

THE POETIC AND MUSICAL DIALOGUE OF AMBROSINI AND CAVALCANTI:

A STUDY OF CLAUDIO AMBROSINI'S *A GUISA DI UN ARCIER*

PRESTO SORIANO FOR SOLO FLUTE

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Claudio Ambrosini's (b. 1948) unpublished work for unaccompanied flute, *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* (1981), although virtually unknown to the musical public and to connoisseurs alike, represents one of the most dazzling and impressive displays of extended techniques in the repertoire of solo flute music. The title, *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, comes from the seventh line of a sonnet by the Italian medieval poet Guido Cavalcanti (ca. 1250-1300) and translates as "just like a fast Syrian archer." The archer in question is Eros, the Greek god of love. By the composer's own admission, the form and expression of this piece is closely linked with the form and expression of Cavalcanti's sonnet. In particular, Ambrosini intimates three elements specifically drawn from the poem: 1) moments of tension and suspense, as Eros silently approaches his target with bow and arrow in hand; 2) moments of love, even to the point of suggesting a love song; and 3) moments that suggest the fast passage of arrows.

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore these three elements in Ambrosini's work and to trace the correlations of the same elements in Cavalcanti's sonnet. The expression of such concrete poetic imagery in Ambrosini's music is at times easily deciphered through clear programmatic gestures or wordless madrigalisms; and at other times the symbolism of the poetry is developed in a hidden and metaphorical manner in its musical iteration. Further, Ambrosini's use of a particularly colorful and vast array of extended techniques serves as the impetus for the formal structure that the music embodies, and I will show that this formal structure is itself a symbolic and metaphorical representation of the poetic significance of Cavalcanti's sonnet.

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I dedicate this dissertation to my only God who gave me the strength and guideline to make it this far. I wish to express my deepest thanks and appreciation: to my parents, Jaepoong Choi, and Namho Cho, and my husband, Inho Eom for their support and unconditional love; to my professor, Dr. Mary Karen Clardy for her great teaching, advice and guidance from the beginning to the end of my graduate school years; to Claudio Ambrosini for his time, generous help, and giving the permission to use excerpts and full score of *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*; to my editors, Elliot Figg, and Alyssa Hedenstrom for their time and effort; and to my UNT colleague, Dr. Hyunsun Oh for her kind help and beautiful mind. This dissertation would not exist without their love, support and help. I gratefully appreciate to them.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: CLAUDIO AMBROSINI AND THE VENETIAN ETHOS

Claudio Ambrosini's (b. 1948) unpublished work for unaccompanied flute, *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* (1981), although virtually unknown to the musical public and to connoisseurs alike, represents one of the most dazzling and impressive displays of extended techniques in the repertoire of solo flute music. The most striking feature of the work, unique to works of this genre, is Ambrosini's use of a wide array of alternative techniques for the sake of penetrating and poetic expression. The title, *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, comes from the seventh line of a sonnet by the Italian medieval poet Guido Cavalcanti (ca. 1250-1300) and translates as, *Just like a fast Syrian archer*. The archer in question is Eros, the Greek god of love and by the composer's own admission, the form and expression of this piece is closely linked with the form and expression of Cavalcanti's sonnet. In particular, Ambrosini imitates three elements specifically drawn from the poem: 1) moments of tension and suspense, as Eros silently approaches his target with bow and arrow in hand; 2) moments of love, even to the point of suggesting a love song; and 3) moments that suggest the fast passage of arrows.¹

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore these three elements in Ambrosini's work and to trace the correlations of the same elements in Cavalcanti's sonnet. The expression of such concrete poetic imagery in Ambrosini's music is at times easily deciphered through clear programmatic gestures or wordless madrigalisms; and at other times the symbolism of the poetry is developed in a hidden and metaphorical manner in its musical interaction. Further, Ambrosini's use of a particularly colorful and vast array of extended techniques serves as the impetus for the formal structure that the music embodies, and I will

¹ Claudio Ambrosini, interview by author, Venice, Italy, July 27, 2012.

show that this formal structure is itself a symbolic and metaphorical representation of the poetic significance of Cavalcanti's sonnet.

As Ambrosini explicitly states, the history of Venetian music provides a guiding principle for his own particular approach to music composition and he cites a number of particular events in Venice's distant past that provide an intellectual background for his musical thinking. The composer states that it was in Venice that the first instrumental treatises were printed, such as *La Fontegara* and *Regola rubertina* in the early sixteenth century. Venice was also the source of the first important acoustical research following the ancients by Gioseffo Zarlino, who wrote, *Le istituzioni harmoniche* in 1558 and the *Dimonstrationi harmoniche* in 1571. Renaissance Venice also provided the locale for some of the most important early explorations into stereophonic forms of composition and performance (*cori battenti*). Ambrosini also cites the "synesthetic" musical explorations of Vivaldi, combining music with visual or environmental subjects, as in Vivaldi's *Le quattro stagioni*, as a further source of inspiration to his own approach to music making.²

Claudio Ambrosini was born in 1948 in Venice, Italy, where he continues to live and work today. Widely recognized for his work in Europe, he is regarded as one of the leading contemporary Italian composers in a variety of compositional areas. *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* represents Ambrosini's first and, until recently, only foray into the genre of unaccompanied flute. The composer describes the origin of the inspiration for the work as dating from his teenage years, at which time he first became acquainted with Cavalcanti's sonnet. Ambrosini indicates a gestation period of fifteen years before the music inspired by the poem began to appear.³ Of the concepts listed above that Ambrosini associates with the Venetian mode of musical thought, it is his concept of the principle of "synesthesia" that

² Personal correspondence, email of February 12, 2012.

³ Ibid.

most drives the form and expression of *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*. Ambrosini describes his compositional idea of “synesthesia” as different from the neurological condition in which an individual associates particular pitches or key areas with visual colors; rather, Ambrosini associates the concept of “synesthesia” with a notion closer to the idea of the expression of programmatic elements in music, and Ambrosini’s choice of the word “synesthesia” is apropos in relation to the wide variety of sonic colors in his music.⁴ The composer’s palette of colors, resulting from his use of extended flute techniques, as well as from the manner in which these colors express ideas, derived directly from Cavalcanti’s thirteenth-century poem (which further provides the impetus for the overall form of *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*), combine to form a unique work in the repertoire for solo flute. In the following chapters, I will examine the fruits of Ambrosini’s deep consideration of Cavalcanti’s sonnet as it is manifested in the confluence of the composer’s notion of a Venetian synesthesia expressed through the carnival-like kaleidoscope of colors offered by the greatest variety of extended techniques.

⁴ Ibid.

CHAPTER II

THE POETIC INTERACTION BETWEEN CLAUDIO AMBROSINI AND GUIDO

CAVALCANTI

As detailed in the introduction, Ambrosini uses three recurring extra musical ideas in *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*: 1) moments of tension and suspense; 2) moments of love; and 3) moments that suggest the fast passage of arrows. Though these ideas are expressed multiple times within the work, they are not consistently represented by the same musical material in each interaction of a given extra-musical theme. Ambrosini has stated that these three particular motives are drawn from the following sonnet by Guido Cavalcanti, given here in a translation by the influential American ex-patriot modernist poet Ezra Pound (1885-1972):

Table 1: Cavalcanti, Sonnet III

<p>O LADY mine, doth not thy sight allege Him who hath set his hand upon my heart, When parched responses from my faint throat start And shudder for the terror of his edge? He was Amor, who since he found you, dwells Ever with me, and he was come from far; An archer is he as the Scythians⁵ are Whose only joy is killing someone else.</p> <p>My sobbing eyes are drawn upon his wrack, And such harsh sighs upon my heart he casteth That I depart from that sad me he wasteth, With Death drawn close upon my wavering track, Leading such tortures in his somber train As, by all custom, wear out other men.⁶</p>	<p>O donna mia, non vedestù colui, Che su lo core mi tenea la mano, Quand'io ti rispondea fiochetto e piano Per la temenza de gli colpi sui? El fu Amore, che trovando vui Meco ristette, che venìa lontano A guisa d'uno arcier presto soriana, Acconcio sol per ancidere altrui.</p> <p>E trasse poi degli occhi miei sospiri, I quai si gittan da lo cor sì forte, Ch'io mi partii sbigottito fuggendo. Allor mi parse di seguir la morte, Accompagnata di quelli martìri, Che soglion consumar altrui piangendo.</p>
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⁵ Pound inexplicably substitutes “Scythian” for “Syrian” of the original. I have adopted Pound’s usage throughout for the sake of convenience.

