
Eighth Note Publications

Nine Trumpet Duets

Girolamo Fantini

Arranged by Henry Meredith

Acclaimed in his day as "King of the Trumpet,"¹ Girolamo Fantini was born in Spoleto probably in 1600. He worked in Rome as a trumpeter for the Cardinal Scipione Borghese during the years 1626 to 1630, and then went to Florence to assume the post of principal trumpeter to Ferdinando II, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in 1631. Records in Florence show he was present in that city at least until 1675. Further details about his life have been discovered in the archives of Italy,² but much still remains unknown. Fantini's major enterprise and legacy to future generations was his famous trumpet method book, published in 1638.³ In this manual, while acknowledging the previously all-important military aspects of the trumpet, Fantini emphasized, for the first time, the instrument's artistic potential.

To corroborate his new concept of "musical" trumpet playing, Fantini presented in his tutor what constitutes the first known collection of compositions for solo trumpet. Sandwiched between 70 binary dance pieces for solo trumpet and continuo, and 8 longer sonatas for trumpet and organ, there are 8 unaccompanied duets for 2 trumpets plus a single-line echo piece that can be played with one or two trumpets (facsimile, p. 65-71). Cesare Bendinelli before him had provided rudimentary trumpet duets as etudes for "il modo corretto di sonare il Clarino sopra la sonata" [the proper way of sounding the clarino part above the sonata part] in his own 1614 manuscript tutor.⁴ Formerly, the sonata (or quinta) part had been the "principal" or lead trumpet. But with the advent of clarino [clear, high] trumpeting, a new voice was added as the top part of the traditional trumpet ensemble.⁵ No doubt the players of clarino parts got together with their new second trumpet colleagues, and, detached from their drone-playing associates, they practiced to develop techniques for the trumpet's new found high register. Fantini evolved this idea into a separate class of trumpet ensemble pieces, having equal parts, thus providing encouragement between master and apprentice, or between two professional colleagues, to depart from the military traditions of trumpet playing and to approach the instrument as a musical one, without the restrictions to its range or capabilities.

The present edition retains the names associated with the pieces in the original method book for quick identification and ready comparison with the original source. These names were probably derived by Fantini or his publisher from the surnames of patrons, subscribers, friends, musicians, acquaintances, famous personages, royalty, and even from street names of Florence or other localities.⁶ The few critical revisions to the original music can be gleaned by referring to the facsimile, or to the list of corrections and additions printed in the editor's study of the entire method book.⁷ At many places, Fantini indicated a trillo (tr), and he sometimes preceded tr with a notated groppo (such as in bar 8 of Corsi and bars 20-21 of Castaldi). For the trillo in the successive measures, an editorial example (in the top part only) of how to execute this early 17th-century cadential ornament has been written out for the modern edition. It would be appropriate to add such embellishments to other internal and sectional cadences. Refer to Fantini's own description of the groppo and trillo in his introductory comments, and to the groppo/trillo studies on his page 11, for further information.⁸

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Except for the first duet (Prima sonata a due trombe detta del Corsi, facsimile, p. 65), in which the second part is always lower than the first, both parts in the remaining duets are much more equal as far as range is concerned. The longest and most varied duet is the Sonata a due trombe detta del Gucciardini (p. 68), where we find a greater degree of rhythmic independence between the two parts, plus a striking use of statement-and-answer effects complemented by numerous echo dynamics. The melodic exchanges between the parts in Gucciardini forecast the style of Fantini's Sonata di Risposte detta la Salviati (p. 69). This "echo" duet is literally a "sonata of answers" and can be performed by a single player, or as a responsorial duet, with the second trumpeter playing only the "responses." For every reiteration at the same pitch level, a *p* is indicated, the preceding statement to be played *f*. Fantini no doubt meant the echoes at an octave lower pitch to be likewise softer. This motivically interesting piece constitutes an excellent exercise for accuracy, flexibility, and control. Fantini's own dynamic markings in the echo sonata and in three other duets have been retained for the present publication. At numerous places similar to those where Fantini used them, the editor has suggested the same kinds of dynamic contrasts. These are placed in square brackets, as are mid-volume indications such as *ff*. In the other five duets, where no original dynamics were provided, judicious application of dynamics in the same fashion would no doubt meet with Fantini's approval. While natural trumpets of Fantini's day or modern trumpets are the instruments of choice for this edition, any equal instruments that can address the idiomatic trumpet writing would also be suitable.

