

“WITHOUT AN EAR OF HIS OWN”!  
 POUND’S JANEQUIN IN CANTO 75

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Years ago Hugh Kenner argued that cantos 1 and 2, taken together, offer a kind of interpretive paradigm for the cantos. He saw the first as offering blood for the ghosts via translation, and the second as instantiating the way form emerges out of the process of metamorphosis (Kenner 4-5, 11-12).<sup>2</sup> I would suggest that the first two Pisan cantos offer a parallel paradigm but on very different terms from those early cantos. While canto 1 shows a willingness to undertake an Odyssean descent and a confidence that sailing after knowledge is both necessary and possible, canto 74 opens with an Odyssean “no man” whose present moment of speech and observation serves as a constant reminder of his dislocation from himself and from productive meaning.

Canto 75, like canto 2, might readily be seen as all about metamorphosis and translation, given that the score implies within it multiple instances, borrowings and transformations of bird songs. But the Pisan poet cannot ask the equivalent of canto 2’s opening question: “But Sordello, and *my* Sordello?” (2/3) because both the singularity and identity of his subject

position as well as the objects of inquiry have been fractured and their recovery made uncertain. The problem of multiple bird songs in canto 75 is not simply a new version of multiple Sordellos. Canto 75's last textual line: "not of one bird but of many," aptly summarizes Pound's starting point in Pisa. While both cantos 2 and 75 deal with the metamorphic relationships among a multitude of related "texts," in canto 75 the emphasis is less on a rhythm of transfiguring relationships contained within the activity designated by the pronoun "my," and more on the act of notation itself. Pound's direct address to Gerhart Münch in the opening lines of canto 75 make it clear that the German composer-pianist who emerges from the hell of war is a type of double or persona for Pound himself. But by emphasizing the music Münch carries with him in his satchel, in particular Münch's own handwritten score for Janequin's "Chant des Oiseaux" that occupies the bulk of this canto's two pages, Pound stresses above all the act of inscription and its documentary legacy. The score's inscription of notation emphasizes the specificity of each material instance of song as a way of registering a form of production that resists both the personal and institutional follies that imprison the poet. As Norman Wacker has written:

The poet's seat in the broadcast booth at the margins of the fascist empire has been replaced by a seat embedded in the production of a material notation. There he recognizes the mastery and routinization of universalizing notations is one medium in which power is exercised and that specificity and irregularity of notation are among the means by which it may be resisted. ("Ezra Pound and the Visual" 99)

In order to examine the ways rhythm structures the "irruption of the plural" (Wacker "Subject Repositioned" 89) – "not of one bird but of many," I want to look at how the score notates the various vocal, visual and inscriptional layers of bird songs. I will argue that Pound's score represents an instance of what I call his nominalist prosody – a term I will first define and contextualize before turning back to canto 75.

*Towards a Nominalist Prosody*

In a recent article entitled "Pound, Duchamp and the Nominalist Ethos," Marjorie Perloff argues that Pound's work is rent by a contradiction that she defines in terms of competing desires for a Confucian or neo-Platonic ideal vision versus a nominalist verbal texture characterized by an "overdetermination of nouns and noun phrases" (207). Pound's fascination with geographic, real and fictional persons, foreign language tags, including Chinese ideograms, as well as his tendency to turn ordinary words into proper names is evident from early on in his career. Perloff sees Pound's nominalist practice as better able to sustain the encyclopedic scope of the *Cantos*, especially the Pisans, than the brief, visionary passages that attest to Confucian or neo-Platonic wisdom. Perloff explains that nominalism for medieval Scholastics was

the doctrine that denies the existence of abstract objects and universals, holding that these are not required to explain the significance of words apparently referring to them. Nominalism holds that all that really exists are particular, usually physical objects, and that properties, numbers, and sets (for instance) are not further things in the world, but merely features of our way of thinking or speaking about those things that do exist. Thus defined, nominalism is not simply equivalent to empiricism, for it takes the particulars in question, not as so much material data, but as discrete and unique bearers of meaning. It is the relation of particular to the 'essence' beyond it that is questioned. What makes Pound a nominalist is his peculiar fixation on the uniqueness of a given word or object, its *haecceitas*, its *difference* from all other words or objects. Such thisness, we should note, is not necessarily a matter of the concrete image. Indeed, the language of *The Cantos* is hardly "concrete" in the sense of "visual" or "descriptive." (210)

