

Musical representation in the domestic context in early modern Barcelona

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RESUM / RESUMEN / ABSTRACT

Aquest article té com a objectiu oferir una mostra de la representació musical que es pot trobar al context domèstic a Barcelona a l'època moderna a través dels tapissos i altres elements decoratius que s'han trobat en inventaris, així com la consideració dels contextos socials i artístics en què es trobaren aquestes obres. El gran problema que hom troba és el tipus de descripcions breus dels notaris ja que, molt probablement, la iconografia musical que apareix a les obres d'art amb temes devocionals i bíblics haurien estat més comuna del que suggereix la documentació. Ocorre el mateix amb les escenes mitològiques, atès que sants, déus i herois són normalment representats amb elements musicals, tot i que en poques ocasions s'esmenta específicament. Altres representacions mostren també dones tocant o escoltant un instrument musical. En aquest article ens enfrontem a les limitacions dels inventaris com a instrument d'investigació, sobretot per l'escàs nombre d'exemples i és per això que probablement els inventaris provoquen més preguntes de les que responen. No obstant això, amb exemples específics es dona una idea més clara del *imaginarium* musical de l'època i la classe social a qui pertanyien els propietaris d'aquestes obres.

Este artículo tiene como objetivo ofrecer una muestra de la representación musical que se puede encontrar en el contexto doméstico en Barcelona en la época moderna a través de los tapices y otros elementos decorativos que se han encontrado en inventarios, así como la consideración de los contextos sociales y artísticos en que se encontraron estas obras. El gran problema que se encuentra es el tipo de descripciones breves de los notarios ya que, muy probablemente, la iconografía musical que aparece en las obras de arte con temas devocionales y bíblicos habrían sido más común de lo que sugiere la documentación. Ocorre lo mismo con las escenas mitológicas, dado que santos, dioses y héroes son normalmente representados con elementos musicales, aunque en pocas ocasiones se menciona específicamente. Otras representaciones muestran también mujeres tocando o escuchando un instrumento musical. En este artículo nos enfrentamos a las limitaciones de los inventarios como instrumento de investigación, sobre todo por el escaso número de ejemplos y es por eso por lo que probablemente los inventarios provocan más preguntas de las que responden. Sin embargo, con ejemplos específicos se da una idea más clara del *imaginarium* musical de la época y la clase social a la que pertenecían los propietarios de estas obras.

This article aims to offer a fan with the musical representation that can be found in the domestic context in Barcelona in the Modern Age through tapestries and other decorative elements that have been found in inventories, as well as the consideration of social contexts and artistic in which these works were found, as far as possible. The big problem we face is the brief descriptions of the notaries, since most probably the musical iconography that appears in works of art with devotional and biblical themes would have been more common than suggested. The same happens with the mythological scenes, since saints, gods and heroes are usually represented with musical elements, although in few occasions it is mentioned specifically. Other performances also show women playing or listening to a musical instrument. In this article we face the limitations of inventories as a tool for research, especially for the limited number of examples and that is why probably the inventories cause more questions than they respond. However, with specific examples, there is a clearer idea of the musical *imaginarium* of the time and the social class to which the owners of these works belonged.

PARAULES CLAU / PALABRAS CLAVE / KEY WORDS

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The musical iconography of Catalan-Aragonese paintings that survive from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries has been studied in depth by Jordi Ballester, who has also compiled a very useful inventory according to different typologies of musical representation (Ballester, 1993; Ballester, 1995a; Ballester, 2004; and Ballester, 2005a). Based on analysis of over three hundred paintings, Ballester argues that during the sixteenth century artistic production in Catalunya followed the patterns and discourses already well established in the region (Ballester, 2004: 55; Ballester, 2005b: 1124), and notes the essentially devotional nature of paintings with musical elements (Ballester, 1993: 3263). However, Ballester argues convincingly that, even allowing for artistic convention and functional purpose, these paintings can reveal much about the society that commissioned them, the role that music and musicians played in everyday life, and the concept of music in the mentality of the period (Ballester, 2004: 55).

Ballester's detailed analysis of surviving art works can be supplemented by a consideration of the different elements in the musical discourse found in paintings that have been lost, but which are occasionally detailed in post-mortem inventories from the period. In this respect, the research undertaken by the art historian Marià Carbonell i Buades on collections of art found in the homes of Barcelona citizens in the early modern period is particularly useful, providing invaluable information on the subject-matter of paintings and tapestries owned by members of various sectors of society (Carbonell i Buades, 1995). His research shows that while devotional paintings, whether of the Virgin Mary, Christ, specific saints or Biblical scenes, still tended to dominate the *objets d'art* to be found in the domestic spaces of Barcelona, other major themes, including Classical mythology, contemporary portraits and places, as well as various aspects of daily life, were also commissioned, acquired and owned by its citizens. The limitations of post-mortem inventories as a research tool for ownership of paintings and tapestries, particularly from the viewpoint of any kind of statistical analysis, have been frequently rehearsed by scholars.¹ In the vast majority of cases, the subject-matter of the painting or tapestry is described only in vague, generic terms: in particular, the inventorying of tapestries rarely goes beyond such general terms as 'foliage' ('brots') or 'figures' ('personatges'). Similarly, descriptions of paintings are generally limited to a particular typology: for example, 'The Descent from the Cross' ('lo dauallament de la Creu'), 'The Virgin and Child' ('la verge Maria amb el fill al bras') or 'Saint Christopher' ('sanct cristophol'), in devotional paintings, and 'the story of Hercules' ('la ystoria de ercoles') or 'the five senses' ('els cinc sentits') for those works on non-devotional themes.

