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Unification By Replication: Music, Architecture, and the Imperial Image of Ercole I d'Este

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE Master of Music

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ABSTRACT

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Throughout his reign, Duke Ercole I d’Este (1431-1505) modeled his image as a ruler after those of classical antiquity. This determined and focused agenda was the driving force behind the artistic outpouring of late fifteenth-century Ferrara. By drawing parallels between the music of his most prominent court composer, Johannes Martini, and the classical architecture of Ferrara, I will demonstrate that Ercole’s aspirations brought artistic unity to the city. Ercole’s musical, architectural, and physical enhancements to Ferrara were unprecedented, and scholars have long admired them as individual accomplishments. Yet a close examination of Ercole’s endeavors as a whole reveals a city unified by a specific, imitative technique. This technique relied on extensive quotation, and it is found throughout all of Ferrara’s artistic media, reflecting Ercole’s efforts to magnify and immortalize his imperial image.
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PREFACE

Lewis Lockwood’s classic book on Renaissance Ferrara offers the most accurate and succinct appraisal of Ferrara’s humble beginnings, for we do indeed “begin on barren ground.”1 The tiny duchy of Ferrara had neither the great artistic heritage of Venice, nor the legacy of wealthy merchants and bankers of Florence. Moreover, this north-Italian city sorely lagged in the production of polyphony during the Trecento. By 1471, however, Ferrara was no longer barren. Under the guidance of Ercole I d’Este (r. 1471-1505), Ferrara became not only the epicenter of polyphonic composition in fifteenth-century Italy, but one of the most important and well-known courts in Western Europe. Ercole, however, was interested in more than simply enriching the culture of his city-state. I will argue that his primary concern was the magnification of his imperial image. This desire, in turn, shaped and unified the artistic achievements of late fifteenth-century Ferrara.

A substantial body of scholarship about Renaissance Ferrara exists, but previous studies have not considered the various events and achievements of Ercole’s reign as a whole. Art and architecture historians focus on his unprecedented expansion of Ferrara, and several view Ercole as more of a tyrant than a benevolent patron; musicologists study the music and musicians of his court chapel and have concentrated on his religiosity and piety. In each approach, Ercole is cast in several different roles: pious, religious, shrewd, learned, and tyrannical.2 None of these perspectives is inaccurate, but each offers only

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one facet of the same person. I will portray Ercole as neither saint nor tyrant, but rather a
ruler with a determined and focused agenda – the driving force behind all of his political
and artistic actions. Ercole wanted to embody the prestigious and memorable images of
the ancients. In short, he wanted to become a fifteenth-century Caesar Augustus. I will
argue that every artistic aspect of late fifteenth-century Ferrara reflects and enhances
Ercole’s projected image, and as a result of this, there is a deliberate, unified scheme
among the arts that he patronized.

To prove that Ercole consciously sought to unify every aspect of his city in an
effort to aggrandize and immortalize his image as a ruler, I will examine Ferrara’s
architecture and music, and the imitative techniques that appear in both of these artistic
media. Historians have failed to recognize this common thread in architecture and music,
which in turn impresses Ercole’s image upon all of Ferrara: the technique of imitating a
model by frequently quoting from that model. This imitative technique is found
throughout Ferrara. In architecture this technique is commonly recognized as classicism,
as architects replicated and quoted from ancient structures. Architects took classical
emblems, such as the design of Greek columns or Corinthian capitals, and cast them
throughout their architecture. Music – particularly the Masses of Johannes Martini –
used continuous quotations of a polyphonic model, as if dispensing emblems of that
model throughout the composition. Theatrical entertainment reproduced ancient Greek
plays. Even the great monument intended for Ercole referred to him as Caesar Augustus,
modeling this Ferrarese duke after the triumphal Roman ruler. With its paved roads and
marble buildings, the entire city harkened back to the splendor of Imperial Rome.

Press, 1996), 15; and Joseph Manca,, The Art of Ercole De’ Roberti (Cambridge: Cambridge University
Press, 1992), 77.
Just as the Ferrarese architecture precisely quoted from classical models, the Masses of Martini quoted exactly from various voices of a polyphonic model. Of his eleven Masses, seven were based on polyphonic models. It was as if Martini cut certain musical phrases from a model, and pasted them into different voices of a Mass. He used this technique of imitation by quotation consistently throughout his work – he never paraphrased – he always incorporated a precise replication of the model into his Masses. As we will see, this stands in contrast to some of his contemporaries, such as Heinrich Isaac and Johannes Ockeghem. Several scholars have examined and analyzed Martini’s music, but none has sought to answer the question of why Martini used this particular quotation technique throughout his compositions. We may never be able to concretely respond to this question, but placing Martini’s music in the larger context of both Ferrara’s artistic media and Ercole’s agenda of personal glorification, may bring us one step closer to the answer.

This thesis will demonstrate how an imitative technique used by both architects and composers brought unity to the Ferrarese arts, in turn, reflecting Ercole’s aspirations of becoming Italy’s most celebrated ruler. It will also examine the close attention that Ercole paid to his public image. Chapter One analyzes the activities of Ercole’s

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3 I have limited the discussion to Martini and his Masses based on secular, polyphonic models for two reasons. First, Martini was the most prominent and long-lasting composer at Ercole’s court. Not only did he go to great lengths to acquire Martini, but Ercole also referred to Martini as cantadore compositore, thereby declaring that Martini was not just a chapel singer, but also a composer – a rare distinction during this period in Italian history. (This will be discussed in depth in Chapter Three). Second, Martini was stylistically a very consistent composer. A study or analysis of one Martini Mass reveals much about his entire Mass output. This thesis will not consider Martini’s secular works or hymns, primarily because they do not typically use a polyphonic model, and it will be easier to see the correlation between music and architecture with compositions that use polyphonic models. Finally, settings of the Mass Ordinary were by far the most popular fifteenth-century genre.

predecessors, illuminating the chasm between their accomplishments and his. Chapter Two considers important influences in Ercole’s upbringing, his methodical expansion of Ferrara, and the clever ways in which he wove his image throughout the city. A detailed examination of two representative Ferrarese structures takes place in this chapter, because in Chapter Four, the techniques seen in these two structures will become important points of comparison with the musical techniques at the court. Chapter Three explores how Ercole assembled such a successful court chapel, and how the elaborate chapel polyphony also magnified his imperial image. The nucleus of this thesis (Chapter Four) will draw parallels between the imitative techniques of architecture and the Masses of Martini, showing how emblems from a model – whether musical or architectural – brought unity to the arts during Ercole’s rule.
CHAPTER I

THE RISE OF ESTENSE FERRARA

*Foundations*

Founded as a Byzantine settlement in the seventh century, Ferrara was strategically situated on the northern bank of the Po, just west of where the river divides into the Po di Volano and the Po di Primaro. The geographic location had both positive and negative effects: the Po provided important trade and transportation routes, and Ferrara was surrounded by powerful neighbors such as Venice, Milan, and the Papal States. The earliest physical evidence of a settlement came in the form of a *castrum* – a Byzantine fortress – soon followed by the monastic church of San Giorgio near the junction of the Po di Volano and the Po di Primaro.1 In 751 Desiderius, King of the Lombards, invaded the *castrum* but he promised to return the Ferrarese community to Pope Stephen II. Two separate documents – the *Codex Carolinus* and the *Liber Pontificalis* – record Desiderius’s promise; the documents are significant because they are the first references to “Ferrara” as an administrative entity. By the tenth century legal documents refer both to “citizens” (*cives*) of Ferrara and four distinct regions of the city – the Fundus Tabernolus (the northern area including the Byzantine *castrum*), the Fundus Bagnolus (eastern region), the Fundus Roncagallus (the northern bank), and the Fundus Germaniana (the exact location remains unknown).2 The naming of both Ferrara and her

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1 Charles M. Rosenberg, *The Este Monuments and Urban Development in Renaissance Ferrara* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 9. Due to an earthquake, the course of the river has been diverted and Ferrara now sits on a minor tributary of the Po.

2 Ibid., 10-11.
citizens and the distinct city regions provides concrete evidence of rapid growth in this north-Italian state.

The Este family originated in the Euganean hills near Padua, and they ruled as lords of Padua for much of the eleventh century.\(^3\) Besides occupying Padua, the Estes were scattered throughout much of central and northern Italy. The family did not immediately establish sovereignty over Ferrara; before the Estes, the city had been controlled by two rival families: the Torelli and the Adelardi.\(^4\) But with the 1158 marriage of Azzo VI d’Este and Marchesella degli Adelardi (effectively replacing the Adelardi family), the Estes entered the political scene of the city, struggling until 1240 with their new rivals, the Torellis. Once the Torellis were forced out of Ferrara, the Estes maintained control until 1597, establishing a signoria of unparalleled longevity.\(^5\) The only musical development under Azzo came from Troubadours who had migrated from Provence to Italy; churches and monasteries retained the plainsong tradition.\(^6\) There may have been some improvisatory polyphony, but the lack of surviving music creates a void when attempting to piece together Ferrara’s early polyphonic tradition.

Azzo “Novello” d’Este died in 1264 and he was succeeded by Obizzo II (1264-1293),\(^7\) who continued Ferrara’s territorial expansion with the acquisition of Modena, Reggio, and Rovigo. When Obizzo died in 1293, his son Azzo took control of Ferrara,

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\(^3\) Tuohy, *Herculean Ferrara*, 3.


\(^5\) Ibid., 14.


\(^7\) See Appendix I for an Este family genealogy.
but war and strife plagued his reign, costing him both Modena and Reggio in 1306.⁸

When a later Azzo (grandson of Azzo Novello d’Este) tried to transfer power to his grandson, Folco, he met fierce opposition from other family members. In desperation, Folco turned to Venice for support and eventually ceded Ferrara to Venice. This led to a dispute between Venice and the Papacy (Ferrara had pledged allegiance to the Papacy in 1130), and though Venice finally conceded in 1310, an Este revolt against the Papacy in 1317 re-established family authority over the city, and for the rest of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries successive Popes did not challenge Este sovereignty.⁹ Alliance between the Estensi and Papal authorities was further strengthened during various wars in the 1350s.

After 1350, there was substantial development within the Ferrarese government, specifically the establishment of a camera (chamber for finance) and a chancery (letters and decrees). The city also grew culturally and musically, but the music was not written in traditional Trecento Italian genres. The Estensi were obsessed with French chivalry and royalty (they fancied themselves descendants of the French), and as a result, Ferrarese poets wrote narratives that celebrated French heroes. This poetry had no connection to lyric poetry of the Italian Trecento or the Italian music of this period, such that Lockwood concludes:

. . . the courtly circles in fourteenth-century Ferrara did not lack music – which was surely present in various forms – but rather lacked the amalgam of aesthetic, linguistic, and cultural interests that was giving rise elsewhere to Italian poetic-polyphonic forms and repertoires – the caccia, madrigal, and ballata. . . The religious confraternities had some music of their own, but neither there nor at the cathedral, until the early fifteenth century, was there any figure of distinction in musical matters. Before the 1390s there was no university at Ferrara at all, thus

⁸ Dean, Land and Power in Late Medieval Ferrara, 18.

⁹ Ibid., 18.
no seat of interest in the speculative side of music and its scholastic and theoretical traditions, to which students and citizens could gravitate. Local society, from peasants to city burghers and lords, was exposed to music in a superficial and casual sense, ranging from popular tunes to dance music and perhaps to the occasional appearance of wandering singers and players – but all of this represents nothing more than was typical of musical life in any other urban century in the region, and it gives no hint of later growth.  

_{Ercole's Predecessors: Alberto, Niccolo III, Leonello, and Borso}_

It is necessary to briefly examine the accomplishments of Ercole’s predecessors, for not only will this place his reign within a historical context, but it will also illuminate his unique and unprecedented accomplishments. Though each ruler contributed significantly to Ferrara’s cultural growth and welfare, none would compare with Ercole’s political and artistic campaign. While each of these predecessors had specific areas of interest, they did not seek to impress their image upon the entire city, and thereby had no reason to insist in unification of the arts. The artistic undertakings of Alberto, Niccolo III, Leonello, and Borso, lacked the underlying unity and modeling scheme brought about under Ercole.

_{Alberto d’Este (r.1388-1393)}_

The short reign of Alberto from 1388-1393 could easily have been forgotten amidst the more prominent and long-lasting Este rulers, except for his establishment of the university. He took a pilgrimage to Rome in 1391, obtaining Pope Boniface IX’s blessing to build this institution, and shortly before Alberto’s death, Ferrara gained a new university.  

It immediately attracted important humanists, such as Donato degli Albanzani, a friend of Petrarch and translator of both Petrarch and Boccaccio. Donato founded the university library and oversaw its growth and development. Under his

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10 Lockwood, _Music in Renaissance Ferrara_, 10.

11 Dean, _Land and Power in Late Medieval Ferrara_, 21.
leadership as university chancellor, he attracted several more influential scholars, such as Toscanelli, Aurispa, and particularly Guarino Veronese. The university quickly became the nucleus of the city, allowing the intellectual and cultural climate to flourish throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Lockwood marks Alberto’s reign as the beginning of “a transformation of Ferrarese civic and court life that continued through the fifteenth century, gradually reshaping Ferrara from a backward feudal stronghold into a culturally rich and well-endowed city.”

