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Leonardo da Vinci as a Musician. by Emanuel Winternitz

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suddenly finds it given to Bramante (p. 38); so the references to the Villa Lante at Bagnaia are very misleading. I am credited (p. 277, footnote 25) with attributing the fountain and garden design to Carlo Maderno when in fact I have attributed the basic design to Vignola, noting that Maderno only designed the second casino as a twin to match the earlier one of Vignola. To describe the Isolotto fountain at Bagnaia as “a quincunx-shaped pool” denies completely the meaning of the word quincunx, and it is equally misleading to describe the fountain of the Montalto arms borne by four “mori” in the pool as a “fountain of the winds” so that it might be read as “a distant prophecy of Caserta’s Aeolus fountain” (p. 111).

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Emanuel Winternitz. *Leonardo da Vinci as a Musician*. New Haven—London: Yale University Press, 1982. 167 illus. + xxvi + 241 pp. \$29.95.

Emanuel Winternitz intended his study of Leonardo da Vinci as a musician to coordinate the artist’s musical interests with his other activities. He recreates Leonardo’s musical environment in Florence and Milan, describing his musician associates, and discussing the nature of Renaissance festivals, theatre, and other entertainments in which Leonardo participated. Winternitz examines instruments in contemporary paintings to distinguish the real from the fanciful, and identifies the *lira da braccio* at which Leonardo was adept. The *lira*, its bow, social status, and treatment in myth and art are considered as separate topics related in their relevance for Leonardo. Although a useful pedagogical approach, this topical treatment has the disadvantage in written form of unnecessary repetition. Winternitz analyzes Leonardo’s experiments in acoustics and his inventions of new instruments, which include melodic and chordal drums, and harpsichords with increasing and decreasing tone volumes. He also distinguishes successful inventions from nonfunctional ones, and in demonstrating how a new instrument could work, offers improved translations of many obscure passages in Leonardo’s notebooks.

Winternitz is reluctant to trace the development of Leonardo’s musical ideas where this might have been possible, given the precise dating of most of the artist’s notebooks, as recently demonstrated in Martin Kemp’s splendid study integrating Leonardo’s art and

thought. As a musicologist Winternitz is interested in the form and function of musical instruments, which may explain his failure to relate music in a broader way to Leonardo's painting. He does not consider Thomas Brachert's study of Leonardo's *Last Supper*, with its compositional elements arranged in small whole number ratios corresponding to contemporary musical modes. Nor are other musical analogies pursued, as in Leonardo's *Virgin and Child with St. Anne* in the Louvre, where the Virgin's drapery ascends along her right leg in broad folds diminishing across her back to terminate in gathered folds at the shoulder, which comprise a quickening visual pattern much in the manner of whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and grace notes.

Some issues raised by Winternitz are open to question, such as his interpretation of the ridges at the roof of an animal's mouth as frets in Leonardo's drawing of a fanciful lyre in the shape of an animal head (p. 40), or his reading of a cadaver in Carpaccio's *Preparation for the Entombment of Christ* as reaching for the Saviour's loin cloth when the creature is actually many feet removed on the opposite side of Christ's marble bier (p. 58). The reader might be able to correct the inverted captions for illustrations of works by Campagnola and Lorenzo Costa (Figs. 5.33 and 5.36), but it is difficult to minimize other errors, such as the birth of Paolo Giovio in 1543 (instead of 1483, p. 75), which in the sentence's full context also places Leonardo's birth in 1512. Leonardo's death is noted in several places as 1516 (pp. xxiv, 5, 6), and Winternitz has him leaving Florence for Milan for the first time in 1493 (p. 42). Although correct dates appear elsewhere, such inconsistencies are confusing. Winternitz's citation of Colleoni's death as 1466 (p. 44) instead of 1475 leads him to suggest that Leonardo had seen Verrocchio's designs for the mercenary leader's equestrian monument before 1476. The problem seems to be that Winternitz's book is a restatement of much he published in the form of articles over the previous forty years, but without benefit of up to date notes. The numerous digressions, speculations, and single sentence paragraphs are nettlesome, as is the tendency to introduce illustrations (published by Winternitz elsewhere) of instruments from later centuries, which have no direct bearing on Leonardo. Winternitz's efforts often yield brilliant analyses of Leonardo's innovations, offering insights into the depth of his understanding of natural science, but blatant errors of fact mar the book's promise.

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