Within these generic descriptions, and particularly in the case of devotional paintings since a good number of such works survive, the conventions pertaining to these types of paintings, as categorized by Ballester, allow certain assumptions to be made about the likely inclusion of musical elements, even where these are not specified in the inventory. This is the case, for example, with artworks that include musical iconography of an emblematic nature: King David is generally represented with his harp, St Cecilia with an organ; Herod's banquet is signalled by an ensemble of minstrels, while the Coronation of the Virgin often sees her surrounded by angel-musicians, and the Calvary of Christ is often symbolized sonically by a straight trumpet, the Nativity by a shepherd's bagpipe (Ballester, 1995b, 1997, 2002, 2005b: 1124–25). As well be discussed below, certain scenes of Classical mythology were similarly represented by a specific musical iconography.

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¹ The situation as regards the history of the book is rather different; despite the limitations of post-mortem inventories, books are listed sufficiently often and in sufficient detail (with author and at least a short title), for statistical analysis to be a useful tool for the historian (see Peña 1996, 1997).

Thus, paintings described in post-mortem inventories as representing these subject matters very probably included such musical elements, even though they were not specified by the inventory-takers. Indeed, the level of detail included in the description of paintings and tapestries in post-mortem inventories clearly depended on a number of variables, among them the quality and value—and perhaps originality—of the painting, and the artistic knowledge—and perhaps personal interest—of the inventory-taker. While the level of expertise among the notaries responsible for the taking of post-mortem inventories must have varied considerably, they would have had considerable experience in dealing with artistic objects, and were very often—though not always—able to identify the visual subject-matter by typology: individual saints, for example, are generally identified in inventories, suggesting that the inventory-taker was familiar with the symbolism pertaining to each saint, although it is clear that at least in some instances painting would have been labelled.²

When all these factors are taken into consideration, together with the fact that large numbers of post-mortem inventories have not survived, it is not surprising that detailed references to musical elements in paintings and tapestries are rarely found. Indeed, the proportion is so small as to make any kind of statistical analysis meaningless, and potentially misleading, so that each case needs to be considered individually in its context. This rarity value is mitigated to some extent by the frequent appearance of stock devotional and mythological art works already mentioned meaning that the representation of musical instruments as symbols or emblematic devices would, in fact, have been encountered quite commonly in the domestic context. It is more difficult to gauge the significance this musical iconography would have held for their owners, either in terms of aesthetic appreciation or the extent to which the musical depiction related to their reality. Probably the recognition and reception of the iconographical aspect of musical discourse should not be underestimated, given that it was embedded in widespread popular devotions that occurred and recurred on a regular basis. As Kenneth Kreitner has shown for late-medieval Barcelona, every year its citizens would have witnessed live performances by ‘angel’ musicians (that is, musicians dressed as angels) during the Corpus Christi processions that wound their way through the streets of the city (Kreitner 1995, 2012). As Kreitner suggests, the types and combinations of instruments played on these annual occasions corresponded closely to those depicted in art of the same period.

Something of the importance or otherwise of the musical discourse represented in paintings and tapestries may be gleaned from the context of ownership and value. A global methodological approach implies knowledge of the owner, including his or her status in society and relative wealth, analysis of their possessions in general and their cultural artifacts in particular, notably other evidence for a particular interest in music, such as the presence of musical instruments or music books. The value of the object can sometimes be signalled in the inventory description or ascertained through the existence of the inventory made at auction, when the amount paid for it as a second-hand object is specified (Peña 1994-1995, 1996: 205-16). The degree to which the owner can be considered to have been a true collector of paintings is often difficult to ascertain, although the density of art works in particular domestic spaces—notably the study³—and a wide range of subject matter can be taken as indications of interest in or awareness of visual representations, whether as status symbols or out of genuine interest—or both.

In most instances, little more is known of the owner of musical paintings or tapestries than his or her

² On at least some occasions the widow and/or heir of the deceased accompanied the inventory-takers as they moved through the house and may have helped with identification.

³ On the importance of the study as a space for private thought, reading and other activities, see Peña, 1996: 231-35.

profession or social category, together with some information on his or her heirs, or the auctioneers involved in the sale of his or her possessions. Yet an approach that attempts to take into consideration the owner's identity and his or her possessions as a whole, as well as the domestic spaces in which such items were kept, can help to shed some light on musical discourses of the period and on the reality of musical experience in daily life (Knighton 2016).⁴ In addition, post-mortem and auction inventories highlight secular typologies that have not survived whose loss may result in a somewhat distorted view of artistic creation and consumption. An important example is the representation of women listening to and making music, whether singing or playing an instrument. Pilar Ramos has considered the lack of such representations from the period in Spain as indicative of a broader discourse that emerges from educational and social comportment treatises that sought to disassociate women and music on moral grounds (Ramos, 2015). The representation of women making music often indicated the somewhat dubious morality attributed to such gendered musical performance through the inclusion of symbols denoting that the woman performer was a courtesan (Newcomb 1987). That non-devotional paintings and tapestries depicting the act of music-making, particularly by women, are found in post-mortem inventories from Barcelona suggests that, even though they are no longer extant, they did exist, and that there must have been some demand for them. This brief essay will thus attempt to indicate the range of musical representation to be found in the domestic context in Barcelona in the early modern period and, as far as is currently possible, to consider the social and artistic contexts in which these works were found.

As regards devotional paintings in which musical instruments or singing were represented according to established iconographical traditions, a fairly typical example would be the tailor Jaume Xicot, who lived in a street behind the Benedictine convent of St Pere de les Puelles and whose post-mortem inventory was drawn up in 1499 (E-Bih, Notarial, I.19). Xicot owned several paintings which were distributed among the rooms of his house in a manner commonly encountered in the houses of Barcelona tradesmen: in the dining-room were found an image of St Christopher (commonly found in private houses since the saint was held to ward off death) and a large painting of 'a story of armed men' ('vna Historia de gent armada'), while in the main room was a painting of Christ's Passion and two *oratoris*, one painted with a crucifix, the other with the Virgin Mary and assorted, unspecified saints. In the small room leading to the garden ('recambra del ort') was a retable of the Virgin Mary of the angels ('hun retaule en que es figurada la verge maria dels angels'). Such a painting very probably included angel-musicians, in accordance with the strong tradition for such representations in late-medieval Catalunya (Ballester 1990, 1993, 2005a), although these are not specified in the brief description in the inventory of Xicot's possessions. He must have had some interest in music, however, since he also kept a small 'viola' in his dining-room.⁵ It could be hypothesized that the tailor might have been one of the amateur musicians who participated in the Corpus Christi procession dressed as an angel and playing the vihuela/viol, although there is no concrete evidence to suggest this (Kreitner, 1995).