Niccolo III d’Este (r. 1393-1441)

In the words of one historian, Niccolo III is “best remembered for his many mistresses and illegitimate offspring [he had more than sixteen children] and for his brutal reaction to the adultery of his third wife, Parisina Malatesta, with his bastard son, Ugo.” Pope Pius II characterized him as “fat, jocund and given up to pleasure;” and Werner Gundersheimer compared Niccolo with the sixteenth-century king of England, Henry VIII. Besides personal eccentricities and several wars waged during his first fifteen years as ruler of Ferrara, Niccolo achieved political stability and international recognition. In 1414, he traveled to France and formed an important alliance with the new French king, Charles VII, and France would later provide Ferrara with essential military aid.

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13 Ibid.

14 Dean, *Land and Power in Late Medieval Ferrara*, 27.


Despite experiencing the vibrant musical atmosphere of Paris, Niccolo’s court produced no evidence of sung polyphony before the 1430s.\textsuperscript{17} With the exception of a few hired court musicians, the only signs of musical life came from the cathedral. Even the cathedral lagged behind its neighbors: musicians were much more plentiful in Milan and Venice, and at these cathedrals there were distinctions between “professional musicians” (who sang at Mass) and the cathedral organist. The only musician of significance during Niccolo’s reign was fra Bartolomeo da Bologna who wrote primarily for the cathedral, and occasionally contributed music to the ducal court.\textsuperscript{18} Even though Niccolo’s court produced few musicians (and for that matter, compositions), Bartolomeo’s polyphonic works prove that he was a very capable composer, and his surviving Mass movements are among the earliest Mass Ordinary settings based on secular models.\textsuperscript{19} Furthermore, these Mass settings “belong to the earliest chronological layer of the procedure of ‘imitation’ of polyphonic models...that would develop by the end of the fifteenth century into a principal means of composition for the cyclic Mass.” Lockwood continues by observing that even though these ‘imitative’ Mass movements by Bartolomeo are “much closer to transcription than to elaboration...these in a small way anticipate the subtleties of a much later phase of Mass composition.”\textsuperscript{20} Despite Bartolomeo’s capabilities as a composer, Niccolo never expressed much interest in using Bartolomeo to write music for the court, nor did Niccolo patronize other musicians. By the late 1420s, the cathedral was known only as a center for civic worship, and not as an institution full of promising

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 16-17.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 18.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 24. The manuscripts which contain these works are Modena A (Bologna, c. 1410) and Oxford 213 (Veneto, c. late 1420s).

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
musicians and elaborate polyphony.21 Neither the court nor the cathedral showed musical potential until the early 1430s.

In 1433 and 1438 there were two events which began to slowly change the musical climate at Ferrara – Guillaume Dufay’s (c. 1398-1474) visit and the Papal council. Scholars are not certain when Dufay was in Italy, but they speculate that he was there as early as 1419 and visited Ferrara in 1437.22 With his ballade C’est bien raison, Dufay honored Niccolo’s rule and alluded to the (mythical) Este connection with French royalty. A second composer, Bertrand Feragut, also visited and paid homage to the Ferrarese court, perhaps as early as 1420. He wrote a motet – Francorum nobilitati – which has often been associated with Niccolo’s rule.23 Although their time in Ferrara was brief and their compositions few, the presence of these two musicians and their dedicatory works to Niccolo offer early signs of musical patronage at Ferrara.

The second important event during Niccolo’s reign was the 1438 Council of Ferrara. In the early to mid-fifteenth century, the papacy lacked sovereignty over the Western church, and Pope Eugenius IV set up a papal council in Ferrara in 1438, in an effort to counter opposition from the Council of Basle. The Council of Basle aimed to unite the Eastern and Western churches, a unification that Eugenius adamantly opposed. Eugenius wanted ecclesiastical powers from Italy and even as far as Spain and Scotland to convene and discuss the matter, and Ferrara (already a papal vassal) was a strategic

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21 Ibid., 27.
22 Ibid., 39.
23 Ibid., 34-35. It is not entirely clear when Feragut was in Ferrara. Claudio Satori has established that Feragut maestro di cappella at Duomo in Milan between 1425 and 1430; therefore, Feragut must have been at Ferrara before this, probably sometime in 1430. However, additional documents also confirm that he was in Ferrara for the quartering of arms in August, 1431. See Ibid. and Sarti, “Matteo de Perugia e Bertrand Feragut, i due maestri di cappella del Duomo di Milano,” Acta Musicologica 28 (1956): 12-27.
meeting place. Werner Gundersheimer suggests that Ferrara was chosen because Niccolo had (for the most part) maintained a neutral and relatively peaceful state. The various dignitaries (archbishops, archdukes, and even Cosimo de’ Medici), each representing a unique culture, offered both Niccolo and the entire Ferrarese court a taste of the social, intellectual, and political climate of Western Europe. According to Gundersheimer, the variety of representatives “undoubtedly presented the local ruling family with a vivid image of the potential relationship between personal culture, including taste in the arts, and political success.” This council, along with the visits of composers such as Dufay and Feragut, was an early indication that Ferrara would soon rise to international status. The court as a whole was beginning to blossom.

Leonello d’Este (r.1441-1450)

Leonello’s reign was one of peace and prosperity; he contributed more to Ferrarese culture than either his brother or father. He was also politically savvy: he had several of his sisters married off to neighboring dynasties, strengthening Ferrara’s relationship with surrounding states. Though he had been trained in the art of war, Leonello was more interested in Latin, philosophy, classical drama, and art. Gundersheimer calls him the pater civilitatis, and observes that while Leonello was under the tutelage of the famed Ferrarese humanist, Guarino:

...[he] learned to know, enjoy, and appreciate professional excellence in the arts and scholarship, and possessed both the generosity and the tolerance needed to encourage and stimulate others. His was the patronage not of the Maecenas, but of the passionate devoté, not of the disinterested philistine, but of the discriminating mind and eye, not of the seeker of sensations, but of the self-

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24 Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 30-31.

25 Gundersheimer, Ferrara, 76.

26 Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 30.
conscious searcher for aesthetic canons and scholarly criteria.\textsuperscript{27}

He reopened the university in 1442, which attracted a new wave of scholars including the Greek philosopher Teodoro Gaza and the poet Basinio da Parma. The library continued to grow and there were at least six copyists producing manuscripts, particularly of Italian and French texts.\textsuperscript{28} But the university did more than encourage and promote a scholarly atmosphere; Gundersheimer argues that it helped the economy prosper:

A thriving university would mean foreign teachers and students seeking lodging, clothing, and food, frequenting the taverns and marketplaces, spending money. It would mean new prestige for Ferrara, and perhaps new papal privileges. Above all, it would provide a facility for the education of the middle-income guildsmen who could not afford the expense of sending their children elsewhere.\textsuperscript{29}

The musical advancements were equally impressive. Before Leonello took control of Ferrara, there were two Libri de Canto copied for him by the court scribes. In 1441 Niccolo Tedesco became the first musician of the Ferrarese court to receive a regular salary.\textsuperscript{30} Besides his continued contact with Dufay (Leonello sent a payment to him through the Bruges bank in 1443), Leonello’s most notable musical achievement was the construction of a court chapel. Not only was a private, court chapel unusual for an Italian state, but immediately after its construction, Leonello began to recruit international musicians for this chapel.

The chapel represents a new departure in the domestic scheme of the Este court. It justifies the acquisition of religious art objects, service books, an organ, and musicians to carry out its functions. . .the central point is that the nine years of Leonello’s rule show the creation and maintenance of one of the very few active household chapels in Italy in which polyphonic music was utilized for daily liturgical purposes. It is perhaps the only courtly chapel of its type north of

\begin{align*}
\textsuperscript{27} & \text{Gundersheimer, Ferrara, 98.} \\
\textsuperscript{28} & \text{Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 42.} \\
\textsuperscript{29} & \text{Gundersheimer, Ferrara, 124.} \\
\textsuperscript{30} & \text{Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 49.}
\end{align*}
Florence at this time.\textsuperscript{31}

This new court needed a liturgical repertoire and new singers for Mass and daily offices, and by the time that Leonello died in 1450, the chapel had acquired ten singers and a regular organist.

In addition to payroll records, the main source for understanding this significant musical growth comes from an important Estense manuscript, which offers insight into the polyphony written during Leonello’s reign and the variety of international singers at the court chapel.\textsuperscript{32} First, it demonstrates one of the fundamental differences between Leonello’s chapel and that of Ercole’s – Leonello employed singers; Ercole would later employ singers who also composed. This leads to the second observation: the manuscript contains works by composers that were associated with the Burgundian chapel, the Florentine chapel, and English chapels; therefore, Leonello’s court musicians were collecting and performing a wealth of current, polyphonic music. The international variety in the manuscript “reflects the same aspirations to European stature that were inherent in the very foundations of Leonello’s chapel and its staffing by foreign singers.”\textsuperscript{33} Of the four predecessors, Leonello was the most similar to Ercole – both loved art and learning, and they developed a strong artistic heritage in Ferrara. Leonello’s reign saw important advancements at the court chapel, paving the way for the burgeoning of polyphony in late fifteenth-century Ferrara.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 45 and 49.

\textsuperscript{32} The shelf mark of this manuscript in the Biblioteca Estense is Alpha X. 1.11 (“Modena B”).

\textsuperscript{33} Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 62.
Borso d’Este (r. 1450-1471)

Leonello’s untimely death in 1450 brought Borso to the helm of the Este dynasty. Borso did not fit the mold of the “learned Italian prince” very well, and he had the misfortune of coming between Leonello and Ercole. While Leonello had studied Latin and philosophy under Guarino’s watchful eye, and Ercole had traveled to Naples and experienced the colorful, multi-cultural court of Alfonso d’Aragona, Borso spent his days in the Ferrarese countryside, hunting and fishing. Perhaps to hide his intellectual insecurity, Borso was known as the extravagant prince, one who was never seen in public without expensive clothing and precious jewels.34 His lack of scholarship and disinterest in patronizing artists has colored his reputation, particularly in light of Leonello’s rule. Though Borso did not continue to build upon the great cultural and artistic heritage of his brother, he did prove himself, in the words of Gundersheimer, a “shrewd and effective ruler.”35 His most important contributions were to the physical developments of the land, such as irrigation and flood control. Politically, he managed to avoid conflict with his neighbors – particularly Venice – and though he did not change the administrative structure of the government, he spent considerable time enhancing his relationships with his advisors. He strengthened his administration by surrounding himself with trusted friends who did not necessarily have a political agenda of their own:

Instead of drawing on his personal staff of advisors and confidential agents from this tier of administration, Borso assembled a kind of “kitchen cabinet” comprised of trusted personal friends, most of whom were not trained in the law. These men became the ranking bureaucrats of the Este administration. They had easy access to the prince, they claimed executive powers over the rest of the staff,

34 Gundersheimer, Ferrara, 128.
35 Ibid., 129.
[and] they assisted in the formation as well as the implementation of policy. . . \(^{36}\)

Under his leadership, the government was centralized and fortified. One of the most long-ranging effects of Borso’s government was his investiture as Duke of Modena, Reggio, and, immediately before his death, Ferrara. Gundersheimer has stressed that these were not merely symbolic titles; they enhanced Borso’s prestige and the legitimacy of his rule (Borso was now the second ruler of illegitimate birth), and most importantly, the title of “Duke” put him on the same diplomatic playing field as his neighbors – the dukes of Milan, Mantua, and Urbino. \(^{37}\)

The arts were not at the forefront of Borso’s agenda, and he released most of the court chapel singers who had been employed under Leonello. Though he increased the number of instrumentalists at the court, music for Mass and vespers returned to plainchant. \(^{38}\) During his reign, the court did not hear the polyphony of Leonello’s time, nor did it see the musical production that would soon put Ferrara at the forefront of European sacred polyphony.

**Conclusions**

The continuity of Estenese dominance over Ferrara between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries brought stability to the city. The only real threats to Ferrara and the Este dynasty came from disputes within the family. The musical growth took a somewhat winding path. The years of Niccolo’s reign offered the first real signs of musical life, and with Leonello’s construction of a court chapel, polyphony became an important and distinguishing aspect of court life. But these cultural and especially

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\(^{36}\) Ibid., 142.

\(^{37}\) Ibid., 151.

musical accomplishments would pale in comparison with music under Ercole. He would transform Ferrara into one of the most splendid musical and cultural centers in fifteenth-century Italy, as he impressed his image upon the entire city. Though each of his predecessors made important, individual contributions to Ferrarese heritage, they failed to stamp their image upon Ferrara as Ercole would.
CHAPTER II

ERCOLE I D’ESTE AND THE ADDIZIONE ERCULEA

Ferrara’s physical design resulted from Ercole’s visionary efforts for the expansion and grandeur of his city. But unfortunately, since his reign, parts of the city have been altered. In 1570 an earthquake devastated Ferrara, demolishing many buildings and artistic treasures; in 1598 the papacy claimed the Ferrarese territory and few efforts were made to rebuild the city. There are, however, three surviving diaries of fifteenth-century Ferrara (one by an anonymous author, the others by Bernardino Zambotti and Sabadino degli Arienti), many letters, eulogies and drawings, and detailed payment records.39 All of these sources, plus the few surviving buildings, speak to the magnificent accomplishments of Ercole I d’Este. Without him Ferrara would certainly have been forgotten – instead, under his leadership, the duchy assumed a permanent place among the great Italian city states. Emblems of classical antiquity pervade the city, portraying Ercole as a great Augustan ruler.