Perloff draws several consequences from this definition. She notes that Pound creates a texture of particulars that do not point to an understood or common essence that holds them together.

er or validates them with reference to some general principle beyond the specifics. There is no intratextual “real” in Pound’s texts; in place of reference or transparency, the reader must be rooted in repeated namings of particulars. Perloff compares Pound’s nominalism to the work of Duchamp who, even more radically than Pound, fixes on literal language – zero degree language that makes every word as literal as possible, taking away its musical, conceptual, generic and interpretive contexts. The effect, were it possible to achieve in its most extreme form, would be to “endow the word with ‘a form of plastic significance’ that would be ‘independent of interpretation’.” The purpose of this activity would be to increase “the reader / viewer’s sensitivity to *difference*, to what Duchamp called, in his posthumously published notes, the *inframince*, or in English, the *infrathin*” (212). Not surprisingly, the *infrathin* cannot be defined abstractly but only exemplified. Each example shows that Duchamp, like Pound, was after “prime words,” that is, words divisible only by themselves and by unity, i.e., words that make us maximally aware of infinitesimal differences and specificity. Examples include:

The warmth of a seat (which has just been left) is *infra-thin* (#4)

Velvet trousers – / their whistling sound (in walking) by / brushing of the 2 legs is an / *infra thin* separation signaled / by sound. (it is *not*? An *infra thin* sound) (#9)

*Infra thin* separation between / the *detonation* noise of a gun / (very close) *and* the *apparition* of the bullet / hole in the target. . . . (#12)

2 Forms cast in / the same mold (?) differ / from each other / by an *infra thin* separative / difference. Two men are not / an example of identity / and to the contrary / move away / from a determinable / *infra thin* difference – but (#35)<sup>3</sup>

Perloff sees the motivation of both Pound and Duchamp for their interest in nominalist writing as their common reaction to coming of artistic age during the height of impressionism. Both of them reacted negatively to what they perceived as the emotional slither of impressionism, its tendency to “say . . . something in terms of something else” (223), i.e., to be wed to metaphor. Pound’s juxtaposition of names in his own ideograms operates through a series of names that are “almost but never quite the same” (224). Though a reader might expect that such a care with language would produce a greater sense of reality, the effect, as Perloff points out, is to position the reader both closer in and further away; it is “both an authenticating and a distancing device” (218) because the accumulation of proper names or foreign language tags offers a specificity but at the same time, the specific “names invoked fail to cohere into a larger image-complex” (222). In this way, infrathin or nominalist practice is much like Adorno’s notion of constellation.<sup>4</sup> The prime words with their infrathin distinctions remain the specifics they are and not a springboard for idealization, general concepts or a referenced, extra-textual reality. The effect is to remind the reader that “what we have before us is not the real thing but, after all, a form of writing” (218). Though in my book I have worked out several senses in which Pound’s prosody might usefully be thought of as nominalist, in relation to canto 75 I will only have time to consider one facet.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps the most important way that Pound’s rhythm is nominalist is that, as Perloff’s Duchampian examples reveal, the infrathin can only be understood as a relationship that develops in time and is thus rhythmic in both immediate and large-scale senses. Nominalist specificity is relational and comparative rather than univocal and singular. “The warmth of a seat (which has just been left)” requires that the reader or observer mark the relationship between the warmth of the seat but a moment ago and the warmth after the sitter has left

it. The infrathin whistling sound of velvet trousers takes place in the moment defined by one leg, in motion, brushing against the other. Likewise, the relationship between the detonation of a gun and the appearance of the bullet hole is marked by a trajectory in time, even if it takes place in the blink of an eye. Nominalist rhythm is, in this sense, about relationships in time. Pound's "thisness" is a thisness of discrimination or comparisons, a temporal mapping of relationships of identity and differentiation through time. Two forms cast in the same mold are activated as a means of knowing by the activity of comparison, an activity that is fundamentally rhythmic by virtue of its temporal, relational patterning. Neither the forms nor the mold itself can be infrathin but only their relationship. Likewise, rhythm is about identity in the process of formation, not about a discrete, singular or even stable event.