An example where angel-musicians were specified in an inventoried painting is found among the possessions of the noblewoman Elionor de Viaestrosa (E-Bahp 358/74).⁶ This noble lady owned a number of devotional

⁴ See the discusses the relationship between domestic spaces and reading practice

⁵ The translation and interpretation of 'viola' is problematic, since the word can refer to a plucked or bowed vihuela or the (bowed) viol, and in many instances it is not clear which instrument is intended (even assuming that the inventory-takers were aware of the distinction). I use 'viol' when the term 'viola d'arch' appears, and vihuela when a specific number of courses is indicated, but elsewhere will translate 'viola' as vihuela/viol.

⁶ Several other paintings of the Virgin and angels are listed in the inventories of Barcelona of citizens of different professions and social status: for example, in September 1583, the pot-maker (*scudeller*) Mateu Casaus had a painting of 'nostra señora dels angels' among other devotional images (E-Bahp 432/74); in December of the same year, the notary Joan Roma Cerda had a 'posteta' on the same theme (E-Bahp 438/5); and in April 1585 the farmer (*pages*) Luis Munterols had a painting of the Virgin with three angels

paintings at the time the post-mortem inventory was begun on 15 April 1567, and some of these were found—as was quite often the case—in the private chapel of her house. They included two retables of the Virgin Mary, and a third of Nuestra Señora de Pietat made from alabaster, as well as eight small paintings of angel-instrumentalists and the Salutation of the Virgin (‘vuyt peses de tela petits de pinzell en que hi ha pintat vns angels que sonen y la salutacio de nostra señora’).⁷ The presence of an altar, missal, lectern and a communion bell (‘vna campaneta petita de lauto per quant alser nostre Senyor’) confirm that the chapel was used for the celebration of Mass. A tapestry of green fields (‘vn drap de ras vert de praderia’) and, in another room, a painting of ‘some ladies’ (‘vns damas’) bear witness to secular themes among the decorative images in her house. Elionor de Viaestrosa, as in the case of Jaume Xicot, cannot be considered a collector of art: the number and distribution of artistic objects in her house is quite normal for many Barcelona citizens, as is the predominance of devotional paintings.

The association of angels with musical instruments such as harps is reflected in the 1501 post-mortem inventory of the possessions of one Raimon Ciscar, about whom little is known, although five hangings in the main room of his house had images of ‘harps and other angelic symbols’,⁸ while another curtain was decorated with a coat of arms, presumably his own and thus denoting high social status. The harp probably also featured in the ‘good’ tapestry of the story of King David (‘vn drap de la historia de David es bo’) owned by the merchant Jeroni de Heredia in September 1579 in his house on the Carrer de la Mercè (E-Bahp 390/10).⁹ Like many merchants, Heredia possessed a substantial collection of tapestries and paintings, amongst other luxury items, and he seems to have had a penchant for images of secular music-making, as will be discussed below.

The musical iconography found in artworks involving devotional and Biblical themes must have been much more commonplace than the notaries’ brief descriptions would suggest. While images celestial musicians would certainly have graced the walls of the houses of Barcelona citizens, their earthy counterparts are also represented in images that reflect liturgical worship. In November 1572, canon Baldiri Vilar of the Augustinian monastery of St Anne owned an image of ‘Our Lady of Montserrat, with, below, a priest celebrating Mass, surrounded by *escolans* [choirboys]’ (‘Item vna post en la qual esta pintat nostra dona de Montserrat i baig y ha vn preuere qui celebra missa ab escolans entorn’) (E-Bahp 428/57). This would seem to be an early reference to a genre of paintings that was to become very popular from the first half of the seventeenth century onwards; the earliest surviving example, in the Museo del Monasterio, dates from 1639 and is attributed to the monk-painter Fra Joan Andrés Ricci (1600-81) (Esteve 2009: 270-72). Vanessa Esteve has suggested that at some point the concept of the Virgin surrounded by angel-musicians was transformed into this more specifically local version of the Virgin of Montserrat with the musical *escolans* at her feet (Esteve, 2009: 281). Interestingly, Canon Vilar also owned an old retable of Our Lady of the Angels (‘vn retaule vell de nostra señora dels angels’), among other devotional paintings, including several other Marian images and a painting of St Anne, an Ecce homo, and a *post* of the Crucifixion, depicting the good and bad thieves on one side, some unspecified saints on the other, and the image of the Virgin and Child at the foot. Vilar’s ‘collection’ of images—largely Marian—surely

(‘nostra señora dels angels’) in the room next to that in which he died (E-Bahp 427/171). Among his relatively few possessions, Munterols also had a guitar which was kept in the room overlooking the garden.

⁷ An inventory dated 16 August 1558 of the items held in the sacristy of the church of Santa Maria de Monte Carmelo is more specific with a painting of ‘la coronation de la verge maria abs a cadira y ab dos angels sonant’ (E-Bahp 389/102) that would correspond with the Coronation of the Virgin theme found in many of the surviving art works listed in Ballester 2005a.

⁸ E-Bih I, 20: ‘Item en la cuberta parets sinch peces de cortinatge ab ymages de arpes e senyalls dangells’.

