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ARCANGELO CORELLI

LA FOLIA

VARIATIONS

FOR

VIOLIN

ACCOMPANIMENT OF PIANO, OR ORCHESTRA, AND CADENZA BY

H. LÉONARD

EDITED AND FINGERED BY

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WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR BY RICHARD ALDRICH

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**A**RCANGELO CORELLI'S name, according to Fétis, will endure through the ages in undiminished glory; the hard-headed Hamburg musician and critic, Mattheson, called him "the Prince of all musicians;" and in the view of Gasparini, his contemporary, he was "the greatest virtuoso of the

violin," the "true Orpheus" of his time. And even in these feverish days the genuine artist is fond of taking time now and then to go back to his works, for refreshment through their breadth and dignity, their purity of style, their power and simplicity.

Corelli was one of the founders of the art of violin-playing—one who laid the foundations broad and deep, and made plain the way for all the development of the instrument's resources that has been wrought by his successors. He was one of the pioneers, too, in the creation of the sonata-form, that has had a controlling influence in the subsequent evolution of the art of music. By the middle of the seventeenth century the structure of the violin itself had reached its full perfection at the hands of the great Italian makers, whose work has never since been approached, and the instrument was ready for its emancipation from the subordinate place it held at first, as furnishing a mere accompaniment to vocal music, and then as an imitator of it. Corelli's genius came at a critical time to aid and promote this struggle for freedom; and when he had ceased his labors, the school and method of the violin had been advanced many stages, and the instrumental solo sonata was established as an art-form. Corelli's works, says Sir Hubert Parry, stand at the head of all modern instrumental music; for hardly anything written before his time appeals to the modern hearer as being sufficiently mature to be tolerable; and though in point of technique his range was rather limited, he managed to produce works which, in their way, are complete, well-balanced and perfectly adapted to the requirements of instrumental performance.

Corelli's life was not eventful. Born in February, 1653, at Fusignano, near Bologna, Italy, he is said to have received his first lessons in theory from one Simonelli, a member of the papal choir, and on the violin from J. B. Bassani, a Bolognese, four years his junior. The story goes, that when he was nineteen he visited Paris, but was driven thence by the jealousy and intrigues of Lulli; it is better established, that he visited Germany after he had finished his studies, and was attached to the court of the Elector of Bavaria, at Munich.

By 1681 he had returned to Italy, and settled in Rome. There, two years later, he published his first compositions, a set of sonatas for two violins and a bass, with organ-accompaniment. His reputation grew rapidly; he soon was recognized as the

best of orchestral conductors, and a player of a nobility of style and power of execution beyond anything that had hitherto been heard. He soon became a favorite in the highest circles of Roman society, whose members competed for the privilege of hearing him play in their own palaces. He was honored, too, by the homage of illustrious foreigners who came to Rome. He found a powerful friend and patron in the art-loving Cardinal Ottoboni, in whose palace he lived for many years, until his death. As his fame spread beyond the borders of Italy, many young men of talent came from different parts of Europe to study with him, and his compositions were published in Amsterdam, Paris, Antwerp and London, as well as in Italy; so that before his death he was a person of European celebrity. He died January 18, 1713, dejected and broken in spirit, it is said, because he fancied himself slighted and superseded by a now unknown violinist, Valentini, who had risen to favor during Corelli's temporary absence in Naples. This state of mind was doubtless forwarded by certain unfortunate and humiliating experiences in that city, whither he had been urgently invited by the King, who was desirous of hearing the famous Roman artist. Called upon to play various compositions unfamiliar to him, and perhaps written in awkward style, he had made mistakes in the presence of Royalty and some of the eminent Neapolitan musicians, including Scarlatti; and had furthermore had the misfortune to weary the Royal listener with one of his Adagios, which was pronounced tedious. These things drove him back to Rome, and, as it seems, slight though they now appear, to his death.

Corelli taught many pupils who attained distinction; among them Geminiani, Locatelli, Somis and Baptiste, who transmitted his principles and methods, and thus formed the great school of performers to-day tracing its artistic lineage back to the great Italian founder, and represented in the present century by such men as Ernst, Vieuxtemps, Léonard, Joachim and Sarasate.

