

poglietti
rossignolo

paladino music

joyce lindorff
harpichord

alessandro poglietti
rossignolo

joyce lindorff

Alessandro Poglietti (16??–1683)**ROSSIGNOLO**

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------|-------|----|---------------------------|-------|
| 01 | Toccata | 03:41 | 24 | Alter Weiber Conduct | 02:18 |
| 02 | Canzona | 02:04 | 25 | Hanackhen Ehrentantz | 00:59 |
| 03 | Allemande | 01:54 | 26 | Französische Baiselements | 00:31 |
| 04 | Double 1 | 01:55 | 27 | Gaugler Saitantz | 01:38 |
| 05 | Double 2 | 02:46 | 28 | Pollnischer Sablschertz | 00:54 |
| 06 | Courente | 01:58 | 29 | Soldaten Schwebelpfeif | 01:17 |
| 07 | Double | 01:33 | 30 | Ungarische Geigen | 01:08 |
| 08 | Sarabande | 01:44 | 31 | Steyermarckher Horn | 01:13 |
| 09 | Double | 01:47 | | | |
| 10 | Gigue | 01:55 | | | |
| 11 | Double | 02:01 | | | |

Aria Allemagna con alcuni Variationi**Sopra l'Età della Maestà Vostra**

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|----|------------------------|-------|----|---------------------------------|-------|
| 12 | Part 1 | 00:58 | 32 | Ricercar per lo Rossignolo | 02:32 |
| 13 | Part 2 | 00:52 | 33 | Syncopatione del Ricercar | 02:19 |
| 14 | Part 3 | 00:53 | 34 | Capriccio per lo Rossignolo | 03:07 |
| 15 | Soggetto Rivoltato | 00:53 | | Sopra'l Ricercar | |
| 16 | Lyra | 00:59 | 35 | Aria bizzara del Rossignolo | 01:36 |
| 17 | Part 6 | 00:49 | 36 | Imitatione del medesimo Uccello | 02:15 |
| 18 | Part 7 | 00:49 | | | |
| 19 | Böhmisch: Dudlsackh | 01:03 | | | |
| 20 | Hollandisch: Flagolett | 01:08 | | | |
| 21 | Part 10 | 01:04 | | | |
| 22 | Bayrishe Schalmay | 01:07 | | | |
| 23 | Part 12 | 00:44 | | | |

TT 56:30

Joyce Lindorff, harpsichord

Of Nature and Nations: Rossignolo (The Nightingale)

The Empress Eleanore of Austria¹ could not have wished for a more magnificent gift to celebrate her marriage than Alessandro Poglietti's manuscript of *Rossignolo*. Born in Italy, Poglietti had been Court Organist to Leopold I since 1661². By 1677 his ear and pen had achieved a mastery of nuance capable of confirming him as an adopted son of virtually every national and even regional musical style of Europe. Nowhere is this more dramatically illustrated than in the pages of the visually and musically ornate gift to his empress, a colorful journey through the courts and villages of late 17th-century Europe, presided over by nature's master musician, the nightingale.

Poglietti lavished fanciful artistic design on his presentation manuscript. Inside its leather and gold cover, the title and dedication pages are filled with word, music and number play, in symbolic reference to the Austrian royal couple.

Alessandro Poglietti was thoroughly versed in counterpoint and every other aspect of 17th-century composition, as his *Compendium*³ attests. But toward the end of this comprehensive pedagogical volume is a small catalog of fourteen incipits—bird songs and other descriptive motifs. Their beautiful calligraphy, lovingly decorated with obvious pleasure, confirms Poglietti's delight in achieving, through music, a fluency in the languages of nature, work and war. Two of these were included the following year in *Rossignolo*—the example of French style (the Courante) and the nightingale (the Capriccio). Indeed, he is best

remembered for his keyboard works, the musical portraits of birds (*Cries of the Hens and Roosters*) and programmatic depictions of war (*Toccatina on the Hungarian Rebellion*). But *Rossignolo* demonstrates that his command of language extended beyond nature to the details of Italian and French art music as well as to a wide variety of European musical vernacular.

Poglietti scholar Friedrich W. Riedel wrote, "The keyboard writing in these pieces is unusually full and brilliant. By virtue of its overall structure, symbolic content and skillful handling of form and variation technique, *Rossignolo* must rank as one of the most important cycles in the literature of keyboard music."⁴ Why then has Poglietti's masterpiece remained relatively unknown?

