

CORPUS OF EARLY KEYBOARD MUSIC

JOHN CALDWELL
General Editor

Giovanni Picchi

COLLECTED KEYBOARD WORKS

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

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38

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Edited by
J. Evan Kreider



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

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Foreword

Little is known about the life of Giovanni Picchi, who flourished from 1600 to 1625. From the title page of his *Intavolatura di balli d'arpicordo*¹ we learn that he was the organist at the Casa Grande in Venice, now known as the Basilica Santa Maria dei Frari. In 1600 Caroso mentioned Picchi in his list of *Professori di ballare*.² In 1624 Picchi competed unsuccessfully for the position of second organist at St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice. His publications include the *Intavolatura di balli* (Venice, 1618/19 and 1621) and the *Canzoni da sonar con ogni sorte d'istromenti* for two, three, four, six, and eight parts with basso continuo (Venice, 1625). The other three books of keyboard dances promised by Picchi in his preface of 1621 never seem to have appeared in print.

There are only three sources for the collected keyboard works of Giovanni Picchi: the *Intavolatura di balli*, the *Organ Tablature* of the Biblioteca Nazionale in Torino (Foà 7) compiled on commission around 1637–40, possibly in a court in Southern Germany,³ and the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, compiled by the Englishman, Francis Tregian, sometime between 1600 and the year of his death, 1619. Each of the compositions contained in these sources is unique to its source.

The majority of Picchi's dances are composed in pairs. Three of the four *pass'e mezzos* are followed by a *saltarello* in triple meter. These pairs are Nos. 1 and 2, 11 and 12, and 13 and 14. The short dances in duple meter (Nos. 5, 6, and 7) conclude with either a *balletto* or *saltarello* in triple meter. Nos. 8 and 9 obviously form a single composition consisting of variations. This appears from the fact that No. 8 has no proper ending and that both Nos. 8 and 9 are based on the same harmonic pattern.

1. These transcriptions are based on the "newly corrected and reprinted" edition published in 1621 in Venice by Vincenti, now available in facsimile: *Bollettino Bibliografico Musicale* (Milan: [s.n.], 1934). Only one copy of the original print exists at the Biblioteca Civica of Bassano del Grappa; see C. Sartori, *Bibliografia della musica strumentale italiana*, II (Florence: Olschki, 1968), 78.

2. F. Caroso, *Nobilita di Dame ... Libra altra volta, chiamato Il Ballarino*, 1600; see L. F. Tagliavini, "Picchi," *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 10 (1962): 1235.

3. O. Mischiati, "L'intavolatura d'organo tedesca della Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino—Catalogo ragionato," *L'Organo*, 4 (1963): 1–154, esp. 110.

N° 1. Pass'e Mezzo

Prima Parte

The image displays a musical score for the first part of a piece. It consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings. There are several manuscript annotations: 'Ms: c d#' above the third system, 'Ms: c' G A' below the fourth system, and 'Ms: a e f' below the fifth system. A measure number '10' is placed above the third system. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.