⁶ David Anderson, *Pound’s Cavalcanti* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983), 28-29.

In order to understand the formal and expressive significance of the appearances of the musical symbols representing tension, love, and fast arrows in Ambrosini's work, tracing the appearances of the themes in Cavalcanti's sonnet and examining parallels in Ambrosini's music provide a context for understanding the work.

Elements of Tension in the Poem

In general, Cavalcanti's sonnet presents an instance of the internal conflict between suffering at Eros's attacks while simultaneously feeling an attraction to them. In the sonnet, the speaker suffers from a sense of helplessness and lack of control as a result of Eros's actions, and he is confused about whether the feelings are his own or are imposed by Eros, described by the speaker as, "Him who hath set his hand upon my heart." The speaker experiences conflict between feelings of attraction in the heart and terror in the throat ("When parched responses from my faint throat start"), and he describes the paradox of shaking while the body is stationary, unable to act upon either love or torture ("And shudder for the terror of his edge?").

The tension between pain and attraction is further evident in the "sobbing eyes" being drawn to Eros's torture ("drawn upon his wrack"), when Eros casts "harsh sighs" upon the speaker's heart. Ironically, the sighs are sounds emanating from the speaker himself, and yet Eros seems to cast them on the speaker. The ultimate internal tension is experienced by the speaker through his awareness of parting from and rejecting his own existence ("I depart from that sad me"). The external conflict between the speaker and Eros is expressed by using terminology of opposition ("wrack," "he casteth," "he wasteth," "tortures," "wear out"), and Eros is viewed as having an internal conflict through his comparison to Scythians whose "only joy" is to be found in the act of "killing" another.

Elements of Tension in the Music

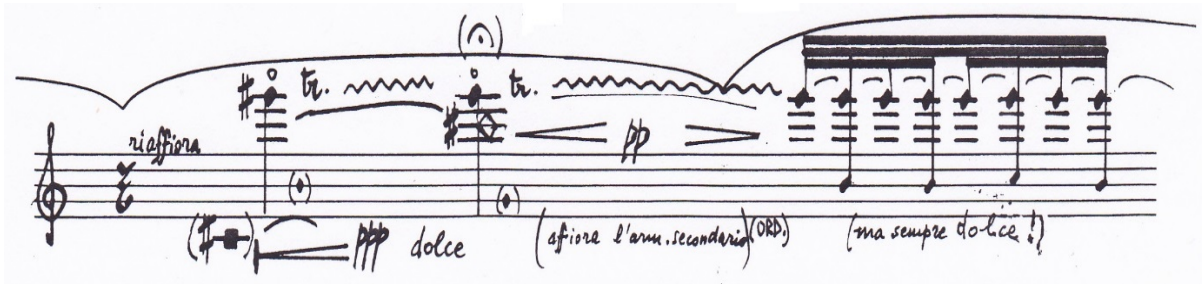
There are seven musical gestures in play in the construction of Ambrosini's, *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, each of which has a particular relationship with the three literary themes throughout the work. Musically, Ambrosini expresses tension in two ways, vertical and horizontal. Vertical tension is created when two or more musical parameters interact simultaneously in contrasting ways, thus vertical tension is present when there is motion within a statically held note through Ambrosini's use of an intricate array of dynamic contrast within a held note. Example 1 illustrates the vertical tension created by dynamics, which is evident in line 4 of *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*. Ambrosini uses intricate hairpin dynamics, including the unique internal hairpin diminuendo on the single D³, and he notates detailed verbal instructions as well. Despite the intricacy of detail, this phrase amounts to only one and a half seconds of music.

Example 1: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 4

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a single note on a five-line staff. The note is a D³ (third octave D). Above the staff, there are three performance instructions: "(come eco)" at the beginning, "(Effetto)" in the middle, and "(come all'ra eco)" at the end. Below the staff, there are dynamic markings: "ppp" at the beginning and "ppp" at the end. In the middle, there is a hairpin dynamic marking that starts with "ppp" and ends with "ppp", with the instruction "senza fretta" written above it. Below the staff, there are two sets of fingerings: "1 0 2 3" and "9". At the bottom, there is a performance instruction: "(dim., ma non mollare del tutto)".

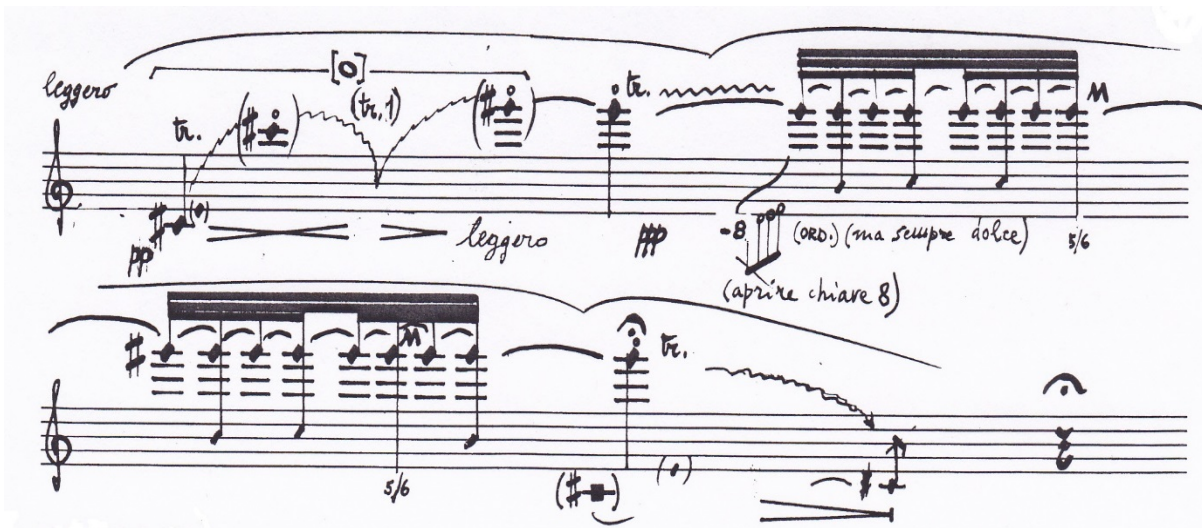
Ambrosini creates vertical tension as well by introducing harmonics during a sustained note; furthermore trills of varying speeds represent a type of vertical tension through the emphasis on one note. Example 2 displays both types of vertical tension. The trill in this example does not always produce two alternating notes but often provides a harmonic coloration of the G# harmonic.

Example 2: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, lines 6-7



Rising and falling harmonics in *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* provide an additional example of vertical tension through the juxtaposition of a static fingering with fluid shifts in the embouchure (Example 3).