*Not of One Voice but of Many: The Score of Canto 75*

If we ask how the score of canto 75 joins Pound's "phalanx of particulars" (74/461), we immediately sense its nominalist configuration. What we see, and what we have the potential for hearing, is Janequin's "Chant des Oiseaux," rendered in Gerhart Münch's handwritten transcription for violin and piano of Francesco da Milano's lute transcription of Janequin's choral setting.<sup>6</sup> One might argue that the score gives us a case much like Platonic beds, i.e., a series of instances, each more distantly removed from an originary Form, in this case, the "original" bird song. Pound's music criticism, which returns to this piece and its various versions and performances numerous times during the Rapallo years between 1933 and 1938, supports the idea that Janequin is himself not the point of "origin" for the music but rather that his forerunner, the troubadour poet Arnaut Daniel, captures some still more ancient bird sounds. However, Pound also avoids casting the "original" bird song in essentialized, or idealistic terms. At one level canto 75 is, like many of the

other elegiac recollections of friends and fellow artists, a portrait of Münch via the music he so often played at Rapallo. But the notated score is not an effort of nostalgic recollection; rather, Pound is interested in acts of making that are most precisely embodied in the distinctive particularities of a given rendition and the way these new engagements with the material of older works reveal unheard possibilities that are provoked through new forms or shapes. He writes:

Francesco da Milano certainly did not try to preserve Janequin's text philologically; that is, he made an altogether different use of his predecessor than does, say, Respighi, whose "ancient airs" give so much pleasure today, evoking the past, recalling a bygone era to the audience. The XVIth century consciousness certainly did not have such respect for the previous century.

It was rather analogous to the spirit of Malatesta, who took marble from Sant' Apollinare to make out of it a "chiexa" of his own. To listen to Francesco is not simply to listen to Janequin on another instrument. Scored today for a single string instrument, listening to Olga Rudge, we hear a more archaic kind of music than that heard by an audience of the XVIth century. (EPM 348)

In this passage, taken from a November 1933 *Il Mare* promotional article for the Rapallo concert series, Pound explicitly contrasts the process of transmission of the Janequin with Respighi's use of earlier music in his "Ancient Airs and Dances," arguing that Respighi is nostalgic while Francesco da Milano's transcription is not a philological clone but a new piece that is assuredly "his own." According to Pound, the Janequin transcription does not simply re-write the same piece for a different instrument; in making use of the chromatic possibilities inherent in the lute, da Milano more radically transforms the original and in so doing releases for hearing a more archaic music that was there in the original but was unsounded, unheard, even by da Milano himself. It is the act of hearing or reading or notating the specificities of *this*

instantiation that allows the other music to be released in all of its particularity.

Pound is more explicit about the process of transcription and transformation in his 1934 *ABC of Reading* discussion of Janequin. Here his analysis of Janequin comes up as part of a discussion of melopoeia, i.e., the charging of language through sound (*ABCR* 37), and more specifically, of the troubadours as among the best exemplars of this practice. As Pound notes: “the best smith, as Dante called Arnaut Daniel, made the birds sing IN HIS WORDS; I don’t mean that he merely referred to birds singing –” (53). Pound concludes by noting that the troubadour “music of these songs has been lost but the tradition comes up again, over three centuries later” (54). He writes:

Clement Janequin wrote a chorus, with sounds for the singers of the different parts of the chorus. These sounds would have no literary or poetic value if you took the music away, but when Francesco da Milano reduced it for the lute, the birds were still in the music. And when Münch transcribed it for modern instruments the birds were still there. They ARE still there in the violin part.

That is why the monument outlasts the bronze casting. (*ABCR* 54)

This passage suggests that the “birds” at certain moments inhere in the music and at other times in words. Arnaut Daniel’s music is lost but the music of the birds remains in his words. Though Janequin gives bird sounds in the text of his setting, the *form* of the birds lies in the music and thus, as Pound says, the words themselves have little value since the important representation is musical. Francesco da Milano’s lute transcription draws on the music and the textless birds remain there, to be given further, if different embodiment in Münch’s transcription. Pound’s concluding sentence echoes Duchamp’s infrathin examples: “that is why the monument outlasts the bronze casting.” Or, as he puts it, quoting Théophile Gautier, in his *Guide to Kulchur* (1938) discussion