A brief study of Ercole’s youth reveals that his passion for classical antiquity began early in his life. And though his fame as the architect of Ferrara resulted primarily from the Addizione Erculea, we will see that his imperial image permeated Ferrarese architecture, even before this vast northern expansion in 1491. As discussed in Chapter One, the accomplishments of Alberto, Niccolo, Leonello, and Borso pale when compared with those of Ercole. These four predecessors did not take such pains to stamp their images on Ferrara, nor did they so assiduously attempt to model those images after the heroes of classical antiquity as Ercole did. A comparison of the monuments ascribed to each ruler will illustrate this difference. More importantly, a close examination of

39 Tuohy, Herculean Ferrara, xv.
Ercole’s monument reveals how it magnified his image, using the imitative technique of frequent quotation, common throughout all of fifteenth-century Ferrara. An equally important church, Santa Maria in Vado will also reflect this imitative technique.

*Neapolitan Influence*

Ercole’s rise to greatness was many years in the making. From early in his childhood, he was surrounded with cultural richness and variety. He was only seven when the Papal Council was set up in Ferrara, and the ceremony and pomp brought by many foreign dignitaries must have had a lasting impact on him. When he was fourteen, his father sent him to Naples. 40 With the birth of Leonello’s son, Niccolo (Ercole’s nephew, though they were the same age), Niccolo III (father of Leonello and Ercole) foresaw the potential conflict for leadership between Ercole and Niccolo and thought it best that Ercole maintain a low profile during his childhood. Though his time at the Naples court of King Alfonso d’Aragona remains almost entirely undocumented, scholars speculate that the Argonese court, with its Spanish flavor and rich cultural influence, had a profound impact on Ercole. 41 Compared with north-Italian cities such as Florence and Milan, Naples did not excel as a great musical center during the fourteenth-century *Ars Nova*; however, the Spanish influence remained unique to Naples:

. . .the great port of Naples opened the way to Italy for the Spanish singers, dancers, and instrumentalists with their vocal repertoires and dances (including the moresca), thus providing other Italian courts and their musicians with a new set of transplanted and locally established performers and repertoires, and bringing to Italian players new varieties of instruments, above all the guitar, which, from then on, came to be seen as a Neapolitan specialty. 42

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40 Ibid., 8.


42 Ibid., 123.
Though philosophers and teachers were not as plentiful at the Neapolitan court as they were at Ferrara (under Leonello), there were still several respected scholars in Naples, and Ercole received an excellent education.

Thomas Tuohy observes that besides the cultural influence of Naples, the Neapolitan king, Alfonso, possessed many traits that would later become characteristic of Ercole. Alfonso generally dressed in simple black clothes, not the lavish and expensive fabrics of other Italian princes. When he became duke of Ferrara, Ercole’s simplistic dress stood in stark contrast to Borso’s extravagant style. Ercole would also continue Alfonso’s tradition of washing the feet of the poor on Maundy Thursday. The two rulers even shared similar personalities: both disliked administrative duties, and both were somewhat distant and reserved. “Ercole in Naples. . . [was] friendly with everyone, but familiar with very few. Neither ruler was dominated by favourites.”

Perhaps the most lasting Neapolitan impression was Alfonso’s love of antiquity. As Tuohy observes, “one of the predominant cultural influences at the court was the revival of antiquity. Ercole may well have been of the company [who visited Roman ruins in Pozzuoli] and could have developed a taste for the antique past more easily in Naples than in Ferrara. . . the environs of Naples were rich in monuments of classical antiquity. . .”

Naples had a profound impact on Ercole’s cultural development; he was more a product of the Neapolitan court than of his native Ferrara. During his sixteen years in Naples, he developed a love for classical antiquity and a desire to emulate powerful rulers and their accomplishments.

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44 Ibid., 11-12.
Soon after King Alfonso died in 1458, Ercole, who was governor of the Neapolitan territory of Capitanata at the time, returned to his home, determined to become ruler of Ferrara. His main obstacle was his nephew, Niccolo di Leonello, but Borso had already declared Ercole governor of Modena in 1466, and over the years, Ercole proved himself superior to his nephew in many ways, especially in military leadership.\textsuperscript{45} When Borso died in 1471, Ercole was the obvious successor. And he had not seen the last of Naples once he inherited Ferrara; Ercole would marry Alfonso’s daughter, Eleanora, in 1473.

The first twenty-one years of Ercole’s reign were spent gaining the trust and support of the Ferrarese citizens, fending off unfriendly neighbors, and impressing his benign image onto the city. Ercole wasted no time in molding his public image; at the beginning of his reign, he waived taxes, released prisoners, cancelled fines, cancelled tariffs on wheat, and provided generous bonuses for city officials.\textsuperscript{46} He faithfully attended daily Mass in his court chapel and imitated Alfonso’s Maundy Thursday example of washing the feet of the poor. He also founded many philanthropic religious confraternities.\textsuperscript{47} Gundersheimer observes that “[Ercole] was evidently presenting himself as a secular, early analogue to Christ himself.”\textsuperscript{48} And yet much of this public piety and religiosity lacked personal warmth, or, according to Gundersheimer, the “common touch:”

[Ercole] was clearly an aristocrat who lacked the common touch. No one praises

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 13.

\textsuperscript{46} Gundersheimer, \textit{Ferrara}, 184.

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 189.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 187-188.
him for his accessibility or dwells on his popular appeal. Unlike Borso, who moved around just as much, Ercole was criticized for his constant peregrinations, his absenteeism from Ferrara. . . when Borso was in the city, he circulated casually and openly among the people; he had a kind word for everyone. People called him jovial; today they might say "casual". . . Ercole seems to have had none of this sunny affability. He could be moody and withdrawn. . . when Ercole appeared in public, it was usually in a ceremonial way. Whether elegantly entertaining the poor, seeking his ventura, attending a spectacle, or intervening to save or condemn some miserable soul, he seemed to be exploiting his sense of occasion rather than reaching out to human beings. Missing from these events, even the self-consciously silly or comical ones, is the impression of spontaneity.49

The Revival of Theatre in Estense Ferrara

Although the most obvious imitation of classical antiquity is seen in Ferrarese architecture, it also came in other disciplines, such as theatre. War with Venice from 1484-1486 halted all artistic endeavors, but once the war ended, Ercole began an unprecedented revival of staged, classical plays, particularly those of Plautus and Terence. His was one of the first fifteenth-century courts to perform these classical plays, and the 1486 staging of Plautus’s Menaechmi was the first post-classical staged performance50 Gundersheimer notes the significance of this revival, particularly the way in which it enhanced Ercole’s image:

What Ercole had discovered was a harmless form of entertainment which could be attended by thousands of his subjects, and which therefore increased his stature not only with court and popolo, but even with the learned. In the comedy, Ercole had found an almost ideal expression of ducal magnificence. Theatre had taken its place along with music as a major cultural interest of Ercole’s.51

49 Ibid., 213-214.

50 Tuohy, Herculean Ferrara, 257. Tuohy notes that these plays had actually been obtained by Leonello from Cardinal Giordano Orsini at the request of Guarino, but the plays were not staged until 1486. See Ibid. Gundersheimer also observes that a comedy, the Iside by Francesco Ariosto Peregrino, had been read at Leonello’s court in 1444, and that the Plautus plays had been translated and studied by the court scholars. However, they were not staged until Ercole’s rule. See Gundersheimer, Ferrara, 209-10.

51 Gundersheimer, Ferrara, 211.
And similar to his other cultural interests, theatre provided an additional venue for Ercole to model his image after rulers of classical antiquity. This was yet another classical emblem crafted into the scaffolding of his city-state.

Architectural Improvements: Formation of the Herculean Image

If the latter half of Ercole’s reign was characterized by Ferrara’s public expansion, the first half (up until the 1490s) was characterized by his private expansion and elaboration – particularly that of the Ducal Palace. Ercole engraved his imperial image on nearly every part of his Palace. For example, when he had the Cortile Novo (courtyard) in the palace re-designed, a magnificent staircase was constructed by Biagio Rossetti and Domenico de Locho. The staircase, with its classical columns and arches, was “worthy to receive any king in the world,” and the courtyard itself would later become the venue for Ercole’s revival of classical plays. Ercole expanded the perimeter of the castles, and he built the Sala Grande (“great hall”) in 1473. He refurbished many rooms connected to the Sala Grande in 1479, and on the walls hung splendid new tapestries that portrayed the mythological Labors of Hercules. These rooms adjacent to the Sala Grande were often used for visiting dignitaries; the Queen of Hungary occupied one of them when she visited Ferrara.

But Sala Grande rooms were not the only ones with images of Hercules. Adjacent to Ercole’s personal bedroom were several smaller chambers (perhaps used for daily devotionals), and covering the walls were elaborately embroidered tapestries, telling the story of Hercules’s labors. The Herculean images were not limited to bedrooms and guestrooms. There was a link – a passageway or walkway – that connected the northern

52 Tuohy, *Herculean Ferrara*, 74-75.

53 Ibid., 75.
side of the Corte with the Castel Vecchio. When Borso was ruler, this walkway went through what was basically the court stable manure dump... “Caleffini’s description of the place as stomagose suggests that the filth turned one’s stomach.”

Not only did Ercole have the place cleaned up, with new shops built, but he also elevated the Via Coperata and built a roof over it. Records indicate that Ercole designed a type of enclosed balcony, which featured elaborate internal and external decorations. The outside of the balcony had columns on which were painted both the ducal coat of arms and two Herculean Labors. Inside, around the corridor another painting by Girado Costa depicted a Labor of Hercules. It is noteworthy and probably not coincidental that the ducal coat of arms was painted next to the Herculean Labors – Ercole saw the expansion and decoration of the palace, and indeed his entire rule over Ferrara, as a Herculean feat.

What more laudable classical figure to model an image after than that of his mythic-heroic namesake?

The Addizione Erculea

In its earliest stages, the great Addition was not so much an aggrandizement of Ercole’s image, but rather a survival tactic and, to an extent, a political statement. Yet it would soon model some of Europe’s most celebrated cities: Athens, Rome, even Paris. War with Venice in 1483 had demonstrated to Ercole the weakness of his northern border and the eminent threat posed by his north-eastern neighbors. Ercole secretly began the expansion and fortification in 1491 when he enclosed the Barco, his hunting land. But as

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54 Ibid., 61.

55 Ibid., 61-62. Similar to so many fifteenth-century Ferrarese structures and artworks which have been changed or destroyed, the Via Coperta was altered – in this case by Alfonso d’Este in 1505. However, the detailed payment records to Girando Costa have survived, with a description of the Ercole’s Via Coperta. See Ibid.

56 Tuohy, Herculean Ferrara, 122.
this northern expansion continued, the Venetians naturally grew curious; Ercole informed them that the city population was bursting at the seams, and that he was merely accommodating his citizens. The addition became more or less official on 27 August 1492, with the excavation of ditches in preparation for the massive wall that was to surround the new land.\textsuperscript{57} By 1493, five-hundred peasants were brought from Romagna to assist in the excavation effort, and even more manpower came from Modena and Reggio. Ercole frequently visited the construction sights and oversaw the progress of his peasant servants.\textsuperscript{58} The physical engineering of the city walls was masterminded by Biagio Rossetti and Alessandro Biondo, but historian Thomas Tuohy stresses throughout his writing that \textit{Ercole} was the supreme architect behind both the walls and new or renovated buildings.

Ercole quickly realized that all of this extra land would need buildings – castles, chapels, etc. – and this Terra Nova would allow him to continue building, refurbishing, and molding Ferrara, which he had begun many years earlier in his own ducal palace. Tuohy remarks that “the extent of Ercole d’Este’s building projects was prodigious and easily outstripped the achievements of any of his contemporaries, or immediate

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 124. The August date comes from the records kept by Caleffini, a contemporary of Ercole who chronicled much of fifteenth-century Ferrara. Caleffini also took great pains to describe the laborious task of excavating ditches.

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., 125. Tuohy goes out of his way to diminish Rossetti’s impact upon the addition: “The duke assumed the leading role in laying out the Terra Nova, not Biagio Rossetti to whom it is generally attributed... the role of the ducal engineer was subsidiary and was to become even less important... After a financial scandal in 1493, his work for the duke was limited... the extension to Ferrara was conceived, planned and directed by the duke himself, and that of the role of the ducal engineer [Rossetti] was completely subordinate.” See Ibid., 128 and 141. Tuohy seem a little harsh on the engineer who was responsible for so much of the Terra Nova (building the walls, laying out the Piazza Nova, building the foundations of a new University, and countless other projects), but perhaps Tuohy is just trying to stress the Ercole’s tremendous involvement, and that Ercole did not simply hand the building and planning over to Rossetti.
predecessors.” Many churches and religious sites were either newly constructed or updated; perhaps the most important piece of the Terra Nova was the Piazza Nova – the center of the new addition, and the location where Ercole’s monument was to have been erected, casting his eternal presence over all of Ferrara.

The Monument for Ercole d’Este

Thomas Tuohy has written what is probably the most comprehensive and thorough architectural history of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Ferrara. He offers detailed descriptions of nearly every important building of the duke’s rule, from the external structure to the furnishings within particular rooms. For the purposes of this paper, it is not necessary to examine each building in Ferrara, but rather particular examples that demonstrate the modeling and replication techniques seen in this city-state’s architecture.

Four Ferrarese princes – Alberto, Niccolo III, Borso, and Ercole – were all commemorated by monuments, and the respective monuments reflect their political affiliations. Alberto’s monument alludes to his triumph in Rome and attainment of a papal bull to build a university; Niccolo’s monument (probably the most difficult to interpret) appears to commemorate the peace established during his reign; Borso’s monument portrayed its subject as a ruler known for his just laws and the faithful and fair execution of these laws. Ercole’s monument was not only a massive display of his eternal presence, but classical emblems pervade the monument, providing a prominent example of the imitation technique that would unify the artistic achievements of this duke. An examination of the monument reveals an abundance of classical quotations: the fluted columns, the Corinthian capitals, the laurel wreaths, the equestrian pose, the realm

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59 Ibid., 186.
of sanctuary around the monument's base, the location in the center of the new addition, and the inscription referring to "Augustus" at the monument's base. See Appendix III, Figure 3.

