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## Reconstructing (and) the Composer's Voice<sup>1</sup>

Florence, Biblioteca del conservatorio di musica, MS Basevi 2442 (hereafter Florence 2442), sometimes called the »Strozzi Chansonnier«, is an incomplete set of partbooks containing fifty-five French songs. Howard Mayer Brown, who wrote a series of articles on the manuscript, believed the partbooks to have been copied in Florence around 1527.<sup>2</sup> More recently, scholars including David Fallows, following Joshua Rifkin and others, have tended to assume that the date of copying is earlier, perhaps around 1510 to 1515, and that it was copied in France, or at least the scribe was French.<sup>3</sup> Many of the songs have concordances in Ottaviano Petrucci's *Canti* series or elsewhere, but the unica require reconstruction, thanks to the missing bassus partbook. The composers represented in the partbooks include Josquin des Prez, Ninot le Petit, Antoine Bruhier, Loyset Compere,

- 1 I would like to thank Wolfgang Fuhrmann, Klaus Pietschmann, and Immanuel Ott for generously inviting me to present at the workshop in Mainz; the vocal ensemble under the direction of Christian Rohrbach for performing my examples there; and especially the contributors to the reconstruction workshop in Salzburg, mentioned in full below, who have made this article possible.
- 2 Howard Mayer Brown, »Chansons for the Pleasure of a Florentine Patrician: Florence, Biblioteca del Conservatorio di Musica, MS Basevi 2442,« *Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Music: A Birthday Offering to Gustave Reese*, ed. Jan LaRue (New York, 1966), pp. 56–66. See also id., »The Music of the Strozzi Chansonier (Florence, Biblioteca del Conservatorio di Musica, MS Basevi 2442),« *Acta Musicologica* 40/2 (1968), pp. 115–129; and id., »Words and Music in Early 16th-Century Chansons: Text Underlay in Florence, Biblioteca del Conservatorio, Ms Basevi 2442,« *Formen und Probleme der Überlieferung mehrstimmiger Musik im Zeitalter Josquins Desprez*, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Munich, 1981), pp. 97–141.
- 3 See Joshua Rifkin's response to Brown at Brown, »Words and Music« (cf. fn. 2), p. 122. Rifkin's take was summarized in *Census-Catalogue of Manuscript Sources of Polyphonic Music 1400–1550*, compiled by the University of Illinois Musicological Archives for Renaissance Manuscript Studies. Renaissance Manuscript Studies I (Neuhausen/Stuttgart, 1979–88), vol. 1, p. 236. See also Lawrence F. Bernstein, »Notes on the Origin of the Parisian Chanson,« *The Journal of Musicology* 1 (1982), pp. 275–326, at 286–87 n. 28; Louise Litterick, »Out of the Shadows: The Double Canon *En l'ombre d'ung buissonnet*,« *Instruments, Ensembles, and Repertory, 1300–1600: Essays in Honour of Keith Polk*, ed. Timothy J. McGee and Stewart Carter (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 263–98, at 268–75; Richard Wexler, *Antoine Bruhier: Life and Works of a Renaissance Papal Composer* (Turnhout, 2014), pp. 49–68; David Fallows, »Gaspar and Japart: The Secular Works, with Particular Reference to Basevi 2442 and a Word about Fridolin Sicher,« and Carlo Bosi, »Caught in the Web of Texts: The Chanson Family *Bon vin / Bon temps* and the Disputed Identity of »Gaspart,« both in *Gaspar van Weerbeke: New Perspectives on his Life and Music*, ed. Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl and Paul Kolb (Turnhout), pp. 243–54 and 255–80, respectively; and the introduction to Gaspar van Weerbeke, *Collected Works*, vol. 5: *Settings of liturgical texts, songs, and instrumental works*. Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 106/V, ed. Paul Kolb and Agnese Pavanello in collaboration with Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl (American Institute of Musicology, forthcoming).

Antoine Brumel, and Pierre de la Rue.<sup>4</sup> There are also three compositions ascribed to »Gaspart.« The compositions are generally grouped by attribution, and the three »Gaspart« songs proceed one after the other as numbers 48 through 50.