Example 3: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, lines 21-22

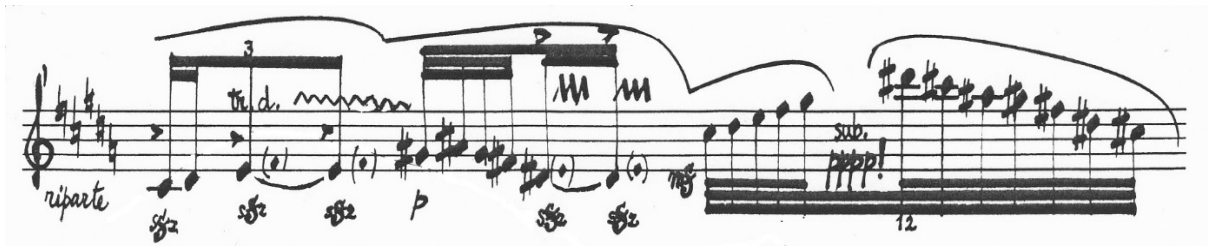


The composer's techniques for building horizontal tension create a counterpart to the vertical tension in the work. In contrast, horizontal tension is produced through the conceptual arrangement of elements over time. Horizontal tension is evident in *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* through extreme alternation of character, from the punctuated style of the opening to the static and sustained passages of verticality and the wild passage work of the cadenza section (lines 10-20). Specific use of horizontal tension occurs in the extreme and rapid dynamic contrasts in the opening section (lines 1-9), from very loud to completely silent. Silences and rests used throughout the work create suspense and surprise, and the lack

of a regular meter throughout the piece heightens the effect of the horizontal tension produced by silence.

The cadenza presents a unique example of horizontal harmonic tension through the alternation of material in a key signature of five sharps (pentatonic harmony) with material in “white key” harmony (example 4).

Example 4: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 16



The particular type of horizontal tension created in the cadenza comes from the fact that harmonic elements are presented linearly as arpeggios and scales are interspersed with atonal material. In addition, this section demonstrates dramatic shifts of register and the pointed contrasts of delicate and forceful gestures.

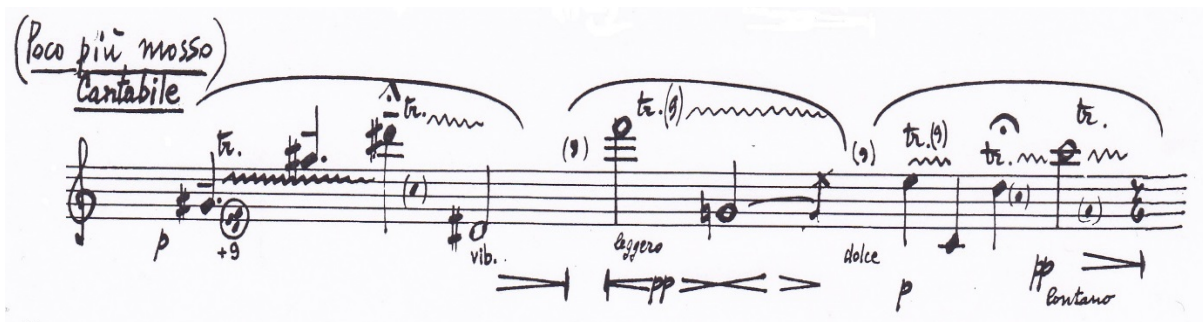
Elements of Love in the Poem

Although Cavalcanti’s poem is a description of the speaker’s experience in the state of love, little in the poem can be described as indicative of the language of love. At best, the narrator remains neutral with only one mention of the name of “Amor.” The pains and tortures described by the speaker are ignored as he says, “He was Amor, who since he found you, dwells/ Ever with me, and he was come from far.” The only other reference in the poem containing an element of love is in the phrase “sighs upon my heart.” However, this phrase is contained within a full line of poetry, making the sighs “harsh” and “casteth” upon the speaker as a punishment from Eros.

Elements of Love in the Music

The section in Ambrosini's *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* that represents a lyrical expression of love is less ambiguous than the expressions of love in Cavalcanti's sonnet. The passage from line 23 through line 32, representing approximately a third of the entire work, is lyrical and loving in character in contrast to the surrounding material. The distinct character of lyricism is evident from the first line (23), marked *Cantabile* with sustained and open diatonic sonorities (example 5).

Example 5: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 23

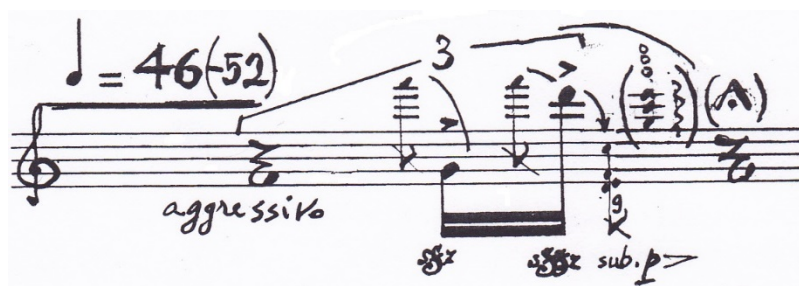


Furthermore, this section contains only two instances of sustained tones performed with traditional vibrato and tone production. Ambrosini does not avoid using extended technique in the section, but the colors achieved are a distinctly softer quality compared with the rest of the piece. Thus, this section stands out as the love song in the middle of the work.

Depiction of Arrows in the Poem and Music

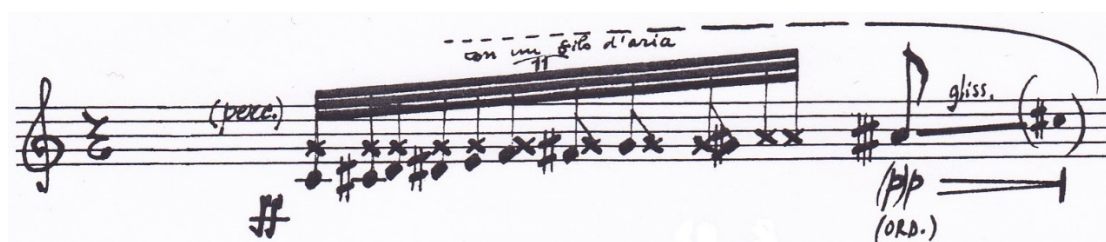
The imagery of arrows is not a particularly prevalent element in Cavalcanti's poem, though there is one mention of *Amor* being an "archer" comparable to the skilled archers of Scythia. Otherwise, the mention of *Amor's* "edge" and the "harsh sighs" that are "casteth" are the only other allusions to the imagery of arrows in the poem; however, in Ambrosini's music, musical motives representing the motion of arrows abound, the first of which occurs as the opening gesture of the work, as shown in Example 6.

Example 6: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 1



This motive returns as punctuation throughout *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* and represents the most direct expression of the imagery of fast moving arrows. The ascending chromatic motive, employing key clacks with a small amount of air, is perhaps indicative of the flight of arrows, though as arrows that fail to reach their targets (Example 7).

Example 7: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 2



It is likely that any instance of quick passage-work in Ambrosini's piece has some correlation with the imagery of arrows, and such passages are often directional, moving either in a straight line up or down. The composer has also suggested that these gestures may symbolize the action of Eros's "sneaking" (to use Ambrosini's word) as he hunts his prey.⁷

⁷ Claudio Ambrosini, interview by author, Venice, Italy, July 27, 2012.

CHAPTER III

FORMAL ANALYSIS OF A GUISA DI UN ARCIER PRESTO SORIANO

While Ambrosini draws the three basic extra-musical ideas forming the basis of *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* from Cavalcanti's text, these three themes are not mapped directly from one to the other as Example 7 shows. However, Ambrosini builds an intricate form and structure from these three ideas. For example, the motive representing sustained repetition, indicative of tension in the work, takes on a soft and sensuous color in the "love song" section and imparts an important conceptual variation on the meaning of tension in the work. The scalar "arrow" or "sneaking" motive is treated to a full, dramatic development in the cadenza, with mature development of the motive beyond the initial episodic statements. I will examine the complex interactions between the various musical gestures and motives in *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, and the examination of certain concepts drawn from Cavalcanti's sonnet dramatically impacts the understanding of Ambrosini's work.

There are five main sections in the work (A, B, C, D, and Coda). Sections A and D represent the activities of Eros, while section B and C represent the interior state of the narrator in love. The coda demonstrates a final interaction between Eros and the narrator, and a general overview of the contents and narrative significance of the five sections appears below in Table 2.