One of the most immediate distinctions between Ercole's monument and those of his predecessors was Ercole's direct involvement in its design. Leon Battista Alberti noted in his treatise *De re aedificatoria* that "such monuments [i.e. the kinds built in memory or honor of rulers] are to be erected by the community, not by the individual being honored, so as to avoid the charge of self-aggrandizement." Ercole apparently had no such scruples. For Alberto and Niccolo, the city council or *Savi* commissioned the monuments in honor of the former rulers. Construction on Alberto's began about five months before his July 1393 death and Niccolo's monument was begun after his death. And it was the community of Modena, particularly the Modenese *Savi*, that decided to build a statue in Borso's honor. Neither Alberto nor (obviously) Niccolo had any direct influence upon their respective monuments; Borso may have had some input in the construction of his monument, but not to the extent of Ercole. A series of letters exchanged between Ercole and his Milanese ambassador, Giovanni Valla, reveals that it was the Duke who had ordered the casting of the equestrian statue. Rosenberg observes:

\[\ldots\] the inscription that was to have adorned the monument's base prominently proclaimed it to be a *communal* initiative, undertaken to honor the duke. Evidently, although the commune might ultimately have paid for the monument, Ercole's wishes were to have played a significant role in the project's genesis and

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61 Ibid., 27-8 and 54.

62 Ibid., 88. Rosenberg does point out that the monument was erected during Borso's lifetime (sometime in 1450, right after he came to power).
The four monuments bear a certain affinity, as the location of each monument mirrors the political profile of each prince. Alberto’s was built into the facade of the San Giorgio Cathedral, commemorating his successful pilgrimage to Rome and his obtainment of a papal bull that authorized him to take possession of land previously controlled by the papacy. The location of the monument reflects piety (an important princely virtue) and when viewed in context, the monument is dwarfed by the size of the facade, in stark contrast to Ercole’s gigantic equestrian statue atop its massive columns. See Appendix III, Figures 1, 2, and 3. Niccolo’s monument was similar to Ercole’s, in that it was a large equestrian monument, but because the statue has not survived, there is debate about the location and precise appearance. Drawings and other documents suggest that Niccolo was dressed in civilian clothes, in contrast to Ercole’s military attire. Niccolo’s statue was to be placed near or perhaps even attached to the ducal palace, but not to preside over the city in the authoritative manner of Ercole’s. In his statue, Borso was depicted as a judge, sitting and administering justice, and Rosenberg suggests that the monument’s placement outside of the Palazzo della Ragione – the seat of communal government – directly refers to the important characteristics and accomplishments of his reign. See Appendix III, Figure 4.

63 Ibid., 155-6.

64 The ‘San Giorgio Cathedral’ in this case refers to the cathedral at the center of Ferrara, not the monastic church located southeast of the city. The chiesa was built before the city, and was and still is a monastery. The San Giorgio cathedral façade, where Alberto’s monument is located, stands within Ferrara itself, and was probably not constructed until the twelfth century.

65 Rosenberg, Este Monuments, 66.
Ercole’s monument, however, was to become the focal point of the Piazza Nova, “[setting Ercole’s] stamp upon the Addition in an unmistakable fashion.”

It was an ancient Roman practice to place a ruler’s monument in some prominent location within a city, that current and future generations might see and remember that ruler. Placed within the Piazza Nuova – the “commercial and symbolic hub of the Erculean Addition” – the monument enhanced the image created by the new Addition. Not only was Ercole now able to “leave the Addition in marble” just as Caesar August had left Rome in marble, but he was eternally present over the entire city. While discussing the location of the monument, Rosenberg comments on the unusual and symbolic choice of location for Ercole’s monument, particularly in light of his predecessors:

Unlike the earlier monuments [to Alberto V, Niccolo III, and Borso], each of which was associated with some specific symbolic structure – the cathedral, the Corte, or the Palazzo della Ragione – the Ercole monument was to have been associated primarily with urban space. The monument’s location there [in the Piazza Nuova] would have given Ercole an eternal presence as the author of that space, towering above a compendium of his noble accomplishments.

There was also a realm of sanctuary established around Ercole’s monument – another ancient tradition. Wolfgang Leibenwein has traced this to Roman emperors who established a space around their monuments as a symbol of authority, wherein the ruler could grant sanctuary or refuge to persons guilty of capital crimes. Ercole wanted his immortal presence cast eternally over Ferrara.

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66 Ibid., 153.

67 Manca, Ercole Roberti, 79.

68 Rosenberg, The Este Monuments, 171.

69 Ibid., 171.

70 Ibid., 170.
The inscriptions around the three monuments warrant careful consideration. Alberto’s inscription wasn’t really an inscription to him, but rather a replica of the papal bull that he triumphantly obtained in 1393. Niccolo’s inscription briefly recounted the peace obtained under his rule, but it was certainly not a biography. Finally, Borso’s inscription is quite brief ("A grateful Ferrara dedicates this column to you while you are living, most just Borso, by merit ruler of the city, who was the first of your blood to receive [the title of] duke from the Emperor, and who rules all in peace"), celebrating his just and peaceful rule, as Rosenberg comments, "the abstract qualities of rulership." But Ercole would not have such pithy and abstract inscriptions (see Appendix II):

The tenor of the Ercole inscription and its relationship to the monument it adorned are radically different from those of the texts that graced the three earlier Este monuments. . . the Ercole inscription goes much farther, for it is a sort of mini-biography. It begins and ends with laudatory statements about the duke but consists primarily of a catalogue of concrete achievements. Since the Este inscriptions could have celebrated whatever image the ruler or his apologists felt appropriate, the contrasts in texts is illuminating. Borso’s monument celebrates the duke’s character, Ercole’s commemorates his concrete achievements. It was definitely Ercole’s passion for architecture and princely entertainments that distinguishes him from his predecessor.

A final and most ironic point about Ercole’s monument, is that it was never erected. Scholars are not sure exactly why, but there is speculation that as workers were unloading the columns of the monument (which had been shipped up the Po River), one

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71 Rosenberg does not give the text and translation of Niccolo’s inscription; presumably this has not survived in full, but enough has survived or was referred to by Ferrarese chroniclers that we can grasp the overall message.

72 Rosenberg, Este Monuments, 89. Hanc tibi viventi Ferrara grata columnam om merita in patriam princeps justissime Borsi dedicat Estensi qui dux a sanguine primus excipis imperium et placida regis omnia pace. I added the italics in the main text.

73 Ibid., 169.

74 Ibid.
fell into the river. But there are several surviving documents that offer detailed accounts and drawings of Ercole’s monument, so it is possible not only to see what it would have looked like, but also to understand the symbolic importance of this Herculean monument.

Santa Maria in Vado

Originally constructed in the mid-tenth century, Santa Maria in Vado was rebuilt in 1494 at the request of Ercole by the court painter and architect, Ercole Roberti. As one of the few buildings spared by the 1570 earthquake, Santa Maria in Vado is “the best surviving example of [a church] with which the duke was involved.” It provides yet another example of a structure that embodied and modeled many classical characteristics. The emblems of antiquity may be seen in the clear and precise classical references: the simplicity and grandeur emphasizing all’antica, the circular windows (instead of the square Gothic windows) allowing light to flow evenly into the room, the rounded arches inside the building; and the high pedestals supporting the columns in the nave, which were inspired by Roman ruins that Roberti encountered during his trip to Rome.

See Appendix III, Figures 5, 6, and 7. The windows actually offer two layers of unity— not only are they round, but this shape allows light to stream evenly through them,

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75 Ibid., 154-155.
76 Ibid., 24. Rosenberg notes that Santa Maria in Vado was one of the oldest foundations in Ferrara, and may date even before the tenth century.
77 Tuohy, Herculean Ferrara, 388.
78 Manca, Ercole Roberti, 81.
79 The church has been altered significantly since the fifteenth century. If one were to examine current pictures of Santa Maria or visit it, they would see rectangular windows. These were added in the sixteenth century, but historians have been able to find traces of older, round windows. See Manca, Ercole Roberti, 81.
80 Manca, Ercole Roberti, 82.
providing an equal proportion of light to the entire room. Manca comments on the

unified and proportioned clarity of Santa Maria:

Indeed, the impression of every aspect of the original design is one of unity: unity of lighting in all parts of the church, unity of the circular fenestration, and unity of materials, with brick and marble outside and a coloristically similar use of white marble, pink marble, and terracotta on the inside. The correspondence of outside and inside, perhaps reflecting central Italian ideals, was abetted by the similarity of the height, position, and form of the pilasters and plinths on the outside and the inside of the church. . . the height of the columns and bases inside are one third the height of the building, and the height of the large pilasters inside is one-half the entire structure’s height. The transept elevation is also divided into simple proportional parts. \footnote{Ibid., 81.}

Manca stresses that Santa Maria in Vado exemplifies both classical antiquity and the more current characteristics of Ferrarese architecture during Ercole’s reign. The church combines “the spirit of antiquity with that of courtly fantasy and delightful variety. . . the Ferrarese artistic traditions are still present, even in a grand monumental structure designed in imitation of antiquity.” \footnote{Ibid., 82.} For example, the decorative designs donning the column capitals within the nave are not uniform – each capital has a slightly different design, lending to the “Ferrarese aesthetic [that] favored caprice and visual effects over more rationalizing and measurable intentions.” \footnote{Ibid., 83.} (See Figure 7). It is important, however, to realize that these simple embellishments, while present, do not take away from the overall classical design of the building. At first glance of the interior (Figure 7), one’s eyes are drawn to the rounded arches, evenly lit space and the balanced, unified structure of the room. The imitative technique of relying on frequent quotation is dominant throughout the church.

\footnote{Ibid., 81-82}
Conclusions

The architectural achievements of Ercole’s reign stand in marked contrast to those of his predecessors. Even though Niccolo reigned for nearly fifty years, only a few structures were added to Ferrara during that time, and most of these were for defensive purposes.\(^{84}\) Leonello likewise built few structures, but he was interested in architectural theory, and even requested that Leon Battista Alberti write an architectural treatise, *De re aedificatoria*.\(^{85}\) Borso commissioned more projects than his predecessors – walls were added to the city’s southern border, several monasteries were established, and new additions were added to the Palazzo Schifanoia – but his endeavors were far from the magnitude and scope of Ercole’s.\(^{86}\)

By comparison Ercole used his architectural projects to shape and mold his reputation to an unprecedented degree. Even before the northern addition he cast his presence throughout Ferrara, from his image-bearing currency to the great Labors of Hercules woven into the tapestries on the walls of his guest-bedrooms. The expansion project of the 1490s accomplished not only defensive and political goals, but it also provided a venue for Ercole to further enhance his reputation as a magnificent ruler – one who compared with the great emperors of antiquity. Tuohy comments on the Duke’s motivations:

[Ercole’s] building projects on such a large scale, even though many were ecclesiastical, must surely have been politically motivated. He wished to impress others, particularly the French, and to give the illusion that his city and the state of which it was a capital was large and rich, and strong enough to resist a recurrence

\(^{84}\) Rosenberg, *Este Monuments*, 46.

\(^{85}\) Ibid., 53-4.

\(^{86}\) Ibid., 83-6.
of the humiliating defeat suffered at the hands of the Venetians in 1484.\textsuperscript{87}

Through his architectural pursuits and the specific detail given to the persona of individual buildings and interior design (such as the tapestries), Ercole’s desire for prestigious and immortal status emerged from the physical structures of his city. And more than simply his agenda, the architecture — especially the monument and Santa Maria — displays the imitative techniques which would unify Ferrara’s artistic atmosphere.

From the equestrian pose and Corinthian capitals to the "Augustus" inscription, emblems of classical antiquity permeate the monument. Likewise, Santa Maria in Vado displays such classical emblems: rounded arches, circular windows, and the unified proportion of the building. As we will see in Chapter IV, not only do the statue and church bear these classical emblems, but the polyphony written for Ercole’s chapel also relies on this imitation by quotation technique.

\textsuperscript{87} Tuohy, \textit{Herculean Ferrara}, 20.
CHAPTER III
ERCOLE AS PATRON: THE COURT CHAPEL

We have seen how Ercole integrated his imperial image into the architecture and physical expansion of Ferrara; now we turn to his musical endeavors. He built the court chapel by patronizing Europe’s most sought-after composers, and during his reign, Johannes Martini, Jacob Obrecht (c.1457-1505), and Josquin des Prez (c.1450-1521) all came to Ferrara. Martini warrants the most study; he remained Ercole’s primary court musician for twenty-five years, creating an atmosphere of musical excellence with unprecedented polyphonic achievements. Furthermore, Ercole’s chapel produced some of the first sacred Italian polyphony since its sudden disappearance from sources in the early fifteenth century. In order to continue the production of sacred polyphony at his court, Ercole sought musicians who could both sing and compose, and as suggested by Rob Wegman, he was one of the first in Europe to hire a musician based on compositional skills.\(^{88}\) This chapter will examine Ercole’s patronage strategies and the resistance to polyphony by some prominent religious figures; then it will turn to Martini and particularly his Masses. In Chapter Four, the Masses will become the focal point of comparison with the architecture, and it will be helpful to have put them in context. Besides providing a close look at Martini’s Masses, this chapter will suggest that while Ercole’s musical accomplishments mirror not only his religiosity (as Lockwood argues), they also reflect his aspirations of becoming Italy’s grandest and most celebrated ruler.