»Gaspart« has most frequently been taken to mean Gaspar van Weerbeke, a Flemish composer active mostly in Milan and Rome from the 1470s to the 1510s.<sup>5</sup> Allan Atlas argued that »Gaspart« with a »j« or »g« at the beginning and an »e« or »t« at the end could not refer to the composer Jean Japart.<sup>6</sup> David Fallows, by contrast, suggested that a French scribe could have confused Gaspar with Japart, and the attribution could therefore refer to either figure.<sup>7</sup> Others have suggested that it might refer to other, minor musicians such as »Jaspar du Sanchoy,« a *petit vicaire* at Cambrai, »Jaspars,« *sangmeester* at Bergen-op-Zoom, and »Gasparo di Fiamengo,« a singer at the papal chapel.<sup>8</sup> As one of the editors of the Gaspar van Weerbeke edition, and specifically responsible for these songs, I argued that »potential confusion on the part of the scribe is no reason to disregard *prima facie* an attribution (such as »Gaspart«) which by all accounts appears to point to Weerbeke.«<sup>9</sup> Even so, Gaspar's other songs and instrumental works do not provide a clear compositional context in which to consider these pieces stylistically. Of the six such works with attributions to »Gaspart« or similar, three have conflicting attributions.<sup>10</sup> The three songs in Florence 2442 represent fully half of the composer's potential song output and are thus essential for understanding Gaspar's non-sacred compositional activity.

The first of these three songs, *Vray dieu quel paine m'esse*, is also transmitted in three Florentine chansonniers from the 1490s and in Petrucci's *Canti C* (Venice, 1503; RISM 1504<sup>3</sup>), among others. In addition to the »Gaspart« attribution in Florence 2442, it was attributed to Compere in *Canti C*.<sup>11</sup> As to which of these

4 For an index of compositions including a somewhat outdated list of concordances, see Brown, »Music of the Strozzi Chansonnier« (cf. fn. 2), pp. 124–26.

5 On Gaspar, see especially Gerhard Croll and Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl, »Weerbeke, Gaspar van,« *Grove Music Online* (last updated 2012), and the contributions to Gaspar van Weerbeke: New Perspectives, ed. Lindmayr-Brandl and Kolb (cf. fn. 3).

6 Jean Japart, *The Collected Works*. Masters and Monuments of the Renaissance 6, ed. Allan Atlas (New York, 2012), xxii–xxiii, xxxvi.

7 Fallows, »Gaspar and Japart« (cf. fn. 3). Carlo Bosi argues against this possibility; see »*Bon vin / Bon temps*« (cf. fn. 3).

8 Litterick, »Out of the Shadows« (cf. fn. 3), p. 273 n. 32, and Bosi, »*Bon vin / Bon temps*« (cf. fn. 3).

9 Introduction to Weerbeke, *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (cf. fn. 3). In the introduction I discussed further the various spellings of the song attributions, including »Gaspart.« See the notes to each individual piece for further comments on authorship.

10 The other three are *La Stangetta*, also attributed to Isaac and Obrecht; *O Venus bant*, also attributed to Josquin; and *Sans regretz*. See Weerbeke, *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (cf. fn. 3).

11 The third attribution, to »Matheus Pipalare« in the somewhat later CH-SGs, MS. 530, is generally dismissed as resulting from scribal confusion.

could be correct, Allan Atlas has favored Gaspar, but Fallows has recently suggested that both Gaspar and Compere are plausible.<sup>12</sup> Like Fallows I am unwilling to come down firmly on either side. To quote from my forthcoming edition: »[s]tylistically there is much to recommend Weerbeke's authorship [...], but there are no characteristics that unambiguously point to Weerbeke.«<sup>13</sup>

For the second and third of these songs, *Bon temps / Adieu mes amours* and *Que fait le cocu au bois*, no concordances survive. The question of authorship thus depends exclusively on how one interprets the »Gaspart« attribution and whether one considers that conclusion stylistically credible. Following his assumption of scribal confusion, Fallows tentatively suggested that these two compositions may have been composed by Japart.<sup>14</sup> But, assuming the attribution is not quite so ambiguous, I remain largely convinced that the composer was in fact Gaspar van Weerbeke. If these pieces date from around the end of the fifteenth century, one need not look for a later »Gaspar.«<sup>15</sup> As to the famous mention of a »dauphin« in *Bon temps*, Jeannette DiBernardo Jones has recently argued for other reasons that Gaspar spent some time in France in 1498 and 1499, and this could have provided a context for the composition of the song.<sup>16</sup>

