**Music supplement to Lute News 143 (October 2022): Josquin part 3 - the second selection of motets - Five French Ballets**

**Josquin part 3: motets II**

This is the third in the series of music by Josquin de Pres (*c*.1450-1521) intabulated for the lute, and includes five more motets, in nine parts in all (1284 bars total).[[1]](#footnote-1) It is thought that the portrait (right) of a musician painted by Leonardo da Vinci is of Josquin. It is dated to the 1480s when the composer was in his 30s.



The selection of lute settings of motets here are less well known to modern lutenists and there are relatively few original sources for each - just one each for three of them, and five for the the other two - also only one has been recorded as far as I know (see below). However, they are all rewarding to play and deserve to be better known. The intabulations for lute follow the vocal originals bar for bar and all sources have the same number of bars (apart from a few errors and omissions). However, the sources range from more direct intabulation through lightly elaborated figuration to heavily embellished settings, and I have chosen the simpler settings when there are more than one source to choose from. The more direct intabulations (J23, J25) are plain but easier to play and the beauty of the melody and counterpoint is more prominent, whereas the more embellished settings (J27) are a challenge to play and the melody and counterpoint are obscured by the elaborate figuration. It takes a virtuoso to do it justice, such as Jacob Heringman's recording of Bakfark's setting of J24.[[2]](#footnote-2)

It seems likely that the printed sources are reproduced as they were intended to be played, the settings in the lute tutors of Gerle and Newsidler presumably intended for students of the lute and those in the prints of Ochsenkun and Bakfark clearly for more experienced or even professional lutenists. However, the purpose of the more direct intabulations lacking written out ornamented phrases in the manuscript sources D-Mbs 267 and 272 is possibly not as clear, but may be intended only as a an aide memoire or guide for the person or people that used the manuscript to improvise the embellishment and ornament in different ways when they played or performed from it. In fact, when there are multiple sources, it is significant that they are all closely related to each other with identical bars interspersed with other passages with different degrees of embellishment, as if they represent different attempts at improvising on the model. This suggests that we should try improvising on the plainer settings here! The settings by the lute masters Hans Gerle and Hans Newsidler (J24, J26) are the most satisfying with just the right amount of figuration added (for me anyway) to sustain the sound of the lute. And athough Newsidler did lightly embellish the model, he commented at the end of the tablature to J26 that 'I have not decorated the Psalm for it is in itself very good, and so that a beginner can also have something to play in this book'.[[3]](#footnote-3) The models are all for four voices although frequently reduced to a two or three voice texture. The four voices with two or three voice passages is retained in the intabulations except Hans Gerle's setting of J24, used here, reduces the texture to a maximum of three voices thus clarifying the harmonic texture. The intabulations also either retain the original tonality (J24, J25) or else transpose down (J23, J26, J27) and all settings are for a regular renaisance six course lute, except J27 employs scordatura tuning with the sixth course lowered by a tone in the original but adapted for seven course lute here.

**J23.** **Ecce tu pulchra es** [Behold you are fair] NJE[[4]](#footnote-4) 14.6, 4 voc to text from *The Song of Songs* chapter 1:15-16. Unembellished intabulation in up to four voices set a fourth below the vocal model. Tablature letters in red (grey in printed version of the supplement)[[5]](#footnote-5) are based on the tenor voice to be sung to the underlaid somewhat garbled text beginning 'Amica mea oculi tui colu[m]baru[m], ecce tu pulcra es'.