Table 2: Overview of the structure of *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*

Section A (lines 1-9)	-Contains musical motives representing the flight of arrows from the bow of Eros and him sneakily hiding. -Tonal center of G-sharp represented by the sustained tone in lines 5-7.
Section B (lines 10-22)	-Contains the greatest activity of any section in the piece, representing the fever of love experienced by the narrator after being pricked by Eros's arrows. -Tonal center of G-sharp (lines 20-22).
Section C (lines 23-32)	-Shows the narrator in a different state of love. Quasi-love song demonstrates the speaker's state of languorous desire with a short reference to Eros's hiding in line 24. -Tonal center of D-sharp (lines 29-30).
Section D (lines 33-39)	-Eros reappears in a playful mood and sneaking around but not shooting arrows. He observes the narrator like a cat with a mouse. Short reference to

	longing of the speaker in line 38. -Tonal center of F-sharp (lines 33, 34, and 37).
Coda (lines 39-44)	-The speaker's love-death approaches, represented ironically by the accelerating high F-sharp. Brief memory of his feverish state in line 41. -Eros sneaks, the narrator dies, Eros has one final joke at the end of the piece. -Tonal center of F-sharp throughout.

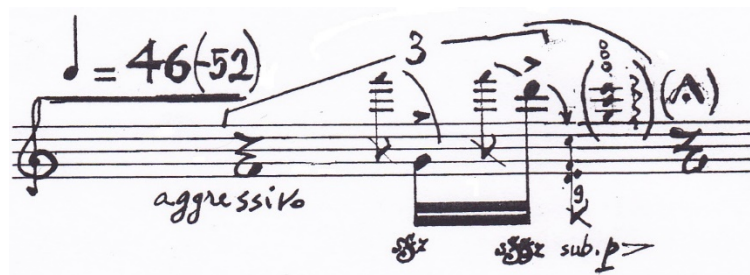
Section A

Section A presents the six motives that provide the building blocks for the entire piece and the motives are somewhat related to each other. For example, motives 1 and 4 share an angular and rhythmic character comprised of leaps and grace notes. Motive 4, in effect, is a development of motive 1 through the addition of key trills, and motives 2, 5 and 6 all use the gesture of a quietly sustained high note. The end of motive 5 presents an inverted variation of the rising key clack motive of motive 3, in a descending form rather than ascending.

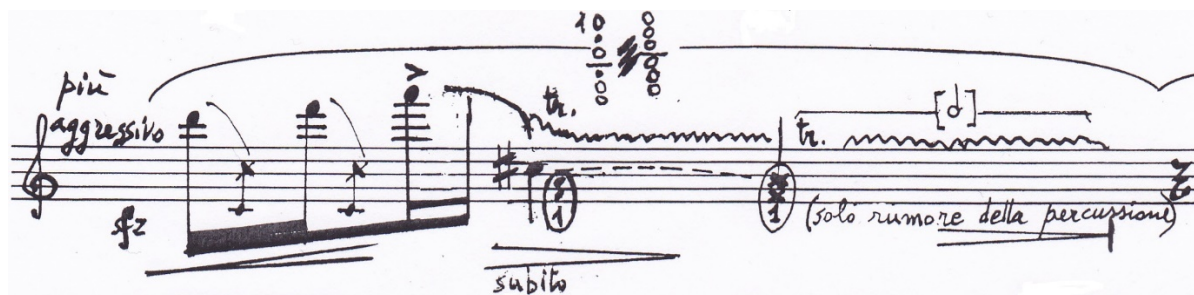
Ambrosini adds complexity to the exposition of the six motives through the repetition of certain motives before all are presented. Thus, motive 3, which is initially presented in line 2, reappears in virtually identical form in lines 5 and 8. Motives 4, 5, and 6 all appear in between these repeated statements of motive 3, thus disrupting the sequential presentation of all motives.

All six of the opening motives present Eros in three particular states of physical manifestation, exemplified in the first three motives. Motive 1, similar to motive 4, illustrates the flight of arrows from the bow of Eros (Examples 8 and 9).

Example 8: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 1, Motive 1

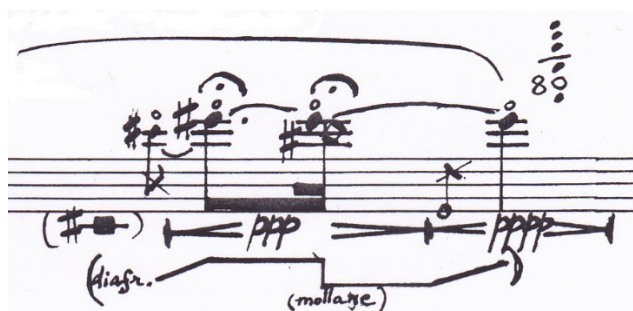


Example 9: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 3, Motive 4

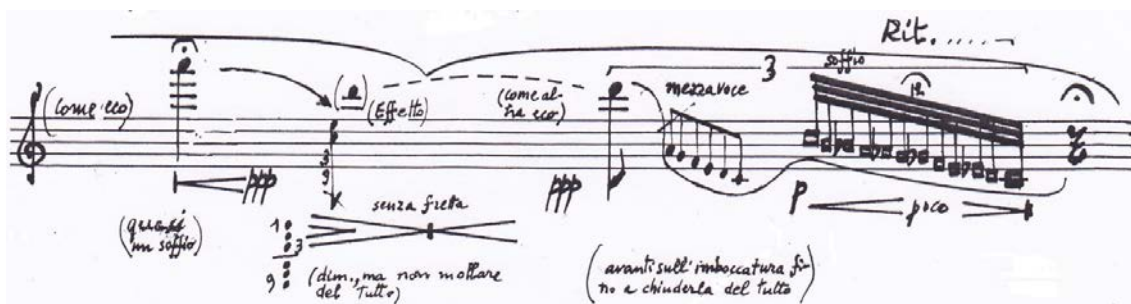


The quietly sustained high notes of motives 2, 5 and 6, mentioned previously, represent the image of Eros hiding or waiting (see examples 10, 11, and 12).

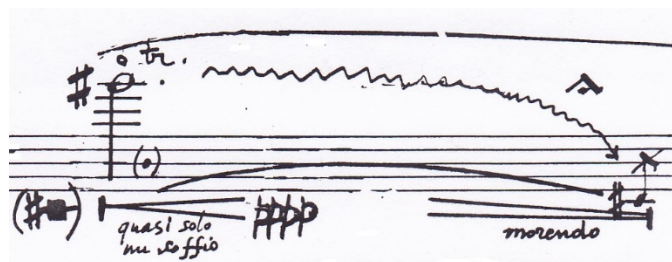
Example 10: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 1, Motive 2



Example 11: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 4, Motive 5



Example 12: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 5, Motive 6



Motive 3, seen in Example 13, and its repetitions (Examples 14 and 15) all illustrate Eros's mischievous skulking about.

Example 13: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 2, Motive 3

Example 14: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 5

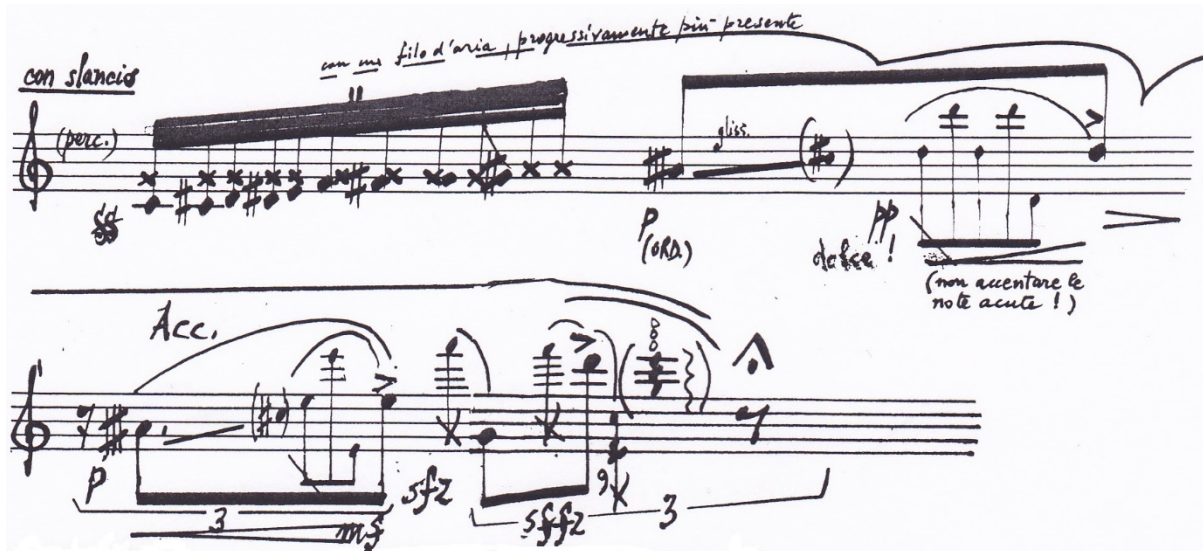
Example 15: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 8

Motive 6 occupies a unique spot within the exposition of section A as the only example that is followed immediately by development of the given material (Example 16).