For all its treasures, Poglietti's work also offers its share of mysteries for the interpreter. Its very wealth of national styles eludes easy classification, presenting problems of stylistic interpretation. Questions of intended instrument, confusing rhythmic passages and the work's sheer length have perhaps added barriers to its performance. Poglietti's vision must be taken as unique — he anticipated not only François Couperin's experiments 50 years later, which wholeheartedly celebrated both the Italian and French styles (*Les goûts réunis*), but even ideas of our own time — the notion of a European community, perhaps, expressed in music, as well as Messiaen's passion for the musical art and science of birdsong. Poglietti mirrors the actual song of the nightingale in every detail: its long opening pure tones; its exceedingly accurate and successively complex rhythmic subdivisions; the rich elegance of its trills and chirps; even the silences

between. Thus the songbird itself turns out to be the best reference on the work's occasionally perplexing riddles of texture, ornament and rhythm.

Poglietti introduces *Rossignolo* with two movements in his mother tongue. The characteristically Italian *Toccata*, alternately free and imitative, ends in a flourish of rhythmic abandon. The *Canzona* contains some of the loveliest counterpoint of the work.

Each dance of the suite which follows displays convincingly French harmonic and rhythmic character, but with a twist: all four dances are followed by doubles, and it is in these variations, especially in the exuberant pair following the *Allemande*, that Poglietti's Italian accent shows.

In the variations on a German song, Poglietti afforded the cloistered Empress a delightful and forbidden glimpse of common life that remains vivid more than 300 years later. The timbres of the street – hurdy-gurdy, bagpipe, shawm and fife – are captured in a tour that takes in Bohemia, Holland, Bavaria, Poland and Hungary. A sense of fun and zest for life abound: the earthy dance of the Hanackhen contrasts humorously with the following flurry of prissy hand-kissing. Skillfully asymmetrical arpeggios convey the queasy swaying of the tighrope walker; subtly layered harmonies, the wheezing of the bagpipes; and joyful oompahs, the excitement of the Polish sword-play. The ultimate satire is found in the *Alter Weiber Conduct* – the insincere wails of these paid mourners are depicted in chromatic motion of an audacity not heard again until Richard Wagner.

Questions have arisen as to whether *Rossignolo* was intended as a large-scale work or as a collection of unrelated groups of pieces. The answer comes from the nightingale itself – the bird's voice is heard throughout, as if observing from a high branch the activity of the court below. In the *Double of the Courante* the nightingale first abandons its decorum and makes a surprise entrance as one of the musicians. It flies down unexpectedly to have the final say in other movements as well; bits of its song can also be heard at the ending of the *Double of the Sarabande*, and in the variations (Tracks 15, 20, 23, 24, 27, 30 and 31).

After hinting at its presence throughout with these cameo appearances, in the final section the bird takes center stage, opening with the serious subject of the *Ricercar* and its clever *Syncope* and offering a sweet rhythmic simplicity in the form of a *Capriccio*. The *Aria bizzarra* leads us out of the human world of dance and into the world of nature, with the *Imitatione*'s final brilliant outpouring of the nightingale's full song in all its splendor.

¹ Eleonore had one year earlier become the third wife of Leopold I.

² In 1683, during the siege of Vienna, Poglietti was killed and his children taken prisoner by the Turks.

³ *Compendium oder Kurtzer Begriff und Einführung zur Musica* (1676), ms. at Stift Kremsmünster, Austria, presents Poglietti's teachings with a wealth of musical examples.

⁴ F. Riedel, "Alessandro Poglietti," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Stanley J. Sadie, ed. (London: Macmillan, 1980).



Harpichordist **Joyce Lindorff** has won rave reviews for her concerts in the US, Europe, and Asia. Lindorff earned a doctorate at The Juilliard School as a pupil of Albert Fuller. Her earlier degrees were a Masters from the University of Southern California and a BA from Sarah Lawrence College. A Fulbright Scholar, she has received recitalist awards from the Pro Musicis Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts (US). Her discography includes the first complete recordings of Poglietti's *Rossignolo* and *The Harpsichord Miscellany II*. She has recorded for the Titanic, Centaur, CRI, Serenus and Digitech labels, and her articles have appeared in the journals, *Early Music* and *Rivista italiana di musicologia*.

As an ensemble player Joyce Lindorff has appeared with the Waverly Consort, Hesperus, Tempesta di Mare, Newberry Consort, Charbonnier Viol Ensemble, and others. After many years as a freelance musician in New York, where she performed with the New York Philharmonic and several chamber orchestras, she began her teaching

career at Cornell University. A seven-year residence in China followed, with performances as soloist with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, at the Hong Kong Arts Festival, and as Artist-in-Residence for Hong Kong's classical radio station, RTHK. Currently Professor of Keyboard Studies at Temple University in Philadelphia, she regularly returns to perform and teach in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau and China, where she is an Honorary Visiting Professor at the Shanghai Conservatory. She previously taught harpsichord and performance practice on the faculty of Cornell University's Center for Eighteenth-century Music and directed the Cornell Summer Harpsichord Workshop.

In addition to early music, Joyce Lindorff has performed a vast repertoire of contemporary harpsichord repertoire, with many works composed for her.

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