Still, these two songs are difficult to judge stylistically, not least due to the missing bass part. Reconstruction of the bass at least allows them to be sung in a contrapuntally complete form. Yet in both songs there is no obvious »right answer« to reconstruction, and the potential solutions will inevitably owe a great deal to the specific contrapuntal/harmonic/melodic/textual insights of its author. Or, is it possible to get closer to the composer himself, to reconstruct a voice that is not just musically plausible, but that could have been composed by Gaspar?

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As it survives in Florence 2442, *Bon temps* is a quodlibet, with the top two voices taking their text from the *Bon temps / Bon vin* family of texts.<sup>17</sup> The *Bon temps* melody is found in the altus alone. The superius also sounds like it could be quoting a different song melody, but if so it remains unknown. The tenor begins with the melody and text of the famous song, *Adieu mes amours*. After quoting the beginning of the text of several other songs, the voices come together to sing

12 Allan Atlas, *The Cappella Giulia Chansonnier* (Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, C. G. XIII. 27) (Brooklyn, 1975), pp. 196–97, and Fallows, »Gaspar and Japart« (cf. fn. 3).

13 Weerbeke, *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (cf. fn. 3), commentary to *Vray dieu*.

14 Fallows, »Gaspar and Japart« (cf. fn. 3).

15 As did Bosi in »*Bon vin / Bon temps*« (cf. fn. 3).

16 Jones, »Gaspar van Weerbeke and France: The Poetic Witness of Guillaume Crétin,« *Gaspar van Weerbeke: New Perspectives*, ed. Lindmayr-Brandl and Kolb (cf. fn. 3).

17 The texts and melodies associated with them are described in Bosi, »*Bon vin / Bon temps*« (cf. fn. 3).

related bits of text for »le dauffin«, all ending with: »Sonnez, chantez soir et matin, sonnez la bien venue de monsigneur le dauffin.«<sup>18</sup>

For a workshop in Salzburg in the summer of 2017, eight participants, myself included, submitted solutions for both songs in advance.<sup>19</sup> The final versions to be published in the Gaspar edition will draw on insights from all of the submitted solutions.<sup>20</sup> One of the most creative, interesting, and effective reconstructions was that of *Bon temps* by Jaap van Benthem (see Example 1). Van Benthem approached his reconstruction as a composer and scholar particularly attuned to the ways of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century composition. Seeing a quodlibet, he treated it as a composer around 1500 might have done: integrate song incipits into a text, and compose a compelling line of counterpoint. The new text for his bass reconstruction is comprised of incipits from various Josquin songs. It does not quote the melodies of these songs, but that is not a problem: most of the song texts in the original three voices are not given with their original melody.<sup>21</sup>

My own approach to this same piece was less creative and more focused on specific contrapuntal possibilities. Seeing a handful of related, composite texts in the other voices, I selected phrases from them to create a composite text for the bass. (Almost all of the other reconstructions came up with similar textual solutions.) Musically, I was not concerned to create something interesting, but rather to come up with something that fits into Gaspar's sound world. Having spent years working specifically on Gaspar's music, this is something I am uniquely qualified to judge. Still, my insights into Gaspar's style are colored by my own musical skills and obsessions, which probably skew towards counterpoint.<sup>22</sup>

