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 Chapter 12

Performing Musical Theater in the Bodas de Camacho
 in Don Quixote

CHAD M. GASTA

he careful and frequent integration of musical performance in Don Quixote is essential to Cervantes's literary strategy. The abundance of musical references and their heterogeneity suggests that Cervantes's musical knowledge was extensive, and far surpassed that of other authors of the time. In Don Quixote, music is prominent in 51 of 126 chapters, and thirty-five different musical instruments are mentioned in 125 different combinations (Leal Pinar 7176). Several characters sing or play instruments regularly, and entire episodes either depend on music, or it is operative in the background. Elsewhere, I documented how musical pieces appearing in the novel are nearly always lyrical poems, sometimes sung and accompanied by music, other times recited and performed from memory, and occasionally just mentioned in passing. I The origins for most of these pieces can be traced to well-known songbook collections such as the Cancionero de Palacio or the Romancero general, while some poems are Cervantes's inventions.² Lyrical poems may necessarily appear in the text as literary objects, but the context for their appearance indicates that they are meant to be performed aloud by the reader for an eager group of listeners. In an era of high illiteracy, many people became familiar with the knight and his squire only by gathering to listen to the story being read aloud. The communal act of listening to a story required authors like Cervantes to carefully integrate performance cues into

his narrative to assist the reader. As a result, the novel is a wonderful example of oral performativity, and the vast array of

See "Señora, donde música no puede haber cosa mala: Music, Poetry and Orality In Don Quijote" and "Writing to Heard: Performing Music In Don Quixote." Nothing in the historical records confirms that Cervantes was a trained Singer or Instrumentalist although Manano Soriano Fuertes states that Cervantes was a guitarist (153) and

Haywood has written that while a captive in Algiers, Cervantes became a "fairly accomplished performer of the guitar" and sang to pass the time (144—5). It is likely that Cervantes's education with the Jesuits would have included musical instruction since the religious order was well known for requiring song and performance in daily lessons. Cervantes's teacher Córdoba was the Jesuit Chapel Master. Alonso de Vieras, who trained the choir in polyphony. Regardless, the author's knowledge of early modern musical forms was extensive.

In Part I, Cardenio Sings an *ovllejo*, a complicated verse form invented by Cervantes and intermittently cultivated by poets. See "Wnng to be Heard' Performing Music In Don Quixote."

musical-poetic pieces concurrently reflects how Cervantes was writing at a time when society was transforming from an oral to a written culture.

I would like to add one additional musical genre to Cervantes's repertoire: a form of musical theater following the Italian *intermedi* tradition that had emerged in the late sixteenth century and that ultimately led to opera in music—later called opera. Specifically, the Camacho Wedding episode from *Don Quixote* includes a succession of festivals and feasts as well as masques, poetry readings, and, in particular, three musical-theatrical performances.³ Together, the presentations are strikingly similar to those commemorating the different Medici wedding festivities that took place between 1589 and 1600 in Florence. In fact, the 1600 wedding featured the world's first operas whose characteristics are similar to the aforementioned "*danza de artificio*" in *Don Quixote*—although at this time we are still referring to such productions as musical theater. As I note below, accounts of the Medici celebrations circulated across Europe in a variety of written and visual forms, and Cervantes may have become aware of the lavishness of the events from such reports, which then partially served as the basis for the fully-sung "*danza de artificio*" in the Camacho episode.

Cervantes did not have first-hand experience with early opera even though his life adventures put him in physical proximity to the principal Italian cities where musical theater was highly developed. Cervantes journeyed to Italy in 1569 as a *vale*^t to the papal legate Giulio Acquaviva (1546-1574), whose entourage traveled overland, from Madrid to Barcelona, then to Provence, followed by Turin, Milan, Florence, and finally to Rome where the retinue was housed in the Vatican.^{an} Sometime in 1570 or 1571, Cervantes became a soldier and was stationed in Sicily until he departed as a member of the Christian naval forces sent to confront the Ottoman Empire's fleet at the Battle of Lepanto on October 7, 1571. After participating in several other naval battles, the author stayed the winter of 1572 in Sicily, Sardinia, and

