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Images for the music: drawings and secular cantatas

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Propositions

1. Behind the anonymous “Master of the Roman Songbook” stands an artist fully embedded in Rome’s seventeenth-century musical circles, as his decorated cantata manuscripts reveal.
2. The decorated Ottobonian cantatas in the British Library are the missing link in Filippo Juvarra’s Roman graphic production, revealing the architect and designer in formation.
3. The drawings in the Ashmolean album reveal how the prestige of Stefano della Bella’s name shaped the later reception and market value of decorated cantata manuscripts.
4. Carlo Antronio Buffagnotti united composition, drawing, and performance, turning the page itself into a stage.
5. Kept in music libraries and absent from payment records, decorated cantata manuscripts have escaped the gaze and methods of art history.
6. The materiality of decorated cantata manuscripts—encompassing paper, ink, and hand—deserves the same critical attention that art history reserves for other works of art.
7. The baroque musical score is a cultural object: it embodies shared knowledge, imagination, and craftsmanship, realised in material form.
8. At the intersection of art and music history, decorated musical manuscripts draw from a shared well of imagination.
9. What we learn from our mentors is not knowledge, but the art of remaining curious.
10. Bibliographies are mirrors of the soul: some reflect curiosity, others vanity.
11. During a doctorate, friendship means finding people who share their sources as generously as they share themselves.
12. We walk on paths cleared by others; gratitude is not optional, it is structural.