18 See Brown, »Chansons for the Pleasure of a Florentine Patrician« (cf. fn. 2), pp. 64–65, esp. n. 23.

19 This was on the final day of the conference »Gaspar van Weerbeke: Works and Contexts,« convened by Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl, Agnese Pavanello, and myself, and hosted by the Department of Musicology and Dance Studies at the University of Salzburg, June 29 to July 1, 2017. The eight participants who submitted solutions were Martin Eybl, Richard Freedman, Matthew Hall, Oliver Korte, Jaap van Benthem, Philip Weller, Magnus Williamson, and myself; other conference participants gave valuable insights during the workshop. I thank them all for their contributions, and in particular Eybl, Korte, Van Benthem, Weller, and Williamson for allowing me to discuss their solutions here. Length prevents me from discussing the particular insights of each solution in greater detail, but some of them may later be published online on the websites of the Gaspar Project and Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae (<http://www.gaspar-van-weerbeke.sbg.ac.at/> and [http://www.corpusmusicae.com/cmm/cmm\\_cc106.htm](http://www.corpusmusicae.com/cmm/cmm_cc106.htm)).

20 See Weerbeke, *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (cf. fn. 3). In this article, »my solution« refers to that which I composed for the Salzburg workshop, not that which I have since then put together for the edition.

21 As an alternative, Carlo Bosi (»*Bon vin / Bon temps*« [cf. fn. 3]) has suggested that the text of a different Josquin song, *Faulte d'argent*, might fit more appropriately in this textual context. But the melody of that song also does not fit obviously into the bass here.

22 To review Gaspar's compositional style, the first four volumes of his complete works have been published; see Gaspar van Weerbeke, *Collected Works*. Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 106,

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FlorC 2442, no. 49 Gaspard

C Bon temps je ne te puis laiss-ier,

A Bon temps ne vien-dra[s] tu

T A-dieu mes a-

B Com-ment peut a-voir joy-e, Com-ment peut a-

tu m'as l'a-mour don-né-e.

ja-mais? Tu m'a[s] don-né me-ren-col-

mours, a-dieu mon sou-las, A-dieu mes es-bas; hé-las,

voir joy-e en l'om-bre, en l'om-bre, en

Le-vez vous hau-guil-le-met-te, car il est jour.

li-e. Il est de bon-

hé-las. Des-sus ton lict, des-sus ton lict la-de-mour-rons.

l'om-bre dung buis-son-net au ma-ti-net, quant je vous voy-e d'ai-

Son-nez, chan-

ne-heu-re né qui tient sa-mi-e en un pré, sur l'her-be jol-li-e,

Chantez du coeur la bien-ve-nu-e de mon-sig-

se tran-si, quant je vous voy-e d'ai-se tran-si,

Example 1. Beginning of *Bon temps*, reconstructed by Jaap van Benthem.

ed. Gerhard Croll, Eric F. Fiedler, Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl, Agnese Pavanello, and Paul Kolb (American Institute of Musicology, 1998–present). The fifth and final volume, cited above and containing the works in question, is forthcoming.

The musicological discipline has often been preoccupied with the authorship of pieces, and in many cases (as with the two songs under discussion here) a definitive answer may never be forthcoming. But the reconstruction enterprise has only rarely and generally superficially considered how one might or should take authorship into consideration when putting together performable versions of compositions that survive incomplete. In the handful of articles on the reconstruction process, internal compositional characteristics are invariably the primary concern.<sup>23</sup> Analysis of a specific composer's style in order to inform the reconstruction tends to focus on considerations of voice range.<sup>24</sup>

Unlike much of the repertoire previously submitted to the reconstructive process, our two songs have a seemingly endless amount of potential solutions. All eight submitted versions were substantially different; indeed, it was often more surprising when two versions had the same or a similar solution to a specific passage. To put this another way, there were few sections or phrases where the internal clues gave a more or less definitive answer. To reconstruct these examples in particular, then, one has to weigh competing priorities, from internal musical considerations – counterpoint, voice leading, texture, text, and text underlay – to external musical considerations, in particular a specific composer's musical style.

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23 In Irving Godt, »The Restoration of Josquin's *Ave mundi spes Maria*, and Some Observations on Restoration,« *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 26/2 (1976), pp. 53–83, the discussion of whether the composition fits Josquin's style follows the completion of the »restoration« (p. 71). Likewise in Julie Cumming, »Composing Imitative Counterpoint Around a Cantus Firmus: Two Motets by Heinrich Isaac,« *Journal of Musicology* 28 (2011), pp. 231–88, reconstructions based mainly on internal compositional characteristics are then used as the basis for discussion of Isaac's compositional style. *The Lost Voices Project*, directed by Richard Freedman and Philippe Vendrix (<http://digitalduchemin.org/>), produced numerous reconstructions of mid-sixteenth-century French songs. Alongside this, it published an extensive thesaurus of contrapuntal devices to help define the musical style of the repertoire, but this is not composer-specific.