Naples. Little is known about his actions from 1572 to 1575, but it is assumed that he was stationed in Italy until he departed Naples for Spain in 1572—at which point he and his brother were captured by Berber corsairs and taken prisoner to Algiers. We can surmise, then, that Cervantes spent around six years in Italy, but there is little in the historical record that describes what he did there. It is widely assumed that the author became familiar with the Italian language,⁴ literature'

Begoña Lolo maintains that the Camacho episode is the most used in Italian operas of any episode from the novel (21) and Adela Presas writes that the Camacho Wedding scene was one of the four episodes from the novel included in the first Italian operas based on Don Quixote: "Los capítulos de las bodas de Camacho, por su propio contenido han sido frecuentemente recreados en ballets, pero también en intermezzi y óperas, tanto como argumento umco (...) como entre otros (...) y aparecen muy frecuentemente entre las obras de compositores italianos" (627). More than anything, the Camacho scenes have been used precisely because of the combination of singing, playing, and performance.

⁴ Maria Caterina Ruta reminds us that Cervantes himself notes his knowledge of Italian when he stated "Yo—oo don Quijote—sé algún tanto del toscano y me precio de cantar algunas estancias del Ariosto" in a reference to Ariosto's

history, and culture, and he surely witnessed the Renaissance firsthand, particularly by spending time in Florence. Indeed, Cervantes became acquainted with the classical foundations on which much of his education was based as well as the Renaissance aesthetic that would both cement his appreciation for the classics and provide the substance for his own literary career. As many critics have shown, Italy is omnipresent in Cervantes's fiction.⁵ Not only do several of his works take place in Italian locales or feature Italianisms, but Cervantes also unsuccessfully attempted a return to the country twice, first by seeking to accompany his friend Ascanio Colonna (1560-1608) who went to Rome as a Cardinal, and second by dedicating ^{most of his} ^{Armas 51.6} works to the Count of Lemos in the hopes of being invited to Naples (De

As Frederick A. De Armas notes, there is a constant presence of Italy and Italian culture in Cervantes's literary works such that "Cervantes spent his life 'desiring Italy'—and that desire is often represented in his literary texts through descriptions of the art, architecture, and culture of the Italian peninsula" (4). De Armas ^{show} Cervantes captures the visualization of aesthetics in textual form as ekphrasis, 'the description in words of a work of art' (9). I would argue that Cervantes's similar attraction to music led him to faithfully represent lyrical and instrumental work in his narrative. Like ekphrasis in art and architecture, musical performance did not escape the author's interest.

Indeed, references in *Don Quixote* suggest that Cervantes must have known something of adverbs in music that later

contributed to early opera.

As we know it today, opera's primary development took place during the transition from the Renaissance to the Baroque in Italy. The genre began around 1594 in Florence, when a group of Renaissance humanists, the famed "Camerata" sought to imitate the classical academies of Greece and met regularly to discuss topics related to the arts. The group of intellectuals, comprised of poets, and singers, became intrigued with the performative nature of drama and sought to discern the extent to which it might be completely • The Camerata fashioned dramatic works inspired by classical theater but

as 1516. According to Catena Ruta, Cervantes may have read Ariosto's work in

Italian (12)

in Cervantes's literary works (Barcelona, Genova, Florence, Milan, Rome): Persiles y Sigismunda, El cuñado impertinente. Frederick De Armas reminds us that Bologna is the setting for *La while* it is also a constant presence in works such as *La Española inglesa*, *El licenciado* to whom at the time of the work's publication, the Abbot of Santa

but after his return to the Vatican. It was this trip that Cervantes hoped to join.

which featured monodic—or single voice—vocal parts in recitative matched to instrumental music. Recitative is a combined singing and dialogue method used to heighten tension or emotion, which would mostly go away after the eighteenth century. The single-voice philosophy ran counter to the prevailing tendency to sing polyphonic music, which was the norm across Europe. The Camerata composed and performed several musical experiments that intertwined a single voice with music, staging, and costumery—all completely set to music—with plotlines of popular mythological stories. The first, *Dafne*, was performed in 1598, though no extant text exists. The second, *Euridice*, was staged on October 6, 1600 as part of the celebrations marking the Florentine wedding between Marie de' Medici and France's King Henry IV.

