

# Angelo Michele Bartolotti - Prince of the Muses

## 5. I-Rama-A-Ms.4912 (*Olim I-Rsc Ms.AS A 4912*)<sup>1</sup>

**I-Rama-A-Ms.4912** is an anonymous and undated manuscript of presumably Italian provenance comprising 119 unnumbered folios in oblong format measuring 160 x 225mm. A digital image of the manuscript was available at but currently seems to be inaccessible.

[http://bibliomediateca.santacecilia.it/bibliomediateca/cms.view?munu\\_str=0\\_1\\_0\\_4&numDoc=20&physDoc=14398&pflag=personalizationFindBiblioteca](http://bibliomediateca.santacecilia.it/bibliomediateca/cms.view?munu_str=0_1_0_4&numDoc=20&physDoc=14398&pflag=personalizationFindBiblioteca)

The library catalogue entry describes the manuscript as “*incompleto e mutilo*”. It has been badly affected by damp and there is extensive staining at the top of each page. There is no title page or other preliminary material. The manuscript is ruled throughout with six staves to a page. The pieces are grouped according to mode or key with some unused pages between sections. The original on-line digital image does not include the unused pages. The listing of these in the library catalogue entry at the beginning of the original pdf is unhelpful as the manuscript has recently been restored and the pages re-arranged.<sup>2</sup> In its present state there are eleven apparently blank pages at the beginning (folios 1r-6r); an attempt to erase the content of these has been made at some point and the pieces are no longer legible. At the end there are fourteen further folios, (f.106r-119v), some with erased contents and some ruled but unused.<sup>3</sup>

The manuscript is the work of two separate very distinctive copyists, identified here as Hand A and Hand B. Originally, pieces mainly, if not exclusively, by Corbetta and Bartolotti were copied by Hand A. At a later date pieces, some of them attributed to a certain Domenico Rainer, were copied on the unused pages left at the end of each section by Hand B, possibly by Rainer himself.<sup>4</sup> One interesting characteristic of Hand A is the lopsided 8 which is also a feature of the typeface used in Bartolotti’s ‘**Secondo libro di chitarra**’ (ca.1656). Hand B uses the more usual upright form.

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<sup>1</sup> The manuscript is now in the Bibliomediateca dell'Accademia nazionale di S. Cecilia in Rome. The Accademia and the Conservatorio are now in separate institutions. I am greatly indebted to Lex Esienhardt for making available to me a pdf of the manuscript which includes the blank pages and for sharing with me the notes he made when examining it personally at the library in Rome.

<sup>2</sup> The page numbers used in this study are those matching the online pdf on the assumption that this version is the one to which most people will have access. In the pdf page 1 shows the library catalogue entry; the music is on pages 2-120.

<sup>3</sup> For a complete list of the contents see Corbetta Section VI Part 6 I-Rama-A-Ms.4912.

<sup>4</sup> Nothing is currently known about Rainer. It has been suggested that he was a pupil of Roncalli but this is not supported by any evidence. The Allemanda on p.113-114 is attributed to “Dom<sup>co</sup> Rainer”; elsewhere he is referred to only as Rainer.

The mode and the corresponding *alfabeto* letter are indicated at the beginning of each section as follows.

p.2 - 15	G minor	[Mode 2 = O]
p.16-29	A minor	Mode 3= D <sup>5</sup>
p.30-39	E minor	Mode 4= +
p.40-57	C major	Mode 5 = B
p.58-66	F major	Mode 6 = G
p.67-76	D major	Mode 7 = C
p.77-85	G major	Mode 8 = A
p.86-91	B minor	Tuono Trasportato

Throughout the music is in Italian tablature combined with *alfabeto*. In the pieces by Bartolotti, the direction of the strummed chords is indicated by placing the heads of the note values on the line of the stave where the strum begins with the stems down for a down (bass to treble) stroke and up for an up (treble to bass) stroke, as in the printed book. Chord H is sometimes represented by R and Chord M+ by S. The sign for a trill or descending appoggiatura is a t with a dot beside it. An ascending appoggiatura is indicated with a slur beneath the stave as in b. 4, 8, 16 and 20 in Example 1 below. Some of Bartolotti's other signs such as his *arpeggio distesso* sign  $\diagdown$  indicating that an *alfabeto* chord should be arpeggiated rather than strummed and *corde insieme/corde separate* slashes are occasionally reproduced. The hash sign # is used occasionally to indicate vibrato; slurs are used in the customary way to indicate groups of notes played only with the left hand.

Most of the pieces are to all intents and purposes identical with the versions in the printed book. The exceptions are the Alemanda (Bartolotti p.49/I-Rama p.71), the Corrente (Bartolotti p.46/I-Rama p.73) and the Passacaglie (Bartolotti p.78/I-Rama p.92). In the Alemanda and Corrente some of the five-part chords are eliminated and the part-writing reduced from three parts to two. Some of the variations in the Passacaglie, including the last 10 variations, have been omitted.

