The Ornamentation of Baroque Sonatas Exemplified by Johann Ernst Galliard's *Sonata V for Bassoon and Harpsichord*

by

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The Baroque era (c.1600-1750) was a time of great beauty in all of the arts. The architecture of the period, strongly influenced by Christopher Wren, combined beautiful arched ceilings with sculpture and paintings. The arts thrived on the paintings of Rubens and Rembrandt, the literature of Moliere and Locke, and the music of Monteverdi and Bach. It was "a grandiose exercise in theatrical illusionism, an overwhelming visual and even spiritual experience."

There was a freedom of expression in music and a spirit of experimentation that mirrored the evolving scientific practice of Galileo and his contemporaries.

Some of the original freedom in music came in the practice of figured-bass, or thorough-bass. This is a means of notating harmonic intervals above a bass note. Clavecinists were required to realize these bass lines into four part harmony. This practice started in France and spread through the rest of Europe. The individual keyboard players began to incorporate other embellishments or agrements into their performance, and these eventually found their way into other instrumental genres.

During the Baroque it was common practice for musicians to

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spontaneously improvise or embellish music during a performance. Frederick Neumann in his book, *New Essays on Performance Practice*, observed that many composers, such as Vivaldi (1675-1741) and his contemporaries, wrote out only the skeletal notes of their works, particularly in slow movements. In general, performers were required to add their own ideas to complete the music. There are, of course, instances where a composer would include some ornamental suggestions or even write out a complete ornamentation. Dart, in his book *The Interpretation of Music*, described the musician of the baroque as being considered "a more intelligent member of the musical community than he is now." Baroque musicians had to think and react quickly not only to the printed page, but also to the people with whom they performed. In addition to enhancing the printed music, performers copied each other as they played similar phrases. There was a constant interaction between musicians.

Although Baroque musicians found embellishment to be second nature, that performance practice has all but disappeared today. At that time, students heard their teachers and other more experienced

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players ornament melodies. Students copied the style of their teachers until they were able to ornament freely on their own. This can be compared to the jazz musician of today. Hearing a specific “lick” or progression that he likes, a jazz musician will remember it. Later he can use it himself and incorporate it into the traditional practices. In this way a musician of any period can develop his own style.

Before embellishing a piece of music it is important to determine the origin of the composer and the style in which he composed. Johann Ernst Galliard (1687-1749) composed in the Italian style. His first teachers, Farineli, and Abbate Steffani were great influences on him. In fact, some critics of the day considered Galliard’s music merely a replica of Steffani’s style. The influence of the Italian style is also indicated by Galliard’s use of the Italian language in his titles and tempo markings. He uses siciliano, allegro, and adagio as opposed to the comparable French markings. The first movement of Sonata V is marked adagio, the second and fourth movements include allegro in their titles, and the third movement is entitled “Alla Siciliano,” all of which come from the

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2 T. Dart, op. cit., p. 93.
There are some general areas where ornamentation was used in Italian-style music of this time. Dart lists four: "extemporized embellishment of adagios; optional variation on repeated material; additional ornamentation at cadences; and slight alteration of written note-values."7 After determining the area to embellish, it is important to understand the different possibilities in ornamentation.

There are many different types of ornaments that can be used when embellishing a piece of music. Notes which are a third or more apart can be connected by means of a glissando, grace notes, or by outlining a chord. When filling in between two notes the fillers or grace notes may be diatonic or chromatic. Either may be used in the case of unaccented passing tones because the dissonance created will be barely noticeable.6

Another type of embellishment is the trill. The trill can be primarily melodic, or it may have a more important harmonic function such as in a cadential trill. In the first case the trill may be started on either the main note or the upper note. For cadential trills it is customary to start on the upper note.8 This tradition of

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7T. Dart, op. cit., p. 88.
9Ibid., p. 195.
trills it is customary to start on the upper note. This tradition of starting on the upper note has been passed down through many generations of teachers; however, Frederick Neumann disputes this idea. He contends that in Pier Tosi's *Observations on a Florid Song*, translated by Galliard, Tosi implies that the trill should begin on the lower note. The trill, Tosi says, is a rapid alternation of two notes, "one of which deserves the name master note because it occupies with greater forcefulness the site of the note which is to be trilled; the other sound, notwithstanding its higher location, plays no other part than that of helper." Regardless of Neumann's opinion on this passage, Galliard wrote all of the trill examples beginning on the upper note. Even if this was not Tosi's intention, this is obviously what Galliard was accustomed to hearing.

Another very common ornament is the appoggiatura. This ornament comes on the beat; it may be prepared or unprepared, but it usually lasts half of the value of the note to which it resolves." Galliard wrote that, when it is prepared, the preparation for this ornament should be longer than the actual appoggiatura. After

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9 Ibid., p. 195.
12 Dart, op. cit., p. 79.
gathering this more specific information, it is possible to begin embellishing.

