and wailing for what is before you?  
Hey, [what a] sin!  
Bornu people prefer these things,  
And not the 'nah nah' people  
Who love the nobleman's daughter!

Don't pay attention to the Bornu  
Who might love the man.  
Come here and dance,  
Allah helps him who helps himself!  
Come, worthless one, we are joking!

Hail Allah, slave ...

### [4] Canta, Georgia, canta

– Canta, Georgia, canta,  
Che bede namolata!  
**Giorgia:** Giorgia non pote cantar!  
– Che sta murta, passionata?  
**Giorgia:** Tutta negra sta storduta  
Quando bede gente ianca.  
– Canta, Georgia, canta!  
**Alla cura che de cua!**  
Siamo **bernagualà!**  
**Giorgia:** Pamini Lucia, paminì!  
Che patrona vol francare.  
**Lucia:** Vol dar marit'oime!  
**Giorgia:** Piglia, gente lurma,  
Che vo far gonell'à tia,  
**Ati cilum corachi bischine,**  
A regina, ti **maigara**

**Tinche, tinc, tinc ...**

Messer dorma, Parino sotto lietto,  
Madonna gamb'in collo,  
Messer grida, Madonna fuia,  
Parin sona zampogna,  
Armare Re io, **gua, gua!**

– Sing, Georgio,  
Here comes your lover!  
**Giorgio:** Giorgio can't sing!  
– What? Why do you stand mute, are you in love?  
**Giorgio:** All Black people are struck dumb  
When they see white people.  
– Sing, Georgio, sing!  
Allah helps him who helps himself!  
We are from Bornu!  
**Giorgio:** Go, Lucia, go!  
The master wants to free you.  
**Lucia:** He wants to give me in marriage, oh!  
**Giorgio:** Come on, the Loma people  
Will give you a little skirt;  
This Black asks you to dance,  
[Will make] you a queen, a queen!

Scary, scary, scary [or creak, creak, creak] ...

The master is asleep, Parino is under the bed,  
My lady's leg on his neck;  
The master shouts, my lady flees,  
Parino plays the bagpipes,  
To shore up the king, I, stomp, stomp!

**[5] Hai, Lucia, bona cosa**

Giorgia: Hai, Lucia, hai, Lucia,  
 Bona cosa io dic' à tia:  
 Che patrona fatta franca  
 E vò bella maritare,  
 Giorgia tua vò pigliare.  
 Tutta negra v'invitare  
 Nott'e giorno vonno sonare:  
 Tambiiiiiiiiiiii!  
 Lucia, poiche Dio v'au'agiuta,  
 Gente negra vol cantare;  
 Core mi ascoltare  
 Apri bocc'et non dormire.  
 Acqua, madonna, al foco,  
 Che ardo tutta  
 Et tu pigliat'a gioco,  
 Jo grido sempre, haimé,  
 Et tu non sentuta,  
 Et voce mia tutto fatta roca.  
 Acqua, madonna, al foco  
 Che ciminera, ard'e mo fuiuta cocha.

**Giorgio:** O Lucia, O Lucia,  
I have a good thing to tell you:  
The master has freed you,  
And he wants you to marry, beautiful.  
Your Giorgio wants to come take you,  
To invite all the Blacks  
To play night and day:  
Tamburiiiiiiiii!  
Lucia, since God has helped me,  
The Black people want to sing;  
My heart, listen to me.  
Open your mouth and don't go to sleep.  
Water, my lady, on the fire,  
For I am burning all over,  
And you make fun of me.  
I keep crying 'alas',  
And you don't hear it,  
And my voice is all hoarse.  
Water, my lady, on the fire,  
Like a chimnev, burning and now escaping the heat!