of *Janequin*: “The bust outlasts the throne / the coin Tiberius” (GK 152; see also Bacigalupo’s discussion of *forma* and Gautier, 114). In other words, what is enduring is what is given form, but “form” here is not a closed process and it cannot be mindlessly duplicated in subsequent iterations. As Ardizzone has argued, Pound developed his notion of form from Cavalcanti’s emphasis on knowledge as making rather than knowledge as abstraction, i.e., on an open-ended process based on particulars rather than a closed, achieved embodiment. For Pound, form includes a sense of continuous energy. “Form, properly understood, is not a result, but rather a continuous potential that generates objections and responses” (Ardizzone 138).

Whatever the ancient source of bird sounds may have been, Arnaut Daniel, *Janequin*, Francesco da Milano, Münch, Rudge and Pound himself, participate in an ongoing generation of objections and responses, each of which generates further form. Or to put it in Duchampian language, each further instantiation, like each form cast in a mold, differs from the other by an infrathin difference that makes us aware less of an essentialized common element than of the substantive differences of representation, i.e., of the accidents by which a work defines itself as having distinct, individual qualities and of the plurality of such works taken together. These specifics allow us to hear what is “prime” about each distinctive representation. It is the prime quality of particular embodiments that allows what has been submerged or lost over time to re-surface, whether it is da Milano’s chromaticism or the far-reaching stylistic changes of Münch’s transcription. Thus, when Pound makes his famous and oft-quoted “rose in the steel dust” claim about form in *Guide to Kulchur* (152), a passage that occurs right in the midst of his discussion of *Janequin*, the important emphasis is not on an essentialized, neo-Platonic concept of form, but precisely the “dynamic form” that is alive to the generative possibilities that an ear enlivened to the ultra-

thin differences of the accidents of form – the very stuff of *forma*'s dynamism – creates.<sup>7</sup> Such dynamic form is inherently rhythmic both at the immediate textual or musical level and as a figure for the relationships among the various historical embodiments of the bird sounds, including the gaps among them.

If Fr. Di [sic] Milano and Besard for their own delight and that of their hearers chiseled down Dowland's and Janequin's choral works to something they cd. play on the lute, Münch has an equal right, and is equally laudable in settling the same eternal beauty in fiddle part. If the piano obscures the fiddle, I have a perfect right to HEAR Janequin's intervals, his melodic conjunctions from the violin solo.

"I made it out of a mouthful of air"

wrote Bill Yeats in his heyday. The *forma*, the immortal *conchetto*, the concept, the dynamic form which is like the rose pattern driven into the dead iron-filings by the magnet, not by material contact with the magnet itself, but separate from the magnet. Cut off by the layer of glass, the dust and filings rise and spring into order. Thus the *forma*, the concept rises from death

The bust outlasts the throne

The coin Tiberius.

(GK 151-152)

If one were to try to translate Gautier's claim about "the bust outlast[ing] the throne, the coin Tiberius," into a parallel claim about the relationship between the bird song and its later poetic and musical embodiments, the two most obvious approaches would, I think, both be wrong in the Pisan context. It is neither correct to suggest that the bird song, as a type of "immortal *conchetto*" has outlasted Arnaut, Janequin, da Francesco, Münch, et. al., nor to say that these various new compositions or embodiments have overtaken the lost birds. To assign priority or essence either to bird song or to new instantiation simplifies what the musical score suggests. The dust and filings spring into order but they are also simultaneously cut off from, separated by, the glass. Both the internal

and external dust and filings at Pisa bespeak an incorrigible disorder which it is the poet's task to record or notate, not from the vantage point of a privileged knower but precisely as one who is himself subject to constant change and unknowing. As Wacker argues: "Value may shift and fluctuate, but where the units of measure are sharply delineated, some purchase can be gained on the potential subject positions discriminated by fluctuation and alteration" ("Ezra Pound and the Visual" 100; "The Subject Re-Positioned" 96). The score, then, both in its cultural rhythms, i.e., the series of musical-poetic relationships it measures or inscribes, and as an instance of notation itself, acts to measure, to give rhythm to the very fluctuations, breakdowns and reformations of personal, artistic and political experience. The score thus remains dynamic and its forma is notated by these very rhythms of disjunction, the rhythms not of one bird but of many.