⁹ The qualification ‘es bo’ might indicate high quality or that the tapestry was in good condition. Sixteenth-century Catalan examples of the representation of King David playing the harp are listed in Ballester 2005a, nos. 26, 30 and 36.

stemmed from the expression of his devotional interests, and these art works were subsequently purchased at auction in March 1573 by another clergymen, canon Luys Ruffet for fifteen *sous*. Unsurprisingly, given the proximity of the pilgrimage site, devotion to the Virgin of Montserrat is reflected in sixteenth-century wills in which the celebration of Mass(es) in the abbey is requested among the suffrages commonly specified by testators, and images of her (often printed sheets) are commonly found in post-mortem inventories. Perhaps Canon Vilar was among the many who made the pilgrimage to Montserrat where he may have acquired the painting of the Virgin and *escolans* as a kind of devotional souvenir.¹⁰

Visual representations of the celebration of the liturgy, including a group of singers gathered round the lectern (*facistol*), are found throughout Europe, particularly in the depiction of royal or noble chapels. Good examples from east-coast Spain are the miniature in the Psalter-Book of Hours of Alfonso de Magnanimous (completed in 1443) of the celebration of the divine office in his chapel by the Valencian illuminator Lleonart Crespi (Español, 2002-2003: 105; Serra Desfilis, 2013: 351),¹¹ and the ordination of St Vincent by St Valerius painted for the main altar of the parish church of Sarrià by Jaume Huguet (c.1412-62) in 1455-60.¹² Examples of paintings of chapel-singers are found in the inventories of two Barcelona notaries: Francesc Mateu (inventory dated July 1500; E-Bih, Inventoris 1,20) and Miquel Benet Gilabert (December 1569; E-Bahp 426/169). In addition to the small ‘drap de pinzell ab capellans que canten remifasol’, Mateu had a substantial collection of paintings and tapestries on a variety of secular themes, including the Judgment of Paris (‘lo sopni de Paris ab les deesses’), what was probably a hunting scene (‘animals e homes a caual’), and ladies and gentlemen playing chess (‘homes he dones ... qui juguen esquachs’), as well as the more commonly found devotional images of the Crucifixion and the Salutation of the Virgin. One of Mateu’s retables was painted with the arms of Alfonso the Magnanimous, with the ‘cetra dins la flor de lis’, possibly indicating that it once belonged to the king, or that the notary had close connections with the court. He also had a library of sixty-six books, mainly manuscripts, including juridical, theological and Classical texts.

Mateu’s painting of cantors was small, and sold for only three sous, while notary Gilabert, at the time of his death in 1569, owned a large and old retable with eight singers (‘vuyt cantors que canten lo remifasol vell’), together with some other devotional paintings: Noah’s arc, St Christopher, the three kings, Christ bearing the Cross, and the Pietà, among others. The retable with eight singers was kept in the room in which the maidservants (‘fadrines’) slept, perhaps because it was old, perhaps because it was instructive. In both these examples, the chaplains and singers are singing the solmization syllables ‘remifasol’ which might indicate performance of either chant or polyphony (the latter seems more likely in the case of the eight singers of Gilabert’s retable), but in any case, suggests that some form of notated music was depicted. This raises the question as to whether these representations had an essentially devotional function—as in the examples by Crespi or Huguet mentioned above—or whether they might in some way have had a didactic purpose. Either way it is intriguing to find such paintings in the houses of notaries, always bearing in mind that they might have acquired them at auction and that the paintings might formerly have belonged to members of the clergy.¹³ This

¹⁰ The *escolania* at Montserrat flourished from at least the thirteenth century; possibly it was the prestige of the papal licence granted to the school by Clement VII on 6 May 1534 (Esteve, 2009: 275) that contributed to the transformation from angel to boy musicians in the musical iconography of the celebrated Virgin of Montserrat.

¹¹ The miniature depicts seven singers singing before the lectern, two of which appear to be boys. On its completion, the Psalter-Book of Hours (now preserved at the British Library, Add. MS 28962) was sent to Naples; the miniature in question is on fol.281v.

¹² At least three, if not four, adult singers are depicted before the lectern.

¹³ Notaries commonly purchased items at the auctions of the possessions of their former clients, and would have the pick of items on sale (Peña 1994-1995, Peña 1996: 205-16, 226).

need not have been the case, however, since notaries were quite often the owners of musical instruments and music books (Knighton 2016).

As with Biblical representations, mythological scenes would often have included musical elements, although only on rare occasions are these mentioned specifically by Barcelona inventory-takers. For example, in January 1582, Pau Benet Prexana, doctor in both laws, had a painting of Orpheus among several other devotional art works, including retables of the Passion of Christ and the Adoration of the Three Kings in the room used as a chapel ('vna cambra que serveix de capella') in his house on the 'carrer vulgarment dit de la figuera creurella' (E-Bahp 407/58). It is highly likely that Orpheus was depicted playing a plucked instrument of some kind, as in the frontispiece to Luis Milán's *El maestro* (1535-6), even though this is not mentioned in the brief description in the post-mortem inventory. However, musicians of a very particular kind are specified in the depiction of King Midas owned by Miquel Quintana, Abbot of Sant Cugat and member of the Royal Council: ass-musicians ('vn quadro de tela guarnit de fusta molt vell abs a figura del Rey midas ab alguns assens musicchs') (E-Bahp 475/53).¹⁴ This is surely a reference to the musical competition between Apollo and Pan, at which the cloth-eared Midas expresses his preference for Pan's earthy panpipes rather than Apollo's more exalted harmonies on the lyre, the instrument with which he was closely associated iconographically.¹⁵ Apollo, in a fury, gave Midas the ears of an ass to punish his poor judgment and this would appear to have been extended to the musicians portrayed in Quintana's painting, which seems to have formed part of a series of four *quadros* related to the same Midas theme. All four were found in the same space—the *torra* of his house in the 'Plaçeta de la deuallada de vila de Cols', where he lived until his death—and involved ass-musicians as well as dancing asses: 'mes altre quadro de dos assens que sonen'; 'mes altre quadro ab vn asse y vna sombre que dansen'; 'mes altre quadro ab dos assens mestres de danses'. Quintana had other sequences of paintings in his smaller study (the 'restudi', next to the 'studi dels llibres'),¹⁶ including the victories of the Emperor Charles V (seven), of Cupid (number unspecified) and of the 'Ages' (presumably four), as well as devotional pictures of different kinds found throughout his house: he seems to have been something of a collector. He may also have been something of a musician: also in the 'restudi' at the time of his death was a clavichord, described as broken ('vn manacort tot spallat').¹⁷