Example 16: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 6-7

The alternating octaves in lines 8 and 9, while not exactly a motive in itself, constitute a type of Coda for the exposition. The leaping octaves become an important structural motive as the work progresses (Example 17).

Example 17: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 8-9



Section A is rounded off symmetrically with an exact repetition of motive 1, the opening gesture of work.

Section B

Section B shares little in common with section A, thematically or otherwise. This section presents a distinctive cadenza-like character and provides the first glimpse of Cavalcanti's narrator, which is in stark contrast to the playful portrait of Eros in section A. Section B is turbulent and emotional, as befits the state of the rejected lover with "sobbing eyes" and "harsh sighs." Section B demonstrates a strong sense of gestural direction, exemplified by the sweeping ascending and descending scalar passages (Example 18).

Example 18: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 16



This example further demonstrates one of the unusual quirks adopted by Ambrosini for this section in the duality between “white-key” and “black-key”⁸ melodic-harmonic material. Ambrosini even uses temporary key signatures in section B to further distinguish the two sides of the narrator’s character. It is not clear what this duality represents as regards the character of the narrator and the composer admits to using the key signature of five sharps simply to save himself the trouble of writing in all of the accidentals.⁹ Nonetheless, despite Ambrosini’s admission, the harmonic structure presented by this duality remains a concrete and significant structural device defining the musical trajectory of section B.

Structurally, it seems a poor decision to put the most exciting and active section near the beginning of the work, and in typical musical structures, the cadenza-like section marks the dramatic high-point near the end of a work. Ambrosini’s choice reflects the particular narrative that he wishes to express through the form of *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*. Thus, it is significant that the narrator’s excitability and feverish passion follow directly upon the pranks and games of Eros in section A. If the composer had utilized a different placement of the cadenza, the narrator’s emotional transformation after the turbulence of section B would no longer retain the particular narrative logic expressed in Ambrosini’s form.

⁸ These terms refer to the notion that the given material would be played on either the black or white keys, respectively, if played on the piano.

⁹ Claudio Ambrosini, interview by author, Venice, Italy, July 27, 2012.

Section C

Section C represents a complex and intimate expression of the state of love which the narrator experiences. The particular trills used by the composer create a complex array of microtonal effects, and trills are the basic unifying device in section C. Most of the trills throughout this section, however, make use of atypical fingerings, creating a particular palette of colors that define the musical character of the section. For example, the trilled G-sharps opening the section would normally make use of the left hand trilling on the G-sharp and G keys simultaneously while the B and A keys are depressed in order to create a trill between the notes G-sharp and A. Instead Ambrosini included the right hand to trill with the D, E, and F keys simultaneously while holding the C roller key. The high D-sharp that follows subsequently calls for a trill using a C-natural fingering rather than a high E fingering (Example 19).

Example 19: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 23



The entire section presents a wide variety of extended trill techniques. Each presents a unique microtonal effect, and all combine to create a kaleidoscope of colors, which gives section C its particular beauty of expression. It is through this exploration of highly detailed microtonal coloration that Ambrosini provides a musical metaphor for the shimmering intimacies of the narrator's erotic longing. Perhaps the most unique color resulting from the altered trill fingerings occurs in lines 28 and 29 where a sustained high B is interrupted by an irregularly spaced mordent using again the D-E-F fingering found at the beginning of the C section (Example 20).

Example 20: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 28-29



The actual sonic effect is the widest trilled interval in the entire work. Thus, combined with the long sustained notated pitch of B, this passage in effect expresses the high point of the love-song, and perhaps of the entire work. One may compare it to the irregular palpitations of the lover's heart.

The slower pace and predominance of expressive leaps in the melodic writing give the impression that this section is representative of a love song. The sweetest and most expressive example, marked *Ancòra Cantabile*, is found in the third line of the section (Example 21).

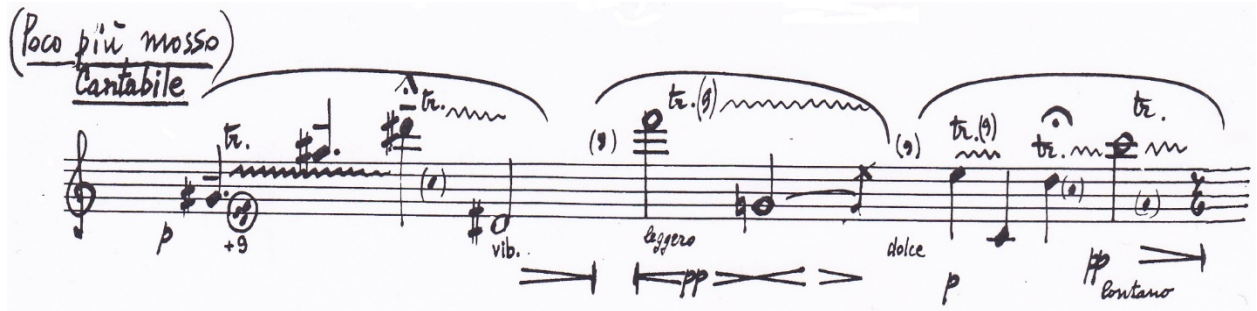
Example 21: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 25



In addition, as seen with the last note of the previous example, this section provides the only examples in the entire work of traditionally produced sustained tones, which in itself contributes to the variety of colors.

Ambrosini further explores the black-key/white-key duality of the narrator’s character (first heard in section B) in the opening line (though perhaps not elsewhere) of the “love-song” section. The first and second halves of this line are clearly divided into black-key and white-key patterns, respectively (Example 22).

Example 22: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 23



The narrator’s reverie of longing is interrupted briefly by a surprise visit from Eros, whose “skulking” motive (first heard in line 2) reappears in line 24 in an altered form (Example 23).

Example 23: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 24



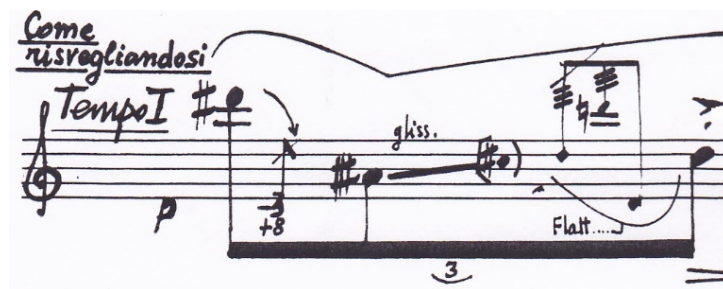
Ambrosini alters the original form of the motive, found first in lines 5 and 8, to include a somewhat violent *trillo doppio* at the end, signifying Eros’s attempts to disturb the narrator.¹⁰ The disturbance recurs a few seconds later, in line 26, with a reiteration of the same *trillo doppio* as used in line 24.

¹⁰ Defined by the composer in the performance instruction as “approximately twice as fast” as a normal trill (*tr.d.*).