Rival Patrons

Ercole wasted no time in cultivating the art of musical patronage. Lockwood has observed that Ercole’s patronage was closely tied to his piety and religiosity: “The character of Ercole’s musical interests and patronage is entirely consonant with his strong religious outlook.” Ercole certainly displayed great piety: his days began with a sung Mass, and during certain seasons of the Christian calendar, he was seen among his people, giving money to the poor or serving the sick, and, on occasion, attending theological debates. Throughout his numerous writings about Ferrara, Lockwood has commented on the depth of Ercole’s faith:

As a further contributing element in Ercole’s approach to music we should consider his deep personal religiosity, amounting almost to fanaticism. This may surprise those who know his character only from the diplomatic side, in which he has the reputation of being a clever manipulator . . . But his correspondence and other evidence compels us to take his religious attitudes very seriously. . .

These “religious attitudes” intensified throughout Ercole’s life:

In the last years [of Ercole’s life] he also become even more deeply and openly religious than he had been before. His increasing religious devotion in these last years is closely bound up with his intensified patronage of musicians for the court chapel, for which, above all, Masses were collected and composed.

And yet even Lockwood suggests that piety and religiosity were not Ercole’s sole concerns. In a discussion of Johannes Martini’s extensive use of secular cantus firmi, he seems to question the devotion to religious faith at Ercole’s court, remarking that “Martini’s extensive use of secular cantus firmi for his Masses suggests a relaxed attitude

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90 Tuohy, Herculean Ferrara, 167.

91 Lockwood, “Music at Ferrara,” 114.

92 Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 129.
toward the atmosphere of strong religious faith of the court under Ercole, at least at the
abstract level of the choice of basic melody for a polyphonic Mass to be performed in his
chapel."\(^{93}\) While devotion and piety were important to Ercole, advancing the status and
prestige of his court was an equal if not higher priority. He was on the cusp of becoming
one of Italy’s most powerful rulers.

Musical patronage was far from just a personal enterprise; it quickly became an
important political, humanistic, and cultural endeavor in the late fifteenth century. The
popularity and success of musical patronage came about for a variety of reasons, but in
part because “awareness of music as a social art, as a means of intensifying poetic and
religious expression, and as a mode of personal cultivation, spread through Italian literate
circles in the late fifteenth century.”\(^{94}\) Competition among patrons of various north-
Italian courts was yet another reflection of city-state rivalry, but even more than this,
patronage reflected “the growth of humanistic culture, with its emphasis on manners,
refinement, and individual distinction made patrons themselves more willing to cultivate
music – with respect to the more manly traditions still a soft and effeminate art – as part
of the search for a wider expression of personal values.”\(^{95}\) Ercole, however, was not just
competing with his neighbors, he was competing with his own predecessors, for his
“intensive development of the court chapel as private oratory and as [a] symbolic center
of court worship, staffed by the best singers in available in Europe, implicitly challenged
the memory of one of Leonello’s most celebrated earlier achievements [the construction

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\(^{93}\) Ibid., 238.

\(^{94}\) Ibid., 130.

\(^{95}\) Ibid.
of the court chapel].”

In fact, Leonello’s court chapel was one of the few that included polyphony for the daily liturgy. But this dims when compared with Ercole: between 1443 and 1445, Leonello’s chapel grew from four to ten singers; between 1473 and 1476, Ercole’s grew from twelve singers (plus a group of German choirboys from Constance) to twenty-eight singers, and by 1500, it had grown even larger than the pope’s. Just as Ercole surpassed his predecessors’ architectural success, he would also surpass their musical endeavors.

Lockwood has observed that rivalry with neighboring courts – especially the Milanese court of Galeazzo Maria Sforza – was an important component of Ercole’s intense patronage. Throughout Ercole’s reign, the courts of Ferrara and Milan constantly vied for the most outstanding musicians. Lockwood even suggests that “Ercole’s entire effort to launch his cappella was not a wholly independent venture but was aimed at competing directly with Galeazzo Maria Sforza.” Ercole and Galeazzo became bitter rivals, as both embarked on extensive recruitment campaigns for Italy’s finest singers. Musical competition was part of Ercole’s self-aggrandizement program, so he naturally sought to surpass the Milanese chapel of forty-four singers – by far the largest in Italy. Indeed, the Lombard capital hosted some of the most important composers in Italy during

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96 Ibid.

97 Ibid., 45 and 49.

98 This is even more remarkable considering the fact that Borso dismissed many court singers.

99 Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 48 and 134; and “Music at Ferrara,” 107.


101 Ibid., 233.
the 1470s: Josquin des Prez, Compère, Agricola, Weerbecke, and Martini. Ercole obtained several papal bulls that allowed him – without waiting for papal permission – to grant benefices. This privilege, which Galeazzo never obtained, accounted for much of Ercole’s success as a patron. After Galeazzo was assassinated during Christmas Day Mass in 1476, his core of singers nearly dissolved, and in 1477 Ercole recruited five from Galeazzo’s chapel.

Sacred Polyphony at Ferrara

The landscape of fifteenth-century Italian polyphony is extremely difficult to survey; for nearly one-hundred years – from 1430-1530 – native Italian composers of polyphony seem to have vanished. This remains a mystery, for though Italian artists blossomed in painting, architecture, poetry, and other arts, they failed to produce sacred or secular polyphony, and Italian courts were forced to rely on foreign talent. In light of the burgeoning polyphony throughout the rest of western European countries, this polyphonic void is even more anomalous, and scholarship has yet to offer a compelling explanation.


105 In addition to Pirrotta, see Allan W. Atlas, Renaissance Music: Music in Western Europe, 1400-1600 (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1998), 200-201. Scholars remain baffled by the absence of polyphonic music in Italy during the in the early decades of the fifteenth century. Atlas summarizes three current explanations: 1) Italian music may simply have given way to the French styles, but as Atlas points out, this is not very convincing, especially since Italy became the leader in all other areas of art and learning. 2) Italy did not have the choir schools of the Franco-Flemish cathedrals (thus the great migration of Franco-Flemish composers into Italy), but this is still not satisfactory, because Italy did have cathedral schools, and finally 3) the rise of humanism and love for classical antiquity may have prompted Italians to abandon the complicated style of Franco-Flemish polyphony and the lavish style of their own Trecento in favor of simple improvisation. This may have been an attempt to imitate the Greek
Secular and sacred polyphony did not consistently flourish in Italy again until the 1490s. The Ferrarese chapel was an exception, for not only was it one of the earliest to emerge as a center for sacred polyphony, but it did so shortly after Ercole’s rise to power in August 1471. By November Ercole had already hired fra Johannes Franza (Johannes Brebis) as cantadore, and by early December, Ercole was in close contact with the Bishop of Constance. In a famous letter to the Bishop, Ercole outlined his goals for the court chapel, and included that “for the celebration of divine worship and the daily offices we are seeking most excellent musicians, whom we are looking for everywhere.” Ercole also announced to the Bishop that he wished to hire a priest – dominus Martinus de Almania – and asked the Bishop to release the priest. Scholars are fairly certain that this was Johannes Martini, the singer and composer who would remain at Ercole’s chapel until 1497. It is not clear how Ercole became aware of either Martini or the Constance chapel, but the letter does provide a clue to Ercole’s recruiting technique: he relied heavily on word-of-mouth, not necessarily on diplomatic emissaries. It demonstrates that he was not content to simply hire an agent who would stock the chapel with singers, but rather that he was actively involved in the hiring process. His chapel grew to twenty-eight singers (plus twelve German choirboys from Constance) and with the Milanese chapel and the Papal chapel of Sixtus IV, “these three musical groups form at this time the most important centers for polyphony in Italy.”

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style of accompanying Latin verse with the lyre – an imitation of the ancient Greeks. Atlas considers this the most probable of the three explanations.

106 Lockwood, Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 131.

107 Ibid., 134.
The singers at Ercole’s court were kept extremely busy – they were used for daily worship services and any special occasions. The Ferrarese court chapel produced some of the most elaborate polyphony of the late fifteenth century, and though not performed everyday, Lockwood suspects that there was more refined polyphony sung in Ferrara than anywhere – including the Papal chapel.

Every major occasion [at Ferrara] involved some form of music making, and, for each, Ercole’s musicians were capable and ready to supply not merely routine but highly skilled performances, if we judge from their professional experience and the quality of their repertoires. At morning Mass, at Vespers, and on other occasions (including the ventura, the processions and services of Holy Week, and the sacre rappresentazioni), Ercole’s singers could provide polyphony that represented the most developed contemporary form of musical expression.\(^{108}\)

Though Ercole was determined to revive polyphony and create one of Italy’s most important polyphonic centers, he met considerable resistance from clergy and religious reformers, especially the Ferrarese monk, Savonarola, who spoke out about the dangers of polyphony:

> These lords have chapels of singers that seem like a great tumult, because there stands a singer with a big voice like that of a calf, and the others yell around him like dogs, and no one understands what they are singing. Leave aside figured music and sing the plainsongs ordained by the church.\(^{109}\)

While Ercole admired and implemented many of Savonarola’s religious reforms, he refused to ban polyphony, as it was far too important to the musical advancement of court. Regardless of the fact that religious polyphony was rare and often viewed with suspicion in the fifteenth-century church, Ercole announced, through a prestigious succession of court composers and singers, that Ferrara would lead Italy in the development and refinement of sacred polyphony. Did Ercole recruit these musicians

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simply to write Masses for his personal devotion and piety, or did he recruit them so that Ferrara might become the greatest musical center in the fifteenth century? Surely Johannes Martini, Jacob Obrecht, and Josquin des Prez did not make the pilgrimage to Ferrara simply to write humble music for a humble duke; some of their most elaborate and famous polyphonic works came from their years at Ferrara.\(^\text{110}\) Ercole clearly had a different musical agenda than the Catholic Church, as he sought to advance his personal greatness as a ruler.

*Johannes Martini (c.1430-1497)*

The singers at Ercole’s court remained there for a remarkably long period of time, particularly in a period when competition among ducal patrons often caused them to move from one court to another. The most long-lasting and influential singer at Ercole’s court was Johannes Martini. His presence has often been overshadowed by Josquin and even Obrecht, but these two composers were only in Ferrara for a combined total of two years, while Martini remained at Ferrara for twenty-five years. It was Martini to whom Ercole turned for splendid polyphony, and it was Martini who would build Ferrara into a musical powerhouse.

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\(^\text{110}\) Two of Josquin’s famous works — the motet *Miserere Mei Deus* and the *Missa Hercules dux ferrariae* — were written during 1503. The elaborate motet setting exemplifies how rapidly polyphony matured at Ferrara. See Patrick Macey, *Bonfire Songs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 184-213. The *Missa Hercules* became such a landmark composition in honoring nobility that it was copied into manuscripts with the name *Dux Ferrariae* replaced with the names of various leaders. For example, MS Brussels 9126 lists the same Mass (the music remains unchanged) as *Missa Philippus Rex Castiliae*, dated 1504 and 1506. In Jena, Universitätsbibliothek MS3 lists the Mass as *Fridericus Dux Saxoniae*, dedicated to Frederick the Wise. See Lockwood, “Music at Ferrara,” 109-110. And although there is heated debate among scholars regarding the date of *Missae Hercules* (proposed dates range from 1480-1503), in the most current scholarship Christopher Reynolds suggests that the Mass was written during Josquin’s 1503 trip to Ferrara. See Christopher Reynolds, “Interpreting and Dating Josquin’s *Missa Hercules dux ferrariae,*” in *Early Music Borrowing*, ed. Honey Meconi (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 91-110; p.105. Obrecht wrote at least Masses during his one year at Ferrara, including *Missas Adieu mes amours*. See Rob C. Wegman, *Born for the Muses: The Life and Masses of Jacob Obrecht* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 138-147 and 189-190; and Barton Hudson, “Two Ferrarese Masses by Jacob Obrecht,” *Journal of Musicology* 4 (1985-6): 276-302.
By far the central figure in the chapel under Ercole was Johannes Martini. In recruitment and management of Ercole’s musicians, in the formation of the chapel’s repertories and compiling of its manuscripts, in the performance and composition of new music, and in teaching Ercole’s children and probably to other members of the court establishment, Martini played the leading role for nearly twenty-five years.\textsuperscript{111}

As with so many pre seventeenth-century composers, Martini’s biographical profile has many gaps, and scholars are unable to precisely trace his early activities. He was of Flemish origin, probably born in either Brabant or Flamingus. “Martini” was a common surname in fifteenth-century Europe, which has also caused confusion about his origin. Scholars sharply disagree about his approximate date of birth – proposed dates range from 1430-1450 – and Murray Steib speculates that the earlier date is most likely.\textsuperscript{112} A papal document of 1486 refers to a Johannes Martini as “clericus Cameracensis,” suggesting that Martini spent some time at the Cambrai court, probably in the late 1460s, though scholars cannot tell whether he secured a benefice there. The famous Burgundian court, an influential and extremely productive musical center during the fifteenth century, certainly nourished Martini’s growth and he may have had the opportunity to study with Dufay. The first mention of Martini in a Ferrarese document is the December 1471 letter from Ercole to Bishop Constance. As mentioned earlier, the letter reveals not only that Ercole began his reign with the adamant pursuit of musicians, but also that he personally hired Martini:

\textsuperscript{111} Lockwood, \textit{Music in Renaissance Ferrara}, 167.