Pisador 1552, ff. [78r-78v] *Otra motete de Iusquin, de tota pulchra* pp. 4-5

[index: *Tota pulchra es de Iusquin a quatro*] - vihuela

**J24. Qui habitat in adjutorio altissimi** [He that dwells in the aid of the most high] - **Non accedat ad te malum** [There will no evil come to you] NJE 18.7, 4 voc in two parts to the text of Psalm 90, the first part from line 1 and the second part from line 20. The intabulations of all three parts are in the same tonality as the vocal model. There are four sources for lute of the complete two part motet, plus another source with only a fragment of the first twenty-two bars of the first part. The version included here is from a print of Hans Gerle with a moderate amount of embellishment with quaver phrases. A comparison of all the sources reveals a range of settings that are closely related to each other by many identical bars but differing in embellishment elsewhere.[[6]](#footnote-6) These five versions form a remarkable spectrum of gradually increasing embellishment in the sequence D-Lr 1196 < D-Mbs 267 < D-Mbs272 < Gerle < Ochsenkun < Bakfark, the sources collectively presenting an object lesson in how to embellish an intabulation. The first two are more direct intabulations with crotchets as the fastest rhythm, the next two add few and many quavers, respectively, and the final two add few and many semiquavers, Bakfark latter breaking into passages of continuous quavers more like a contrapunto.

**I.** Gerle 1533, ff. 74v-77v *Qui habitat* - bar 19 absent 6-9

D-Lr 1196, p. 4 *Qui habitat in adiutorio altissimi Iosquini* - bars 1-22

D-Mbs 267, ff. 14v-16r *Qui habitat 4or vocum Josquin*

*- pr*[im]*a par*[s]

D-Mbs 272, ff. 77v, 79r, 78v *Qui habitat der erst taill*

Ochsenkun 1558, ff. 27r-28v *Qui habitat. IIII Vocum.*

*Iosquin de Pres*

Bakfark 1565/1569, ff. 19r-21r *Qui habitat in adiutorio*

*altissimi, in protectione Dei coeli comorabitur.*

*4 Voc. i pars Iosquin. De pres* - BakfarkH[[7]](#footnote-7) II/31a

**II.** Gerle 1533, ff. 78r-80r *Der ander teil. Non accedat* 10-12

D-Mbs 267, ff. 16r-17r *Sec*[un]*da pars Non accadatt*

D-Mbs 272, ff. 78r, 79v-80r *Qui habitat der ander taill*

Ochsenkun 1558, ff. 29r-30r *Qui habitat. IIII Vocum.*

*Iosquin de Pres*

Bakfark 1565/1569, ff. 21r-23r *Non accedat ad te malum,*

*secunda pars* - bars 1-25 double length of rhythm signs compared to other sources - BakfarkH II/31b

**J25. In exitu Israel de Egypto** [When Israel went out of Egypt] - **Deus autem noster in celo** [But our God is in heaven] - **Dominus memor fuit nostri** [The Lord has been mindful of us] NJE 17.4, 4 voc in three parts to the text of Psalm 113, the first part from line 1, the second part from line 11 and the third part from line 20. There were three sources known for lute but one is now lost, plus two sources for a 4-course renaissance guitar. The two sources of the intabulation for lute that we have are in the same tonality as the vocal model. The one used here, in D-Mbs 272, is plain with no faster rhythms than crotchets and the other, in Ochsenkun, is elaborate with many phrases with written out ornamentation ending in semiquavers.[[8]](#footnote-8)

**I.** D-Mbs 272, ff. 82v-83r *In exitu Israell der erst taill* 13-15

Königsberg Gen. 2.150 [In exitu Israel] - lost

Ochsenkun 1558, ff. 22v-24r *In exitu Israel de Egipto*

*IIII Vocum. Iosquin de Pres* - bars 92-96 missing

cf. Brayssing 1553, ff. 7r-10v *In exitu israel de Aegypto* - guitar

Phalèse & Bellère 1570, ff. 37v-41r *In exitu Israel*

*de Aegypto* - guitar

**II.** D-Mbs 272, ff. 83v-84r *In exitu Israell der ander taill* 16-18

Königsberg Gen. 2.150 [Deus autem] - lost

Ochsenkun 1558, ff. 24r-25v *SECVNDA PARS*

**III.** D-Mbs 272, ff. 84v-85r *In exitu Israell der drit taill* 18-20

Ochsenkun 1558, ff. 25v-27r *TERTIA PARS*

**J26.** **Memor esto verbi tui** [You be mindful of your words to your servant] - **Portio mea Domine** [O Lord my portion] NJE 17.14, 4 voc to the text of Psalm 118, the first part from line 1 and second part from line 9. The unique lute intabulation is a tone lower than the vocal model. The first part is ornamented with occasional phrases including quavers, but the second part is nearer a direct intabulation with rhythms no faster than crotchets.