**[6] Lucia, celu, hai biscania**

**Giorgia:** Lucia, *celu, hai, biscania*  
 Tambilililililili, *gua, gua*, ciri, ciri, cian.  
 Non canusci Giorgia tua,  
 Cristophona tua?  
 Se tu far cariss'a me,  
 Et io far cariss'a te, *gua, gua*,  
 Se te voi scarpe de laura  
 Con chiavelle sommolata  
 Et dobletta quadra cirifa  
 Con gonnella de scuagliata  
 Giorgia tua port'à te,  
 Ciambelotta verde, bruna,  
 Carmosina leonata,  
 Et no pare de paternoglia  
 Cosa canda come contessa,  
 Cod'alzata com' à Madonna  
 Apri porta! Giorgia tua  
 Canta la magna!  
 Hai! Lucia mia,  
 Non canusci Giorgia tua  
 Che te vole tanto di bene,  
 Che non pote niente di bene,  
*U, u, gricache, za, za, baraza,*  
*Tiri, tiri, gua, gua.*  
**Lucia:** Nigra *guala burno*,  
*Je non quie au ne!*  
*Ala bachi laudi barachigno!*  
 Scaba canaza, vati con dio  
 Non cene leche, per santa malina!  
*Zu zu bere, tiri tiri gua gua*  
**Giorgia:** Hai Lucia mia!  
**Lucia:** Giorgia, sporcata  
 Piscì a lo lieto!  
 Dici sudata pampona  
 Fete come tonina.  
*Burnoguala*, scaba canaza!  
*Ziche lizi*, dirindirindina!  
 Zocolo, zo, che della *burnoguala*.  
**Giorgia:** Siamo *burnoguala*.  
 Dindirì, dinidirindina!

**Giorgio:** Lucia the Black, oh, dance!  
Tambilililililili, many, many stomps!  
Don't you recognise your Giorgio  
[And] your Christopher?  
If you caress me,  
And I caress you, drum, drum,  
If you want golden shoes  
With pretty heels,  
And a fine cotton blouse  
With a flounced skirt,  
Giorgio will give you all this,  
A hat of fur that's green, brown,  
Scarlet ginger,  
And don't act like a 'Pater noster',  
If I sing to you as if to a countess,  
To a highness, to the Madonna.  
Open the door! Your Giorgio  
Is singing your greatness!  
O, my Lucia,  
Don't you recognise your Giorgio  
Who loves you so much,  
But he cannot do anything well?  
I, I, my turn, drum the dance,  
Many, many drums!  
**Lucia:** Black man of Bornu,  
You have enraged me!  
Allah beat, flip, and hunt [you]!  
Runaway prick, go with God; there are  
No fine meals here, by Saint Marina!  
Run, scatter! Many stomps!  
**Giorgio:** O, my Lucia!  
**Lucia:** Giorgio, you are filthy,  
You pissed the bed!  
You tell me it's sweat like wilting leaves  
– It smells like tuna!  
Bornu man, runaway prick!  
Take those clothes off your body, dirindirindina!  
The clog that comes from this Bornu man!  
**Giorgio:** I am from Bornu.  
Dindirj, dindiridina!

**[7] O Lucia, miau**

**Giorgia:** O Lucia, miau, miau!  
Tu non gabbi chiù a me,  
Sienta, sienta matanuta!

**Giorgio:** Oh, Lucia, meow, meow,  
Stop making fun of me.  
Listen to my serenade!

**Lucia:** O musutta  
 Licca pignata, cula caccata!  
 Chi è chissa billanazza  
 Come gatta chiama me?  
**Giorgia:** Giorgia tua sprotnata  
 Che vol tanto bene a te.  
 Ia ti prega, cula mia,  
 Lassa passar bizzaria,  
 Ch'aia, statua momorata?  
 Perché l'autra tu trovata,  
 Che non vole bene a te.  
 O Lucia, susa da lietto e non dormire,  
 Scienta Giorgia bella cantare  
 Con zanpogna e tanmorina  
 Per voler far cantarata.  
 O Lucia inzuccurata  
 Perché pur sta corruzzata?  
 Miau, miau, grata malata!  
**Lucia:** Va cucina,  
 Licca pignata, cula caccata!  
**Giorgia:** Sienta, sienta matunata,  
 Giorgia tua vol cantare,  
 Che vol tanto bene a te!