Among those familiar with the 1600 wedding and its musical adverbs was Claudio Monteverdi, considered to be one of Europe's foremost singers and composers of madrigals and religious polyphony. Struck by the new musical-theatrical style, Monteverdi staged his opera, *L'afavola d'Orfeo*, in 1607 during the annual Carnival celebrations in Mantua. During the next several years, Monteverdi and others would begin to define the genre by moving completely away from polyphony to monodic recitative. Writers and actors had long complained that polyphony was not an

especially effective means for theater since a central dramatic action represented by so many vocal combinations was confusing and lacked force. The new monadic recitative style (often called "song speak"), however, was never popular, either, and it was eventually displaced by the full-blown, single-voice song that reached its fruition with the aria.

All lyrical poems in *Don Quixote*—coplas, romances, sonetos, etc.—are in the new and fashionable monadic style at precisely the same time that society was moving away from polyphony. It seems that Cervantes may have had knowledge of these musical transformations. As Fernando Gutiérrez de Arroyo notes, all music in *Don Quixote* is performed in a single voice, and no clear musical performances in "polyphony" exist at all in the novel despite its obvious popularity at that time⁽³⁵⁾. For Miguel Querol Galvadà this lack of polyphony suggests Cervantes believed the monadic song to be of higher distinction (32). Several times in *Don Quixote* Cervantes advocates for single voices over polyphony (also called "counterpoint") as a way to encourage clarity and force in singing performances. For example, in Maese Pedro's Puppet Show, *Don Quixote* interrupts the boy-narrator of the story of Don Gaiferos and Doña Melisendra imploring him to not stray from the main story because to do so causes confusion: "sigue tu canto llano, y no te metas en contrapuntos" (391). This is followed two chapters later when a town mayor beats Sancho for braying like an ass, believing that the squire is mocking him. Scolding his squire, *Don Quixote* says: "A música de rebuznos ¿qué contrapunto se había de llevar sino de varapalos?" (395). There is also an example in *Los baños de Argel*

where there is blatant criticism of "música concertada / la que llaman contrapunto" (2062-3). These examples suggest that Cervantes was likely familiar with the evolution away from polyphony toward monody that is also evident in the dozens of examples of fully sung poems in the text, all performed by one singer. As Querol has established, unlike other authors, Cervantes had an uncanny familiarity with the genres and techniques relevant to the general principles of musical theory during the period (43).

Similar emphases on monadic singing can be found in the three theatrical performances within the Camacho wedding scenes. After *Don Quixote* and Sancho leave the home of Don Diego de Miranda, they cross paths with two students and two workers who invite the knight and his squire to a wedding celebration that promises to be "una de las mejores bodas y más ricas que hasta el día de hoy se han celebrado en la Mancha" (371). The men explain that Camacho is to wed Quiteria:

"él, el más rico de toda esta tierra; y ella, la más hermosa que han visto los hombres" (374). Through a form of foreshadowing, the group's conversation

for the rest of the day and beginning of the next clearly highlights music and performance, thus Providing context for the wedding celebration well before their actual arrival:

el tal Camacho es liberal y hásele antojado de enramar y cubrir todo el prado por arriba (...) Tiene asimesmo maheridas danzas. así de espadas como de cascabel menudo (...) de zapateadores no digo nada, que es un juicio los que tiene muñidos; pero ninguno de las cosas referidas ni otras muchas que he dejado de referir ha de hacer más memorables estas bodas. sino las que imagino que hará en ellas el despechado Basilio. (371)

Immediately, Basilio, the rejected lover, is made known to the reader as one participant in a triangular love affair that provides the impetus for the conflict that follows, They describe Basilio as a notable singer and a fine musician who "canta

y toca una guitarra, que la hace hablar" (371), thus prompting to recognize the prominence of music even before the episode begins. Often uses a similar technique in the novel whereby he attributes a critical ability to a character before he or she is introduced to the reader.