Table				
Bartolotti - Secondo Libro ca.1656			I-Rama-A-Ms.4912	
Page	Key	Title	Page	Title
p.1	E minor	Prelude	p.30-31	Preludio
p.2	E minor	Allemande	p.34-35	Alemanda
p.2	E minor	Gautot	p.32	Gavotta
p.3	E minor	Courante	p.36-37	Corrente
p.3	E minor	Sarabande	p.33	Sarabanda
p.7	E minor	Gigue	p.38-39	Gigue
p.10	G major	Prelude	p.77-7	Preludio
p.13	G major	Sarabande	p.80	Sarabanda
p.15	G major	Gigue	p.84-85	Gigue
p.15	G major	Alemã	p.81-82	Alemanda
p.26	C major	Prelude	p.40-42	Preludio
p.34	C major	Allemande	p.48-49	Alemanda
p.33	C major	Caprice	p.46-47	Capriccio

<sup>5</sup> The *alfabeto* letter is on p.18 rather than p.16.

p.33	C major	Alle	p.44	Alemanda
p.35	C major	Sarab	p.45	Sarabanda
p.37	C major	Minuete	p.43	Minuete
p.38	C major	Gigue	p.50-51	Gigue
p.42	D major	Prelude	p.67-70	Preludio
p.46	D major	Corrente	p.73-75	Corrente
p.49	D major	Allemande	p.71-73	Alemanda
p.54	A minor	Prelude	p.16-17	Preludio
p.55	A minor	Allemande	p.24-25	Alemanda
p.57	A minor	Gigue	p.26-27	Gigue
p.62	A minor	Passacaglie	p.99-10	Passagalli
p.78	D minor	Passacaglie	p.92-98	Passagalli

The three unidentified pieces which may be Bartolotti are

p.18-19	Alemanda	A minor
p.20-23	Toccata	A major
p.83	Sarabanda	G major

The Sarabanda can be attributed to Bartolotti with a fair degree of certainty. It is also included on f.9r of the manuscript, **Pieces de guitarrre de differends autheurs recueillis par Henry François de Gallot (GB-Ob Ms.Mus.Sch.C94)** which dates from the 1660s. This includes at least 13 pieces from Bartolotti's **Secondo libro**, in some instances identifying the composer by his initials – **a.m.** In addition, there are four preludes attributed to **a.m.** which may be by him.<sup>6</sup> This Sarabande is attributed simply to “**a**”.

In **I-Rama Ms.AS A 4912** the number of courses to be included in the strummed chords is indicated in the same way as in the printed book, with the head of the note value placed on the third, fourth or fifth line of the stave as appropriate. As in the printed book, this system does not make it clear whether the first course should be included in the strum. In bars 1, 2, 4 and 8 the first course should obviously be omitted from the G major chord. The piece ends with a short coda which is typical of other sarabandes in Bartolotti's work. The version in **GB-Ob Ms.Mus.Sch.C94** is in French tablature. It does not include the coda and the harmonic progression in bars 11-14 is different and arguably more effective. The direction of the strummed chords is indicated by stroke marks below and above the uppermost line of the tablature and does not indicate where the strum should start or finish.

It seems more likely on stylistic grounds that the Alemanda is by Bartolotti rather than Corbetta if indeed it is by either of them. It features the *campanella* passages which Bartolotti is rather fond of. All but one of the strummed chords are represented by *alfabeto* and the second chord in bar one is clearly intended to include all five courses. One interesting feature of the piece is that left-hand fingering has been supplied in b.1, 2 and 3 using the usual system of dots. It is not possible to tell from the reproduction whether these have been added at a later date.

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<sup>6</sup> See the Table on p.6 of Section 1 above.

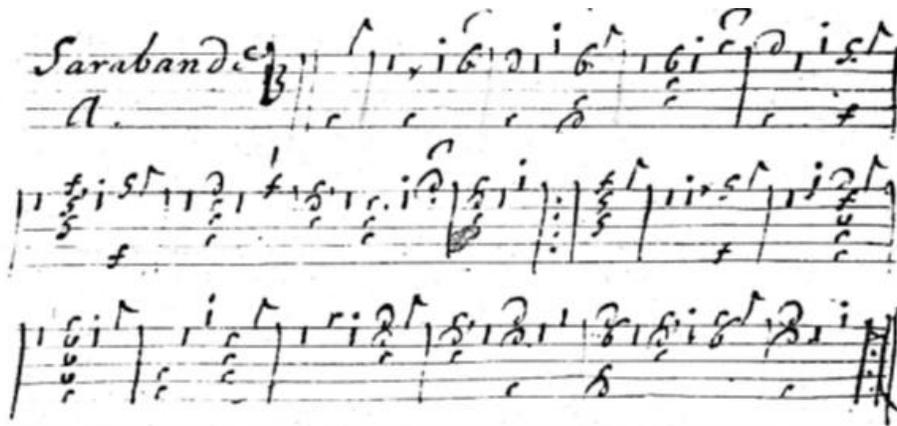
The Toccata is the least convincing piece of the three. It is in A major, which is not a key often used in baroque guitar sources; there is a short foray into A minor at b.33-35. The barring and note values are sometimes less than helpful. It is in several contrasting sections featuring the elaborately arpeggiated chords indicated with the sign /, which are typical of Bartolotti; lengthy but repetitive sequential passage work; a section of three-part harmony and a closing section in triple metre. The few chords which are to be strummed rather than arpeggiated have stroke marks beneath the staff in the usual manner for Italian sources, rather than a note value placed on the staff. However, this method of notation is used in Bartolotti's **Libro primo (1640)**. Bartolotti does write extended free-style pieces of this kind usually as preludes to his suites. If it is by him it cannot be regarded as one of his most successful efforts.