#### [8] Cathalina, apra finestra

**Giorgia:** Cathalina, apra finestra,  
 Se voi senta Giorgia cantara;  
 Se tu sent'à me sonara,  
 Passa tutta fantanasia.  
 Ja te priega, core mia,  
 Non volere scorrucciare,  
 Perché Giorgia vol cantara,  
 Per passare fantanasia.  
 Spetta loco e non par tutta  
 Quant'accordo quissa liuta:  
 Tron, tron, tiri, tron ...  
 Andar avalenza, gia calagia  
**Schinchina bacu** sana laqua!  
 Affaci'un poco, quissa pertusa!  
 Lassa via un poc'à tia,  
 Voglio cant'una canzona  
 Come fusse tamborina.  
**Hu**, a te bella, **hu** a te mania.  
**Hu** a te canazza! Zuccara mia!  
 «Chissa capilla come latte  
 Fronte luce, come crescere,  
 Occhi tua come lanterna,  
 Chissa nasa sprofilata,  
 Faccia tua come smeralda,  
 Chissa labra marzapanata,  
 Bocca tua come doanna,  
 Cizza grossa come fiascone  
 (Lassa biber'a Giorgia tua!),  
 Bella infanta!  
 Vostr'amore mi fa morire!  
 Tutta la note la galla canta.  
 Giorgia mai non può dormire».  
**Cathalina:** Mala francisca posse venire  
 Come la ladra, figlia de cane.  
 Tira va trasse, bibe la broda  
 Intra coccina come gatta nigra.  
**Giorgia:** Poi che tu non voi facciare,  
 Io di qua voglio per tutta.  
**Cathalina:** Su, schiavo ladra,  
 Cana musata,  
 Diriet'à la porta,  
**Giorgia:** *nistillingo*,  
**Cathalina:** Madonna trovata,  
**Giorgia:** *nistillingo*,  
**Cathalina:** Con Giorgi'abbracciata.

**Lucia:** O, little snout,  
 Lick the pot, shitty ass!  
 Who is this snot nose  
 Calling me like a cat?  
**Giorgio:** It's your unfortunate Giorgio,  
 Who loves you so much.  
 I beg you, my ass,  
 Stop being bizarre;  
 What are you, a marble statue?  
 Because that other guy you found  
 Doesn't love you well.  
 O Lucia, get out of bed and don't sleep.  
 Listen to Giorgio sing beautifully,  
 With his bagpipe and his little drum  
 For he wants to sing for you.  
 O Lucia, you sweet thing,  
 Why are you so angry?  
 Meow, meow, sick scraper!  
**Lucia:** Go to the kitchen,  
 Lick the pot, shitty ass!  
**Giorgio:** Listen, listen to the serenade,  
 Your Giorgio will sing for you,  
 Who loves you so dearly!

**Giorgio:** Katarina, open the window,  
 If you want to hear Giorgio sing;  
 If you listen to my sound,  
 All pretense will disappear.  
 I beg you, my heart,  
 Don't be angry  
 Because Giorgio wants to sing  
 To lose the pretense.  
 Wait there and don't leave  
 While I tune this lute:  
 Pluck, pluck, plinketty, pluck ...  
 – Wait, wait, it's about ready –  
 Curious one, [this is] not healthy water!  
 Look a little through this small hole!  
 Let a little of yourself be seen!  
 I want to sing you a song  
 Just like the drummers do.  
 I want you, beauty, I want to handle you.  
 I want to stick into you! My sweet!  
 'Your hair is like milk,  
 Your forehead like a crescent moon,  
 Your eyes are like a lantern,  
 Your nose is splendid,  
 Your face is like an emerald,  
 Your lips like marzipan,  
 Your mouth is like a doe's,  
 Your breasts as big as wine gourds  
 (Let your Giorgio drink from them!),  
 Lovely babe!  
 Your love is making me die!  
 All night long the cock sings.  
 Giorgio never can sleep.'  
**Katarina:** The pox can come to you,  
 Like a thief, you son of a bitch.  
 Get out of here, drink your swill  
 In the kitchen like a black cat.  
**Giorgio:** Since you don't want to do it,  
 I want to stay here for everything.  
**Katarina:** Away, slave thief,  
 Muzzled dog,  
 Go out the door –  
**Giorgio:** I'll take care of it!  
**Katarina:** My lady, never,  
**Giorgio:** I'll take care of it!  
**Katarina:** Will be in Giorgio's arms.



Giorgia: *nistillingo*.

Giorgio: I'll take care of it!

[9] Chi chilichi

Chi chilichi?

Cucurucu!

**Lucia:** *U*, scontienta, *U*, *beschina*,

*U*, sportunata, me Lucia!

Non sienta, Martina,

Galla cantara?

**Martina:** Lassa canta, possa clepare!

Porca te, piscia, sia cicata!

la dormuta, tu scitata.

**Lucia:** Ba con dia,

non bo più per namolata.