In his *Performance Practice* Neumann warns that, in general, it is better to include too few ornaments rather than too many. If the melody is a good one to begin with, it is able to stand alone, and too many ornaments could clutter it. Keeping this in mind, as well as the general practices of ornamentation used in the Italian style, one may begin to work with a specific piece such as *Sonata V for Bassoon and Harpsichord* by Johann Ernst Galliard.

The first movement is marked "Adagio," (Appendix A), which gives significant opportunities for embellishment as suggested by Dart in his previously cited list. In examples *1, *4, and *5 notes were included to fill in between thirds. The original version is on the left and the embellished version is on the right.

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*1

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*4

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Example three also fills in between two notes on the third beat, but it outlines a C major chord rather than by diatonic motion as the previous examples do.

*2 and *6 are examples of cadential trills.

Each of these trills, as will as the other trills in this piece begin on the upper note. This decision was made in order to be
consistent with Galliard’s examples in his translation of Tosi’s *Observations on a Florid Song*.

Example seven is only a slight variation on the already printed music. The already existing trill is moved one eighth note early. This is the fourth suggestion for ornamentation in Dart’s list.

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*7
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The only changes made in the “Allegro e Spiritoso” were the addition of three cadential trills: *1, *2, and *3. These may be seen in Appendix B and are self explanatory.

The “Alla Siciliano” (Appendix C) was originally written as two repeated sections of eight bars each. In this copy the repeats are written out in order to include the ornamentation which occurs only in the second time through each section. Varying repeated material was also suggested by Dart. Cadential trills, which have already been discussed sufficiently, were added at *3, *5, and *7. Another trill was added at *1, but it is a basically melodic trill.

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*4 and *6 could also have been written as grace notes.

*4

\[ \text{music notation} \]

*6

\[ \text{music notation} \]

It is important to note that the rhythms indicated above are approximated. Rosalyn Turneck, in her introduction to Putnam Aldrich book *Ornamentation in J. S. Bach's Organ Works*, correctly recognizes that ornaments were not precisely notated. She adds, it is of prime significance to understanding the psychology underlying the usage of embellishment symbols. To see embellishment notation as an exact orthography is to impose rigidity upon this florid art. The very essence of musical psychology from which embellishment emerged and developed is non-arithmetical and non-precise, unlike the mechanistic frame of reference of the nineteenth century and the tyrannical categorization-processes of the twentieth.\(^{14}\)

*2 could be considered an upper neighbor or an appoggiatura.

\[ \text{music notation} \]

The fourth movement "Allegro Assai" can be found as Appendix D. After considering the tempo and the lack of opportunity for ornamentation, there were no alterations made to this movement.

Considerable thought was given to this project, and the results of the ornamented version may be heard on the included tape. This performance took place as part of the writer's Senior Honors Recital on January 28, 1991.

Many musicians do not know where to start preparing for an authentic performance of a Baroque work. They do not understand that "ornamentation is not a luxury in baroque music, but a necessity."^15 It has now been made clear to this writer what some of the preliminary steps in this process of ornamentation should include. First, it is obligatory to determine in what style the ornamentation should take place, either French or Italian. After gathering some background information on the work, it is important to understand the appropriate places to include ornaments. Dart supplied a good general list to work from in his book *The Interpretation of Music.*^16

There are also many traditional ornaments that were used in the Baroque. Some of the most common are grace notes, trills, and

^15Donington, op. cit., p. 160.
^16see p. 3.
appoggiaturas. Some ornaments occur more regularly at certain times in music, but the most critical judge of what ornament to use, and where, should come from the musician's ear. Musicians of the Baroque needed very little time to plan their ornamentation if they had time at all. They merely played what sounded right. With the information found in this paper and a good ear, any musician may make a satisfactory embellishment of a Baroque work.
Bibliography


Appendix A
Sonata V

Johann Ernst Galliard
1687-1749

ed. Kristine A. Kohler
Appendix B
Allegro e Spiritoso
Appendix C
KRISTINE A. KOHLER
bassoon
in a
SENIOR HONORS RECITAL
assisted by
Kuniko Fukushima, piano and harpsichord
Don Rentfrow, cello

Sonata V
Adagio
Allegro e Spiritoso
Alta Siciliano
Allegro assai

Concerto in F Major, Op. 75
Allegro ma non troppo
Adagio
Allegro

... Intermission ...

Rhapsody for Bassoon
Willson Osborne
(b. 1906)

Sonatine pour Bassoon et Piano
Alexandre Tansman
(b. 1897)

Johann Ernst Galliard
(1687-1749)

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786-1826)

Kristine Kohler is a student of Homer Pence.
She performs with the Muncie Symphony Student Woodwind Quintet
and is a member of Pi Kappa Lambda, National Honor Society in Music.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Honors Program at Ball State University.

PRUIS HALL
Monday, January 28, 1991
8:00 p.m.

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