If the score of canto 75 notates the rhythms of disjunction, it also, as visual object, measures the epic-lyric poet's necessary movement towards a music that would enlarge the affective and conceptual capacities of his language without losing his critical capacities. With conventional lyric subjectivity denied to him in the circumstances of Pisa, Pound turns to music not as the locus of non-linguistic disarticulation or emotional escapism, but as a mode of enlargement through constantly foregrounding the articulation of form. On this reading, the history of the various forms of bird song represented in the score is a history of lyric's repeated attempts to stretch itself toward the form experience of music and in doing so, to enlarge the possibilities of critical thought. Each prime instance embedded in the score is, through the means of the score, displayed as though optimally self-aware of itself as representation, i.e., as a constructed "as-if" in contrast to the commodity's illusion of "genuine, free immediacy" (Kaufman 12). Pound had certainly, since the beginning

of his career, bemoaned the loss of lyric vitality when music and poetry were separated. But at Pisa, there is more at stake since Pound, as the ear of his era, knew what music had to offer poetry. Nonetheless, his affective and political failures brought home to him at Pisa may also have suggested the failure of the lyric impulse itself, a failure made all the more treacherous by the obvious necessity he felt there for an elegiac mode. In this context, the score of canto 75 both announces the failure of lyric – the score after all subsumes or replaces the text and yet demands, or awaits performance – and, displays full awareness of its own “as-if” nature, its multiple musics. These birds can never, as Keats’s could, be “already with” Pound; instead, his birds will reappear on the staff-like wires in later cantos, coming unbidden, part of the fabric of interruptions and plurality that suggest the spontaneity of lyrical-musical form, a spontaneity that can neither be sought nor willed by the poet or captured by the commodity. This music, insisted upon by the notated score itself, is the basis for Pound’s re-engagement with the lyric tradition, most prominently displayed in canto 81.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> This phrase comes from Charles Olson’s 1948 essay, “GrandPa, GoodBye”: “The lines and passages which stand out, from the start, capture a mood of loss, and bear a beauty of loss. It is as though Pound never had illusion, was born without an ear of his own, was, instead, an extraordinary ear of an era and did the listening for a whole time, the sharpest sort of listening, from Dante down. (I think of Bill Williams’ remark: ‘It’s the best damned ear ever born to listen to this language!’)” (Olson 98).

<sup>2</sup> In “The Broken Mirrors and the Mirror of Memory,” Kenner talks about cantos 1 and 2 as forming two halves of the “Poundian

doctrine of the creative act. . . . In Canto 1 we have ritual, magic, homage to forerunners, and ghosts supplied with blood which enables them to speak in the present. . . . The blood for the ghosts is an analogue for translation; he brings them blood, and they speak anew with their own voices. . . . [In canto 2, the theme] “is form out of flux. By form is meant intelligible form, like Aphrodite visible to the mind’s eye. . . . This Canto polarizes Canto 1. If translation – recreation – is one lobe of the poetic act, the education of forms is the other” (4-5, 11-12).

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Perloff 212. Her source for the quotations is Duchamp, “Infrathin,” *Notes* n.p.

<sup>4</sup> As Jay notes, Adorno “borrowed [this term] from Benjamin to signify a juxtaposed rather than integrated cluster of changing elements that resist reduction to a common denominator, essential core, or generative first principle” (14-15).

<sup>5</sup> The approach I suggest here via my sense of Pound’s nominalist rhythm stands in contrast to some other readings of this canto. Bucknell, for instance, sees Pound as interested above all in visual concreteness and spatiality (53-54), leading him to posit the score as a type of ideogram that emphasizes the timeless element common to all of the manifestations of the bird songs in successive works (112). Coyle sees Pater’s influence on Pound’s conception of music as “dissociating the music of poetry from its sense” (155), a separation he sees actualized in the score of canto 75 as well as in the libretto section of canto 81 (162). For my reading of Pater and his influence on Pound’s conception and practice of rhythm, see Chapter 4, “The Interval of Metamorphosis,” of *Form Cut Into Time*. There I argue that Pound was drawn to Pater’s idea of music as a model for perception, in particular the conflict between flux and abstraction. Pater’s idea of music is a model for the rhythm of the spectator’s or listener’s submergence in and re-emergence from the empirical stream of perception as the listener continually attends to and recollects each passing moment. In contrast to the problematic models of music used by both Coyle and Bucknell, Byron looks at the way the insertion of the score into the *Pisan Cantos* “forestalls the conventional philosophical division of music into the ideal work, the transient performance, and the sedimented, materialist score. Instead, the violin line in Canto LXXV shows the complex identities of both score and

text to voice implicit critiques of uniformly idealist and materialist notions of music and of literature” (158). His consistent emphasis on the way the intersections among score, music, poetry and history force the reader to rethink aesthetic production and identity are closer to my concerns here.