24 David Burn proposed a seven-step reconstruction process in »Reconstructing Senfl's Fragmentary Motets,« *Senfl-Studien* 2, ed. Stefan Gasch and Sonja Tröster (Tutzing, 2013), pp. 525–55. His fifth step involves comparing the (by now mostly complete) reconstruction with similar pieces by the same composer (pp. 546–47). Oliver Korte starts with a more extensive overview of a Brumel's voice ranges to determine that of the missing voice, but thoughts on the composer's style are largely left to the end; see »Reconstructing Antoine Brumel: How to Bring the Chanson »Dieu te gart, bergere« Back to Life,« *Journal of the Alamire Foundation* 8/1 (2016), pp. 165–79. Exceptionally, Theodor Dumitrescu, in »Reconstructing and Repositioning Regis's *Ave Maria* ... *virgo serena*,« *Early Music* 37 (2009), pp. 73–88, makes reconstruction decisions with frequent reference to what he considers characteristic of Regis's style.

Four examples from these two songs, as reconstructed in multiple ways, will serve to demonstrate some of these competing priorities. The examples were chosen because the solutions are interesting, and while some reconstructions were arguably better than others, there is rarely a solution which is obviously the best.

The first example is at the first four measures of *Bon temps*, which present an unusual contrapuntal challenge. The bass has to enter alone in the first measure, and thereafter provides accompaniment to the cadence in the superius and altus, which has a notated *e*-flat. (See the solutions alongside each other in Example 2.) Van Benthem's characteristically elegant solution has the bass in parallel tenths with the superius. The counterpoint works nicely, and the musical line is perfectly formed (see above in Example 1). Oliver Korte has parallel tenths with the altus, which is also elegant. It incorporates offset parallel octaves with the superius, but, as he says, these sort of parallels are not found infrequently. He also incorporated the melody of *Adieu mes amours* in the opening (Example 2a). Philip Weller had a similar solution to Korte, with a similar citation of *Adieu mes amours*, but he avoids the somewhat anomalous parallels by approaching the *c* from the *b*-flat below (Example 2b). This clever solution is unfortunately well out of the bounds of Gaspar's usual bass range.<sup>25</sup>

My own, rather unsatisfactory solution embraced an accented diminished fifth between tenor and bass in the second half of the third measure (Example 2c). On the other hand, I avoided the accented sixth with a *b*-flat in the bass at the down-beat of the second measure. I prioritized having a *g* in the bass here, as strong octaves at the openings of pieces are generally characteristic of Gaspar. Accented sixths which do not resolve in stepwise motion to the octave are correspondingly rare. There was nevertheless a way around the preceding accented diminished fifth, and this can be found in Magnus Williamson's reconstruction (Example 2d). But in Martin Eybl's elegant solution, this problem is circumvented entirely with rests (Example 2e).

In the middle of the song (measures 11–26), one has to decide where to place the musical phrases in the bass (see Example 3). It is only contrapuntally necessary at measure 13 (probably), at measure 20 (due to the fourth), and at measures 21 to 22. The three solutions presented here are totally different, although none of the solutions are particularly satisfactory at measure 20. Van Benthem has the bass enter at the end of measure 11, easily covering the contrapuntal gap at measure 13 (see above in Example 1). His bass voice remains largely out-of-sync with the phrases in the other voices, thus overlapping at their cadences. His final phrase enters at measure 20, immediately providing contrapuntal support for the

<sup>25</sup> This was pointed out by Korte at the workshop in Salzburg, who instead now recommends a solution an octave lower.

a)

Musical score for part a) in 2/2 time, key of B-flat major. It features four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "Bon temps, je ne te puis lais - sier." (Soprano), "Bon temps, ne vien" (Alto), "A - dieu" (Tenor), and "A - dieu \_\_\_\_\_ mes a - mours, a - dieu mon" (Bass).