Representations of secular music-making are quite often found in the same spaces as musical instruments. A good example is that of the soldier Miquel Benet Hieronim Luques who lived in the Carrer den Caldes near the Born (Knighton, 2016: 140-41). At the time of his death in July 1520, he owned several different instruments that were scattered through his house. In the relatively public space of the *sala*, Luques had a good-quality, new, small vihuela/viol ('huna viola petita noua e bona'), another small vihuela/viol ('hun viola de fust petita'), a hunting-horn with a leather strap ('huna corneta debanyo ab son correig ja dolent'), and a harpsichord ('hun

¹⁴ Possibly one of the four tapestries owned by the royal scribe Dionisi Miquel at the time of his death in February 1578 was also related to the Midas theme, although the description in the inventory is vaguer: 'mes quatre draps de ras ... lo altro es de personatges ... ab dos personatges assentats y vna flauta a la boca y vns dos altres personatges...' (E-Bahp 398/90). If this was indeed a depiction of the judgment of Midas, the inventory-taker did not identify it as such.

¹⁵ In sixteenth-century iconography, Apollo is often depicted with a bowed viol or vihuela, as in the majolica plate painted by Nicola da Urbino (c.1480-1540-47) for Isabella d'Este in about 1520-25 (now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York). In seventeenth-century paintings by Filippo Lauri (1623-94) and Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) Apollo is depicted with a Classical-style lyre.

¹⁶ Quintana's books are not listed, and were either inventoried separately or, as was quite often the case, gifted as a legacy to a nephew or other family member, and so not inventoried (Peña 1996: 216-21).

¹⁷ On 26 November 1591 the case of this instrument was sold at auction for the meagre sum of two *soms* to one Joan Arnau ('mas a Joan arnau vna caixa de manacort molt vella').

clausimbol ab sa caxa ab pany e clau tanchat'),¹⁸ as well as two empty cases for small vihuelas and, in the chapel, a clavichord ('hun manacort abs a caxa de fust pany y clau') (E-Bahp 301/105). It would appear, therefore, that Luques—and/or the other members of his household—played plucked string instruments as well as keyboards. Also in the *sala* he also had what was probably a print or engraving of a lady playing a rabel ('huna figura de dona en vn paper lo qual sta sonant ab hun rabeu').¹⁹ The other paintings in Luques's house are almost exclusively devotional, and are concentrated in the chapel, where there were retables of the Descent from the Cross and the Virgin and Child. Elsewhere were found images of the *pietà*, the Salutation of the Virgin, Noah's flood, the flaying of Christ and what was probably a Veronica ('lo fac de nostre senyor').²⁰ In addition, Luques had an interesting book collection—including works by Ovid, Petrarch (the sonnets in Italian), Boethius, Juan de Mena and the 'composicio del mon', as well as a 'carta de navegar'. All these possessions would denote a wealthy family background as well as an individual of considerable education who very probably travelled—perhaps to Italy—and who, if not exactly a Renaissance man, was a notable consumer of culture and cultural artefacts at a relatively early date.

The depiction of a lady playing or listening to a musical instrument is a theme that recurs among the art works listed in Barcelona inventories. While it is difficult to establish whether such images were imported from outside Spain or were produced there, the theme had clearly gained currency there by the early sixteenth century, including among the higher echelons of the clergy (Fatjó Gómez 1993).²¹ Cathedral canon Clemens Bosch, whose possessions were inventoried in February 1533, provides a good example of the cultured high-ranking clergyman, with a substantial number of paintings, books (including music books) and musical instruments in his home (E-Bahp 341/30) (Peña 1996: 163-65). In addition to retables that included a Descent from the Cross with the prophets Joseph and Nicodemus, and the beheading of John the Baptist (possibly a reference to Herod's feast and thus depicting a group of minstrels) (Ballester, 1995b), Bosch had a number of secular art works in his study, where he also kept his many books,²² and at least one of his musical instruments, a six-course vihuela ('vna citera o viola encordada a honze cordes').²³ The secular paintings in the canon's study ranged from a portrait of the Emperor Charles V, to a couple playing cards and a *vanitas mundi* ('hun letoret recolsat sobre hun cap de mort'),²⁴ and included two musical images: what was possibly another *vanitas mundi* with a lady holding a lute in her hands and one foot on a skull ('vna donna ab hun lahut en les mans e sota lo hun peu hun cap de mort'), and a man and a woman, with the man playing a bowed viol ('hun home y vna dama tots mig e lo home sona vna viola de arch'). It would seem that the recreational delights of playing cards and music-making

¹⁸ This is the earliest reference to a harpsichord so far found in Barcelona inventories.

¹⁹ While 'rabeu' clearly refers to a bowed string-instrument, probably played on the chest or near the chin, it is not altogether clear whether this would have been of the rebec or the viol type.

²⁰ A further painting ('hun drap de pinzell ab diversos personatges') may have had a secular theme, or it may simply be that the inventory-takers did not recognize unnamed saints.

²¹ As Pedro Fatjó Gómez has shown for the seventeenth century, cathedral canons often came—though by no means exclusively—from wealthy families of noble or ennobled status. The body capitular was thus both socially cohesive and to some extent socially fluid.

²² Canon Bosch owned a wide-ranging collection of books, including the tools of his 'trade' such as the Bible, the works of the church fathers, sermons and liturgical books (breviaries and a processional), as well many Classical authors such as Aristotle, Horace, Cicero and Ovid, but also other key humanistic texts by Erasmus (letters), Vitruvius (on architecture), and works by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. He also had a printed 'art de cant', one of the many produced by Spanish presses (Knighton, 2006; Mazuela, 2014).

