

## **The music of the spheres on the front of the Gesù Nuovo in Naples**

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In 2010 Vincezo de Pasquale from Naples asked me to work as a musician with the symbols of the Gesù Nuovo. This is one of the biggest churches in Campagna in Naples, the center of the Jesuits. This church was built in 1470 on the main street in the historical downtown as a palace of Roberto Sanseverino.

Today I would like to speak about just two topics. First of all shortly about the history of the bulding and the pyramids with their symbols. And then about concept of the word 'renaissance'. When I started this project I was reading some books, among others 'Leonardo da Vinci' written by Capra. I wanted to learn more about how people were thinking in the renaissance time.

Roberto Sanseverino was the duke of Salerno, and it was his idea to build a great palace for himself in the center of Naples. Sanseverino gave this big job for Novello di Sanlucano, who was a famous architect in this period. In this historical period in the Kingdom of Naples two different royal dynasties, the French House of Anjou and the Spanish Aragon dynasty succeeded one another. King Matthias ruled in Hungary at that time, his wife Beatrix came from Naples. She was the daughter of Ferdinand of Aragon.

In the renaissance period the ancient knowledge was the center of the way of thinking. Philosophy, Mathematics, Music and Astronomy: these fields of four sciences had been woven together into one science. Saint Thomas of Aquino had made the bridge over the gap between ancient Greek philosophy and Christian philosophy. He could integrate ancient Greek philosophy into Christian philosophy. Platon, Pythagoras, Augustinus and Saint Thomas, the music theoretics were looking for the connection between the four fields of science. They could find the rule of God, harmony and perfect proportion in all things. When the palace of Sanseverino was being built in Naples, the greatest music theoretic Tinctoris was working at the royal court. His student, whose first book 'Musica Practica' I used in my work, was Franchino Gaffori. This book was published in Naples around 1490. Another interesting fact is that Gaffori was born in Lodi near Milan, and when he returned to Milan he started to work for the Forza family with his friend Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo painted a portrait of Gaffori. Leonardo and Gaffori created a spectacular performace for the Forza family. It was the „Fun of the planets”.

Illustration of the Universe can be found in the book of Gaffori. The Earth can be found in the center of the Universe with the four elements. On the left side of the picture, the ladies of the arts and science can be seen, they are the Muses. In the other part of the picture are the Heavenly Bodies, the seven planets. Between the Ladies and the planets, the way, the circle of the planets can be seen. We call them spheres. Every sphere has its own

scale. For example, the Sun is running on the Doric scale. This is the „Re” scale. It is interesting that Ré means King. On the top of the Universe the King can be found: Apollo, with Thalia the muse of the theatre and comedy.

Let's see examples, on the fronts of some Cathedrals of Milan (Dom) and Paris (Notre Dame) you can see the same system of the Universe or Heavenly Bodies. The architects put the symbol of Heaven on the front of the churches. When we go into the church we can be in a sacred time and sacred space. The doors and the windows and the figures guide us between the spheres in Heaven. My opinion is that on the front of the Gesù Nuovo we can find the same idea of the Heavenly Bodies. How can we find Heaven?

On the pyramids of the Gesù Nuovo you can see the same old graffiti. This graffiti are Greek and Aramaic symbols. Jesus spoke the Aramaic language, which is a kind of Hebrew language. According to the legend of the builders, with these secret symbols they wanted to keep out the negative energy from the building.

Every symbol means a number or a musical note. It can be a musical notation. For example Alpha means A or La; Delta means D or Re; Gamma means G or Sol. We have six different notes in a Hexachord. Generally the Gregorian melodies have a hexachord sound system. We can cut the hexachord in two and after that we have got two tricords. Do-re-mi and fa-sol-la. We call them Durum, it means hard. It is with these two hard notes that the power of the wall can develop.

But how can we read these notes on the front of the church? The key, the secret was the number 3, the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Let's see some more examples of the number 3. When I saw the muse Thalia on the illustration of the Universe, I felt the connection with Dante. The most popular book at that time was the Divine Comedy written by Dante. The other connection is Vergilius, who is the guide of Dante in Hell and Purgatory. Vergilius died near Naples.

- The Comedy has three parts: Hell, Purgatory and Heaven. In Heaven of Dante the choirs of angels are on the planet. Hierarchies of Angels live on each planet.
- Every part of the comedy has 33 songs.
- Every song was written in rhyme called terza.
- On the front of the Gesù Nuovo you can see 33 lines of pyramids.
- On the front of the Gesù Nuovo there are 6 different notes with two durum tricords.

As I have mentioned before, the key was the number three. I counted the lines, I started to read the notes from the 6th line because we have six different notes in our hexachord. I read three lines because we can find two tricords in this hexachord. The three lines of pyramids create one melody. I could recognise that it is a perfect, a very nice

melody. The notes are variable and the '*sentences*' of the melody has a musical rule. So my key must be work throughout the melody. The melody is a perfect Gregorian melody. But how can I get the lyrics? During my work I followed my intuitions, and having completed the project, I could see that my intuitions were right. So, my first intuition was that: on the wall I have to find Psalm number 23. I had a look at the Latin version of the Psalm and I combined the melody with the sentences of the 6th part of the Psalm. Finally it was correct.

After this wonderful research I started to compose an organ and solo voice piece. The title of my piece is L'Enigma del Gesù Nuovo – Harmoniae Universales. In my piece I represent the melodies of the front of the Gesù Nuovo. Every movement represents the melody of the wall, the sound of the planet, the music of Heaven. In the book of Gaffori (Musica Practica) there is a musical system of the Universe. Gaffori measured the distance between the planets, and as a result, every planet has its own tone or sound. I put the notes in a line and I got a very special scale of the Stars, and I placed the notes in different points on the piano to construct the Harmony of the Universe.

I am not the first who has used this sound system in the history of music. This sound system can be found in the European music of Bach, Mozart, Liszt, and Wagner. For example in a melody from the Dante Symphony of Liszt, the melody of the Purgatory contains the notes of the stars. Another example is Tanhauser by Wagner. The tone of Venus is „E”, and the cave scene of Venus is in this tonality.

The First movement is Earth. I composed the musical symbols of the elements, soil, air, water and fire. The soil sound is the bass with the rhythm of the heartbeat. The water melody is flowing in the middle of the musical piece. In the highest part of the music you can hear the trillas of the air. The fire motif first is just a little spark. The audience can hear the sound of the genesis of the Earth.

The Venus part of the piece is the most interesting from our point of view. In the melody of the Venus you can see a mathematical incident. Not every pyramid has a symbol, the empty pyramids mean a kind of break or pause. The breaks are collecting the notes. The first note is alone, and after a break come two notes, break again and you can see three other notes, break and five. The notes of the melody are developing with the system of the Fibonacci numbers.

When I arrived at the Venus part during the reading of the Divine Comedy, the biggest surprise was reading: The spirits and the angels were greeting Dante and Beatrice with the melody of „Saint Hozanna”. This is the same song, the „Santus” that I had written from the Venus part of the wall.

Now, more than five hundred years later it is very difficult to find the truth. What is the message of the wall? But I feel, and I know that I am very near the truth. With the melodies of the wall and the system of Gaffori I could compose very moving cosmical music, that never happened before. This is my first piece of music of the spheres.

Thank you for your kind attention!

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