**I.** Newsidler Ander 1536, sigs. S3r-T2r *xxxiii. Joß quin*

*de preß. Memor esto* 22-24

**II.** Newsidler Ander 1536, sigs. T2r-V1r *xxxiiii. Memor*

*esto der ander theyl* 25-27

**J27.** **Absolon fili mi** [Absolon my son (the third and favourite son of King David who rebelled against his father and was killed by Joab)] NJE \*14.1, 4 voc to text from *Samuel* chapter 18:33. The intabulation is set a minor third below the vocal model that ends with a 17-bar passage (from bar 52) that is repeated (from bar 69). The setting is embellished with quaver figures and occasional semiquavers right from the beginning. The German tablature notation in Ochsenkun is unusual in several respects: firstly the 6th-course is notated as numbers 1, 2, 3, etc. with a bar above for open, first fret, second fret, etc., secondly the ciphers for voice parts in chords are lined up horizontally to show voice leading which is useful when playing from the original tablature (but not the French tablature transcription), and thirdly ciphers are frequently duplicated to show unison notes in the vocal original but this is not useful when playing as the lute can only sound oneof them. The attribution to Josquin has been questioned because the motet is atypical of him and it is only ascribed in one vocal source that has other unreliable attributions, however the lute intabulation is also ascribed to Josquin.

Ochsenkun 1558, ff. 30r-31r *Absolon fili mi. IIII Vocum.*

*Iosquin de Pres* 28-30

**Five French Ballets**

Here are five ballets from three manuscripts as page fillers. All three are in the National Bibliothèque in Paris Rés.1108 and Rés.F.993 of french and Vmd.29 Italian prevenance, although the title of the ballet from the latter indicates that it is of French origin. All three were copied in the period *c.*1600-1620 and the Ballet du Roy (B1), des Luts (B2) and Franzese (B5) could have been be from any of the French court ballets staged during the reigns of Henri IV (1589-1610) or Louis XIII (1610-1643). However, Ballet des Armafrodites (B4 1-7) may be based on a suite of related dances from the Ballet de Madame performed in 1615, in which a fourteen year old Louis XIII is known to have danced the part of Hermaphrodites in the Ballet des Androgynes - contraversially it seems as his critics thought it was not manly enough an image for the King.[[9]](#footnote-9) Les flambeaux (as in des Porteflambeaux or torch bearers of B3) also danced in the Balet des Ardents on the same occasion, but torch bearers were a common feature of Ballet de cour.