<sup>6</sup> Byron gives a particularly clear account of the history of the music, the score and the compositional process of canto 75 (see 158-163). There is considerable confusion about whether the handwriting on the score of Münch’s arrangement of the Janequin is his or that of Olga Rudge. Schafer, in *Ezra Pound and Music*, identifies the violin line as in Münch’s handwriting (492, 500) as does Byron (160). Coyle refers to the score as “Olga Rudge’s hand-copy of Münch’s score” (171). In Sieburth’s recent edition of *The Pisan Cantos*, his notes to canto 75 also identify the handwriting as Olga’s. Based on conversations with Massimo Bacigalupo and Catherine Paul, as well as an examination of copies of various musical manuscripts in the identified hands of Münch and Rudge in their possession, I believe that the handwriting in canto 75 is Münch’s. A possible source of confusion comes from the fact that there is another copy of Münch’s Janequin manuscript in print in Pound’s essay, “Janequin, Francesco da Milano,” from the 1938 *Townsmen*, a piece followed by a separate essay by Olga Rudge, “Music and a Process,” which focuses on the importance of microphotographic reproductions of music. Pound’s essay includes a handwritten version of Münch’s arrangement of the Janequin. The handwriting here is distinctly different from what appears in canto 75 and it resembles other examples of Olga Rudge’s hand that I have seen in manuscripts identified by Catherine Paul as Rudge’s; it also matches the handwriting on the manuscript of “Heulmiere” from Pound’s opera, *Villon*, printed in *Guide to Kulchur* (361-365). I thank Massimo Bacigalupo and Catherine Paul for their generous help with this matter.

<sup>7</sup> Bacigalupo also discusses the relationship between the “rose in the steel dust” idea as it appears in both canto 74 and in *Guide to Kulchur* in relation to the way order emerges in cantos 74 and 75 from within the real rather than through external imposition (114).

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#### Note on Da Milano-Münch

The following pages reproduce Ezra Pound's contribution to the first issue of *Townsmen* (January 1938), "Janequin, Francesco da Milano", followed by Da Milano's score as "abbreviated by Gerhart Münch" and by Olga Rudge's note "Music and Process." This will allow readers to compare the *Townsmen* violin line, in Münch's hand according to Donald Gallup, and the score printed in canto 75. We know that both Dorothy Pound and Olga Rudge sent copies of Münch's arrangement to Pound's publishers for use in *The Pisan Cantos*. Dorothy wrote Ezra from Rapallo on 29 December 1945: "I have found a copy of Gerhardt's 'Uccelli' in *Townsmen*, & sent it on to Jas [Laughlin]. T.S.E. has had a copy already that Olga found" (*Letters in Captivity*, p. 229). However, in canto 75 both New Directions and Faber used the copy provided by Olga, which (unlike the *Townsmen* version) is enriched by introductory comments (in English and Italian) on "metamorfosi," clearly inspired by Pound's interpretation of the piece's significance. Though the handwriting in canto 75 *may* not be Olga's, these comments could hardly have been written by Münch or anyone but her or Pound himself. Both scores are dated "28.9.33 Milano," which therefore must be read as the date of composition, not of copying. (The "Canzone de li ucelli" was premiered in the Rapallo Town Hall on 14 October 1933.) The canto 75 version is initialled by Olga Rudge, at least the final "R" seems to be her signature letter. The reading of these final initials as Chinese characters proposed by some commentators seems far-fetched. In conclusion, the music in canto 75, which we know was sent to Eliot by Olga in late 1945, is probably her work. – Eds.



