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Dall'Abaco

Capricci a
Violoncello Solo

Francesco
Galligioni

Joseph Marie Clément Ferdinand Dall'Abaco (1710-1805)
Capricci a violoncello solo

1	capriccio I (introduzione-tempo giusto)	5'00
2	capriccio II (allemanda)	2'55
3	minuetto*	2'30
4	capriccio III (allegro di molto)	4'44
5	capriccio IV (aria andante)	3'44
6	capriccio allegro*	2'01
7	minuetto*	2'09
8	capriccio V (bizzarria)	2'19
9	capriccio VI (courante)	2'12
10	fantasia*	1'49
11	capriccio VII (andante)	4'32
12	capriccio VIII (minuetto)	4'07
13	fantasia vivace*	2'30
14	capriccio IX (toccata)	2'45
15	capriccio X (aria)	2'51
16	largo-double*	2'46
17	capriccio XI (aria da capriccio)-presto	2'48

Francesco Galligioni *violoncello*

*Composed by Jean-Daniel Braun (before 1728-1740)

When questioned by the police in January 1753 about Giuseppe Maria Clemente Dall'Abaco, Monica Căstin, who served at the coffeehouse the musician frequented in Munich, declared her customer to be «a rowdy gossipmonger, who played billiards and sometimes dice or other table games».

Dall'Abaco had had the misfortune to be in some way implicated in swindle involving 35.820 Royal Thalers that his brother-in-law, Franz Peter Cosman, had misappropriated from the military treasury of the Cologne Electorate. Moreover, in an anonymous letter he had been accused of spreading idle untruths concerning the Prince Elector of Cologne, to the extent of suggesting that he was about to be poisoned. Questioned by the inquisitors on 16 and 17 January, the musician managed to prove his innocence, thereby avoiding heavy punishment and possibly even a death sentence.

Whether or not he was unwittingly involved in the business or was actually in some way responsible for it remains to this day a moot point. At all events, within a few weeks he decided it would be a good idea to give up his position as Kammermusikdirektor to the Prince Elector of Cologne and move to Verona, the birthplace of his father Evaristo Felice (1675-1742), who had worked from 1704 as Kappelmeister and cellist at the court of Prince Maximilian II Emanuel, Elector of Bavaria in Munich.

Born in Brussels in 1710, Giuseppe Maria Clemente was the oldest of three brothers. Following in his father's footsteps, he chose to study music, and on 29 March 1729, at the age of 19, was appointed cellist in the chapel orchestra of the Prince Elector Clemens August I of Bavaria in Bonn, which earned him an annual salary of 400 Rhein florins. Ten years later he was named director of the court chamber orchestra and advisor to the Prince. In the course of time he was also honoured with the title of Baron. Once he had settled in Verona he met with further acclaim, especially as a cellist, and on 20 April 1767 was accepted as a member of the city's Accademia Filarmonica.

The only extant version of the 11 Capricci for solo cello consists of a hand-written 19th century manuscript kept in the Library of the Music Conservatoire in Milan. On the frontispiece there is an allusion to the title conferred to him by the Elector of Bavaria in 1766 for services rendered: «Violoncello solo. / Capricci / del Sig.^r Giuseppe Barone / Dall'Abaco». It is a declaration that bears witness to the musician's continued relationship with his noble patron and the court.

The manuscript consists of 12 pages, of which the last two are empty. The writing is regular and there are no corrections, despite the odd inaccuracy, which suggests that it is a copy made by someone other than the composer himself, perhaps after his death in 1805, at the ripe old age of 95. Probably the collection originally comprised 12 Capricci, which would have been typical in the 1600s and 1700s, so it may well be that the copy was made by some *maladroit amanuensis* who never even managed to complete the eleventh Capriccio, which come to a halt at bar ninety-nine. Clearly today's performers must come up with their hypothetical conclusion to the piece. Another possibility is that the original version was lacking in certain pages, which forced the copier to complete his efforts with the four brief compositions in G that reveal the same structure as the preceding pieces.

Almost all the Capricci consist of two parts, like baroque dances, which they sometimes also resemble. There is also a reference to exercises and studies, since compositions of this sort could reconcile a certain degree of freedom with a common nucleus of melodic, rhythmic or technical formulae, in view of the very fact that they were conceived for teaching purposes: leaps in pitch, arpeggios, scales, double chords, melodious passages, and so on. As compositions they share two salient features: a degree of virtuoso display, and a sense of improvisation. Moreover, they are all lacking in indications regarding expression and rhythm, with only the eleventh twice bearing the marking *Presto* within the composition itself. As a result, again it is the performer who must decide on how to interpret 18th century practice in order to provide modern audiences with a historically coherent rendering of the compositions.