the group nears the wedding, the priority of music, song, and dance more obvious. The narrator reports that the group is greeted from a distance hvaryety of musical pieces and people dancing:

oyeron asimismo confusos y suaves sonidos de diversos instrumentos, como de flautas. tamborinos, salterios. albogues. panderos y sontljas: ..) Los músicos eran IOS regocijadores de la boda. que en diversas cuadrillas por aquel agradable sitio andaban. unos bailando y otros cantando, y otros tocando la diversidad de los referidos instrumentos. En efecto. no parecia sino que por todo aquel prado andaba corriendo la alegría y saltando el contento. (373)

In addition to feasts that could sustain "un ejército" (374), Camacho's party also features masques and poetry readings.' Sparing no expense for celebrating the wedding, a stage also has even been constructed: "Otros muchos andaban ocupados en levantar andamios de donde con comodidad pudiesen ver otro día las representaciones y las danzas que se habían de hacer en aquel lugar" (273). The knight opts not to join the wedding festivities that evening, instead preserving the chivalric tradition of sleeping in the open air. When they arrive the next day, they first witness three back-to-back meta-

theatrical performances. The first is "una danza de espadas," where 12 mounted swordsmen perform a choreographed battle scene. This is followed by "una clanza de doncellas" which boasts finely dressed blond-haired maidens who perform multiple dance numbers. The third performance, "una danza de artificio y de las que llaman habladas," is emblematic of the Italian courtly celebrations that emphasized music, dance, and performance. It is also the presentation that mostly resembles the evolution to early forms of opera. Here, eight nymphs enter the stage to tell the allegorical story of how money is more powerful than love. Each nymph carries a sign identifying their allegory: Cupido leads Poesía, Discreción, Buen Linaje, and Valentía; Liberalidad, Dcídiva, Tesoro, and Posesión Pacífica accompany Interés. The two groups are separated by a meadow that runs parallel to a wooden "Castillo del buen rectato" where a damsel is held captive. One by one, the characters sing a song while performing a choreographed dance sequence: "Deste modo salieron y se retiraron todas las dos figuras de las d^{os} escuadras, y cada uno hizo sus mudanzas y dijo sus versos, algunos elegantes y algunos ridículos" (375). Each character's appearance ends by firing an arrow at the castle in an effort at freeing the imprisoned maiden: "Acabó la copla, disparó una flecha por 10 alto del Castillo y retiróse a su puesto" (375). When their attempts are unsuccessful, Interés simply flings a bag of money at the castle wall and the walls crumble: "Finalmente, después de haber bailado un buen espacio, el Interés sacó un bolsón... que parecía estar lleno de dineros, y, arrojándole al castillo, con el golpe se desencajaron las tablas y se cayeron, dejando a la doncella descubierta y sin defensa alguna" (375). The seemingly obvious message is that money, or intereses' wins over love.⁸

7 Several towns in Spain today celebrate the Bodas de Camacho and, as Carolyn Nadeau has observed, the culinary scenes have transcended the novel: "The banquet preparations of this episode... have inspired more cooks than any other episode or even any other literary work of the Spanish Golden Age. Dozens of restaurants in various provinces in Spain boast their culinary recreations of this wedding feast. In fact, some cooks claim the copyright..." (349-50) There is yet another reason why so many towns re-enact the wedding festivities: as Rodríguez Marín has shown, there was a wealthy landowner named Camacho el rico who lived in Jerez in 1507 (qtd. in Sinnegen 166 and 1117) The fact that this episode is drawn from Spain's most important literary work and Camacho is possibly based on a real

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person It is generally from the believed area would that seem the metatheatrical sufficient to celebrate. "danza de artificio" complements the wedding in which Camacho can marry Quiteria because wealth is more important than love. As Sinnegen shows, however, the fact that Camacho and Quiteria's wedding is upended by Basilio's trick demonstrates that the message is the opposite.

Camacho's nuptials are meant to emblemize a rural peasant wedding, albeit one that is more lavish and grander than others. However, the unrestrained spending likewise reinforces the impression that this is a significant marital celebration on par with those of the aristocracy. Indeed, this is exactly Don Quixote's contention when he wonders if some prince is to be wed instead of a rural landowner: "Preguntóle don Quijote si eran de algún príncipe, que así las ponderaba" (370). The knight's question (and the attention to extravagance foregrounding the entire episode) would naturally evoke for Cervantes's original readers the most legendary real-life corollary of his lifetime: the various Medici nuptials of the decades leading into the seventeenth century. In Florence and other wealthy Italian city-states, the most well-known Medici celebrations were the 1539 wedding between Duke Cosimo de' Medici and Eleonora Álvarez de Toledo, the 1589 union of Grand Duke Ferdinando

I de' Medici and Christina of Lorraine, and the aforementioned 1600 wedding of Marie de' Medici and France's King Henry IV. The first consolidated the important Habsburg-Medici union, the second signaled the Medicis' slow turn toward France, while the third marked an outright move toward France.