## JANEQUIN, FRANCESCO DA MILANO

By Ezra Pound

"Clement Janequin wrote a chorus . . . when Francesco da Milano reduced it for the lute, the birds were still with the music. And when Münch transcribed it for modern instruments the birds were still there."

*A.B.C. of Reading*, p. 38.

THE two pages of *Janequin* are there, indestructable, and as indisputable as *Pisanello's* portrait of *Miss Este*, indisputable, no one can ever have misunderstood them any more than you can misunderstand the flowers and the butterfly in *Pisanello's* paint. More indestructable in that no calamity to a single exemplar can obliterate their statement. And that statement did not begin with the French master. It is there in *Arnaut Daniel's* prosody in the canzoni "*L'aura amara*" and "*Autet e bas*."

Neither *Vivaldi* nor *Couperin* in any way superseded it. There are in the arts certain maxima. There has been little comparative objective criticism in music. *Cocteau* and *De Schloezer* and *Sauzay*, and *Richter* who wrote about counterpoint may have cleared up a good deal but haven't stolen my thunder on this point. The ideogram of real composition is in *Münch* two pages, which belong to no man. They are abbreviated out of *Francesco da Milano's* transcription for the lute. Something has happened to the *Janequin*. The casual reader of *Henry Expert's* edition won't immediately identify the notes. In the *Münch MS.* before me he has given *Francesco's* name with perhaps greater justice than *Chilesotti's* reference to the choral work. At any rate there was something I did not hear when I heard the song done by chorus.

In one sense I don't care a hoot about the authorship. The gist, the pith, the unbreakable fact is there in the two pages of violin part (whether *Münch* has shown greater talent in his later editing of *Vivaldi* is beside the point). The point is "not one bird but a lot of birds" as our violinist said on first playing it.

The undeformable objects in music comparatively few. Compare *Casella* in conversation: "I just can't remember bad music."

Objectivity? the presentation in one art of what cannot be given in any other. It can imply, it can concentrate into itself any amount of implication, and does "epitomize" etc. Thus the two pages are mediaeval and nothing can make 'em renaissance or ornamental, or take 'em into the realm of applied ornament. I doubt if choral performance underlines the thing that I mean. I doubt if *Francesco da Milano's* lute quite so concentrated the statement. The statement is in the violin part, which stands as food for the critical eye (or ear, better say ear) even without the "accompaniment."

*Aunaut's* lost music existed before or about A.D. 1200. *Expert* dates *Janequin* "attainant 1529?" *Besard* wanted a portable *Dowland* that he could play himself. *Idem* *Francesco da Milano* for *Janequin's* chorus. *Idem* *Bach* when he put *Vivaldi* into a transcript that could be done from a keyboard.

The bed rock in any art is composed of such solids. You could construct music again from a few dozen such proofs of invention.

## LA CANZONE DE LI UCCELLI

By Francesco da Milano (1500)

Abbreviated by Gerhard Münch

Violino

I<sup>a</sup> Parte  
Moderato assai

mf f

dim.... p

f dim. molto

pp fff

cresc.

f ff

mf f

dimin.

p mp

f p mf

arco

P133 P

20

mf *pizz* *f* *arco* *mf*

*dim. in.* *p*

**III. Parte**

*mf* *arco* *un poco più presto* *sf* *pizz* *arco* *cresc.*

*arco* *f* *arco* *pp* *pizz*

*arco* *pp* *arco* *pizz* *arco*

*sf sempre* *Tempo 1º* *pizz*

*ritenuto* *mf*

*dim. molto* *pp*

28.9.33 Milano

## MUSIC AND A PROCESS

By Olga Rudge

I HAVE been told that history is badly written. We musicians certainly fare badly for works on music as distinct from "lives of musicians."

There are admirable introductory books to music such as Luciani's skeleton history "Mille anni di Musica." But the moment one's curiosity emerges from the general vagueness, the works on music show yawning lacunae or insufferable redundancies.

Until the historians can at least see the MSS. or hear the works of the composers whom they find significant to their story, there can be no serious history of music.

Lavignac resigns himself to vast unpublished stacks of Boccherini, and supposes they will remain unpublished forever. To say nothing of the unsatisfactory editing of 60 per cent of what is published.