Section D

Eros again commands the stage in the following section. Here, the gestures representing the flight of arrows and the furtive movement of Eros heard in the opening of the work, return in modified and fragmented forms. For example, the glissando at the end of the skulking gesture in line 2 is placed in the middle of the arrow gesture in line 33 (Example 24).¹¹

Example 24: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 33



The beginning of the sneaking gesture appears again in its original form but slightly expanded at the end of line 34 (Example 25).

Example 25: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 34

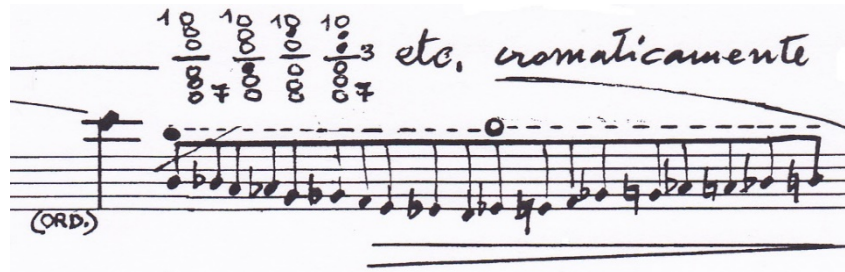


Although section D is primarily an “Eros” section, the narrator makes significant appearances and in comparison, the Eros gesture also appears in section C in the midst of the narrator’s innermost expressions of longing. The frequency of microtonal trill effects in section D indicates the representation of the struggle between Eros and the narrator. Section D opens with a rapid grace note gesture indicative of the arrow motive and the microtonal glissando, first heard in line 2 and an original part of Eros’s furtive gesture follows immediately. The second half of line 33 recalls in the earlier examples of the narrator’s love,

¹¹ Compare with Example 13.

represented by microtonal trills and, in the composer's words, "fake grace notes." This technique first appears earlier at the end of the section C (Example 26).

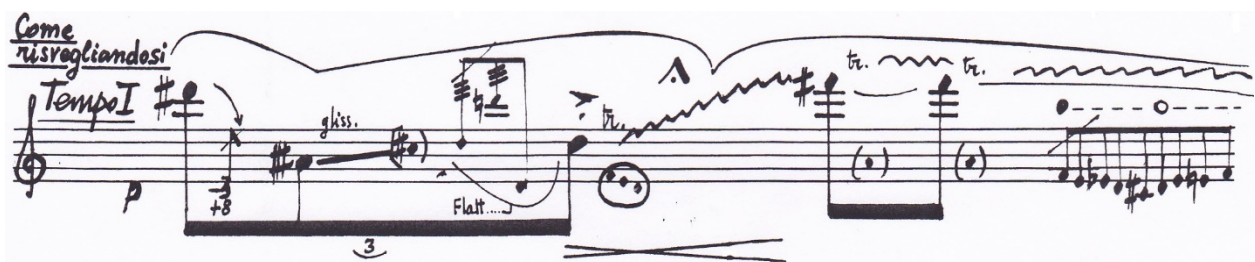
Example 26: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, end of line 31



The effect of the fake grace notes is closely tied to the microtonal trill technique; however, it may be said in affect that the effect, the deterioration of the gesture represents the consequent deterioration of the programmatic elements. Thus, the fake grace notes appearing at the end of the *love-song* imply the narrator's impending death as a consequence of his love.

Ambrosini does not combine all of the elements and develop them until section D, and here the material of both Eros and the narrator joins into a mode of expression not previously heard. For example, the trills expressing the narrator's intense longing takes on an active role not previously heard. Line 33 (Example 27) clearly shows the transformation of the various elements for the final struggle between the narrator and Eros.

Example 27: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 33



Line 33 briefly combines motives representing arrows: Eros's skulking, the narrator's longing, and the approaching death of the narrator. This type of development is maintained throughout section D as almost all gestures presented at the beginning of the piece make a brief appearance in transformed ways. At the same time, the fake grace notes (creating new

thematic material introduced in the development), assume increased importance as the work nears its conclusion, foreshadowing the death of the narrator.

Coda

The Coda is marked by a great simplicity of texture and the entire section consists primarily of an elaboration of the note F-sharp. Here as well as in section D, a new theme appears with a clearly defined rhythmic and tonal structure. The insistently repeated high F-sharp has not been heard at this point in the work and this idea creates a progressively stronger mood as the repetitions become briefer and accelerate as seen in Example 28.

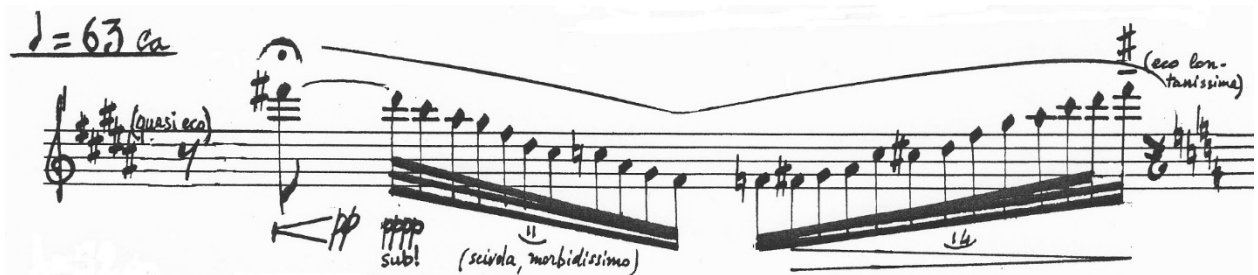
Example 28: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, lines 39-40

The image displays two staves of handwritten musical notation. The top staff is marked "Tempo Doppio" with a tempo indication of $\text{♩} = 92 \text{ ca}$. It features a series of high F-sharp notes on a treble clef staff, with a crescendo line underneath leading to a dynamic marking of *sfzp*. The bottom staff is marked "Accel." and includes the instruction "Le figure restano uguali, le pause progressivamente più strette". It shows a sequence of notes with decreasing intervals, marked with dynamics *pp*, *mp*, and *f*. Annotations include "(quasi eco)", "T-k", and "(eco)".

A kind of desperation is felt in this newly introduced musical idea and the repetitive use of a single tone is indicative of a fast heartbeat. Each successive interaction is shorter than the previous one, and the space between each is progressively shorter (*le pause progressivamente più strette*). The narrator's death approaches as his heartbeat quickens to the end, and at the same time, this aggressive gesture is similar in character to the motives representing Eros's arrows, with its rhythmical and percussive qualities. It is a kind of gesture signifying the attack by Eros on the narrator, while simultaneously illustrating the narrator's death.

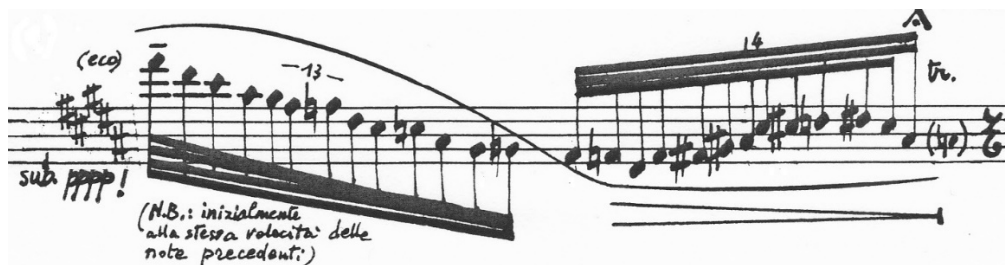
After the succession of dying heartbeats and arrow attacks in lines 39 and 40, material from the cadenza (section B) recurs in line 41 as a kind of dying memory of the narrator's feverish movements when he was first consumed by passionate longing. Here again is the strong downward-upward gesture that is identified with the melodic contours of section B appears again in its entirety (Example 29).

Example 29: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 41



In line 41, the composer provides similar material but not in an exact form to that of passages in in section B, and the closest approximation is at the end of line 15 (see Example 30) but without the fermata at the beginning of the gesture.