All were splendid affairs, but it was perhaps the 1589 and 1600 marriages that best highlight the weight of aesthetics as political tools, and underscores the evolution of Florentine music, song, and dance. The 1589 marriage required an entire year of preparations and was celebrated for nearly all of April and May. It featured the triumphal entry of the bride into the city, the formal ceremony at the cathedral, and many banquets. There also were jousts, tournaments, and several Processions. Artists, musicians, architects, and engineers collaborated on a variety of projects featuring ingenious technical designs. The revelries featured multiple intermedii, which are similar to the *danzas* featured in the Camacho wedding scenes. The intermedii were designed and produced by Giovanni de' Bardi, one of the Florentine Camerata, whose emphasis on music and political allegory served to highlight the importance of musical theater and signify the prestige of the new marital union (Carter 20-1). Tim Carter calls them "the greatest set of Florentine intermedii" (20-28). Additionally, attendees were presented with pastoral plays, masques, ballets, the well-known *commedia dell'arte*, as well as a staged naval battle in the flooded courtyard of the Pitti Palace. As James M. Saslow notes, the entire affair advanced theatrical innovation like no other:

"In theatrical and artistic terms, these presentations united humanist antiquarianism and far-reaching musical dramatic innovation with important advances in architecture, mechanics, and stage

unions between states had long been a preferred form of diplomacy, and the Medici-Habsburg mtcularly important See Nicholas Scott Baker's study of the representation of Medici-Habsburg 1539 wedding. Edward L Goldberg writes about the Medicis' dependence on Spain and both in aesthetics to both power and prestige. Tim Carter's study of Monteverdi includes a lustoncal events while centering on the Importance of music and drama In these celebrations.

design to lay the foundations for theater and opera as we know them today" (2). In short, the 1589 wedding was a touchstone for maximum aesthetic ingenuity while simultaneously highlighting the symbolic and theatrical nature of the court. The events were firmly implanted in the European consciousness through a series of 18 festival books and sets of prints that were circulated through the Medici diplomatic channels across the continent. The books recorded in more or less chronological order the various grand entries into the city, pageants, jousts, and games. Of particular interest is the various illustrations of the intermedii as well as depictions of

1 no the less dramas, lavish. songs, It took dances, place and over musical several pieces days performed. (rather than The months) 1600 wedding and included was

parades, processions, games, feasts—all of which was commemorated in paintings by Jacopo da Empoli. In retrospect, the highlight of the multiple theatrical and musical performances was the world's first opera, *Euridice*.

As a composite model for dramatic-musical performance, this Italian court festival tradition and the Medici weddings in particular left an indelible impact on European consciousness, including the Camacho Wedding celebrations in *Don Quixote*. In the Camacho episode, the new singing style, dance numbers, musical accompaniment, backdrops, stage mechanizations, and actresses donning elaborate costumery suggest that the *Danza de artificio* is no ordinary theatrical work. In the play, the narrator reminds us that everything was performed with music: "y todas las demostraciones que hacían eran al son de los tamborinos, bailando y danzando concertadamente" (375). Each character performs a dance sequence, then the musical accompaniment stops so that the character can sing her verses without interruption. Interestingly, each song is performed in a single voice even though polyphonic singing would have been a logical choice given that there are groups of nymphs on the stage at all times. Moreover, the establishment of a single voice recalls a similar evolution found in the early operas of Florence. The narrator here pays more attention to documenting all details in the theatrical performances than in many other seemingly more important episodes. It is intriguing that all the typical elements of early opera are intertwined at

one time on a single stage. As Jorge Checa notes, the combination of music, song, dramatization, and staging is meant ^{to} overwhelm the senses (477) just as opera was to do. It is probably more precise, however, to state that while the danza hablada features all of the intricacies of the Medici operas from the previous decade (particularly its reliance on a single voice, dances accompanied by music, and significant staging and costumery), the Camacho scenes probably evolved from the Italian intermedi tradition. Moreover, given its dependence on the traditional copla verse form, the dramatic piece was something along the lines of a pre-cursor to opera.