²³ The study was generally the most likely place to find these items. Another large vihuela/viol ('vna viola gran encordada') was found in the room at the top of the stairs, and a small case of white wood for holding six 'violes' (presumably a consort of viols) was sold at auction on 10 February for five *sous*. Curiously, the inventory indicates that the six-course vihuela was given to the priest *mossen* Francesch Roses, in order to pay off a debt owed him by the canon.

²⁴ The meaning of 'letoret' is not altogether clear, but possibly it refers to an inscription of the type found in a similar painting belonging to the Aragonese protonotary Miguel Climent Gurrea: 'Una table pintada en la qual ay un niño desnudo con la muerte en las manos y un letrado que dize mortem non timeo' (Morte García, 1996: 139).

visually represented in the canon's study were tempered by ephemeral, vain and worldly nature of the pleasure they brought.

The owners of images of music-making involving *galanes*—ladies and gentlemen of high birth—tended themselves to be wealthy and of relatively high social status. The only exception found to date is Antoni Sicha, a soap-maker (*saboner*) whose possessions were inventoried in December 1506 in his house in Carrer de Vernet (E-Bih Notarial: Inventaris I, 23). Compared to his wealthier counterparts, Sicha had relatively few possessions but a number of art works, all devotional (St Anthony, the Virgin, Christ in Gethsemene, etc.), except for, in the room at the top of the stairs, a small painting with foliage, a hunt, and a youth playing the vihuela/viol to a lady ('vn drap petit de pinzell ab brots e cassa [e] vn minyo qui sona vna viola a vna dama'). The five further examples considered briefly here all concern those of noble birth or high standing in society. For example, at the other end of the social spectrum to Sicha the soap-maker, and well over a century later in July 1632, the III Marquis of Aytona, Francesc de Montcada i de Montcada (1586-1635) owned, among many other possessions, a collection of thirty-six tapestries, including one of 'some ladies with viols' ('damas pintades ab vnes violes') (Carbonell i Buades, 1995: 165). The III Marquis was a royal diplomat of high standing in the service of Philip IV and served as interim Governor of Flanders in 1633-34. He was also an accomplished author, who, among several other works, wrote a biography or *vida* of Boethius that was published posthumously in 1642. A portrait of the Marquis by Anthony van Dyke of about 1633, now in the Prado, Madrid, shows a finely dressed, rather corpulent man with a shrewd, intelligent gaze. The Marquis's sojourn in Flanders may—at least in part—account for his substantial collection of tapestries, including that of viol-playing ladies, although this is impossible to verify at present. Flemish tapestries circulated in Barcelona as luxury merchandise imported and sold by merchants, as well as through the second-hand market stimulated by the auction sales (Molina i Figueras 1999: 47-48).

The cultural profile of a royal ambassador such as the III Marquis of Aytona should not be considered exclusively as a seventeenth-century phenomenon; the pattern was well established during the sixteenth century (Escrivà Llorca, 2011a, 2015b). An earlier royal ambassador, Miquel May (Mai) travelled throughout much of his life in the service of Charles V and was an avid consumer of cultural artifacts which, it has been suggested, he almost certainly gathered during his diplomatic travels abroad (Durán i Sanpere, III: 356; Bellolell Martínez, 2011).²⁵ Classical sculpture, including marble busts, and medallions featured in the May house on the Carrer de Cucurella,²⁶ as well as substantial collections of books (over 2000), tapestries and paintings. One of the paintings listed in the post-mortem inventory drawn up after his death in the summer of 1546 suggests the Garden of Delights theme: 'a lady coming out of the baths with another lady playing a lute' ('vna dama que exie dels banys ab vna altra dama que sonava vn lahut') (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, II: 454). This painting was displayed with others on a variety of themes—a sea battle, a labyrinth, a Last Supper and a Mary Magdalene—in the room leading off the stairway near to the chapel. Elsewhere, in a room with two windows overlooking the street, an unusual artifact of two round pieces of bone, each with a mirror, is decorated on the outside of each roundel with a painted scene of a lady playing a vihuela/viol ('dues pessés de os rodones quiscuna te un miral tanquense rodant quiscu te en lo cuberta de part de for a pintat de vert una dama que sonava la viola'; Bellolell Martínez, 2011, II: 508). May also owned musical instruments, including at least one large vihuela/viol and its case,²⁷ and

²⁵ The accumulation of *objets d'art* abroad is suggested by Joan Bellolell Martínez in his detailed study of Miquel May: 'la majoria, per no dir tots, dels objectes que decoraven l'estudi, tenien un origen for a i per tant sembla lògic pensar que els anava adquirint amb el pas dels anys en els seus viatges' (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, I: 338).

²⁶ Some items are preserved in the Museu Frederic Marès and the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya; see Garriga 1989.

²⁷ An inventory made of May's possessions in the house on the Carrer de la Cucurella on Saturday 13 January 1532 lists 'vna viola gran ab sa caxa de fust ab pany y clau' (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, II: 423). This may or may not be the same instrument inventoried post-

in his library St Augustine's *De musica*, Boethius's *De consolacione* and Francesco Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi totius*, which was published in Venice in 1525 (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, II: 589). Some of the smaller, unspecified books in Mai's collection, such as the 'small booklet ... with 'cansons di...' written on the first page', may have contained music (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, II: 550).²⁸ Bellolell Martínez draws attention to the fact that other diplomats moving in royal circles had similar paintings, notably Miguel Climent Gurrea, protonotary of the Aragonese Royal Council, who owned a tapestry of 'una dama que tiene un laud en la mano' (Morte García, 1996: 149),²⁹ and suggests, following Guy de Tervarent's study of Renaissance symbolism (originally published in French in 1958 and translated into Spanish in 2002), that the lute may be interpreted as an allegory of Mercury, patron of ambassadors (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, I: 203). Whether this interpretation would have held significance for Miquel May is difficult to ascertain, though it is clear that this well travelled and highly cultured man was interested in the theory, practice and representation of music, or, at least, considered this to be a necessary part of his cultural persona.