Example 30: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, end of line 15



Line 41 is a cleaner and more streamlined development of the gesture found in line 15, subtly representing the loss of the narrator's earlier feverish passion and in this statement, Ambrosini creates the dying memory of the narrator's former passion through the use of repeated material, but at this point, the narrator's death is coming.

The strongly repeated F-sharps return after this brief statement of previous material, and the signaling a rapid musical decay of the narrator's gesture. After one exact interaction of the motive, the microtonal trills, fake grace notes, and other extended techniques overtake,

or *attack* the repeated F-sharp, bringing it to a speedy death at the end of line 42 (Example 31).

Example 31: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 42



It seems that Eros is alone with the narrator who has died, but Eros continues to examine his fallen prey. Ambrosini presents two statements of motive 3, but without the typical microtonal glissando at the end as seen in Example 32.¹²

Example 32: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 43



The second statement of motive 3 contains identical pitches up to the statement of the same motive at the end of the line 34 in section D.

Eros circles the fallen narrator like a hunter, making sure that he is dead; however, the narrator still shows a few signs of life. A faint and irregular heartbeat is heard in the gesture that begins the final line of *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, again on the heartbeat note F-sharp. Ambrosini writes a complex double-layer of conflicting dynamic markings, with one applied to the sustained F-sharp, and the other to the simultaneous key clacks. Example 33 shows both the original notation and the resulting musical effect, which is represented in two staves below.

¹² Compare to example 25.

Example 33: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, line 44, first half

The image shows two systems of handwritten musical notation. The first system consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a circled 'X' and the instruction 'tr. d.'. The notation includes a series of wavy lines representing a trill, with dynamic markings 'p' and 'ff'. A large bracket spans the first half of the system, containing the instruction 'minaccioso, a scatti' and a circled note '(sim. ad libitum)'. To the right of this bracket, another circled note reads 'irregolam. alternare suono e percussione delle chiacchie'. The second system consists of two staves, both with treble clefs and a key signature of one sharp. The top staff is marked '(suono) p' and 'sempi', and contains a series of notes with dynamic markings 'p', 'mf', and 'f'. The bottom staff is marked '(perc.)' and contains a series of notes with dynamic markings 'p' and 'ff'. Both systems end with wavy lines and dynamic markings.

The fact of Eros's final victory is evident with the final gesture that concludes the work. This outburst is simply the final arrow shot by Eros, which quickly strikes its victim and causes a grotesque death rattle, exemplified by a gradual slowing trill and with a vanishing sound to the end of the piece (Example 34).

Example 34: *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano*, end of line 44

The image shows a single staff of handwritten musical notation. It begins with a circled 'X' and the instruction 'tr. d.'. The notation includes a series of notes with dynamic markings 'ff', 'sfz', and 'p!'. A circled note '(1)' is present. The staff ends with a wavy line and the instruction '(Rit.)'. Below the staff, there are several annotations: 'sfz poss.', 'p! sub.', and '(solo perc.)' with arrows pointing to specific notes.

This ending prevents the title from expressing a sense of sadness or tragedy upon the narrator's death. The comic dimension of the ending is manifest through the idea of one dying for love only to become like a lowly beast hunted for sport.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Claudio Ambrosini's *A guisa di un arcier presto soriano* is ostensibly a work in the high post-war modernist tradition of Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Luciano Berio. The wide variety of extended sonic techniques and the tendency toward timbre experimentation place the work's basic aesthetic premises in a late twentieth-century contemporary idiom; however, the clear narrative structure and close ties with the form and emotional expression of Guido Cavalcanti's love sonnet create the distinct impression that Ambrosini's work is firmly rooted in the ideals of Romanticism. The battling duality between the scherzando-like material associated with Eros and the unabashedly lyrical material associated with the narrator create a clearly defined theatricality of contrasting characters. The wild passagework of the cadenza section displays, through its strong directionality and dramatic dynamic contrasts, a direct expression of human passion and feverishness that may be compared with the passionate outpourings of composers of the high Romantic era. Ambrosini, in effect, makes use of the widest array of contemporary coloristic resources allowed by the modern flute for the sake of revitalizing centuries-old aesthetic ideals and techniques of formal construction.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF INSTRUCTION OF EXTENDED TECHNIQUES



Tone fall: Immediately release your diaphragm and play diminuendo (after sfz.) Something like: fpp, while adding the requested keys. The sound will suddenly die away.



Main natural harmonic: The square note in parentheses shows the root note.



Secondary natural harmonic: Add the second harmonic to the main one.



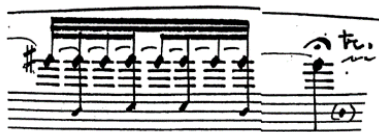
Open (only) the hole corresponding to the small note. In this case the right hand middle finger



Left hand percussion (x-notes) only, while the right hand fingers the round notes in the normal way. Initially without blowing, then with very little air (“con un filo d’aria”). In the example the left hand ring-finger rhythmically hits the G hole while the right hand thoroughly fingers C, C#, D etc.



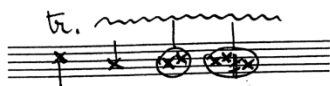
$\frac{3}{4}$ tone higher



Trill, mordent or grace note only with the requested key or hole (here: B, C). Furthermore, open and close only that key or hole, (most often) using one finger. Or add a key (e.g. +3) or release a key (-3), sometimes adding another one (-7 +8). (The effect is often a “key-vibrato” or a quarter-tone trill)



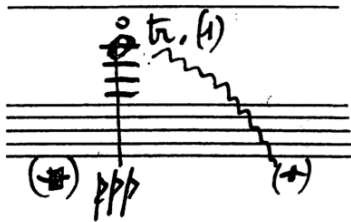
If enclosed in a circle: Trill with all the requested keys (or holes) ALL TOGETHER (= all necessary fingers simultaneously up and down).



Key percussion (only): The x-note means that only the noise of the percussion (on the key or hole) should be heard. If enclosed in a circle the keys should be played ALL together, simultaneously.



(Soffio) Only air-blow through the instrument (the mouthpiece can be held between the teeth)



Little by little pass through all the natural harmonics down to the root note.



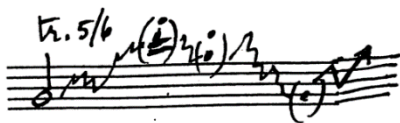
Open the requested key to the previous (normal) fingering. Then close it, getting back to the normal fingering.



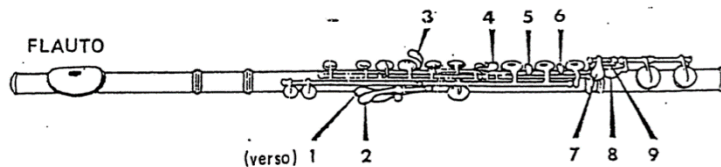
Trill (or mordent) only with the requested key. The effect is a “key-vibrato” or a quarter-tone trill.



(Normal) single mordent, Double mordent, with the upper or lower notes, as in traditional music.



Very fast trill alternating the keys n. 5 and 6. Sweep” up and down the harmonic series, following the suggestions of the zig-zag line. A kind of rough timbre, or “dirty” sound, nearly a multiphonic, may help.





Trillo doppio” (double trills shortened: “tr. d.”). Very fast trill (approximately twice as fast as a normal one). Alternate the two requested keys (5 and 6) or holes (F and F#, or E and F) as fast as possible.

It can also be done on the single F# key, alternating BOTH first and second finger on it. To do so the right hand must momentarily abandon its normal position and move upwards to reach the F# key with both fingers).



Flatterzunge.



Poco sfz, ossia sfz mel p.



Short fermata normal, long.



Play (finger) the diatonic scale between the two written high pitches, but without the necessary lip tension. A kind of rough arabesque in the middle register will come out.