Tutta notte tu dormuta

Mai a me tu basciata

Cucurucu! Cucurucu!

Che papa la sagna

Metter'ucelli enter'à gaiola

Cucurucu, cucurucu!

Leva da loco,

Piglia Zampogna

Va sonando per chissa cantuna.

Lirum li, lirum li.

Sona, se vuoi sonare!

Lassa carumpa canella,

Lassa Lucia!

**Martina:** *U* madonna,

*Ati cilum barbu ni*

Sona, sona, e non gli dare.

Lirum, lirum, lirum, li.

**Lucia:** La moglie del peccoraro

Sette pecore a no danaro;

Se ce fusse Caroso mio

Cinco peccore a no carlino

**Martina:** Auza la gamba,

madonna Lucia,

Stiendi la mano, piglia zampogna,

Sauta no poco con mastro Martino.

Lirum li, lirum li.

Who's [crowing] chilichi?'

'Cucurucu.'

**Lucia:** I, unhappy, I, a joke,

I, unfortunate me, Lucia!

Don't you hear, Martino,

The cock singing?

**Martino:** Let it sing, go die!

You pig, piss, go blind!

I was asleep, you've woken me!

**Lucia:** Go with God,

I don't love you anymore.

You slept all night long,

Never once did you give me a kiss.

Cucurucu, cucurucu!

If Papa knew,

He would put birds [like you] in the birdcage.

Cucurucu, cucurucu!

Get out of here,

Squeeze the bagpipe,

Go play for someone else's song.

Lirum li, lirum li.

Play if you want to!

Leave, rotten cinnamon,

Leave Lucia!

**Martino:** I, my lady,

[To] this Black [you are] a thief!

Play, play, and don't give it!

Lirum, lirum, lirum, li.

**Lucia:** The shepherd's wife

Has seven sheep and no money;

If it were my beloved,

There'd be five sheep and not a penny.

**Martino:** Lift your leg,

Lady Lucia,

Stretch out your hand, grab the bagpipe,

Jump a little with master Martino.

Lirum li, lirum li!

4. Monday, 8 March 1568 – 15 Days After the Wedding  
Commedia dell'Arte Performance

Lassus was charged with creating 'an improvised Italian comedy' for the guests, and Troiano describes the action in some detail. Like the *moresche*, the *commedia dell'arte* (as it was later called) was full of stereotypical characters, and Troiano names many of these along with the names of those who played them. He also mentions incidental pieces in passing, noting how these were performed, but usually without identifying the works themselves. We are performing these in the order in which they were heard, but without, however, the intervening dialogue.

Sexual content in these *commedia dell'arte* works is much less explicit than in the *moresche*, but it is often present. We begin with *Matona mia cara*, which must be among Lassus's most performed works today. The piece is a *todesca* — a genre that satirizes Germans attempting to speak Italian. In this case, a German soldier who lacks both subtlety and phonetic flexibility attempts to woo an Italian lady, apologising for his lack of sophistication ('Me not know Petrarch') along the way. Troiano does not mention the piece, but it appears in Lassus's 1581 *Libro*, and in light of many of the other parodies at the wedding celebration, it would have been a welcome addition. Troiano then mentions a performance of one of Lassus's five-voice madrigals, and we have chosen a setting of *Se si alto pon gir mie stanche rime*, a stanza from a much longer poem by Petrarch and one of the few lofty texts heard on our recording. Next, we hear two stanzas of *Chi passa per 'sta strad'e non sospira*, a lute song by Filippo Azzaiolo with very simple poetry that was clearly meant for the stereotypical under-window serenade. This is the only piece in *commedia dell'arte* that Troiano mentions by name, and he specifies that Lassus sang it while accompanying himself on the lute. Troiano then cites a 'beautiful piece with five *virole da gamba* and as many voices', and we have chosen another *todesca* from Lassus's 1581 *Libro*, *Mi me chiamere*, a representation of a German baker who claims to have much more success with women than his soldier counterpart from *Matona mia cara*. Next comes a piece 'for four voices with two lutes, a harpsichord, a recorder, and a bass viola da gamba'. The text of *Par ch'hai lasciato* is spoken from the point of view of Don Diego, a character from the improvised play whom Troiano describes as 'the desperate Spaniard named Don Diego de Mendoza'. Here Don Diego is frustrated by his lady's unwillingness to appear at the window for a serenade. The text is in the form of a Spanish *villancico* (though the form of the music is a bit more elaborate) and the additional plucked-string instruments would have assisted in bringing out a Spanish character. We conclude with a double-choir dialogue between Pantalone and his servant, Zanni, two more stock characters from the *commedia dell'arte*. Pantalone heaps derision on the ignorant Zanni, and yet the setting concludes with an almost touching farewell between them.