b)

Musical score for part b) in 2/2 time, key of B-flat major. It features four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "Bon temps, je ne te puis lais - sier." (Soprano), "Bon temps, ne vien" (Alto), "A - dieu" (Tenor), and "A - dieu \_\_\_\_\_ mes a - - - - - mours" (Bass).

c)

Musical score for part c) in 2/2 time, key of B-flat major. It features four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "Bon temps, je ne te puis lais - sier." (Soprano), "Bon temps, ne vien" (Alto), "A - dieu" (Tenor), and "Bon temps, je ne te puis lais - sier." (Bass).

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d)

Bon temps, je ne te puis laisser:

Bon temps, ne vien

A - dieu

[Bon temps, ne vien - dra tu ja - mais? \_\_\_\_\_ Tu]

c)

Bon temps, je ne te puis laisser:

Bon temps, ne vien

A - dieu

A - dieu \_ mes a - mours

**Example 2.** Opening of *Bon temps*, reconstructed by (a) Oliver Korte, (b) Philip Weller, (c) myself, (d) Magnus Williamson, and (e) Martin Eybl.

fourth and forming a duet with the altus in 21 and 22. Korte's phrases, like mine, are more closely aligned with those of the existing voices (Example 3a). His bass enters at the gap in measure 13. Measures 20 to 22 are covered by a much longer phrase. To get around the tenor at measure 20, I cheated and changed its final note, pretending that there was a cadence there that is not in the source (Example 3b) – thereby breaking the first rule of reconstruction! Otherwise the phrases in my bass line cover most of the same measures as in Korte's solution. At measure 18 I incorporated some inverted counterpoint. Given that this is not typical of Gaspar, I probably should have avoided this.

Le - vez vous hau guil - le - met - te car il est  
 me - ren - co - li - e:  
 he - las, he - las. Des - suls ton licet, ton licet et la de - mour -  
 Des - suls ton licet, et la de - mour - rons.

jour.  
 il est de bon - ne'heu - re né qui tient s'a - mi - e en ung pré - sur  
 - rons. Chan - tez du cueur fin la bien ve - nue  
 Chan - tez du cueur fin la bien ve - nue de

Son - nez, chan - tez du bon cueur fin, son  
 l'her - be jo - li - e. Son - nez la bien ve - nu - e de  
 de mon - sig - neur le dauf - fin. Son  
 mon - sig - neur le dauf - fin. Son - nez bon - bar - des, son

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Le - vez vous hau guil - le - met - te car il est  
 me - ren - co - li - e:  
 he - las, he - las. Des - suls ton lict, ton lict et la de - mour -  
 Le - vez vous hau guil - le - met - te.

jour.  
 il est de bon - ne'heu - re né qui tient s'a - mi - e en ung pré sur  
 - rons. Chan - tez du coeur fin la bien ve - nue  
 il est de bon - ne'heu - re né qui tient s'a - mi - e en ung

Son - nez, chan - tez du bon coeur fin, son  
 l'her - be jo - li - e. Son - nez la bien ve - nu - e de  
 de mon - sig - neur le dauf - fin. Son  
 pré sur l'her - be jo - li - e. Son - nez la bien ve - nue, son

Example 3. *Bon temps*, mm. 11–26, reconstructed by (a) Oliver Korte and (b) myself.

Structurally, *Que fait le cocu* bears few similarities to *Bon temps*. The song has no apparent quotations of pre-existing music or text. It begins with long imitative duos, first between the tenor and bass, and then between the superius and altus.<sup>26</sup> The tenor in the first duo is almost identical to the superius in the second, but whereas the tenor precedes the bass, the superius follows the altus. The bass in the first duo therefore cannot simply reproduce the altus in the second. The imitation which works best at the opening is at the fifth below, offset by one semi-breve. Williamson carried this imitation through a full six measures (Example 4a), whereas Weller's imitation lasted only four measures (Example 4b).

Que fait le co - cu au bois, qui ne vol - le,  
 Que fait le co - cu au bois, qui ne vol -

vol - le, vol - le, vol - le'au - - - - cu - - - - ne fois?  
 - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le'au - cu - - - - ne fois?