\textsuperscript{112} Lockwood is confident that Martini came from Brabant (see Lockwood, \textit{Music in Renaissance Ferrara}, 167). Steib, however, offers the possibility that Martini was born in Flamingus, because some documents refer to him as “Johannes Martini de Flamingus. There is also a fifteenth-century Flemish author, Jacques de Meyere who mentions a “ioanne Martinus.” Several scholars, including Edward G. Evans, Ludwig Fischer, Adelyn Peck Leverett and Reinhard Strohm have suggested different birth-dates; Steib agrees with Strohm that Martini was probably born around 1430. See Johannes Martini, \textit{Johannes Martini Masses: Part I Masses Without Known Polyphonic Models}, Elaine Moohan and Murray Steib, eds (Madison, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, Inc., 1999), vii-viii; hereafter “Steib and Moohan.”
Therefore, since [report] has come to our notice of the sufficiency, integrity, and honesty of life of the venerable dominus Martin of Germany, priest in Your Lordship’s cathedral church, and having received information that he is of a very great capability in the art of music, we have chosen and hired him as a singer in our aforementioned chapel.\textsuperscript{113}

Martini was first documented at Ercole’s court on 27 January 1473 as “Giovanni d’Alemagna.” It is unclear why there is a gap between Ercole’s request in 1471 and Martini’s documentation in Ferrara in 1473, but Martini may have had difficulty finding a replacement at Constance, or there may have been a delay in recording his salary in the payroll. There is evidence that he was in Ferrara before 1473; a motet (\textit{Perfunde coeli rore}) written by Martini in November 1472 was performed at the lavish wedding of Ercole and Eleonora of Aragon. Martini spent a brief time at the Sforza court in 1474, but by November of that year, he was back in Ferrara, where he would remain until his death in late 1497.\textsuperscript{114}

From the beginning of his career at Ferrara, Martini was afforded greater status than other singers at the court. Not only had he been personally pursued by Ercole, but when he arrived at Ferrara, Martini received a higher salary than his fellow singers and was granted one of the first benefices issued by Ercole.\textsuperscript{115} Martini also held another distinction – he was given the title \textit{cantadore compositore} and this was “the first real evidence of composer being recognized and valued in employment terms.”\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{113} Qua de re cum ad noticiam nostrum pervenerit de sufficiencia, integritate, ac vite honestate venerabilis domini Martini de Alemania, Sacerdotes in ecclesia cathedrali V.D. et habita per nos informatione quod in arte Musica, plurimim valet, ipsum in cantorem capelle nostrre predice delegimus atque conduximus. Cited and translated by Steib in Steib and Moohan, viii.

\textsuperscript{114} Steib and Moohan, viii-ix.

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., ix.

\textsuperscript{116} Wegman, “From Maker to Composer,” 464.
significance of Martini’s title is most clearly seen in light of the general late-fifteenth-century view of employed singers:

The first thing which leaps immediately to the attention is the fact that in the particular circumstances under which the Church promoted the exercise of music, performers were employed as performers, but nobody was employed specifically as a composer. Unlike the painter or architect, the composer was not a type of independent craftsman, sought out by patrons to provide the wares they desired. Composition was merely a sideline, pursued by men whose primary occupation was executant musicians, principally as singers.  

Not only was Ercole hiring some of Europe’s most acclaimed singers, but he was elevating them to a higher status than they had previously received. In 1487, Ercole requested permission for *magister* Jacob Obrecht to leave Bruges for six months and come to Ferrara. A fifteenth-century chronicler noted that “the same duke [Ercole] takes much delight in the art of music, favors the musical composition of the said magister Jacob [Obrecht] above other compositions, and has long wished to see him.”

Commenting on this passage, Wegman states that “here, a musician in a distant country is valued (and fetched at considerable expense) not as a singer but specifically as a composer.” Obrecht would again come to the Ferrarese court after Martini died in 1497 and in 1502 Josquin des Prez would arrive for a brief stay in Ercole’s court. Over the course of the late fifteenth century, musicians were valued as more than mere court singers – their artistry and individuality as composers was seen as having intrinsic value. Patrons were now hiring musicians specifically for their compositional skills. As Ercole

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sought to magnify his imperial image through the architecture and expansion of his court, it should come as no surprise that he also led the way in this watershed phenomenon. The concept of a professional composer was new and innovative, and no doubt Ercole (correctly) foresaw the inherent value in creating these “new fangled” positions.

Martini’s compositional output during his years at Ferrara certainly fulfilled Ercole’s expectation for excellent and refined polyphony. His eleven Masses had probably all been written by the early 1480s. In addition to his Masses, he also wrote eleven hymns, six magnificats, and four motets. Although this thesis examines only Martini’s Masses based on polyphonic models, it is interesting to observe that overall, his hymns and especially the magnificats are highly imitative, often using the same quotation technique found in his Masses.\footnote{Brawley, “The Magnificats, Hymns, Motets, and Secular Compositions of Johannes Martini,”43-44. Brawley is currently the only scholar who has examined this repertoire in detail.} He also composed some secular music, but his sacred works are more plentiful.

\textit{Background and Dating Martini’s Masses}

In Chapter Four, Martini’s Masses will become the point of comparison with the architecture; therefore, it will prove helpful to outline Martini’s basic style and compositional techniques. As with so many Renaissance compositions, it is difficult to date Martini’s Masses precisely, but the manuscripts offer some helpful boundaries. Martini and Johannes Brebis (Brebis worked closely with Martini at Ferrara) produced two manuscripts in Ferrara between 1479 and 1481 that contain psalms, hymns, and magnificats for Vespers, Matins, and Lauds.\footnote{The shelf marks in the Biblioteca Estense are MS. MUS. EM.1.11 and MS. MUS. EM.1.12.} Between 1480 and 1481, they produced another manuscript, devoted solely to Masses. Of the eighteen Masses in this manuscript,
eight were written by Martini, and Steib suggests that the rest were probably edited by him. There were two earlier Masses; *Missa Cucu* appeared in TrentC91, compiled during the years 1472 and 1474, and *Missa Cela sans plus* appeared in VatS 51, circa 1474. *Missa In feuers hitz* only survives in VerBC759 from the 1480s. The only Mass written after 1481 was *Missa La Martinella* whose manuscript, VatS 35, was compiled during 1487-1490.\(^{122}\) Of his eleven surviving Masses, at least six are based on secular, polyphonic models.\(^{123}\)

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<th>Mass</th>
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<td>Missa La Martinella</td>
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<td>Der Pföbenschwancz</td>
<td>Barbingant</td>
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<td>Missa in feuers hitz</td>
<td>In Feuers hitz</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>German Tenorlied</td>
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<td>Missa Ma bouche rit</td>
<td>Ma bouche rit</td>
<td>Ockeghem</td>
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<td>Missa Or sus, or sus</td>
<td>Or Sus, or sus</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>French Chanson</td>
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<td>Missa Cela sans plus</td>
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<td>Colinet de Lanoy</td>
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<td><em>Missa Nos amis</em>(^{124})</td>
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It is believed that these Masses from Table I were written for Ercole’s court.\(^{125}\) If most of Martini’s Masses were written by 1481, he must have turned to other genres during the last decades of the fifteenth century; however, we do not know why he stopped writing Masses towards the end of his life.\(^{126}\)

\(^{122}\) Steib and Moohan., xiii.

\(^{123}\) In the two-volume modern edition of these Masses, Steib actually has thirteen masses listed. For reasons laid out in his preface, he does not believe that two of these masses (*Missa Ferialis* and *Missa Nos amis*) were written by Martini. Steib included these two masses in his modern edition because there has been disagreement as to whether Martini was the author, and Steib “felt compelled to include both Masses so that other scholars could come to their own conclusions.” See Steib and Moohan, xiv.

\(^{124}\) This mass may not be Martini’s.

\(^{125}\) Steib and Moohan, xiii.

\(^{126}\) I am grateful to Murray Steib for sharing with me his thoughts about the dating of Martini’s Masses.
Conclusions

Under Ercole’s leadership, Ferrara became an epicenter for the reemergence of sacred Italian polyphony. The prominence of his chapel grew with the recruitment of musicians who would position this north-Italian city-state on the cutting edge of the musical world. He debated whether to bring Josquin or Heinrich Isaac to Ferrara, and a famous letter between Ercole and his court agent, Girolamo da Sestola, highlights Ercole’s insistence for a composer not only of great talent, but also with prestige and fame. There is currently no document that explains exactly why he hired Josquin instead of Isaac, but Lockwood has suggested that Ercole was motivated by “the dream of outdoing kings and popes.” Ercole hired Josquin over Isaac when informed by Girolamo that “neither pope nor king will have a better chapel than your lordship. . . by having Josquin in our chapel I want to place a crown upon this chapel of ours.”

Lockwood has also considered the possible connection in Ercole’s mind between Josquin and a glorified court chapel:

Particularly striking [in the written exchange between Sestola and Ercole] is the reference to Josquin as the potential culminating figure in a chapel that is already strong, one who will raise it beyond that of any lord or king if he is brought to lead it. . . Josquin, then is portrayed by Coglia [Sestola] as being metaphorically a crowning figure, and the implication is that, by hiring him, Ercole can aspire to higher status than most dukes can claim. A further implication is that the musician of great reputation can confer upon a patron the same measure of reflected glory that had traditionally been attributed to poets and painters.

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129 Ibid.
Ercole was determined to promote his image throughout Italy and all of Western Europe. His longing for the most prominent court chapel and in turn, a glorified self-image, was not exclusive to the musical aspects of the Ferrarese court. The architecture personified Ercole’s Augustan image, as it imitated the might and splendor of the ancients. The chapel continued to magnify this image, becoming one of the most prominent in Europe, and producing some of the finest fifteenth-century polyphony. Yet this brought more than fame to Ercole. As we shall see in the next chapter, the refined and exquisite polyphony spilling from his chapel relied upon the same imitation technique found in the architecture. This technique brought unification to Ferrara, echoing a duke who sought to embody the virtues of Hercules and the accomplishments of Augustus.
CHAPTER IV

IMITATIVE TECHNIQUES IN FERRARESE ARCHITECTURE AND MASSES

From the Labors of Hercules adorning the walls of the Palazzo del Corte, to the great urban project of northern expansion, Ercole had successfully woven his image into the fabric of Ferrara. But what of the elaborate polyphony bursting forth from the court chapel? Surely Ercole did not take such great pains to craft only visual reminders of his regal image. As discussed in Chapter Three, musical patronage played an important role in the life of a fifteenth-century court, and Ercole would only settle for superb musicians and excellent polyphony. After examining the consistent use of classical emblems in the architecture, it is not surprising to find a similar case in the court polyphony. Although there was no Greek or Roman music that composers could emulate, the polyphony could still abide by the imitative technique of quotation. Johannes Martini’s music proves that it was possible to use continuous quotation of a model throughout a composition.

Before considering the specific parallels found in Ferrarase music and architecture, it will be helpful to briefly trace the development of the fifteenth-century cantus firmus Mass and its progression towards the sixteenth-century parody Mass. Then, an examination of movements from Martini’s Missa La Martinella and Missa Ma bouche rit will illustrate his unique techniques, particularly by comparison with Johannes Ockeghem’s Missa Fors seulement and Heinrich Isaac’s Missa Comme Femme Desconfortee. Finally, a comparison of Martini’s Masses with the two architectural examples studied in Chapter Two – the monument intended for Ercole and the church of Santa Maria in Vado – will reveal the striking parallels between the Ferrarese music and
architecture, ultimately proving that Ercole’s personal, self-aggrandizing agenda pervaded and unified the artistic ambitions of late fifteenth-century Ferrara.

*Development of the Fifteenth-Century Mass: Progression Towards Parody*

The greatest question facing composers of the fifteenth century was how to unify the five movements of the Mass ordinary. Though Dufay is often credited as the “inventor” of the cantus-firmus Mass, he most likely consolidated and built on the procedures of two earlier English composers, Leonel Power and John Dunstable, who were among the first to use the same sections of a cantus firmus in all five movements of a Mass. An English manuscript from c.1440 has two complete Mass cycles — *Alma Redemptoris Mater* and *Rex Saeculorum* — whose movements are based upon a unifying cantus firmus in the tenor part.¹³₀ These and other early English Masses, though often overshadowed by Dufay, “can hardly be overestimated. Not only is the general concept of writing a cycle on a single cantus established; the most important specific methods of handling the cantus firmus are developed as well. The structural principles which are laid down in this period persist until well after the turn of the century despite the development of many new procedures of composition.”¹³¹

Though it is one of Dufay’s later Masses, *Missa Se la face ay pale* (Savoy, c.1450) is most often associated with this new style of unified Mass movements. It was also one of the first to use a cantus firmus derived from a secular source. In this Mass, Dufay introduced several important techniques that would become hallmarks of fifteenth-century Masses: the texture now comprises four voices (most Masses before Dufay were

¹³₀ Though there is some debate as to the authorship of these two Masses, it is generally assumed that they were written by Leonel and Dunstable. See Edgar H. Sparks, *Cantus Firmus in Mass and Motet 1420-1520* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), 94-95, 106, and 446.