The best known of Corelli's works are his violin solos, which are comprised in his Opus 5, in two parts; the first part containing sonatas, the second suites, consisting of preludes, allemandes, correntes, gigue, sarabandes and gavottes, and the so-called "Folia" with twenty-two variations. What the "folia" really was does not seem to be known. It is supposed to be a Spanish dance. Hawkins, the last-century English historian of music, calls it "a favourite air known in England as 'Farinelli's Ground'"—that is, an air upon a ground bass. At all events, it is an extremely simple tune, whose short periods recur again and again as the basis of variations in a contrapuntal and florid style, much as Bach and Handel and others of the last century used the chaconne and the passacaglia.

Besides these solo pieces, Corelli wrote what were called "church sonatas," for two violins and 'cello with organ; "chamber sonatas" for two violins, 'cello and violone or cembalo; and concerti grossi, for two violins and 'cello with accompaniment of strings.

RICHARD ALDRICH.

# La Folia.

Edited and fingered by  
Leopold Lichtenberg.

## Variations sérieuses.

A. CORELLI.

Violin. *Adagio. espress.*

Piano. *Adagio. p.*

*pp.*

*pp espress.*

Flauto Solo

Viol. I & II. *dim.*

*p. sostenuto*

*espress.*

Fag. Solo

Alto

Bassi

*cresc.*

*cresc.*

Allegretto.

*p*

Allegretto.

*p*

*dolce* *cresc.*

*p* *cresc.*

*f* *tr.* *mf* *ten. un poco più lento* *ten.* *ten.* *ten.* *ten.*

*un poco più lento* Flauto *p* Fag.

*ten.* *ten.* *ten.* *ten. 3* *3* *ten.*

*ten.* *ten.* *ten.* *f* *cresc.*

*cresc.*

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*f largamente*

'Cello

*pp*

Alto

*largamente*

Violino I.

*mf*

*mf*

*f*

*poco rall.*

*cresc.*

*m. s.*

*mf* Alti

*cresc.* 'Celli

*f*

*poco rall.*

4 *Andante.*

*sosten. espressivo*

*Andante.*  
Clar.  
*mf* Bassi

Flauti  
*p* legato  
Fag.

*stacc.*

*sosten. cresc.*

Bassi *mf*

*p* *cresc.*

*p* Fag. *cresc.*

*a tempo*  
*poco rall. dim.* *p* *espress. a tempo* *p* *dim.*

*poco rall. dim.* *pp* Flauto Quartet Flauto Quartet

*dolce* *dim. poco rall.*

*pp* *poco rall.*

Allegro.

*p ben. marc.*

Allegro.

*quat. pizz.*

*cresc.* *poco rall.* *a tempo*

*marcato* *poco rall.* *a tempo cresc.*

Allegro moderato.

*f ten. risoluto* *ten.* *ten.* *ten.*

Allegro moderato.

*f Orch.*

*ten.* *dim.* *restez.* *Fl.*

*f poco rall.* *tr.*

*Viol.* *poco rall.*

*cresc.*

Adagio.

*p espressivo*

Adagio.

*pp*

The first system consists of a vocal line on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves. The tempo is marked 'Adagio.' and the dynamics include 'p espressivo' and 'pp'. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 3/4.

The second system continues the vocal and piano parts. It includes dynamic markings such as 'cresc.' and 'f' in the vocal line, and 'p', 'cresc.', and 'dim.' in the piano accompaniment.

Allegro moderato.

*p espressivo*

Allegro moderato.

*p*

The third system marks a change in tempo to 'Allegro moderato.' The dynamics include 'p espressivo' and 'p'. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords.

*dolce*

*dim.*

*pp*

The fourth system features a change in mood to 'dolce' and includes dynamic markings 'pp' and 'dim.'. The piano accompaniment continues with a steady bass line.

*p*

*dim.*

The fifth system concludes the piece with a decrescendo ('dim.') and a piano ('p') dynamic. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords.



*dim.* *poco rall.* *f a tempo*

*Cadenza*

*leggiere* *p* *animato* *cresc.*

*ten.* *f* *pp* *dolce*

*p* *cresc.* *f*

*Più lento* *f* *rall.* *pp*

*Adagio* *ten.* *rall.* *ben marc. il canto* *ten.* *ten.*

*espr.* *dim.*

*Più vivo.*

*p* *p* *p* *cresc.*

*f* *animato* *ten.* *ad lib.*

*ten.* *f* *largamente* *pp*

*sempre pp*

*cresc.* *poco rall.*

*Adagio.*

*f*

*Adagio.*

*p sosten.* *cresc.*

*pp quatuor.*