The elaborateness of Camacho's celebrations and the centrality of theatrical events suggests that we are at a crossroads in musical history. The celebration

represent what Francisco Vivar has called "la sociedad del espectáculo" and Jorge Checa names "teatralidad vigente" (473), indicating something more important than a simple rural wedding. As such, the rustic setting invites us to consider the wedding as a parody of the courtly traditions of the time. Indeed, such extravagant festivities given by a wealthy farmer with no particular social status and attended by the entire village of peasants are strikingly similar in practice to the many royal celebrations set up for the elite. For Agustín Redondo everything about this episode is parodic: from Camacho's name to Basilio's industrious joke to the rewriting of Ovid's Pyramus and Thisbe myth. Redondo also holds that the festivities are a clear parody of multiple rural traditions widely known during Cervantes's time. Cecilia Nocilli writes that the intricacies of the festivities and the dance sequences are a clear reference (parody?) to the 14th-century celebrations that marked the entry of the king into a city. According to Nocilli, the "danza de doncellas" in particular probably recalled a similar allegorical dance number from a wedding banquet in Bologna in 1487 (598-601).¹⁰ Similarly, Anthony Close believes the festivities allude to the

Thence into Toledo of King Philip II and Queen Isabel in 1561, which included "danzas y mascaradas alegóricas similares a las descritas en el episodio cervantino, algunas representadas por ciudadanos y otras por aldeanos (178 n. 187). On the other hand, Alfred Rodríguez and Carol Usner argue that a May 22 rural wedding festival central Spain in honor of St. Quiteria provides both the name of the female Protagonist in the novel and a reference to the type of celebrations in honor of the saint (253). Don

Quixote himself seems to allude to the ironic imitation of the entire affair when he states that "debe de tener más de satírico que de vísperas" (375). Thus, the basis for the Camacho episode can be traced to actual historical events, but this in no way diminishes their mimetic and parodic intent. If the wedding is a parody of

COUfflycelebrations, it is just as possible that they allude to the Medici celebrations as to any Others, and their musical features may likewise imitate the intermedis and opera offspring. Given the widespread notoriety of the Medici nuptials,

could easily have been aware of the details.

Opera would not even begin in Spain until Lope de Vega's 1627 *La selva sin ammaone*-act opera performed by members of the Florentine delegation in Madrid.

"allegoncal" wedding celebrations of February 28. 1487 in Bologna where Annibale Bentivoglio, Il Bentwoglio. married Lucrezia d'Este, the daughter of Ercole I d'Este. The attendees were a six-year-old girl and an adult male. According to Nocilli, the dance introduced úR1t "Castidad" and "Amor" and was likely the source for this portion or the Camacho Wedding scene, in fashion:

La danza cervantina de las doncellas tiene muchos puntos en común con la cuatrocentista boloñesa, pero al mismo tiempo Cervantes se aleja de ella al ofrecer la parodia de un anacrónico ceremonial festivo de corte La de las Interpretes en contraposición con la madurez de los hombres expertos. la admiración del público por su precoz habilidad y la función introductoria a la festiva danza alegonca por el episodio de Las bodas de Camacho, son características comunes con las fiestas convulsas de temprana neoplatónica como la de Bolonia. (601)

The next most important musical-theatrical works include Calderón's zarzuelas from the 1650s, followed by a pair of operas in 1659 (*Celos aun del aire matan*) and 1660 (*La púrpura de la rosa*). None of these enjoyed the popularity or success of parallel achievements in the many city-states of Italy. Instead, in Spain, short songs, catchy tunes, and typical vocal pieces from the period were widely included in popular plays, or they make their appearance in prose fiction such as Cervantes's various works. However, references like those in Camacho's wedding help us understand that completely-sung theater was just around the corner, and I would not be surprised if Cervantes had a hand in advancing it.

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