¹³¹ Sparks, 106.
three-voice settings), the cantus firmus is firmly established in the tenor voice, and the cantus firmus is stated at least once in each movement (sometimes more than once, particularly in long movements).\textsuperscript{132}

Along with these cyclic Mass ordinary settings, there was an increased influence of polyphonic chansons, encouraging composers to explore not only the tenor of the model, but also imitative possibilities of the other voices. As imitation became the dominant compositional technique in the fifteenth-century Mass, two important trends emerged: the increased use of secular chanson models instead of plainchant melodies, and the incorporation into a Mass movement of multiple voices from a polyphonic model.\textsuperscript{133}

Masses that borrowed from several voices of a model grew in popularity throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, as composers began to explore the countless variations offered by these polyphonic models. By the sixteenth century, composers used this new-found freedom so extensively that the structural hierarchy of voices within their Masses (i.e. the dominant structural authority of the cantus firmus) lost some of its importance, and Josquin’s generation was the first to use pervading imitation as the building block for their compositions.\textsuperscript{134} Not only did Josquin derive a cantus firmus from multiple voices of a polyphonic model, but he did not always restrict the cantus firmus to the tenor voice. For Josquin, the cantus firmus was not necessarily

\textsuperscript{132} Steib, “Imitation and Elaboration,” 8.

\textsuperscript{133} Atlas, Renaissance Music, 157-158. There are even a few examples of Masses which actually allude to more than one model. In his Missa Ecce ancilla domine/Beata es Maria, Dufay used two different Marian antiphons. However, this was one of Dufay’s last Masses, and a somewhat unusual technique for a composer to use. See Ibid., 162-163.

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 250.
the most important feature of the mass.\textsuperscript{135} Johannes Martini’s Masses do not exhibit the pervading imitation of Josquin’s, but Martini did use extensive imitation throughout his compositions. If Dunstable and Josquin act as the bookends of fifteenth-century Mass style, then Martini falls just before des Prez.

*The Imitation Masses of Johannes Martini*

At the beginning of his dissertation on imitation and elaboration in fifteenth-century Masses, Murray Steib acknowledges that until recently, historians have not realized the extent to which imitation and elaboration were used in fifteenth-century masses.\textsuperscript{136}

The traditional view of these Masses is that only a small number of them contain polyphonic quotations of their model. . .[but] The use of polyphonic quotations was not confined to a ‘small school of composers,’ but was more widespread than hitherto believed. Many composers in addition to those [Peter] Burkholder mentions [Vincenet, Fauques, Martini, Josquin, Obrecht, Isaac, and perhaps Gaspar and Weerbeke] also used polyphonic quotations, including Agricola, Barbingant, Basiron, Bedyngham, Caron, Heyns, Le Rouge, Orto, Pipelare; and more than two dozen anonymous Masses also use polyphonic quotations. . .In fact, virtually every composer who used polyphonic models experimented to some degree with polyphonic quotations, and the repertory of Masses with polyphonic quotations represents a significant percentage of cantus firmus masses from the second half of the fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{135} Steib, “Imitation and Elaboration,” 11.


\textsuperscript{137} Murray Steib, “A Composer Looks at His Model: Polyphonic Borrowings in Masses From the Late Fifteenth Century,” *Tijdschrift Van Koninklijke Vereniging Voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* XLVI (1996): 5-41; see pp. 5-6. Steib is referring to J. Peter Burkholder’s “Johannes Martini and the Imitation Mass of the Late Fifteenth Century.”
Part of Steib’s aim during the research and writing of his dissertation was to demonstrate that fifteenth-century composers not only used polyphonic models in their compositions, but also that they consistently borrowed from all voices of that polyphonic model – not just the tenor/cantus firmus.\textsuperscript{138} There were composers such as Dufay, Agricola, Martini, and Compère who used literal quotations from their polyphonic models; others such as Heinrich Isaac and Johannes Bedingham who used paraphrased quotations from a model; and still others, such as Josquin and Obrecht who used both literal and paraphrased quotations from polyphonic models.\textsuperscript{139} Steib’s work is important because it casts light on the borrowed material (from the polyphonic model) that was not necessarily meant for a cantus firmus in the Mass. It is Martini’s use of this borrowed material – not necessarily his manipulation of a cantus firmus – that distinguishes his technique and makes it unique to Ferrara.

Martini’s use of continuous, polyphonic quotation shows the extent to which a composer could quote exactly from a model while 1) still creating a unique composition which would never be mistaken for its model and 2) still using a traditional cantus firmus structure within the composition. Whenever Martini borrowed a section of the model and placed it within his Mass, he took care to always quote the model precisely, just as a writer would a direct quotation. He never paraphrased or “re-worded” what he had borrowed. He pasted the quotation into his Mass exactly as he found it in the model, and as a result, the contrapuntal fabric of his Masses is rich with “polyphonic emblems” from

\textsuperscript{138} Steib, “Imitation and Elaboration,” xi.

\textsuperscript{139} By literal quotations, Steib means that a phrase of the model is stated literally, with only occasional ornamental notes or passing tones; paraphrase means that many ornamental notes have been added to the voice, and Steib acknowledges that “the distinction between paraphrase and free recreation is often blurred.” Steib, Ibid., 23 and 80.
the model. This technique and style remain consistent throughout his compositions. However, some of his contemporaries, such as Isaac, did not always allow the polyphonic quotation to remain exactly as it was found. When Isaac cut a quotation out from a polyphonic model, he often changed or paraphrased it before pasting it into his Mass; the quotation, therefore, was altered from the model. Johannes Ockeghem was even less concerned with precisely imitating the voices from his model; while he often created a cantus firmus from various voices, the low sonorities of his Masses made any attempt of lengthy quotations a futile effort. Sparks comments that “The imitative passages and short quotations are swallowed up in the thick stream of low sonorities. They are jumbled together without discernable order, often obscured by free voices…” As we shall see, this stands in stark contrast to the clarity and precision of Martini’s technique.

_Martini: Missa La Martinella and Missa Ma bouche_

Masses with precise polyphonic quotations have three distinctive elements:

First in addition to using a cantus firmus derived from a polyphonic source, they [the quotation Masses] all borrow extensively from at least one other voice of their model, and often several voices. . .Second, Masses with literal quotations contain many lengthy multivoiced quotations and other polyphonic allusions to the model, such as alterations and expansions of point of imitations. . .Finally, most allusions to the model (the cantus firmus as well as the polyphonic quotations) are stated literally, with only the occasional addition of a few ornamental notes such as passing tones and anticipations.  

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140 It is also important to note that composers of the latter category (those who used paraphrase and literal quotations) used very short paraphrases or literal quotations. Steib iterates that composers who borrowed from various voices of model were consistent in how they incorporated it into a Mass (e.g. Martini always used literal quotations of a model, never paraphrasing; Isaac always used paraphrase quotations, etc. – “Perhaps the most important observation to be made concerning the three methods [literal quotation, paraphrase quotation, or both literal and paraphrase quotation] of incorporating ancillary borrowings is that, without exception, composers did not use several methods during their careers, but rather employed only one of the methods in all of their Masses with ancillary borrowings.”). See Steib, “Imitation and Elaboration,” xii-xiii.

141 Sparks, _Cantus Firmus in Mass and Motet_, 160.

142 Steib, “Imitation and Elaboration,” 23.
Before we look at these characteristics in the Kyrie of *Missa Ma bouche rit*, it will helpful to see some shorter, more isolated examples. One of the most obvious points of imitation occurs at the beginning of the Kyrie of *Missa La Martinella*, when the first five bars of the superius, contratenor, and bassus quote precisely from their model. (See Appendix IV, Example 1 Martini, *La Martinella*, mm.1-7; and Example 2, Martini, *Missa La Martinella*, Kyrie mm.1-9). But such blatant imitative examples are not limited to the opening of movements; Examples 3 and 4 show simultaneous quotations from multiple voices of the model in the middle of *Missa La Martinella*’s Gloria. (Model, superius voice bars 28-34 as seen in the Mass Gloria, superius bars 50-56; model bars 25-34 as seen in the Mass Gloria, bars 48-56.)

Martini frequently used material that was not originally a point of imitation, and instead of simply restating the line, he turned it into an additional source of imitation – in this way elaborating on a statement of the model. See Example 5, Martini, *La Martinella*, mm.24-35 and Example 6, Martini, *Missa La Martinella*, Gloria, mm. 47-57. (Model, tenor voice, bars 53-56 as seen in the Mass Agnus Dei superius bars 136-139, tenor bars 137-140 and contratenor bars 140-143, and bassus bars 133-137.) As seen in this example, Martini has taken a phrase of the model, pasted it into his Mass, and allowed it to become a new point of imitation, without altering the original material.

While the isolated examples help to demonstrate Martini’s imitation technique, a complete Mass movement will offer a more comprehensive view. With the exception of an occasional passing tone, continuous note-for-note quotations – surrounded by free counterpoint – pervade the Mass. See Example 7, Martini, *Missa Ma bouche rit*, Kyrie. The first seven bars of the superius, contratenor, and tenor replicate the model. And even
when the contratenor, tenor, and bassus move into free counterpoint in bar 8, the superius continues to quote from the model. This type of imitation runs throughout the entire Mass – one of the densest moments comes during the Gloria’s *Qui tollis peccata mundi* (see Example 8, Martini, *Missa Ma bouche rit*, Gloria mm. 66-89). Throughout his Masses, Martini borrows portions of the model and, without any alteration, pastes them into a contrapuntal canvas.

*Isaac: Missa Comme Femme, Kyrie*

Both Isaac and Martini base a significant portion of their Mass repertoire on pre-existent polyphonic models, but Isaac paraphrased his borrowed material while inserting it into his Mass – this in contrast to Martini, who would leave the quotation exactly as he found it in the model. Isaac paraphrased primarily through ornamentation (neighbor tones, passing tones, anticipation tones, etc.), but often the paraphrase is more elaborate. See Appendix IV, Example 9 Isaac, *Missa Comme Femme Desconfortee*, Kyrie. Isaac quotes the tenor of the model almost exactly. However, unlike Martini, Isaac was not so bound to the model that he only quoted literally– paraphrase was an important aspect of his technique. Even parts of the cantus firmus received paraphrase – bars 14-15, 25-26, and 75-76 of the tenor. Isaac opens the Kyrie with a brief, four bar quotation of the model, and the first signs of paraphrase come in bars 5-10 of the superius. As the Kyrie continues, the paraphrase becomes more decorative, and in the superius bars 19-27 Isaac not only paraphrases, but also omits some of the original pitches from the model. One of the more elaborate paraphrase moments comes during the *Christe eleison* (superius, bars 28-36 and altus bars 39-45). These continue to the end of the movement. Isaac was not as concerned with precise emulation of the polyphonic model (as the case with Martini);
rather, he created a Mass movement that bore less resemblance to its original model. On a purely technical level, the difference may seem subtle, but when considered in light of Ferrarese architecture and the emulation of classical models, the difference becomes not only the defining element in Martini’s music, but also the thread that connects Ercole’s musical and architectural pursuits.

*Ockeghem: Missa Fors seulement, Kyrie*

Isaac was not the only fifteenth-century composer who used borrowed material differently than Martini. Ockeghem based much of his Mass repertoire on polyphonic chansons, and while he occasionally used precise quotations, these borrowings are not woven throughout his compositions with the clarity or consistency of Martini. Take, for example, the Kyrie from *Missa Fors seulement* (Example 10, *Ockeghem, Missa Fors seulement*, Kyrie). The cantus firmus in this Mass has generated interest among scholars because it is pieced together from both the tenor and superius of the model. But that is not such a relevant issue when comparing it with Martini’s work. With the exception of the opening ten bars of the contratenor and superius, lengthy imitation of various voices from the model is almost completely absent. There are a few isolated moments, such as the superius of bars 15-18, but no extended quotations as we saw with Martini. Any literal imitation is very brief, and then spins out into a completely new melody. For example, in the superius of bar 42, the three-note motive – DFE – is derived from the model, but newly created material immediately follows that brief motive. As Sparks has noted, the distinctively low range of Ockeghem’s compositions preclude long, imitative passages. One could argue that the contrapuntal web of Ockeghem’s Masses is richer
and more complex than Martini’s; however, Martini’s exact quotations — emblems lifted from his models — are unmistakably and deliberately laced throughout his compositions.

There are several important conclusions to draw from the variation in techniques among these three composers. First, even though they all borrowed from a polyphonic model, the incorporation of the borrowed voice(s) into their Masses was fundamentally different from one another. Martini was careful to preserve and exactly imitate the characteristics of his models — one does not have to go on a treasure hunt to find the quotations in his Masses; his main concern was with literal and clear incorporation of the model. For Isaac, however, the model did not bear the same importance — the paraphrase was so elaborate that it is often difficult to recognize what has been borrowed from the polyphonic model. Isaac instead used the model as a springboard for creating new material that did not bear such literal and obvious resemblance to the model. And Ockeghem barely used continuous quotations in any part of Missa Fors seulement. It is nearly impossible to find such precise quotation in his work.

Ferrarese Architecture and Martini’s Masses

Martini’s distinctive technique becomes even more important when considering the parallels between his Masses and late-fifteenth century Ferrarese architecture. As discussed in Chapter Two, the monument abounds with classical emblems — the Corinthian columns, the equestrian pose, the realm of sanctuary around the monument’s base, the location in the center of the new addition, and the inscriptions of “Augustus” are all such emblems — precise, unaltered designs from antiquity — placed prominently throughout the structure. Just as the fabric of the Kyrie or Qui tollis of Martini’s Missa Ma bouche rit displayed exact replicas from the voices of its polyphonic model, so
Ercole’s monument displayed exact replicas of elements found in classical antiquity. The defining characteristics of the Mass movement and the monument are fundamentally the same – both seek to emulate their respective models exactly. There are places in Missa Ma bouche, where the polyphonic quotations are absent, and Martini has written free counterpoint, such as in bars 11-16 of the Kyrie (See Appendix IV, Example 7) – this is his way of “personalizing” the movement. Likewise, there are personalizing elements in the monument, such as the biographical inscription to Ercole. However, the imitation techniques, unique to both the Mass and the monument, remain the fundamental and predominant feature of the works.