**B1.** F-Pn Rés.F.993 [*c.*1605-10], f. 3r i *Ballet Du Roy* 3

**B2.** F-Pn Rés.1108 [*c.*1610-20], f. 25r *Ballet des Luts* 3

**B3.** F-Pn Rés.1108, f. 24v *Ballet des Porteflambeaux* - torch bearers[[10]](#footnote-10) 3

**B4a.** F-Pn Rés.1108, f. 25v *Ballet des Armafrodites* [1 partie] 20

**B4b.** F-Pn Rés.1108, f. 26r-27r *Ballet des Armafrodites 2-7 partie* 21

**B5.** F-Pn Rés.Vmd.29 [*c.*1600-1610], f. 6v *Ballo Franzese* 30

*John H. Robinson - September 2022*

1. Twenty intabulations for lute of the 110 motets Josquin is thought to have composed. The first part of 14 secular works was in *Lute News* 132 (December 2019) and 2 secular and 6 motets in *Lute News* 138 (July 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Jacob Heringman recorded Bakfark's setting of J24 for *Black Cow* (Discipline Global Mobile DGM9906, 1999), tracks 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The print it is in *Der ander teil des Lautenbuchs* is otherwise devoted to elaborate intabulations for much more experience players than the beginner. Original text: 'Den Psalm hab ich nit colorirt er ist an ihm selbs ser gut vnd das ein vngeübter auch etwas zu schlagen hab in disem buch'. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Willem Elders *et al.* *The Collected Works of Josquin des Prez* (NEW JOSQUIN EDITION, Koninklijke Vereniging Voor Nederlandse Musiek-geschiedenis, 30 vols. \* indicates doubtful but likely attributions - see J27. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Editorial changes to the rest of the tablature in this supplement are not in grey but are listed in this **Commentary: Josquin: J23.** Italian tablature; 54/2 - a3 instead of e3; 71-2-3 - crotchets absent; 89/1 - b2 instead of b3; 93/1 - a4 red instead of a3; 93/2 - b4 instead of c4; 93/3 - b3b4 instead of a4; 103/2 - a4 added; 177/1 - b5 added. **J24i.** German tablature; no change. **J24ii.** German tablature; 19 - bar omitted but present in all other lute sources. **J25i.** German tablature; 13/2, 35/2, 38/3 - e4f5 instead of a4; 78/1 - f4 instead of c5. **J25ii.** German tablature; 99/1 - eff6 instead of a5. **J25iii.** German tablature; 6-7 - bar line absent. **J26i.** German tablature; 8-9, 13-14, 60-61, 65-66, 81-82, 97-98, 112-113, 120-121 - bar lines absent; 129/4-5 - quavers instead of crotchets; 154/2 - semibreve instead of minim. **J26ii.** German tablature; 13-14, 27-28, 35-36, 50-51, 73-74, 99-100, 100-101, 108-109, 139-140 - barlines absent; 64/<1, 100/<1, 109/<1 - ciphers 'o' above 'z' [=d2f3] as triple time signature. **J27.** German tablature; 6F - adapted for 7F so tablature letters for 6th course tacitly changed as well as changing some notes from one course to another (such as f4 to b3) for easier playing; 21-22, 26-27, 39-40, 43-44, 61-62, 79-80 - bar lines absent. **Ballets:**  **B1.** 8/1 - f1 instead of f2. **B2.** rhythm signs absent (except quavers at 8/2 and 12/1) and reconstructed editorially; 6/2-3 - bar line added; 6-7 - bar line displaced 2 notes to the left; 7-8, 10-11 - bar lines absent; 9/5-6 bar line crossed out; 9/6 - c2 instead of c4. **B3.** 3/3-4 - crotchets absent; 4/1 - dotted crotchet instead of crotchet; 13/3 - a2 instead of d3. **B4a.** no change. **B4b.** 14/3 - minim absent; 28/3 - a4 instead of a5. **B5.** Italian tablature; 7/2 - c3 added; 7-8, \*16-17, \*19-20 - bar lines absent; 8/2 - quaver instead of crotchet; 9-13, 19- rhythm signs absent; 13/2-3 - bar line added; 13/3-6 - quavers instead of semiquavers; 14/4-5, 15/4-5, 16/4-5 - quavers absent; 16/1 - d1 instead of d2; 17/2 - a5 instead of c2; 18/3-4 - semiquavers instead of quavers. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The other sources are in the accompanying *Lutezine* for comparison. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. István Homolya & Dániel Benkö *Bakfark Opera Omnia* vols I-III (Editio Musica Budapest 1979). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. A setting for lute in Italian tablature and 4 voices in score with the same title unrelated to Josquin's is in Galilei *Fronimo* 1584, pp. 17-23 *In exitu Israel de Aegypto* - not listed in NJE. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Mark Franko 'Fragment of the Sovereign as Hermaphrodite: Time, History, and the Exception in Le Ballet de Madame' *Dance Research* 25/2 (2007) pp. 119-133. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See the *Lutezine* to *Lute News* 141 (April 2022) for settings of Branle de la torche. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)