

Joan CABANILLES

KEYBOARD MUSIC, VOLUME THREE: 21 WORKS FOR ORGAN AND FOR HARPSICHORD

TIENTOS NOS. 26, 30, 40, 57, 59, 81, 89 AND 107

TWELVE VERSOS DE PRIMERO TONO

DIFERENCIAS DE FOLÍAS

Timothy Roberts

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

JOAN CABANILLES, 1644–1712:

A LIFE IN SUMMARY

by Timothy Roberts

Our knowledge of Joan Cabanilles' life is relatively slight. On 6 September 1644 he was baptised Joan Baptiste Josep Cabanilles Barberà at Algemesí, near Valencia, his father being a native of Pollença in Mallorca. In 1665 the young Cabanilles succeeded Jerónimo de la Torre as second organist of Valencia Cathedral, and in less than a year was promoted to first organist and received the clerical tonsure, as the post required. He soon took minor orders and then was successively ordained subdeacon (1666), deacon (1667) and priest (1668). In 1666 he bought an organ and an *espineta* (a triangular spinet, virginals or, possibly, small harpsichord) from the estate of Andrés Peris, and in 1675–77 he was in charge of the welfare of the choir, though apparently not its musical direction. There is no reliable evidence that Cabanilles ever left Valencia, where he would die on 29 April 1712, although he often required a deputy after 1703 because of absences. The archives record a few other events of an apparently undramatic life: the receipt of salary payments; service on the jury when Antoni Ortells was hired as choirmaster (1677); supplying small or portable organs for feast days and processions, and inspecting organs at the city parish churches of St Martin (1682) and *Santos Juanes* (1705); having a *Trompeta Real* and a treble *Clarín* (horizontal trumpet) installed in the large Cathedral organ (1693); and hiring out, maintaining or transporting a *lira*, most probably a bowed keyboard instrument (*Geigenwerk*) that was used during Holy Week. His will shows that, partly through prudent purchase of property, he had become wealthy, and that he had apparently lost touch with his Mallorcan relatives, whom it does not mention.

Ten vocal works by Cabanilles have survived,¹ in a manuscript that may be in his own hand. All his other works are for keyboard, overwhelmingly for the organ,² and it has been claimed that he is 'the most prolific composer of organ music the world has ever seen';³ Spanish copyists' manuscripts contain over two hundred *tientos*⁴ and other, often substantial, pieces, as well as close on a thousand short liturgical versets and other plainchant settings.⁵

¹ They have been well recorded by the Amystis Chamber Choir conducted by José Duce Chenoll (two CDs, Brilliant Classics 94781).

² The numbering used here for the *tientos* is that of the as yet incomplete *Opera Omnia*, Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona: Vols. 1–4, 1927–56, ed. Higiní Anglés; Vols. 5–9, 1986–2008, ed. Josep Climent. That of the versos follows Nelson Lee's edition, also ongoing: *Keyboard Music from the Felanitx Manuscripts*, Vols. 1–, Corpus of Early Keyboard Music, American Institute of Musicology, Münster and Madison, 1999–.

³ Nelson Lee (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. ix.

⁴ As a keyboard form this type of piece – its title is best translated as 'essay' – had been cultivated in Iberia since the early sixteenth century, most notably by Antonio de Cabezón (1510–66), Francisco Correa de Arauxo (1584–1654) and Pablo Bruna (1611–79). Traditionally the *tiento* was a relatively serious contrapuntal piece, usually in four voices, such as an Italian contemporary might have called *ricercare* or *fantasia*, though there were also *tientos* with the livelier character of the Italian *canzona*.

⁵ For a more extensive consideration of Cabanilles' life, works, and use of the organ, cf. my booklet notes in Vol. 1 of this series (Toccata Classics TOCC 0391). Vol. 2 (TOCC 0406) contains an essay by Nelson Lee on Cabanilles' Valencian background and on the manuscripts containing his music.

QUESTIONS OF STYLE IN CABANILLES' MUSIC

by Andrés Cea Galán

From the standpoint of present knowledge it is rather hard to comment on matters of style in relation either to Spanish instrumental music in general, or to Cabanilles' keyboard music in particular. Numerous musical sources (scores, treatises) survive to provide a quantity of explicit details that cast light on the form and structure of his compositions and enable scholars to analyse his use of counterpoint and harmony. Such objective criteria enable each work to be ascribed to one of a range of particular musical genres, although by their nature such stylistic categories must remain tentative.

