WALTER CHINAGLIA & GUILLERMO PEREZ

Organetto di LEONARDO

Do you know that the modern accordeon has got a precursor? Can you imagine a continuo wind organetto? This is exactly what Leonardo da Vinci projected in XVI century! This is exactly what Walter Chinaglia&Guillermo Pérez reconstructed and play today!

July 2012


MADRID CODICES
Folio 75r & Organetto

The Madrid Codices I–II are two manuscripts by Leonardo da Vinci which were discovered in Madrid in 1964.

Topics discussed include mechanics statics, geometry and construction of fortifications; they are among the major engineering treatises of their time.


As often, Leonardo introduced some techinical novelties to previous machines and to musical instruments.

In the Folio 75r, he sketched an organetto which probably could be considered revolutionary respect to the medieval organetti.

MADRID CODICES II, fl 75r

"Organetto di Leonardo"
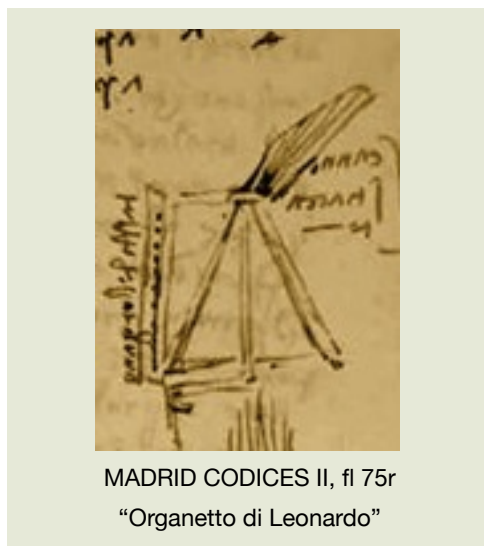
To our knoledge, for the first time, he projected a "double action bellows" to garantee the so called "ventum continuum"; he introduced an upright keyboard (in this, we easy recognize the modern accordeon); he wrote *"canne di legno o di carta"* (paper o woodden pipes), as typical in Renaissance small camera or chapel organs.

The Authors of this work gave a detailed interpretaion of the Leonardo's sketch. This takes in account all the elements mentioned above; morever a plausible justification of the strange pipes disposition was found. This suggested an uncommon solution which help to fit many pipes in small space.
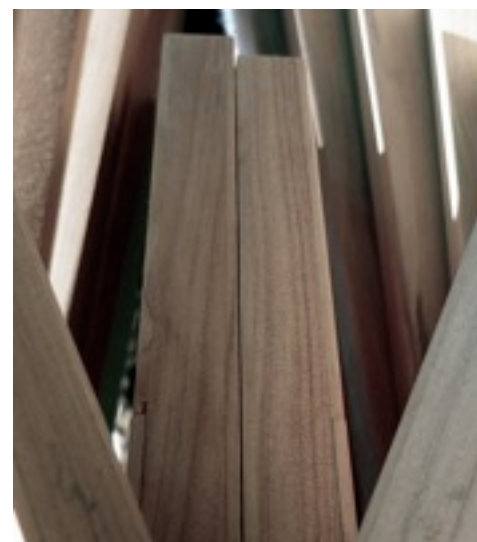
Finally, after an accurated voicing for a reach "principale" sound, our organetto di Leonardo can be played to discover a new musical world: the XVI c. music!

Background

Eight years long research around the medieval organetto and its music.

For over eight years, an intense cooperation between Walter Chinaglia and Guillermo Pères give rise to a top quality medieval organetti.

Our works passed trought the following points:

- inconography analysis

- repertory investigation

- organetto design and building tecniques

- playing tecquiques and critical analisys

To a first approach, what the iconography shows appeared quite far to us respect what one is usual to imagin following a modern view...

Day by day, we introduced ourself to a new perspective which it could be summirize as follow.

We understood immediately that the sound of a small portative organ must be more flexible as possible. There are no reasons, in fact, to develop organs with ON/OFF sound only. Moreover, the player must be in a strickt "contact" with the sound. He has to control the articulation, the attack, the decay and sound power; very important is also the instrument breath (music breath) .

To this aim, we optimized the organetto dimensions (with properly pipe diameters and compass), we opted for the stud keys (botton) action (instead of any keyboard) and we introduced a top quality bellow's response.

We also considered a wide spectrum of music and ensemble contexts to develop a optimal sound both for soloistic use than for ensemble purposes.

At the same time, new playing tecnique was developed.

The "competition" between the new playing tecnique and the organetto's response, drive us to the next steps of the research.

Finally, we point out that, as musical requests help us to create proper instruments, proper instruments help to discover and urderstand hidden details in music!

The photos which show instrument details are taken on our reconstruction of organetto di Leonardo.

Walter Chinaglia

Organa is Walter Chinaglia's workshop. Walter Chinaglia projects, designs, builds, restores pipe organs, harpsichords, claviorgans with traditional materials and techniques.

His instruments have found warm welcome both for their sound and for technical qualities.

Fundamental building principles are constant research and advices of musicians. Each instrument comes from an accurate project down to the last details: the result are very compact, solid organs, with fine mechanical action, easy to transport and to tune up.

Walter Chinaglia projects and makes a complete range of portative organs which enables to play medieval music.

Many ensemble own portative organs made by Walter Chinaglia such as:

Tasto Solo (Guillermo Perez) (FR), Capella Bambergensis (D), Camerata Aboensis(FIN), Uli Kontu-Korhonen (FIN), Viaartis (DK), In Illo Tempore (CH), Laterna Magica (RU), ArtePsalentes (ES), Artefactum (ES), La Reverdie (IT), Ave Grazia Plena (IT), La Fontegara (IT), Esaensemble (IT), Ensemble400.

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Guillermo Pérez

Born in Barcelona (Spain), Guillermo Pérez is an internationally recognized *organetto* player developing an unusual career in the field of medieval music. His interest in the instrumental repertoires of the 14th and 15th centuries led to the foundation and artistic direction of Tasto Solo, ensemble dedicated to the late medieval keyboards. Its first CD "Meyster ob allen Meystern - Conrad Paumann and the 15th century German keyboard school" (Passacaille, 2009) received a large amount of international awards and has been described as "a recording that will be undoubtedly a reference in the field of medieval music for many years" (CD Compact magazine).

Since 2003, he has been also working regularly with prestigious specialized ensembles including Mala Punica (IT), Micrologus (IT), The Unicorn Ensemble (AU) and Diabolus in Musica (FR), recording CDs for Naïve, Ricercar, Zig-Zag Territoires, Passacaille, Aeon and Pneuma labels as well as for radio broadcasting and television.

As a fellow of the Güell Foundation, he follows the International Master programme "Ars Nova in Europe", researching and preparing new articles about the Robertsbridge, Buxheimer and Lochamer manuscripts. He also lectures and offers workshops at main institutions including the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, the Fondazione Cini and the Conservatoire d'Orsay. Since 2010 he is teaching organetto at the CIRMA in Moissac, France.

www.tastosolo.com
www.organum-cirma.fr