Freely modify the normal C# fingering, adding fingers ad libitum which slightly change its colour or pitch



Actual grace notes (you hear the written pitches of the small notes)



Fake grace notes. While playing the big note (in this case) open and then close only the (complete) fingerings corresponding to the small (grace) notes. These “grace notes” DO NOT sound at the written pitch, the effect being just a microtonal melody on the main (big) note pitch (something like a “UAEIOUOIEAU”). (O----- - - - means: opening, - - - - - means: closing).

APPENDIX B
GLOSSARY OF ITALIAN TERMS

<i>A guisa di un arcier presto soriano</i>	In the manner of fast Syrian archer
<i>Il multifonico puo essere incomplete e con i suoni non esattamente sincroni</i>	The multiphonic may be incomplete sounds asynchronous
<i>aggressivo</i>	aggressive
<i>ma molto teso</i>	but very tense
<i>con ma filo d'aria</i>	with only air from the breath
<i>piu aggressivo</i>	more aggressive
<i>solo rumore della percussionsi</i>	only the sound of percussion
<i>come eco</i>	as echo
<i>effetto</i>	effect
<i>soffio</i>	blow
<i>avanti sull imboccatura fin no a chiuderla del tutto</i>	forward on the mouth right up to close embouchure hole completely
<i>come eco lontarissima</i>	like an echo from very far away
<i>mollare</i>	release
<i>senza fretta</i>	without hurrying
<i>ma non mollare del tutto</i>	but do not release altogether

<i>con ma filo d'aria (appena poco piu percettibile della volta precedo)</i>	with only breath of air (just a little more perceptible than the time before)
<i>quasi solo ma soffio</i>	almost only breath
<i>riaffiora</i>	resurfaces
<i>affiora l'arm secondario</i>	release the secondary key
<i>ma sempre dolce</i>	but always sweet
<i>Con slancio</i>	With momentum
<i>con ma filo d'aria progressivamente piu presente</i>	with breath of air progressively more present
<i>non accentore le note acute</i>	do not accent the small notes
<i>con la liberta di una cadenza</i>	with the freedom of a cadenza
<i>scivolando</i>	Slipping
<i>irrequieto</i>	restless
<i>trillo doppio</i>	double trill. Very fast trill
<i>allarga</i>	Widens, expands

suono sound
poco allargato little expanded

Page 3

nervoso nervous
fermandosi pausing
Scatta, violento Shooting, violent
inizialmente alla stessa velocita delle note precedenti initially at the same speed as the previous notes
riparte again
come un farfuglio as a babble
pressoché solo un soffio almost only breath

Page 4

leggero light
aprite chiare open clear
lontana far
ancora cantabile more songlike
si posa comes to rest
ancora posandosi still holding
misterioso mysterious
come spingendosi piu lontano as pushing far away
chiare more clear
riprende resuming

Page 5

cromaticamente chromatically
con l'indice si sempre alzato with the index finger always raised
come risvegliandosi Like awakening
foro del Do: aperto hold C: open

quasi riverbero

*le figure restano uguali, le pause
progressivamente più strette*

come risposta

morbidissimo

scinda

eco lontanissimo

esempio

minaccioso, a scatti

*Irregolarmi altermare suono e percussione
delle chiavi*

quasi reverb

the figures stay equal, the rests progressively
shorter

as a response

extremely soft

splitting

distant echo

example

Threatening to click

Irregular altered sound of key percussion

APPENDIX C

UNPUBLISHED SCORE OF A GUISA DI UN ARCIER PRESTO SORIANO

For Subhyan
 Claudio Ambrosini
 Venice, July 24, 2012

A guisa di un arcier presto soriano

per flauto
 (1981)

Claudio Ambrosini

a Daniele Ruggieri

Largo, ma molto teso

(Il multifonico può essere incompleto e con i suoni non esattamente sincroni)

come eco
 fantasmica

$\text{♩} = 46(52)$

aggressivo

3

sub. p

(diagn.)

(mollare)

con un po' d'aria

(perc.)

gliss.

(ord.)

più aggressivo

sfz

tr.

tr.

(solo rumore della percussione)

subito

(come eco)

(Effetto)

(come al-
 tra eco)

mezza voce

3

soffio

Rit.

P

pico

(quando
 un soffio)

senza fretta

(dim., ma non mollare
 del tutto)

(avanti sull'imboccatura fi-
 no a chiuderla del tutto)

con un filo d'aria (appena poco più percettibile della volta preced.)

pp (ORD) quasi solo nu soffio pppp morendo

riaffiora

pp dolce (sfiora l'arm. secondaria) (ORD) (ma sempre dolce!)

con slancio

con un filo d'aria, progressivamente più presente

P (ora) dolce! (non accentare le note acute!)

Acc.

p sfz sfz

con la libertà di una cadenza

scivolando, irrequieto

$\text{♩} = 63$

pp sub. sfz ppp

Allargo (5/6)

Tempo

p pp

Poco Allargato

Stringendo Tempo

(solo percuss.)

(suono)

Diaton.

mp

mp

merfoso *marcato* *Acc.* *poco Rit.* *Tempo*

stretto poss. con slancio *dolce, fermandosi* *scatta, niente*

riparte *sub. pppp!* *(eco)* *(NB: inizialmente sulla stessa velocità delle note precedenti)*

Flaut. *sub. pppp!* *diat.* *come un frangello*

T-K-T-T *(come eco)* *T-K* *stretto to* *RIT.....* *a tempo (solo piac.)*

Tempo primo *sub. pppp!* *(Rit. il tr.)* *(suono)* *pressoché sub un soffio*

leggero

tr. (#) (tr.) (#) tr.

pp *leggero* pp -8 (oro) (ma sempre dolce) 5/6
(aprire chiare 8)

(Poco più mosso)
Cantabile

tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#)

p +9 vib. *leggero* dolce p *lontano*

gelino
(part) suono

(filo d'aria, progressiva suona) p (suono) f (perc.)

Ancora Cantabile

tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#)

p vib. vib. si posa p vib. (ancora posandosi)

misterioso

tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#)

p pp *lontano* (perc.) (suono)

ancora cantabile

tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#) tr. (#)

(suono) (chiare) p (come spingendosi più lontano)

(riprende)

(eco) p poco *sim.*

1 10 10 10 10 etc, romanticamente (con l'indice sin sempre abitato)

Handwritten musical notation on a staff with treble clef and key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a wavy line above the staff labeled "tr." and a section of notes with a circled "x" above them. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*. A note is marked "(quasi riverbero)".

Section labeled "Tempo I°" with a key signature of one sharp. It starts with the word "dolce" and a note marked "vib (ma non troppo)". Dynamics include *pp* and *ppp*. A note is marked "leggero".

Section labeled "Tempo Doppio" with a tempo marking "(♩ = 92 ca)". It includes a "gliss." section and a "Flat..." section. Dynamics include *mp*, *sfzp*, and *ppp*. A note is marked "tr." and another "T-K".

Section labeled "Accel." with the instruction "Le figure restano uguali, le pause progressivamente più strette". It includes a note marked "come risposta" and "(quasi eco)". Dynamics include *pp* and *mp*. A note is marked "tr. 5/6" and another "tr. 5/6".

Section with a tempo marking "♩ = 63 ca". It includes a note marked "(quasi eco)" and another "(eco con. fortissima)". Dynamics include *pp* and *pppp*. A note is marked "subi" and another "(scinda, morbidiissimo)".

Section with a tempo marking "♩ = 92 ca". It includes a note marked "tr. (5/6)" and another "tr.". Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*. A note is marked "perc." and another "T-K".

Section labeled "Tempo I" with a note marked "filo d'aria". It includes a note marked "(perc.)" and another "filo d'aria". Dynamics include *ppp*. A note is marked "(d)".

Section with a note marked "tr. d." and another "tr. d.". It includes the instruction "minaccioso, a scatti" and "irregolari; alternare suono e percussioni delle chiavi". Dynamics include *pp*, *ppp*, *sfz*, and *pass.*. A note is marked "(solo perc.)" and another "(Rit.)".

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