When one turns to the interpretation of Cabanilles' music, the information provided by those explicit, 'foreground' elements is overshadowed by the much more important implicit ones. The latter include essential aspects of performance such as, first, the selection of the instruments to be used, taking into account, for example, the number and range of the manuals; the style and number of the stops, and their pitch and temperament. It is then also necessary to consider questions of tempo, and variations of tempo; the use of suitable fingering and articulation (including rhythmic inequality); the introduction of appropriate ornaments; and finally the actual use of the manuals and the registrations the instrument makes available.

In the process of (re)discovering such implicit elements in the music, questions will also arise concerning the function of the pieces in their historical context, as well as about the intended meaning of the music in that context, including any rhetoric and symbolism that may be associated with a particular composition. Last but not least, there is the capacity of Cabanilles' music to transmit a specific mood or emotion, which performers have to try to deliver convincingly to the listener. Such historical aspects of an interpretation will have an enormous influence from the stylistic point of view; but even if one gets that far, alongside the knowledge gained from an extensive, complimentary study of documents and of the organological evidence, the personal approach that each performer brings is another vital element in the understanding of this music.

The problem of defining style is even more complex when one considers the possible influences on Cabanilles in the course of his career, and the way in which those influences may be reflected in his compositions. To state that Valencia, where he made his living as a musician and as a priest, was historically connected to Italy politically, socially, culturally and economically, is to say both everything and nothing: such links are the inevitable result of a natural relationship between two seventeenth-century Catholic countries facing each other across the Mediterranean in the era of the Counter-Reformation.

The manuscripts containing Cabanilles' music do indeed include some keyboard pieces by Italian, or Italianate, composers, such as Frescobaldi, Froberger and Kerll, as well as instrumental *balletti e correnti* and even some of Corelli's violin sonatas and

concertos. But it should be observed that some of those collections also offer a few copies of French keyboard works, by Couperin or Lebègue, for example, as well as many arrangements of single movements from Lully's operas and ballets. To this extent the Cabanilles sources are not exceptional, as several other Spanish sources of keyboard, harp or guitar music dating from his lifetime also contain Italian and French pieces among the traditional Spanish compositions. Such examples leave no doubt that around 1700 Spanish musicians absorbed foreign tastes and influences both in their composing and their playing, although it is difficult to be sure of the degree to which they were really conscious of such stylistic subtleties, or how they treated them in practical terms. To sum up, musicology has yet to investigate in depth how far Cabanilles was able to assimilate such different idioms, or to bring the style of his compositions into conformity with those foreign influences.

This ambiguity provides the context for an intriguing and unique work by Cabanilles, his *Tiento a modo de Italia* or, literally, 'in the manner of Italy' [1]. Although this rubric seems to indicate a foreign model for the piece, the fact is that nothing similar in style can be described in the preserved Italian repertoire. Nevertheless, the composition, written as a solo for the right hand (*partido de mano derecha*), lacks the traditional opening duple-time section in imitative style familiar in Spanish compositions of the time; indeed, it seems to evoke an Italian aria in a characteristic triple time similar to a *corrente*. This melodic opening is followed by a fantasia made up of flourishes that are mostly organised in harmonic progressions by fifths, a common procedure of development in Cabanilles' music.

The introduction in a severe imitative style can be heard in other pieces for right or left hand by Cabanilles, like the *Tientos* Nos. 40 [4], 89 [3] and 107 [2]. This genre of *partido* composition (written for two simultaneous, contrasting registrations), invented in Spain during the second half of the sixteenth century, developed into different forms during the seventeenth. In Cabanilles' repertoire many of them are written in only three voices, a light style that, it can be assumed, the composer developed in his later period.⁶

⁶ The style and range of the right-hand solo in *Tiento* No. 89 [3] suggests that it may have been written for the treble *Clarin* installed on the large Valencia Cathedral organ in 1693.

But the *partido* pieces sometimes feature two solo voices, as do *Tientos* Nos. 59 [17] and 81 [21]. In those cases, there are two trebles in the right hand against two voices in the left, and in many sections the latter must be considered something more than a simple accompaniment, as the ‘tenor’ and ‘bass’ interrelate actively with the upper voices. To a certain extent, such four-part fugal pieces recall the style of many French fugues played with two different but balanced registrations on both hands. In Cabanilles’ case, all of those pieces are composed in several large sections, displaying a number of inventive contrapuntal ideas and ‘affects’.

Apart from the *tiento a modo de Italia*, no other references to foreign styles can be discerned in Cabanilles’ titles. Nevertheless, some pieces in his output also display the typical free ornamented writing already known from Italian toccatas. It is not yet clear if those similarities come through the direct influence of Italian musicians or simply represent a manner that was common to seventeenth-century Mediterranean keyboard players in general. On the other hand, during Cabanilles’ lifetime, the *tiento* had developed a more complex structure, in such a way that it became something more similar to the *capriccio* of the Frescobaldi, Froberger or Kerll traditions.