Despite the fact that the manuscript dates back to the third or fourth decade of the 19th century, the compositional style is earlier, closer to the *Empfindsamer Stil* in the way a vein of melancholy pervades many of the pieces, especially those in the minor key (1, 2, 4, 6). There are also allusions to seventeenth and eighteenth century dances: for instance, the second and the sixth Capriccio, which seem to borrow respectively from the *allemande* and the *courante*. The eighth, in G minor, stands out on account of its length and for the sections in the *major* and the *minor* keys, as well as for the prevailing use of polyphony, which is also a feature of the seventh Capriccio. Others develop around simple chords, or in the *toccata* style, as in the case of the ninth. Another common element is the allusion to the *perpetuum mobile* by means of the reiteration of a particular rhythm or figuration.

Jean-Daniel Braun lived during the first half of the 1700s, though what we know about him for sure regards only the period between 1728 and 1740. It was during these years that he received the royal privilege that allowed him to print four collections of sonatas for flute and basso continuo in Paris. It is also certain that he was employed at the time in the chapel of the Épernon court of Duke Louis de Pardaillan de Gondrin. Braun was a flautist and composer, who probably also played the bassoon in view of the fact that many of his compositions, as he specifically indicated, can be played by both instruments.

The pieces recorded here belong to a suite for solo flute contained in a collection published in Paris in 1740 that also comprises a sonata for flute and basso continuo as well as various pieces for solo flute that can also be played, *ad libitum*, on the bassoon (and thus also on the cello). At the beginning of each piece the composer himself provides the necessary transpositions. As declared in the frontispiece, the collection was originally intended as an aid to teaching the flute, or indeed the bassoon.

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The Capricci for solo cello by Giuseppe Clemente Ferdinando Dall'Abaco have become part of the regular concert repertoire for cellists with a focus on early music, be they specialists of period technique and interpretation, or proponents of a more traditional approach.

The only version of the works that has come down to us is unfortunately a 19th century copy that is somewhat inaccurate, with numerous copying errors and very sparse expression markings. Before going ahead with performance it was thus necessary to begin with a meticulous study of the works. The first question to be addressed was the exact character of each Caprice. This led to the attribution of rhythm in relation to the specific dance form (minuet, courante, allemande, etc.), tempi (allegro, presto andante etc.) and mood (caprice, fantasia, etc.). Even if these indications refer to contemporary musical usage, they are absolutely personal and intended as a mere suggestion rather than an absolute norm.

The other problem regarded the identification of the errors in the manuscript, and not so much their correction as possible solutions. Although the copier was perhaps not very expert, or worked with haste, we owe him gratitude for saving for our enjoyment what would otherwise have been lost. In attempting to establish how the original score must have been, the fingers often proved to be more helpful than sight.

For example, in the minuet (Capriccio VIII), a hypothetical change of key, neglected by the copier, would imbue the work with brilliance and ease in a passage that is otherwise hard to grasp and indeed to play. With his cello in one hand and a pen in the other, surely this was not what the composer would have intended.

This same passage, played as suggested above, relates in some respects to Bach's masterpiece, the Suites for solo cello. Indeed, it brings to mind the corresponding piece in the Prelude of BWV1009. And this is just one of the many elements that suggest Dall'Abaco was not only familiar with the Suites, but also admired them. Moreover, it is interesting to note that both these milestones in the repertoire for solo cello have come down to us in copies, rather than original manuscripts.

The works by Jean-Daniel Braun ("Sonate a flûte traversière et basse, suivie de différentes pieces sans basse..tant du même auteur que de divers autres...Ces mêmes pieces peuvent se jouer également sur le basson en suivant la clef de basse mise au commencement de chaque air") that complete the recording were published in Paris during the very years in which Dall'Abaco was also in the city. In style and character they reveal a remarkable affinity with the Capriccios for solo cello.

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Translation by Kate Singleton



Recording: 17-18 October 2017 Chiesa di Sant'Eufemia, Nigoline di Corte Franca (BS), Italy

Recording engineer: Fabio Framba

Cover: Drawing by Mario Folea

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Francesco Galligioni studied cello at the 'C. Pollini' Conservatoire in Padua with Gianni Chiampan, and following his Diploma took part in masterclasses with Michael Flaksman and Teodora Campagnaro. He then studied with Franco Maggio Ormezowski at the Accademia Nazionale di S. Cecilia in Rome, where he was awarded a scholarship and obtained a further Diploma in just two years, and at the A. Toscanini Foundation in Parma in the courses for soloists and orchestra leaders.