If the imitation techniques of the monument parallel Missa Ma bouche rit, they certainly do not resemble the complicated and non-imitative fabric of Ockeghem’s Missa Fors seulement. Ockeghem’s texture has such contrapuntal richness that clear quotation of a model is nearly impossible. One is also hard-pressed to find clear, polyphonic emblems stamped throughout Missa Fors seulement. And while Isaac added new material to a polyphonic quotation – as in the Kyrie, bar 24-27 of Missa Comme Femme Desconfortée – the architects of Ercole’s monument certainly did not start a classical fluted column and then add completely new (non-classical) material half-way to the column capitals. In the monument, however, when one sees the massive columns, prominent equestrian pose, or an inscription referring to Caesar Augustus, there is no doubt of precise, classical emblems. And when examining Martini’s Masses, likewise, there is not doubt of the classical allusions.

This parallel appears again when considering the emblems from Santa Maria in Vado and Martini’s imitation technique. The church, discussed in Chapter Two,
prominently displays classical designs: the rounded arches, Corinthian columns, circular windows, and a unified composition of proportional parts. The musical equivalent – the exact replication of the various "voices" of a model – appears, as we have seen, in Missa Ma bouche rit (e.g. bars 1-8 of the Kyrie or bars 83-89 of the Gloria Qui tollis). Even the slight embellishments – varied capitals and columns barely larger than exact (classical) half-columns – do not take away from the classical elements prominent throughout the church. The classical emblems are clearly the most important visual feature and structural characteristic of the church. For Isaac, however, paraphrase technique – embellishing or somehow altering his borrowed material – was his trademark; he used it throughout his Masses, as we saw in Missa Comme Femme.

Even beyond these two architectural examples, classical emblems are woven throughout the fabric of the entire city, just as polyphonic emblems were pasted into the contrapuntal fabric of Martini's Masses. From the tapestries of Herculean Labors upon the walls of the ducal palace, to the processional avenue, to ancient Greek plays performed in the royal theatre, Ercole desired that his entire city emulate Athens and Rome. His city was cloaked in the guise of classical antiquity. Even the polyphony was saturated with quoted emblems, echoing a polyphonic model. This brought unity and continuity to all of Ferrara's artistic media. Why this classical garb? The history of Greece and Rome was one of mighty warriors and valiant leaders, whose deeds and endeavors were worth emulating. The great philosophers who were studied at the Ferrarese university came from Greece and Rome, and the aesthetic appeal of the art was irresistible. It is no wonder that Ercole turned to the founding cities and leaders of Western civilization after which to cast his imperial image. As his subjects were
surrounded with symbols of both realistic and mythological triumph from past civilizations, they would more readily associate Ercole with these victorious rulers and their kingdoms.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Ercole transformed Ferrara into a splendid and internationally renowned city-state. He desired more than the mere “success” of a ruler who maintained peace and prosperity – he wanted to become a fifteenth-century Caesar Augustus. This agenda impacted every aspect of the city, as Ercole modeled his imperial image after those of classical antiquity. He wanted generation after generation to remember his name with reverence and awe, and he understood that Ferrara and everything it produced reflected his reign. Artistic media were especially effective, for not only do the arts transcend the lifetime of an individual, but they powerfully portray the ideas and thoughts of their creator. The grand monument intended for the duke bore numerous classical emblems, harkening back to the glory of ancient Greece and Rome. Ferrarese architects erected buildings that imitated the specific characteristics of the ancients, such as structures with rounded arches or Corinthian columns. The northern expansion of 1491 and, in fact, all of Ferrara modeled itself after Athens and Rome, reflecting the goals and aspirations of Ercole. Even the polyphony from his court chapel mirrored his agenda.

Not only did Ercole patronize singers who would bring attention and fame to his court, but he patronized those composers – specifically Martini – whose imitative, polyphonic technique matched that of his other court artisans. It would have been impossible for Martini to model his music after that of ancient Greece and Rome, for their music has not survived. He proved, however, that just as the Ferrarese architects modeled their works after those found in Greece and Rome, he also could replicate a model. Paraphrasing the model was not sufficient. Both architects and composers
meticulously imitated their respective models, as they continuously wove precise quotations from these models throughout the fabric of their works. This quotation technique defined Ferrarese architecture and Martini’s Masses, becoming the common and unifying denominator throughout the city-state’s artistic media.

Studying the commonalities of two different media often brings new insight to a topic, but it also poses some difficulties. In the case of architecture and music, the various definitions that each uses are difficult; we do not, for example, think of music in the “classical” style as we think of architecture in the classical style. And the very nature of the two media – one being visual and the other aural – requires varying levels of explanation. Music, while one may look at a score, engages more than sight, and therefore demands more explicit and detailed definitions. That said, it is still possible to gain insight and a greater understanding of a subject when it is placed in a larger, interdisciplinary context. We have seen that the fundamental technique for both architecture and music was based upon quotation, and this allows for more than merely an “analysis” approach to Martini’s music. Martini has never been given the same status as Josquin or Obrecht,¹⁴³ but perhaps his music is more accurately understood and will, consequently, be more illuminated, when studied within the larger context of Ercole’s agenda and Ferrara’s physical appearance. Understanding the common technique in music and architecture, and how it related to Ercole, explains why Martini composed as he did. Besides knowing that Ercole adamantly pursued Martini, we have no letters or diaries that detail Ercole’s relationship with the composer and whether Ercole requested that he compose using this specific imitative technique. However, we can safely assume

that Ercole was actively involved in the musical life of his chapel; not only was he an excellent amateur musician, but his worship (and therefore, music) within the court chapel was a daily ritual. Furthermore, we have seen Ercole’s extensive contribution to the physical appearance of the city (Rosenberg even considers Ercole – not Rossetti – the primary architect of the Addizione Erculea);\textsuperscript{144} why should there be any less involvement at the court chapel? We do not know if Ercole hired Martini because of his use of quotation, or if Ercole asked Martini to write using this technique. Regardless of the answer, we \textit{do} know that Martini consistently wrote with this technique during his remarkable long tenure at Ercole’s court. Examining Martini’s music within an interdisciplinary context offers a compelling possibility to his compositional motives. He did not compose in this imitative style simply because the imitation Mass was popular during the fifteenth-century; rather, his motivations and technique were tailored to the personal agenda of his patron.

Finally, though this study has been limited to Ercole and Ferrara, it raises two important questions that warrant future study. First, was Ferrara the only fifteenth-century court with such parallel features in the architecture and music? The Estes were not the only prominent ruling family in northern Italy, one only must think of the Gonzaga, Sforza, or Medici families. Were these rulers as determined to leave their imperial image embedded in the fabric of their city-states? If so, were their personal agendas mirrored in the artistic realm of their city? The second question is one of musical style. Is it possible to classify a composer’s technique and style based upon the relationship to his or her patron? Did a patron hire a composer because of specific compositional techniques? Fifteenth-century composers shared many similarities, but as

\textsuperscript{144} Rosenberg, \textit{Este Monuments}, 125.
we saw with Martini and Isaac, each composer wrote with an individual and unique style. Was this a factor when they were hired – did a patron go beyond the sound a composer’s music and look directly at the technique? Perhaps the answer is more comprehensive than we first suspected; perhaps we should not limit our study to only the musical accomplishments of a city. Once we have studied the many artistic layers of a city, we can then step away and observe the interdisciplinary parallels of these layers – how they connect and overlap. Fifteenth-century Ferrara is one such example of a city whose artistic layers intricately connect, all in an effort to mirror the immortal presence and Herculean image of its ruler.
## APPENDIX I
### ESTE FAMILY GENEALOGY
This is not a comprehensive genealogy.

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APPENDIX II

The Inscription Around the Base of Ercole I d’Este’s Monument.¹

Memoriae Diui Erculis Estensis Ducis seconundi. Hic Alfonso Neapolitanorum Regi, ob egregiam indolem carissimus, cum Galeatio Pandono viro Illustri, ac fortissimo vix dum adolscens non sine maxime laude, singulari certamine depugnavit.

In memory of the Divine Ercole d'Este, second Duke. He, most beloved for his natural excellence, fought for Alfonso, King of Naples, with the noble man Galeazzo Pandono, and, while scarcely a youth, fought valiantly and not without great glory in single combat.

Ad Molinellam Venetorum exercitum hostili impetus grauiter laborantem virtute sua conservavit, neque prius acriter pugnare destitit, quam repulsis hostibus plumba glande dexterum pedem saucius ex Praelio discedere coactus est.

At Molinella he saved the distressed Venetian army from a savage enemy attack by his own strength; and when he had just left off fighting fiercely, and when the enemy was repulsed, he was wounded in the right foot by lead shot and forced to leave and withdraw from battle.

Multa, Imperium adeptus, ad Urbis ornatum excogitauit, perfectique, Aulam Regiam commodiorem, pulcrioremque reddidit, innumerass domos, nova fora, publicas, porticus marmoreis columnis insignes, Castelli veteris molem iampridem incoatam, celeriter et exacte consumauit.

When he succeeded to rule, he devised many plans for embellishing the city and carried them out: he made the royal residence more comfortable and more beautiful; he quickly and carefully erected innumerable houses, new piazzas, [and] public porticos distinguished by marble columns, and [he completed] the foundations of the Castelvecchio, which had long remained unfinished.


He enlarged and decorated the palace of Belriguardo. He restored Belfiore, which had been destroyed by fire, built a new bridge over the Po with a more sound structure, and made it [Belfiore] much more pleasing by the restoration and the addition of a number of lovely gardens. He established permanent fountains, bringing water from the Po into the city via the lead pipes.
Templis ferme omnibus instauratis atque 
ad ampliorem augstioremque formam 
redactis, nova posuit, et omnia praeclaris 
muneribus ditauit. Pallustres agros ad 
culturam redegit, antiquorum Comedias 
ad veteris scaenae modos actusque 
retulit, plurimaque ad spectatorum 
hilaritatem inusitato sumptuosoque 
paratu actibus interposuit.

After he restored all of the churches 
entirely and returned them to a greater, 
more venerable appearance, he built new 
ones and enriched them all with 
magnificent gifts. He reclaimed marshy 
land for cultivation [and] received 
ancient comedies and the antique 
method of acting on the old stage. 
Having prepared extraordinary and 
lavish entertainments, he introduced a 
number of things for the enjoyment of 
the audience.

Hunc nouum Vrbis ambitum in 
septentronem vergentem antique Vrbi 
addidit, crebrisque propugnaculis 
turritis, et in expugnabilibus Muris lata, 
ac praecipiti fossa, latericiis pontibus 
super constructis, celerrime communuit.

He added a new encircling [fortification] 
situated to the north of the old city, 
furnished it with numerous ramparts, and 
quickly constructed unassailable walls 
[and] wide and deep ditches with 
brickwork bridges built over them.

Tot Magnificis operibus brevi perfectis, 
tot publice, priuatiisque collatis 
beneficiis, tot clarissimorum virtutum 
ratione habita, Augusti, et PP. nomen 
merenti S.P.Q. Ferrariensis hanc 
Equestrem statuam viuenti posuere, ad 
quam si quis intra ambitum XX.P. 
confugientibus vim attulerit se laesae 
Maiestatis crimen incurrisse non ignorat.

Because he completed so many 
magnificent works in a short time and 
performed so many services publicly and 
privately, because he is so inclined to 
principles of the highest virtue, because 
he is worthy of the name “Augustus” 
and “Father of his Country,” the senate 
and people of Ferrara erect this 
monument for posterity. If anyone does 
violeace to persons taking refuge here 
within a circuit of 20 feet, he ought not 
to ignore the fact that he risks the crime 
of insulting his sovereign.
APPENDIX III

ARCHITECTURAL FIGURES
Figure 1. Cathedral of San Giorgio Façade.¹

Figure 2. Monument to Alberto d'Este.  

\[ ^2 \text{Ibid., 30.} \]
Figure 3. Seventeenth-Century Drawing of the Monument to Ercole I d'Este.\(^3\)

\(^3\) Ibid., 158.
Figure 4. Monument to Borso d’Este.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., 94.
Figure 5. Exterior of Santa Maria in Vado.

Figure 6. Interior of Santa Maria in Vado.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{5} Manca, \textit{Ercole De Roberti}, Figure 27a and 27b.
Figure 7. Interior of Santa Maria in Vado. 

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6 Ibid., Figure 27c.
APPENDIX IV

MUSICAL EXAMPLES

The boxed voices come directly from the models. A voice with an “x” indicates added material, or a note that was not from the original model.
Ex. 1. Martini, La Martinella Model, mm.1-7
Ex. 2. Martini, Missa La Martinella, Kyrie, mm.1-9.
Quotations from Martinella model.
Ex. 3. Martini, La Martinella Model, mm.24-35
Ex. 4. Martini, La Martiniella, Gloria, mm.47-57.
Material quoted from the model.
Ex. 5. Martini, *La Martinella* Model, mm.53-56
Ex. 6. Martini, *Missa La Martinella*, Agnus Dei, mm.132-144.
Creating a new point of imitation from quoted material.
Material quoted from the *Ma bouche rit* model.
e e-ley-son, e ley son.
Material quoted from the model.
Quoted and paraphrased material from a model.
Kyrie eleison

Kyrie eleison

Kyrie eleison

Kyrie eleison

Kyrie eleison
Ex. 10. Ockeghem, Missa Fons Seulem, Kyrie.
67

Ky-
ri-
e-
lei

son,

Ky-
ri

70

ye-
e-
lei
BIBLIOGRAPHY