**[10] Matona, mia cara**

Matona, mia cara,  
Mi follere canzon,  
Cantar sotto finestra,  
Lantze bon compagnon.  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.

Ti prego m'ascoltare,  
Che mi cantar de bon,  
E mi ti foller bene,  
Come greco e capon.  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.

Comandar alle cacce,  
Cacciar con le falcon,  
Mi ti portar becacce,  
Grasse come rognon.  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.  
Se mi non saper dire,  
Tante belle razon,  
Petrarcha mi non saper,  
Ne fonte d'Helicon.  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.

Se ti mi foller bene,  
Mi non esser poltron,  
Mi ficcar tutta notte urtar,  
Come monton,  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.

My lovely Lady,  
Me vant to zing a zong  
Under window:  
Lancer good companion!  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.

Please listen to me,  
zince me zinging vell,  
And I'm fond of you  
As a Greek is of a capon!  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.

When I go hunting,  
Hunt vith ze falcon,  
And I'll bring you a voodcock,  
As fat as a kidney.  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.  
Me cannot tell you  
Many elegant zings,  
Me not know Petrarch,  
Nor the Fountain of Helicon.  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.

If you love me,  
Me not be lazy;  
Me thrust all night long,  
Me bump like ram.  
Don don don, diri diri, don don don don.

**[11] Se sì alto pôn gir mie stanche rime**

Se sì alto pôn gir mie stanche rime,  
ch'agiungan lei ch'è fuor d'ira et di pianto,  
et fa 'l ciel or di sue bellezze lieto,  
ben riconoscerà 'l mutato stile,  
che già forse le piacque anzi che Morte  
chiaro a lei giorno, a me fesse altre notti.

If my weary lines can fly so high as to reach her,  
Who is beyond the reach of anger or complaint,  
And whose beauty now makes Heaven rejoice,  
She will recognise the altered style  
That might have pleased her before that time when death  
Bestowed on her bright day, but brought me gruelling dark nights.

*Petrarch (1304–1374)*  
*Mia benigna fortuna e'l viver lieto, s. 11*  
Translation by Mick Swithinbank  
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**[12] Chi passa per 'sta strada**

Chi passa per 'sta strada  
E non sospira,  
Beato s'è,  
Fa la li le la.  
Beato'è chi lo chi  
Lo puote fare  
Per la reale.  
Affaccia ti mo

Se non ch'io moro mo.  
Affaccia ti che tu  
Mi dai la vita  
Meschino me,  
Fa la li le la.  
Se'l cielo non ti  
Possa consolare  
Per la reale.  
Affaccia ti mo  
Se non ch'io moro mo, fa la li le la.

He who passes down this street  
And does not sigh  
Is blessed,  
Fa la li le la.  
Blessed is he who  
Can well do it  
On this royal way.  
Show yourself,

Lest I die right now.  
Show yourself, for you  
Are the source of my life,  
Poor me,  
Fa la li le la.  
If the sky  
Cannot comfort you  
On this royal way,  
Show yourself  
Lest I die right now.



**[13] Mi me chiamere**

Mi me chiamere Mistre Righe,  
 Che con le bucal vo inturne;  
 De le donne mi son amighe,  
 Perche mittere pan'in furne,  
 Tutte nott'e tutte zurne.  
 Mi me piase magnar fighe.  
 Mi me chiamere Mistre Righe.

Quando vagh'à comandar,  
 Se non è levad'el pan,  
 Preste mi face levar,  
 Quando mette le mie man;  
 Malvasie e tribian  
 Me dar poi per mie fatighe.  
 Mi me chiamere Mistre Righe.

Quand'à cas'el pan portar  
 Le matonne'e masserette  
 Dise «Care le mie fornar,  
 Canter' un poch' un canzonetta».  
 E mi preste con pivette  
 Un canzon sonar de dighe.  
 Mi me chiamere Mistre Righe.