The *Tientos* Nos. 26 [18] and 30 [20] included in this recording are still far away from that development, as they feature a much more traditional imitative form, with few written-out ornaments or diminutions. No. 30 is even a rather small piece, compared with the enormous length of many of Cabanilles’ *tientos*. This traditional ‘Spanish’ style is also discernible in the *Diferencias* (variations) on the *folías* [19], a common ground in many Spanish (and Italian) instrumental sources of the seventeenth century. Here the variations are linked almost without interruption in a lovely and pleasant manner that the harpsichord renders very effectively.

Andrés Cea Galán, born in Jeréz de la Frontera and resident near Seville, is active both in performance on early instruments and in musicological research, especially on the historical, technical and aesthetic aspects of the organ in Spain. His articles and books on these subjects are recognised as valuable contributions to the knowledge of Hispanic organ culture, and he has also made several recordings focusing on this special repertoire. As an editor, he has published Francisco Fernandez Palero’s keyboard music, Sebastian Raval’s ricercari and organ pieces by Cabanilles.

THE INSTRUMENTS USED IN THIS RECORDING

by Timothy Roberts

The Organ of the Church of Sant Jaume, Vila-real, Castellón/Valencia

The Valencia region was part of the Republican 'Red Zone' at the start of the Spanish Civil War, and suffered especially severe conflict. The Valencia Cathedral organs were plundered (and later removed entirely when the building was restored), and many other instruments in the region, too, were damaged or lost altogether. The large Vila-real organ of 1724 by the notable Valencian builder Nicolás Salanova (1681–1750) is therefore an especially precious survival as a vehicle for Cabanilles' music, even though nearly all its original pipework was melted down during the Civil War. The organ was originally built for the mediaeval church but was re-installed in its present position high on the north wall of the apse when the spacious new Classical building (said to be the largest parish church in Spain) was built between 1753 and 1779. When Gerhard Grenzing came to restore the organ in 2008–10, what remained (case, soundboards, windchests, stops, action and keyboards) was in a precarious state. Careful work saved the essential parts, and maximum authenticity was achieved in replacing the pipework, based both on detailed study of other old (but modified) organs in the region, and on the long experience of the Grenzing workshop of Iberian organs, particularly those of the Catalan-, Valencian- and Mallorcan-speaking regions.

To my ear, the result is a technical and artistic triumph: an organ of an almost orchestral warmth and brilliance, the principals, flutes and reeds of which provide a satisfying range of vivid Mediterranean colours. The *Cadereta* (Chair Organ) can counterbalance even loud registrations on the *Órgano Mayor* (Great), and despite the low Valencian pitch of A=c.380 Hz, more than a tone below A=440, the sound has energy and clarity, even in the bass – aided, for the microphones at least, by the

warm, cathedral-like resonance of the building. Before this recording, the organ was tuned by Andreas Mühlhofer of Gerhard Grenzing S.A.

<i>Bass (C–c', without low C sharp and D sharp)</i>		<i>Treble (c' sharp–c''')</i>	
Órgano Mayor			
Flautado Mayor	8'	Flautado Mayor	8'
Flautado 2º	8'	Flautado 2º	8'
Violón	8'	Violón	8'
Octava	4'	Octava	4'
Tapadillo	4'	Tapadillo	4'
Docena	2' ⅔	Lleno en 12 y 15	II
Lleno en 15 y 19	II	Lleno en 15 y 19	II
Lleno	IV	Lleno	IV
Cimbala	IV	Cimbala	IV
Nasardo en 12	2' ⅔	Tolosana	III
Nasardo en 15	2'	Nasardo en 12	2' ⅔
Nasardo en 17	1' ⅔	Nasardo en 15	2'
Nasardo en 19	1' ½	Nasardo en 17	1' ⅔
Pajarillo	1'	Flauta (8' doble)	II
Trompa Real	8'	Corneta	VIII
Bajoncillo	4'	Trompa Magna	16'
Chirimia	2'	Trompa Real	8'
		Clarin claro	8'
		Clarin de campana	8'
Cadereta interior*			
Violon	8'	Violon	8'
		Corneta en Eco	V
		Violines	8'
Cadereta exterior			
Flautado 2º	4'	Flautado 2º	4'
Violon	4'	Violon	4'
Lleno en 15º y 19º	II	Lleno en 15º y 19º	II

Lleno	IV	Lleno	IV
Cimbala	IV	Cascabeles	IV
Nasardo en 19°	1' ½	Nasardo en 19°	1' ½
Vox Humana	8'	Corneta inglesa	V
		Clarín	8'
		Vox Humana	8'
Pedal			
Contras	16' + 8'		

*Pipes in the main case but played from the lower keyboard.

