



Ferrabosco

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Fantasias by Musica Britannica #

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Fantasias by Meyer #

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Ferrabosco Fantasias - Stylistic Observations Bruce Bellingham

Fantasia 20 (Meyer no. 22)

The summation of Ferrabosco's achievements, short of the chromatic Hexachord fantasias:

- the principal imitative subject comprises a cadential alteration in its very first measure, causing some uncertainty about its modal centre: g? G? c?
- the alterations derive from conventional ficta uses ('una nota sopra la semper est canendum fa' and 'mi/fa' cadential formulas), soon carried to a point of expressive exploitation of cross-relations, "clashes" (see m.12 S/T, m.18 S/A, m.41 A/T), and $x2^{nd}s$, $o5^{th}s/x4^{th}s$, $o4^{th}s$
- harmonic ambiguity allows for excursions to remote tonal areas, as far as A^b in the basic g dorian mode
- accented passing tones resolve as suspensions over Bass, in 9-8, 7-6 motion (besides 4-3) (esp.m.25-8)
- contrapuntal voice-leading with such fluidity lead through highly original harmonic resolutions, rapidly travelling through expected areas, altered by new sequences and unexpected turns, to deceptive and otherwise elided cadences. The heightened cadence formulas at m.22-3 over an augmented Bass are especially remarkable, and derive from S, m.1: $A-B^b-A$ $B^{nat}-C-B^{nat}$ (mi-fa modal conventions)
- finally, all of the above are combined with motivic mastery, utilizing what amounts to a monothematic texture, with recapitulatory and climactic recalls of initial thematic materials.

View the complete analysis [here](#) *.

Listen to examples† of the motives:

Motive 1a:  [Play](#)

Motive 1b:  [Play](#)

Motive 1c:  [Play](#)

* You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader installed on your computer to view the analysis. In addition, you will need JavaScript and popups enabled for this link to function. If you prefer, you can click [here](#) to see the analysis in this browser window.

†Sound clips are from the VdGSA New England Chapter's CD "Alfonso Ferrabosco II: Four-part Fantasias". Reproduced by permission.