**[14] Par ch'hai lasciato**

Par ch'hai lasciato de non t'affacciare?  
 Per far sapere ca si malatesta?

Deh, poverella, con tanto susiego,  
 Non far che conte sape lo Don Diego.  
 Forse te credi di me laniare:  
 Che me stà'inchiusa come stess'in cella.

Deh, poverella ...

Tira, ca te dovrissi vergognare,  
 Tutto lo giorno farsi lacovella.

Deh, poverella ...

Donna che face quello che non suole  
 O t'ha gabbato, o gabbare ti vuole  
 E senti due parole, se tu voi,  
 Cà saccio quanto para fan tre Boi.

**[15] Zanni! Piasi, Patrò?**

Zanni!  
 Piasi Patrò?  
 Dov'estu?  
 Eso'in cantina.  
 Mo che fast' in cantin', ah loro.  
 E bif meser.  
 O rovina de casa mia!  
 Vien fuori, bestia!  
 Aspetté, Signor, perch'ho perso  
 La spina del vasol!  
 O, pove Pantalon,  
 Stopalo col naso, fio d'un asino!  
 Allegrezz', allegrezza, Patrò!  
 E lo trovada!  
 Stopalo ben, caro Zanni!  
 O Patrò!  
 Che cosa?  
 E le'l stronzo d'unca.  
 O, forfante, mariol, mettetelo'in bocca poltron!  
 O le chilo! Meser, e lo trovada!  
 Mo stopa presto prest'e vien suo!

I'm called Mister Straight,  
 The man who goes around with a jug.  
 I'm the friend of all the ladies,  
 For I stuff the loaf in the oven,  
 All night and all day.  
 I love eating figs.  
 I'm called Mister Straight.

When a wench asks  
 If the bread has not risen,  
 It immediately springs up  
 When she puts her hand on mine.  
 Then she offers Malvasia and Trebbiano  
 For my exhaustion.  
 I'm called Mister Straight.

When I take the bread from the shop  
 To the ladies of the market,  
 They say 'Dear baker,  
 Sing us a bit of a song.'  
 And quickly on my pipe  
 I play them a little song.  
 I'm called Mister Straight.

Why have you stopped appearing at the window?  
 Is it to let me know that you wish to hurt me?

Well, poor, contemptible girl,  
 Do not imagine you will convince Don Diego  
 That you stay away from me  
 By complaining that it is I the recluse.

Well, poor, contemptible girl...

Stop it; you should be ashamed.  
 All day you are quarrelling.

Well, poor, contemptible girl...

A woman who does not behave as she should  
 Has either deceived you or is about to do so,  
 So listen to two words if you will:  
 I am well aware of know how many 'pairs' can be made from three oxen.

Zanni!  
 Yes, boss?  
 Where are you?  
 I'm in the cellar.  
 And what are you doing in the cellar, huh?  
 I'm drinking, master.  
 Oh, ruin of my household!  
 Come out, you beast!  
 Wait, sir, because I've lost  
 The stopper to the barrel!  
 Oh, poor Pantalone!  
 Plug it with your nose, you ass!  
 It's alright, it's alright, Boss!  
 I've found it!  
 Plug it well, my dear Zanni!  
 Oh, boss!  
 What's wrong?  
 This is a dog turd.  
 Oh, you scoundrel, stuff it in your mouth!  
 Oh, here it is! I've found it!  
 Well, stick it in quickly, and come up here!

Perdone me, Patrò, che non poss vegni.  
Mo perche non postu venir castro nazzo?  
Perche? Voi componer un Soneti!  
A laro, mi credo che ti ze imbriago!  
Signur, si, si'a la fe!  
Orsu, dorme sio d'un porco!  
O Patrò!  
Che vustu?  
M'arico mandomi.  
A Dio, Zanni.  
A de, Patrò.  
A Dio.

Sorry, boss, but I can't come up.  
And why not, you wretch?  
Why? Because I want to write a sonnet.  
Oh, you rascal! I think you must be drunk!  
Sir, yes, yes, you're quite right!  
Well, go to sleep, pig that you are!  
Oh, boss!  
What is it now?  
I just wanted to sign off.  
Farewell, Zanni.  
Farewell, master.  
Farewell.

**Eric Rice**

*Translations by Eric Rice unless otherwise noted  
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