Harpsichord No. R33 in seventeenth-century Flemish style by Michael Johnson

Michael Johnson's most recent instruments are informed by a deeply creative relationship with those of the Ruckers family of Antwerp. 'R33' is a single-manual instrument with 8' and 4' registers, with a 'layered' sound which, according to its maker, is informed by that of the Baroque organ.¹ It was recorded in 2015 in his workshop at Fontmell Magna in Dorset.

The late Father Josep Climent² stated that Cabanilles did not compose for the harpsichord.³ That may be true in the strict sense that his creative focus was overwhelmingly on the Cathedral, where strung keyboard instruments were apparently heard only during Holy Week, when the organ was silent, and possibly only in an accompanying role. However, we cannot know whether Cabanilles used his domestic instruments for anything other than private practice; more widely, his work was transmitted in musical circles that traditionally regarded organ, harpsichord and clavichord repertoire as often interchangeable.

¹ The instrument is discussed online by Michael Johnson and Timothy Roberts ('A Tale of Two Harpsichords', YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSGXEC4A2Nw>).

² A recent organist of Valencia Cathedral, and editor of Vols. 5–9 of Cabanilles' *Opera Omnia*.

³ Juan Cabanilles. Puntualizaciones Biográficas, *Revista de musicología*, Vol. vi, Madrid, 1983, pp. 213–21.

Anonymous seventeenth-century organ, Banyalbufar, Mallorca

This relatively modest but strikingly characterful single-manual organ is unusual for its archaic *Blockwerk* construction, which provides two or even three pipes per note in the treble of the principal stops. It was originally installed, probably in the late seventeenth century, for the once-renowned gothic Rosary Chapel of the royal Monastery of San Domingo in Palma de Mallorca. When the Monastery was demolished in the Dissolution of the 1830s, the organ was moved to the parish church of the coastal village of Banyalbufar in the western mountains of Mallorca, where Gerhard Grenzing found it in a derelict state in the early 1970s. Over a long period Grenzing restored it to its present condition, retaining its low pitch (A=392) and pungent quarter-comma meantone tuning with its narrow major thirds and wide semitones.

Flautat 1

Flautat 2

Octava

Tapadet [=stopped 4']

Dotzena

Quinzena

Dissetena

Cimbalet

Corneta

Keyboard range CDEF—c''' (C short octave in bass)

Eight pedal buttons (coupled to manual plus 8' *Contras*) for C D E F G A B flat and B

Medio registro (all stops divided at c'/c' sharp into two halves, bass and treble)

Timothy Roberts developed a passion for Baroque music during his schooldays, when he had organ lessons from Francis Routh and spent many hours getting to know the eighteenth-century harpsichords at Fenton House in his native Hampstead, in north London. He later studied with Christopher Kite and Jill Severs, also receiving master-class tuition from Kenneth Gilbert and Gustav Leonhardt. He worked for about 30 years as a busy touring keyboard player, twenty of them as principal keyboard of the Gabrieli Consort and Players; he also became director of His Majestys Sagbutts & Cornetts, and like many colleagues of his generation contributed to a large number of varied recordings. He later moved to southern Europe, working as a church organist in Provence and, especially, Mallorca, where he still enjoys close musical connections thanks to his ongoing friendship with the Baroque orchestra *Ars Musicae* (with which he recorded a *Toccata Classics* album (TOCC 0477) of music by William Jackson, 1730–1803), the Barcelona-based organ builder Gerhard Grenzing, and others.



Now a grandfather, Tim is once more London-based. As a chamber musician, vocal accompanist and soloist he has often focused on lesser-known repertoire, and reviewing his recent album of the organ music of John Worgan (1725–1790, *Toccata Classics* TOCC 0332), *Fanfare* described him as a ‘famed organist and musicologist’. His first job was as an editorial assistant on the 1980 edition of *The New Grove* dictionary, since when he has produced many historical music editions, especially of English repertoire, for publishers including Faber Music and Oxford University Press. In recent years he has also gained experience as a recording engineer and sound editor, composer and music-setter. He also enjoys part-time work as a dance accompanist at Bird College theatre school in south London. His website can be found at www.orchardstreetmusic.uk.



Recorded on 30–31 May 2017 in the Church of Sant Jaume, Vila-real, Castellón/Valencia
([1]–[17]), on 17 November 2015 in the workshop of Michael Johnson, Fontmell Magna,
Dorset ([18] [19]) and 7 August 2004 in the Parish Church, Banyalbufar, Mallorca ([20] [21])
Microphones: Calrec CB2001
Production and editing: Timothy Roberts

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