This state of things will probably last until more people realize that there are now three ways of reproducing MSS.:

- (1) The ordinary photograph.
- (2) "White on black" or the negative taken direct on to the paper. This method is much cheaper than the ordinary photograph, at prices current here, it would cost three liras a page, instead of twenty liras, but no copies can be made from these as from a photographic plate.
- (3) Microphotography: The photograph is taken on ordinary cinema film, and though the resulting picture is miniature, there is no need to make an enlarged print, as a full-sized image of the film itself, or rather a positive copy of it, is thrown upon a screen by means of a projector.

Microphotography is infinitely cheaper than either of the two first mentioned methods for reproducing MSS., and is particularly well adapted for music which runs into many pages.

German scholars are ready to co-operate in work on MSS. in German archives. I have an estimate for filming two thousand pages, which comes to 450 reichmarks, as against a probable £400 for the same in ordinary photos.

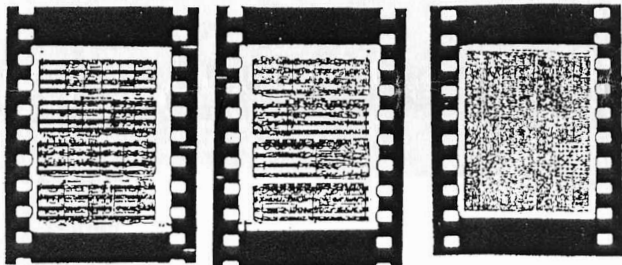
The advantages to editors of such reproductions would be incalculable. Microphotographs are obviously not intended to supplant modern editions, but to supply the serious student, the editor, the performer, with possibilities for verification by comparison with the original.

The invention of this microphotographic process should prove as important a discovery for the history of music as that of the printing press for letters.

Serious editors will one day realize that a rotogravure strip of the original MSS. printed say at the edge of the last page of a work, would cost less and be worth more than the idle scroll engraving so often used for ornament.

A few paleographic editions of poetic texts have appeared, showing the divergencies between MSS. and print and between one MSS. and another. Such luxuries were not for musicians, and couldn't be save in millionaire dreams. Until a couple of years ago. Many people have not yet realized the change and the possibilities at our disposal to-day.

*Sunday Times* for 5th September announces special Libraries Information Bureaux Association meeting at Cambridge. Mr. Watson Davis, of the Washington Science Service, and Dr. Leonard Sayce explained microphotographic recording, but nothing was said, at least in that notice, of its applications to music, where it is much more needed and will bring much greater benefit than in recording news print and book print.



*Microphotos, actual size, by Dr. Leonard A. Sayce.*

## AT THE THROAT . . .

### Of Oaths, Vows, Promises and Pledges

ALL four; fatuous. Indulgence in, any of, proof of weakness, not strength. Crucifying *now* on yesterday, manifestation of mental slunkering—thinking, not thinking. Actions, attitudes, depend on state in individual in relation to state *outside*. Even if one presumes that state *inside* cranium will be static—it is only so with rigor mortis and the *status quo*, adherence to. No dolt can presume to know state of the *outside*, the *about* him to-morrow. To-morrow is so hypothetical, it only exists as a word. The *now* is so insistent, hardly room for the word, for the word is a remove from the real. Oaths, etc., are immoral as they bung up chances of honesty, i.e. individuals 'clean' expression arising from impact with the *outside*. "I promise" means the *me* will now persist without any alteration, growth, or death: the state *outside*, the *about* will persist with no details altered, and what's more the relation between *me*, the *in*, and *that*, the *out*, is fixed, permanent. The verb 'to promise' is the verb 'to lie, to die.' As for peace pledges, dotted line membership of political parties, the same goes for, and more. For what is required is not adherence to paper, the word, but a secure growing sensibility *inside*, which reacts honestly to the without. Action made on account of vows, and not as the inevitable expression, counts for nothing. Don't only mean the Lutheran renunciation but all: "I decided; I won't because I wouldn't; I will because I did," which makes most of you-arsupard idiots on yesterday's poes. As for barbaric ceremony marriages. . . . There are some things which can be made permanent, some things which can be secured for a time, and some things which can't be fixed at all. Iron can be forged to iron and it'll stay put, if it's kept dry. The P.O. secures money or does something with it for a time. But you can't pin down state of emotions—except by cutting head from body. "I promise to love till death, etc.," means as much as dgfh xvbp.

Which has further implications.