Que fait le co - cu au bois, qui ne vol - le,  
 Que fait le co - cu au bois, qui ne vol - le, vol - le, vol - le,

vol - le, vol - le, vol - le'au - - - - cu - - - - ne fois?  
 qui ne vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, qui ne vol - le au - cu - ne fois?

Example 4. *Que fait le cocu*, mm. 1–11, reconstructed by (a) Magnus Williamson and (b) Philip Weller.

26 It is hypothetically possible that the second duo was actually a trio with the bass, as in Van Benthem's reconstruction. But the superius/altus duo as it survives is already contrapuntally complete.

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Almost all of the solutions incorporated this imitation from the beginning, breaking off at various points. This opening struck me as very unusual for Gaspar. Among Gaspar's music which begins with an imitative duet, the imitation is almost always at the unison or octave. In non-imitative duets at the opening, the voices almost always begin at the octave. I was unhappy both with the somewhat unusual imitation but also with the strong *b*-flat in a piece with a dominant *f* tonality. Of course, while it's easy to say that this is unusual, it is impossible to say that Gaspar would not have done this. In any case, my solution begins at the octave, before quickly joining the expected imitation at the fifth below (see Example 5).

Soprano (S):

Alto (A):

Tenor (T):

Que fait le co - cu au bois, qui ne vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, au - cu - ne fois? ne vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, que fait le

8

Que fait le co - cu au bois, qui

Que fait le co - cu au bois, qui ne vol - le,

vol - le'au - - cu - - ne fois?

vol - le au - cu - ne fois?

16

ne vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, que

vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, que fait le

que fait

que fait le

23

fait le co - cu au bois, qui ne vol-le'au - cu - - - - ne  
 co - cu au \_\_\_\_\_ bois, qui ne vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, qui ne vol-le'au-cu - ne  
 le co - cu \_\_\_\_\_ au bois, qui ne vol - le, vol - le'au - - - cu - ne  
 co - cu au bois, \_\_\_\_\_ qui ne vol - le au - cu - ne

30

fois? Ung hom - me'est  
 fois? Ung hom - me'est en ces - te vil - le, ces - te vil - le,  
 fois? Ung hom - me'est en ces - te  
 fois? Ung hom - me'est en ces - te vil - le, Ung hom -

38

en ces - te vil - le qui est co - cu par ma foy.  
 en ces - te vil - le qui est co - cu \_\_\_\_\_ par ma \_\_\_\_\_ foy. \_\_\_\_\_  
 vil - le qui est co - cu par ma foy.  
 me'est en ces - te vil - le qui est co - cu par ma \_\_\_\_\_ foy.



66  
vol - le, vol - le, vol - le, vol - le'au - cu - ne fois?  
8  
vol - le, vol - le'au - cu - - - - ne fois?  
8  
qui \_\_\_\_\_ ne vol - le'au - cu - - - - ne fois?  
qui ne vol - le au - cu - - - - ne fois?

Example 5. *Que fait le cocu*, reconstructed by myself.

The final example is at the end of this song, measures 58 to 65.<sup>27</sup> Even more so than the other examples, this section demonstrated the wide variety of possibilities for reconstruction. The three existing voices have short phrases broken up by rests with the text »si ne volle« and »volle volle volle.« The voices occasionally sing the same text simultaneously in pairs, but on the whole this section exhibits (if I may) Gaspardian irregularity. Without the bass, the contrapuntal texture is very thin between measures 60 and 65, but the bass is never unambiguously necessary. Korte's solution is the most musically dense, with longer phrases in the bass (Example 6a). Van Benthem has the bass mostly aligned with the tenor (Example 6b). Williamson's solution (Example 6c) and my own (Example 5) have some surprising similarities, including the bass in tenths with the altus in measures 58 and 59. Despite the similarities, my bass line is mostly independent of the other voices and covers the overlaps.

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27 My initial transcription, which was the basis for the reconstructions, had a small mistake: the second note in the tenor of measure 60 is an *a*, not a *g*. Van Benthem corrected this in his reconstruction, and Korte later pointed the mistake out to me. I leave the reconstructions as they were initially submitted.

