

SALOMONE ROSSI EBREO A JEWISH MUSICIAN BETWEEN THE RENAISSANCE AND THE BAROQUE

There is little extant information about the life of Salomone Rossi. He was born around 1570, and his life spanned the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the eras known as the late Renaissance and the early Baroque. His was an old Jewish family in Mantova, while he, himself, was a practicing Jew. By culture and religious faith he belonged to a group whose members, until not long before him, were persecuted and condemned by the Inquisition.

It is noteworthy that, with the support of Jewish and Christian patrons, especially of the Gonzaga, Dukes of Mantova, this enormously talented composer, who went by the name of "the Jew" (hebreo), was able to obtain a thorough musical training in the ducal court, whose signore, by the standards of the age, had extended to their city's Jews especially tolerant conditions of life. During his life, Rossi obtained great recognition in the European musical world. His works were performed as far away as Portugal, and were praised almost as much as those of his contemporary Claudio Monteverdi.

Salomone Rossi's musical production represents an extraordinary and brilliantly successful example of the encounter and integration of two cultures. In the realm of vocal music, it is worth recording "Solomon's canticles" for which the composer set to music David's psalms in Hebrew. In this piece, he renovated the contemporary Hebrew liturgy by introducing Christian harmonies, and using both the polyphonic style drawn from the madrigal, and the new compositional techniques that were then flourishing in Italy, such as the basso continuo. Rossi could express himself with equal ease both in Hebrew and in Italian, drawing for his compositions on both languages and musical traditions. But it is also in his intense and expressive instrumental compositions that, quite unexpectedly, one finds echoes of traditional Hebrew music.

Salomone Rossi's oeuvre represents one of the first links between western European and Jewish musical cultures, a quality that bestows on its author an importance that transcends the musical realm. In this sense, Salomone Rossi was the first Jewish musical composer who can be fully identified as belonging to the western European musical tradition.

Mysteriously, for all its very distinguished quality, his musical repertory has been little explored in our day. His work, product of a genial commixture of styles belonging to diverse cultures, has genuinely interested our ensemble, leading us to study Rossi's work more deeply and systematically.

ENSEMBLE LA DAFNE

Stefano Rossi - violin I

Ayako Matsunaga - violin II

Rosita Ippolito - viola da gamba

Fabiano Merlante - theorbo, baroque guitar

Valeria Montanari - harpsichord

SALOMONE ROSSI EBREO

A Jewish composer in XVIIth Century Italy

SALOMONE ROSSI - Sonata sesta sopra l'Aria di Tordiglione

Il quarto libro de varie sonate, gagliarde, brandi e corrente. Venezia 1642

SALOMONE ROSSI (1570 - 1630c.) - Sinfonia prima

Il terzo libro de varie sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, brandi e corrente. Op.2 Venezia 1623

SALOMONE ROSSI (1570 - 1630c.) - Sonata sopra l'aria di Ruggiero

Il terzo libro de varie sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, brandi e corrente. Op.2 Venezia 1623

MARTINO PESENTI (1600c. - 1648c.) - Corrente detta l'Ingannatrice

Il secondo libro delle correnti alla francese. Venezia 1630

ANTONIO BERTALI (1605 - 1669) Chiaccona per violino solo

ms. 176

FRANCESCO CAVALLI (1602 - 1676) - Canzon a 3

Musiche sacre concernenti Messa, e Salmi concertati. Venezia 1656

SALOMONE ROSSI (1570 - 1630c.) - Sonata in dialogo detta "La Viena"

Il terzo libro de varie sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, brandi e corrente. Op.2 Venezia 1623

BIAGIO MARINI (1594 - 1663) - Sonata sopra "La Monica"

Sonate, symphonie, canzoni, passemmezzi, corenti, gagliarde e retornelli. Op.8 Venetia, 1629

ANTONIO BERTALI sonata a 2 violino e viola da gamba col basso per l'organo

ms. S-Uu

SALOMONE ROSSI - Sonata undecima detta La Scatola

Il quarto libro de varie sonate, gagliarde, brandi e corrente. Venezia 1642