Ambassadorial assignments abroad undoubtedly led to and enabled cultural exchange and influence and the movement and transmission of art works. Cultural consumption on an international level may have brought these musically themed art works to Barcelona, and presumably they were seen and appreciated there. Did the soap-maker Antoni Sicha acquire his painting second-hand at auction? He can in no sense be described as an art collector, and there is no other evidence for musical interest among his possessions, but it must have appealed to him or someone in his household. A handful of other examples begin to provide a thicker description of the context for the ownership of such images. The merchant Jeroni de Heredia, whose will was read on 20 October 1579, has already been mentioned as the owner of a tapestry of King David (E-Bahp 390/10). Many paintings were found in his study, and a good number of tapestries in an upper room. The paintings present a notable mix of devotional and secular themes, and Heredia seems to have had a particular penchant for the months of the year, Classical mythology (again the Judgment of Paris, the labyrinth of Crete, the labours of Hercules, Acteon and hunting scenes) as well as prophets and other saints (the Sybil, Jonas, Jerome). His study was also adorned with depictions of the Seven Deadly Sins, Noah's Ark, a Roman procession and the Triumphs of Petrarch. An image of 'a lady with her lute' ('vna dama ab son llaut' is linked in the inventory with three others ('quatre pessés de tela guarnides'): the Virgin, Cleopatra and the goddess Ceres ('abundancia'). It is not clear why these four were grouped together: perhaps they shared the same frame, or were seen as a series representing different women.³⁰ At the auction of Heredia's possessions on 4 December 1579, two of these four images were sold together for twelve *sous* to one Rafel Vila: the lady with her lute (here interpreted by the auctioneer as a vihuela/viol) and the Figure of Plenty ('dos teles la vna la abundancia y l'altra vna dama ab vna viola').³¹

The number (over fifty) and range of paintings in Heredia's study alone suggests he may have been quite a discerning collector. The post-mortem inventory of the lawyer Francesc Queralt dating from around the same

mortem at his house on Saturday 24 July 1546: 'vna viola ab lo manec obrat de negre ab vna de hormone de locs gran que es', found in a chest separated from its case, which by that time appears to be falling to pieces: 'una caixa de viola ab un scut enmig del cuberto de part de dintre ques en la vora y en mig negre molt dolent' (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, II: 495).

²⁸ 'Item un libre de stampa cubert de pergami intitulat de letra vermella Libre de musica e un alter libret de stampa cubert de carto sense cuyro ques Boesius De Consolacione' (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, II: 589); 'Item quatre libres de forma de cuarto cibert de carto ... e un libret petit cubert de carto de tsata que en la primer fulla diu cansons di...[page torn]' (Bellolell Martínez, 2011, II: 550).

²⁹ The protonotary also owned a lute, 'cuatro viguelas' and a claviorgan; Morte Garcia, 1996: 141. Among his many books, Miquel Clement owned well over 70 music books: 'Ytem setenta libros de canto con cubiertas de cuero y cinco con cubiertas de pergamino ... Ytem dos libros de canto' (Álvarez Clavijo & Mateos Gil, 1996: 120-123).

³⁰ Heredia also had a painting of what would appear to be dance in the French manner ('lo quadro de ballo francescos').

³¹ Accuracy—or otherwise—in the use of musical lexicon by the various notaries and notarial scribes involved in the process of inventorying and auctioning possessions is another variable in the interpretation of their documentation (Knighton 2016).

period (1578) also reveals a substantial and varied collection of paintings and tapestries in his house on the Carrer dels Banys Vells near the church of Santa Maria del Pi (E-Bahp 409/83). Unfortunately, most of the descriptions are generalised—for example, a tapestry with a fountain in the centre may be a representation of a Garden of Delights—but one tapestry curtain specified the image of people making music (dancing?) with a tambourine ('altra portatera ab personatges qui fan musica di temborino'). While Heredia's musical interests outside his art works is unknown, Queralt owned several polyphonic books that were sold at auction, including a deluxe set of four partbooks ('quatre librets de cant cuberts de cuyro vermell dins vna bossa de seti fals a m^o hieronim cardona' for 16 *sous*), as well as another, single book ('vn libre de cant', four *sous* to Joan Furtit), suggesting active involvement in music-making on the part of the lawyer.

Two Barcelona notaries who owned musical paintings also possessed guitars, while *magister* Clemens Jorda had a vihuela/viol in its case that was sold at auction to Joan Osorii for the relatively high price of 31 *sous* (E-Bahp 342/47).³² The inventorying of Jorda's possessions began on Saturday 19 May 1554, and, like other Barcelona citizens of the professional classes he kept a wide range of paintings in his study, a few of which were devotional (Mary Magdelene, St John, Christ crucified), but a high proportion of which were secular, including portraits of a lady, a pope and a cardinal (all unspecified), a view of Jerusalem, Venus and Cupid, a nude ('vna dama nua ab vn braguer'), and what was perhaps a *vanitas mundi* ('vn minyonet petit recolsat vb vn cap de mort').³³ Three tapestries were kept in a room overlooking the street: a king wearing a crown and holding a sword; the story of Jason and Medea; and figures making music ('vn drap de ras gran de personatges que fan musica'). The latter was described as in poor condition ('ja dolent') and does not appear to have been auctioned. Jorda's many books included Ovid's *Metamorphosis* and Alfonso de la Torre's *Vision delectable* (which has quite a strong musical element), a copy of the Gospels and Ludolf of Saxony's *Vita Christi*; these, together with various luxury items and *objets d'art*—including an alabaster figure of the Virgin—mark him out as a professional man of his time: relatively wealthy with strong devotional and cultural interests that he was able to indulge in his home. The inventories of the two Barcelona notaries share a similar profile in terms of possessions. In November 1558 Antoni Bou had a dozen or so paintings in his study (Moses and his sons, the Great Flood, Roman history, a portrait of the King of France, and 'fortuna de la mar'), together with a lady playing an instrument ('vna dama qui sta sonant'), which almost certainly corresponds to the painting of a lady playing the harp ('vna domitella ab vna arpa que sona') sold at auction to Joan Jofre, a carpenter (*juster*), for eight *sous* one *diner* (E-Bahp 389/102). The substantial number of books in Bou's study included the expected legal tomes, as well as the eclectic mix already seen in Jorda's study: Francesc Eiximenis's *Llibre dels angels*, a breviary, the works of Petrarch and a songbook ('vn libre de cansons vell'). Bou's 'guitarra de fusta sense cordes' was kept in a room overlooking the street of S. Pere de les Puelles, along with assorted clothing, gold and jewellery, devotional paintings, a large book of hours for a lady ('vnes hores grans de dona'), a crucifix with a skull at the base, and a tapestry with the Salutation of the Virgin. Overall, the inventory of Bou's possessions suggests a more devotional, less humanistic profile than the other inventories discussed above, and can thus be considered the more characteristic for its time.