# Reconstructing (and) the Composer's Voice



System 1: Four staves of music in a single system. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line and rests. The second and third staves are piano accompaniment with rhythmic patterns. The bottom staff is a bass line with a steady eighth-note accompaniment.



System 2: Four staves of music in a single system. The top staff continues the vocal line with more complex rhythmic patterns. The piano accompaniment and bass line continue with similar rhythmic motifs.



System 3: Four staves of music in a single system. The top staff continues the vocal line. The piano accompaniment and bass line continue with similar rhythmic motifs.

Musical score for Example 6(a), reconstructed by Oliver Korte. It consists of four staves: Treble, Alto, Tenor, and Bass clefs. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Musical score for Example 6(b), reconstructed by Jaap van Benthem. It consists of four staves: Treble, Alto, Tenor, and Bass clefs. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Musical score for Example 6(c), reconstructed by Magnus Williamson. It consists of four staves: Treble, Alto, Tenor, and Bass clefs. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Example 6. *Que fait le cocu*, mm. 58–65, reconstructed by (a) Oliver Korte, (b) Jaap van Benthem, and (c) Magnus Williamson.

Sometimes in reconstruction, it feels like we can get very close to the original. In these cases, I fear we are still grasping in the dark. Gaspar's songs are so difficult because of the lack of internal clues such as pervasive imitation or a unified way of dealing with text. I might see this as further evidence of Gaspar's authorship; but whatever the case may be, trying to compose like a specific composer challenges us to address questions of style.

But individual style is difficult to assess. Some considerations are easy to confirm by paging through the edition; other claims would be more easily »proven« using analytical software such as the Josquin Research Project.<sup>28</sup> Both the edition and the software are limited by the quantity and quality of the surviving sources: there can be no absolutely definitive statements about a composer's style. Complicating the picture further, the three »Gaspart« songs in Florence 2442 are the only four-voice songs potentially by Gaspar. This makes it difficult to know where to look for external clues. One might convincingly argue that it would be better to model these reconstructions on similar types of pieces by any contemporary composer, rather than on different types of pieces by the same composer – though these approaches are not mutually exclusive.

While my claims about what Gaspar would or would not have done as a composer are at a minimum debatable, I nevertheless consider this process a useful exercise as part of an ongoing discussion on musical style. And, while using the Josquin Research Project has helped to dispel certain illusions that I once had, much insightful recent work on musical style appears to have been done without the aid of computer-based analysis – work that could only be done by spending a *lot* of time reading, singing, or playing through the music.<sup>29</sup> That my conception of Gaspar's style derives substantially from his masses and motets is not necessarily a problem: while some structural procedures (for example) might be found only in masses or multipartite motets, the sorts of qualities I have mentioned here need not to be limited to a specific genre. And if Gaspar devoted the majority of his compositional career to sacred music, one might expect to find a similar compositional voice in the songs. The evidence of the three surviving voices indeed speaks to this point.

Where the authorship is at least somewhat questionable, another potential pitfall emerges. For, having composed bass lines in the style of Gaspar van Weerbeke,

28 Jesse Rodin, project director; <http://josquin.stanford.edu/>. Unfortunately, as of February 2020, only three motets by Gaspar have been incorporated into the project website. See also his contribution in this volume.

29 For Gaspar, I would highlight especially Jesse Rodin, *Josquin's Rome* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 134–63, and Fabrice Fitch, »»Under the Radar« or »Caught in the Crossfire«? The Music of Gaspar van Weerbeke and its Reception History,« Gaspar van Weerbeke: New Perspectives, ed. Lindmayr-Brandl and Kolb (cf. fn. 3).

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I may have accidentally »Gaspar-ized« two songs which were actually composed by Jean Japart or some other Gaspar. Now, about to appear in a printed edition with their Gaspardian bass, it could be even more difficult to dislodge the attribution. On this point, though, I am comfortable enough with the attribution to take this risk and confident that musicologists can judge these questions for themselves without giving undue consideration to the reconstructed bass line. In the meantime, the reconstructions will hopefully provide an impulse for research and analysis and an adequate starting point for performers.