### Example 1 - Sarabande

I-Rama-A-Ms.4912 p.83



GB:Ob Ms.Mus.Sch.C94 f.9r



I-Rsc  
8  
GB-Ob  
8

5

8

8

10

8

8

15

8

8

20

8

8

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: I-Rsc and GB-Ob. The score is written in two staves for each instrument, with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The time signature is 2/4. The score consists of 20 measures. The first two staves are labeled 'I-Rsc' and '8'. The next two staves are labeled 'GB-Ob' and '8'. The score is divided into five systems of four staves each. The first system contains measures 1-4, the second system contains measures 5-8, the third system contains measures 9-12, the fourth system contains measures 13-16, and the fifth system contains measures 17-20. The notation includes various rhythmic values (quarter notes, eighth notes, sixteenth notes, rests) and chordal structures. Measure numbers 5, 10, 15, and 20 are indicated at the beginning of their respective systems.

Example 2 - Alemanda

I-Rama-A-Ms.4912 p.18-19

*Alemanda*

D

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This image shows the first system of a handwritten musical score for a piece titled 'Alemanda'. The score is written on five staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The notation includes various note values, rests, and ornaments. A large, semi-transparent watermark 'SANTACECILIA.IT' is overlaid across the middle of the system. To the left of the second staff, there is a small letter 'D'.

SANTACECILIA.IT

This image shows the second system of the handwritten musical score for 'Alemanda'. It continues on five staves with similar notation to the first system, including notes, rests, and ornaments. A large, semi-transparent watermark 'SANTACECILIA.IT' is overlaid across the middle of the system.

8

4 2 1

2

8

4 2 1 4 2 1

5

8

8

8

8

10

8

8

3

3

3

8

15

8

Example 3 - Toccata

I-Rama-A-Ms.4912 p.20-23

The image displays two pages of handwritten musical notation for a piece titled "Toccata". The notation is written on six-line staves. The top staff of each page contains a melodic line with notes and rests. The lower staves contain guitar tablature, represented by numbers 0-5 on the lines, with various rhythmic markings and accidentals. A large, semi-transparent watermark "SANTACECILIA.IT" is overlaid across the center of both pages. The handwriting is in dark ink on aged, slightly yellowed paper. The word "Toccata" is written in the top left corner of the first page.

This image shows a handwritten musical score on aged, yellowed paper. The score is organized into two main sections, each containing five staves of notation. The notation is a form of guitar tablature, using numbers 0-4 on the staves and letters 'g', 'x', and 'r' to indicate fretting and techniques like bends or slides. Above the staves, there are handwritten rhythmic patterns and some other markings. A large, semi-transparent watermark "SANTACECILIA.IT" is visible across the middle of the page. The bottom right corner of the page features a signature that appears to be "Jiny".



Musical staff 1: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. A blue vertical line is positioned under the first measure.

Musical staff 2: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. Blue vertical lines are positioned under the first, second, and fourth measures.

Musical staff 3: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. A blue vertical line is positioned under the first measure. The number 25 is written above the first measure.

Musical staff 4: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. A blue vertical line is positioned under the first measure.

Musical staff 5: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. A blue vertical line is positioned under the first measure. The number 30 is written above the fifth measure.

Musical staff 6: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. A blue vertical line is positioned under the first measure.

Musical staff 7: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. A blue vertical line is positioned under the first measure. The number 35 is written above the fifth measure.

Musical staff 8: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. Blue vertical lines are positioned under the first, second, and fourth measures.

Musical staff 9: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and chords. A blue vertical line is positioned under the first measure. The number 40 is written above the fifth measure.

This musical score is for guitar, written in G major (one sharp) and 8/8 time. It consists of eight staves of music, each beginning with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 8/8. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, and 90 clearly marked. The music features a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, often beamed in groups of four. The melody is primarily in the upper register, while the bass line provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. There are several instances of blue vertical lines marking specific notes, likely indicating fingerings or technical points. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the eighth staff.

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