He has taken part in courses specializing in baroque cello held by W. Vestidello and G. Nasillo, and worked with soloists and conductors of international renown (Anner Bylsma, Giuliano Carmignola, Cecilia Bartoli, Max Emmanuel Cencic, Magdalena Kozena, Sergio Azzolini, Sara Mingardo, Victoria Mullova, Angelika Kirschlagher, Andrea Marcon, Federico Guglielmo, Sir J. E. Gardiner, Diego Fasolis, Pedro Halffter, Bob Van Asperen, Michael Radulescu, Gustav Leonhardt, Christopher Hogwood), both in concert performances and recordings.

His passion for early music led him to study viola da gamba with Paolo Biordi at the Conservatoire in Florence, where he obtained the Diploma in 2004, followed in 2007 by a first class degree with a thesis on the relationship between the arpeggione, viola da gamba and baroque cello, with a performance on this latter instrument of the famous sonata.

A founding member of the Accademia di S. Rocco and later of the Venice Baroque Orchestra, he has played first cello in the foremost concert venues, including the Royal Albert Hall and Barbican Hall (London), Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall (New York), JFK Center for Performing Arts (Washington DC), Tonhalle (Zurich), Konzerthaus (Berlin), Het Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Musikverein and Konzerthaus (Vienna), Kyoi hall (Tokyo), Opera Berlioz (Montpellier), Théâtre des Champs-Élysées (Paris), W. Disney City Hall (Los Angeles), Gran Teatro La Fenice (Venice).

He has recorded for ARCHIV (Deutsche Grammophon), Arts, ORF, Chandos, Brilliant, Naxos and Sony Classical. With this latter label he played first cello and soloist with the Venice Baroque Orchestra, as well as performing in various chamber ensembles, including in Trio with G. Carmignola and L. Kirtzof and in sonatas with A. Bylsma.

His concerts as a soloist have been broadcast by WDR, ORF, SWR2 and MDR (concerto for violin and cello by A. Vivaldi with G. Carmignola), as well as by ABC, NPR, BBC3, RDP and Japanese television while touring in Japan in September 2005.

The ensembles with which he has played lead parts include Sonatori della Gioiosa Marca, Orchestra Barocca del Friuli Venezia Giulia "G.B. Tiepolo", I Barocchisti, Oman Consort, Arte dell'Arco, Gambe di Legno Consort, i Virtuosi delle Muse, Opera Stravagante, Ensemble Zefiro. In 2006 he was guest cello soloist with the Gran Canaria Philharmonic Orchestra.

In 2007 he taught at the Ludwigsburger Akademien summer courses, and played as soloist with the orchestra in the Salzburg Festspiele at the Musikverein Grosser Saal in Vienna, the Tonhalle in Zurich, the Victoria Hall in Geneva, the Barbican in London, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris.

In November-December 2008, he took part in a chamber music tour with cellist Mario Brunello with concerts in Florence, Milan, Turin and Rome in Italy, and then in Japan.

In recent years Galligioni has also focused on contemporary music on period instruments, playing works by composers such as Philip Glass, Giovanni Sollima, G. Bersanetti, J. Tavener. In 2011 he was the soloist in the Vivaldi Concerto RV531 with cellist Gautier Capuchon.

His recording of the complete cello concertos by Vivaldi was recently released in a 4 CD set by Brilliant Classics, who also released his recording of Vivaldi's six printed sonatas, and a 5 CD set of Salvatore Lanzetti's printed sonatas.

Galligioni plays a cello made by Paolo Antonio Testore in 1740 and a viola da gamba dating back to the early 1700s.

He has taught cello at the Conservatoires of Lecce, Reggio Calabria, Genoa and Adria, and currently teaches the same instrument at the A. Steffani Conservatoire in Castelfranco Veneto (TV), and the viola da gamba at the J. Tomadini Conservatoire in Udine.



No certain portrait of Dall'Abaco has come down to us, but there is a caricature by Anton Maria Zanetti with a written caption describing it as “the famous Abaco”. This gave my friend, the artist Mario Folena, an idea for a portrait of a far more modest modern cellist (on the cover). The outcome serves to underline the constant link and correspondence between different generations, in the hope that music may act as a primary means for “harmonious reconciliation” of past, present and future.

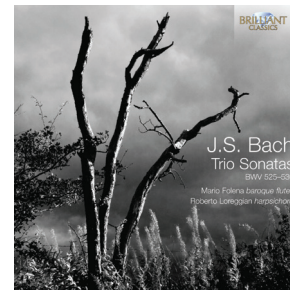
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