Later, in 1635 the *jurista* Jeroni Palmerola had a large collection of paintings (44) and tapestries (12) in his house on the Carrer de la Porta Ferrissa' (E-Bih, Notarial 1 (Inventaris), 52; Carbonell i Buades 1995: 148). Some of

³² It is impossible to know whether the notaries themselves played or some other member of their household, but the sound of the guitar was surely heard in their homes.

³³ This could have been either the 'memento mori' (12 *sous* 6 *diners*) or, perhaps more likely, 'lo triompho de la mor[t]' (20 *sous* 6 *diners*) sold in auction on 3 September 1554 to *mossen* Çacosta and *mossen* Joan Castello respectively.

these, like the image of St Cecilia decorated in ebony, belonged to his wife. Typically, if St Cecilia was represented by an organ in this painting, it is not mentioned, but instruments presumably featured in the series of twelve small oil paintings of musicians (*dotze quadros petits de oli que son vns musichs*). These were sold at auction on 31 October 1635 to Francesc Aguila for two *lliures* eight *sous*, a price suggesting that they were of considerable quality. Palmerola's old guitar (*vna guitarra ja vella*) was sold to Pere Pujol for six *sous* (a fairly standard price for an ordinary or an old instrument) on 19 October. A high proportion of Palmerola's paintings and tapestries represented secular themes, which may indeed reflect a more general cultural shift in the first half of the seventeenth century, and one series is of particular interest here: the five senses or 'sentiments corporals'. No detailed description is given, except that the allegorical figures were female and were painted in oils (*dos quadros que son dos dones y lo hu dells es lo sentiment del gusto y lo altro de hoir al oli*), and the whole sequence was sold to Francesc Oller for two *lliures* five *sous*. Even though no instrument or other musical item is specified, it is likely that they appeared, as in the celebrated sequence by Jan Breughel the Elder and Rubens (1617-18) now in the Prado in Madrid. Again, this quintessentially Baroque theme is also found earlier in the sixteenth century, for example among the possessions of Lucrecia Farrera: '*sinch quadros de lo sinch sentiments corporals*' (E-Bih Notarial (Inventaris), 1, 20). Little is known about Lucrecia except that she was the widow of Gabriel Farrer, whose profession is not given. Other paintings in her house at the time of her death included the Judgment of Paris and one of '*dos damas y dos galanes*'; both of which may have had musical elements. She also owned some gold rings and pearls, and seems to have been quite comfortably off in widowhood.

It is probably true to say that the references to musical iconography listed among *objets d'art* in post-mortem inventories from the period throw up more questions than they answer, in part because the control group is so reduced, and in part because notarial inventory-takers were concerned only to give the briefest of descriptions in order to be able to identify the object subsequently to be sold at auction. Such scribal pragmatism is, of course, highly frustrating for the cultural historian. However, even the small amount of data gathered here can begin to give a clearer outline of the range of the musical imaginarium that decorated the walls of the houses of Barcelona citizens. This included, but went considerably beyond the almost ubiquitous devotional depictions of certain saints, angels and specific Biblical scenes that had acquired a symbolic sonic element, examples of which survive in churches and art galleries today. The preliminary steps towards thematic analysis of lost art works broached here shows that paintings or tapestries of musicians, from a group of singers performing chant or vocal polyphony to ladies playing the lute, tended to belong to those in the upper echelons of society, in particular diplomatic and professional classes, that is, to those wealthy enough to acquire a collection of art works. Those Barcelona citizens who hung musical imagery on the walls of their houses also tended to own other musical items such as instruments or music books; those who owned secular musical images also tended to own other art works with secular themes. Whether depictions of ladies-with-lutes (or '*violas*') formed part of an international cultural consumerism primarily open to wealthy travellers such as diplomats and as such were essentially imported items that then circulated second-hand through auction sales remains to be answered. Nevertheless, the presence in Barcelona of musical imagery of various kinds is well attested, and this suggests that there was some sense of appreciation for such works. Further research may help to elucidate the complex of variables and unknowns, but even this limited information begins to shed some light on the visual aspect of the musical experience in the city in the early modern period.

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Tess Knighton posseeix màster i doctorat per la Universitat de Cambridge i va ser membre del Clare College, Cambridge, durant quinze anys abans de ser nomenat membre *Emeritus*. Des de maig de 2011 ha estat professora d'investigació ICREA a l'Institució Milà i Fontanals (CSIC) de Barcelona. Al juliol de 2012 va obtenir una Marie Curie Foundation Integration Grant per a un projecte de recerca sobre les músiques urbanes de Barcelona moderna. Els seus interessos de recerca abracen música i cultura al món ibèric del segle XV al començament del XVII, i ha publicat àmpliament en aquest àmbit. Va ser editra de la revista OUP *Early Music* de 1993 a 2009 i és editora de sèries *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music* per a The Boydell Press, a més de secretària del Comité Editorial de *Monumentos de la Música Española*.

Cita recomanada

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