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La Cetra Cornuta : the horned lyre of the Christian World

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(Regulations 2018, Article 12. Propositions)

1. The cetra has remained relatively unnoticed in music history research because it is iconographically elusive, confusing in literary use, overshadowed by the lute in musical function, and superficially similar in morphology to the citole (which it in fact antedates).
2. The cetra was cultivated in three distinct periods, (1) 11th c. - first quarter 13th c., (2) second quarter 13th c. - second half 14th c. and (3) second half 14th c. - 1530's circa, although in the first two of these periods, physical changes are not clearly noticeable
3. The cetra's musical function never approached the variety and sophistication of the lute during the 15th and 16th centuries.
4. The features of the third cetra period (second half 14th c. - 1530's) were referencing kithara descriptions by Classical authors as well as ancient Roman monuments showing the kithara, but from c. 1450-c.1520 the citole was recalled as a new morphological element.
5. Frets on the cetra were diatonic until the 14th century; from the 14th c., chromatic frets appear on some examples. Yet "diatonic frets" is only a relative term, because chromatic notes could also be sounded with these frets.

6. The cetra was the only necked chordophone before the 16th c. to feature metal strings. This was a new feature during the first decades of the 15th c., driven by substantial technical progress in the manufacture of drawn iron strings in Germany made during the late 14th c., and perhaps also by textual references to commentaries upon Classical authors and the Bible.
7. “Authenticity” regarding the use of music iconography to construct instruments for the modern performance of historical music has seen considerable published research since the 1970’s, whereas “authenticity” regarding historical aesthetics of music before c. 1550 has seen very little published research.
8. “Improvisation” and “composition” are concepts with opposite meanings for many musicians and music historians today, yet two such contradictory terms did not exist before the 16th century.
9. The use of rubato in the performance of mensural music prior to the second half of the 16th c. is in direct opposition to all historical sources related to music theory and performance, with the exception of passages notated with the corona sign (fermata) or *punctus organi* of Franco of Cologne.
10. There has never been a moment of greater relative change in the percentage of people wishing to pursue music as a profession in Western culture than during the two decades of the 1960’s and 1970’s.
11. Electronic media has increasingly replaced the Church in the West as the definitive Authority on world view during the last century. The use of the internet has accelerated this trend significantly.

12. Social media promotes itself as facilitating communication between people, yet in truth it allows social alienation to flourish as never before. There is a parallel between driving a car and making comments on social media: in both cases the participant uses the activity to express their personality behind a veil of anonymity, thus showing their true personality traits.