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1. "Monarca della Tromba hoggi egli `e'n terra," [King of the Trumpet on earth today is he,] is a line from an anonymous sonnet in praise of Fantini's talents and one of three such laudatory poems that attest to his skill and fame, which are printed on the front and the back pages of Fantini's 1638 trumpet method book, *Modo per Imparare a sonare di Tromba*.
2. Igino Conforzi, "Girolamo Fantini, 'Monarch of the Trumpet': Recent Additions to His Biography," trans. by Jesse Rosenberg and Henry Meredith, (*Historic Brass Society Journal*, 1993), pp. 159-173.
3. Girolamo Fantini, *Modo per Imparare a sonare di Tromba* [Method for Learning to play the Trumpet], (Francofort[sic]: Vuastch, 1638; facsimile editions, Milan: 1934, and Nashville: The Brass Press, 1972; English translation, Nashville: 1976).
4. Cesare Bendinelli, *Tutta L'arte della Trombetta* (1614); facsimile reprint (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1975), p. 55r.
5. Refer to the 5-part trumpet-ensemble music and accompanying historical notes for Fantini's Imperial Intrada for playing in ensemble, reconstructed by Henry Meredith, and available from Eighth Note Publications (Markham: 1998).
6. A map of Florence reveals street names, such as Corsi, Ricasoli, and Gucciardini, which were used as designations or "name tags" for 3 of these duets. Such family names, therefore, no doubt possess historical, regional, or national importance.
7. Henry Meredith, "Girolamo Fantini's Trumpet Method: A Practical Edition," (D.A. dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 1984), vol. II, pp. 208-210.
8. See also the discussion and transcription by this editor, *ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 235-240; vol. II, p. 14.

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9 Duets for Two Trumpets

Corsi

Musical score for the duet "Corsi". It consists of two systems of two staves each. The first system starts with a tempo marking of quarter note = 80. The second system begins at measure 6 and includes trill markings (*tr*) and a dynamic marking of *tr* (as above).

Corsini

Musical score for the duet "Corsini". It consists of two systems of two staves each. The first system starts with a tempo marking of quarter note = 120 and includes trill markings (*tr*). A large "PREVIEW ONLY" watermark is overlaid on this system. The second system begins at measure 8 and includes dynamic markings of *f*, *p*, and [*mf*]. The third system begins at measure 15 and includes trill markings (*tr*).

Ricasoli

$\text{♩} = 120$

6

11

16

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Piccolomini

$\text{♩} = 80$

6

p *f* *p* [*f*]

p *f* *p* [*f*]

11 trillo

trillo

Castaldi

$\bullet = 80$

[f] [p] [f]

[f] [p] [f]

6 1. 2.

12

18 trillo

tr

23

43

f *tr* (see bar 53)

f *tr* (see bar 53)

50

p *tr*

p *tr*

Coppoli

$\text{♩} = 120$

$\text{♩} = 120$

8

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15

22

Gherardini

$\bullet = 120$

6

12

tr.

tr.

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Salvati (Echo Sonata)

[f] *[p]* *f* *p*

f *p* *f* *p*

f *p* *f* *p* *[f]*

[p] *[f]* *[p]* *[f]* *[p]*

* A second player might play only the "answering" phrases.

25
[f] [p] [f] [p] [f] [p]

31
[f] [p] [f]

36
[p] [f] [p]

42
[f] tr

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