The Domestic Life of the Syrinx

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Italian families with disposable income at the beginning of the sixteenth century were presented with a wealth of decorative artefacts with which to adorn their homes. In a classic study Richard Goldthwaite pointed to a substantial increase in luxury expenditure in Italy across the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, underpinned by a new ethics of consumption that encouraged the wealthy to create for themselves an "empire of things" (Goldthwaite 1989; Goldthwaite 1993; Guerzoni 1999). As Evelyn Welch has observed, inventories and other evidence demonstrate that the quantity and range of objects kept in Italian homes increased quite significantly across the same period (Welch 2005, 12). In tandem, an increase in the pace of innovation in product design and production technology made a wider range of products available to a larger number of people.

Several such innovations reached the market in Italy in the decades around 1500. An obvious example is the printed book: from its beginnings in Rome in the 1460s with the German emigré printers Conrad Sweynheim and Arnold Pannartz, and Ulrich Han, by the beginning of the 1490s Venice was established as the headquarters of an industry publishing (to our knowledge) around 300 titles a year and still growing (Nuovo 2013). Closely related is the phenomenon of single-sheet, image-led prints in which a number of artists and engravers specialised, pioneered in Italy in the 1460s and 70s by the shadowy and uncertain Baccio Baldini in Florence, Andrea Mantegna in Mantua, and the anonymous Ferrarese responsible for the so-called *Tarocchi di Mantegna* (Landau and Parshall 1994). An ample generation of craftsmen active and successful in this medium emerged around 1500, among whom Benedetto Montagna (in Vicenza) and Marcantonio Raimondi (in Bologna then Rome) were particularly prolific. An intimately related product innovation was the illustrated printed book, usually achieved by means of woodcuts, which became established in Italy across the 1490s. Particularly widely-circulated in illustrated form, and with profound influence on later classicising images, was Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, first printed with illustrations in 1497 and regularly thereafter, both in Latin and in Italian translations.

Over the same decades, innovations in the production process for the tin-glazed earthenware known as maiolica allowed for brighter and more elaborate painted decorations on tableware. By about 1520, as the industry pivoted from Faenza towards the area around Urbino, "historiated" maiolica was being produced in large quantities, featuring (among other things) scenes from ancient history and myth as well as religious subjects, often in designs borrowed from art prints and book illustration (Syson and Thornton 2001, 220-28; Thornton and Wilson 2009).

Across the second half of the fifteenth century new products and processes were also developed by craftsmen working with metal, who had often trained as goldsmiths but worked extensively with cheaper bronze (Motture 2019). From the 1480s the Veronese Moderno (Galeazzo Mondella), as well as several anonymous artists apparently working in the same region or in Rome,

were producing small bronze reliefs in large quantities representing classical or religious scenes (Luchs 1989). Versatile objects, these so-called "plaquettes" could be collected as artworks in their own right, and equally they could be assembled into book bindings, lamps, inkstands or sandboxes, or adapted as what we might call "wearables" (hat badges, sword pommels, pendants, and many other possibilities). In the same decades, Antico (Pier Jacopo Alari Bonacolsi) in Mantua, Riccio (Andrea Briosco) and numerous anonymous associates in Padua, and Severo Calzetta in Ravenna established workshops specialising in small, what we might call "tabletop" bronze statuary, often designed to serve as inkwells, pen stands, candlesticks, and oil lamps. Antico and Severo used the indirect lost wax bronze casting process which, unlike the direct method conventional at the time, allowed the production of multiple copies from a single model (Stone 1981). Some of Riccio's associates used a less sophisticated process, an innovation within the scope of conventional direct lost wax casting, to produce non-identical copies of Riccio's designs (Stone 1981, 111-15).

Certainly, products of these types are not normally considered as, or to be, musical sources. Nonetheless, running through this range of luxury, but in some sense mass-produced, objects are a number of distinctively musical fashions, whose presence in the home alongside musical leisure pursuits assigned to them a potentially powerful role in mediating musical practices (Dennis 2006; Shephard 2020; Shephard et al. 2020). Printed images and bronze plaquettes illustrating the story of Orpheus were popular (Scavizzi 1982), with a particular focus on the scene in which Orpheus laments in strains so moving that wild animals, rocks and trees gather round in pity (e.g. https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.44057.html). Numerous books and texts from the period around 1500 gloss this scene as representing the ancient bard using his persuasive oratory to bring primitive men to civilisation; it is clear that at the time this was considered to be the central message of Orpheus' story (Shephard et al. 2020, 171-89). This scene was much copied: within a few years it had migrated to maiolica (e.g. https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010117976), and a strikingly similar image was in vogue for the author portrait on the title pages of contemporary vernacular poetry anthologies—for example a collection of Notturno Napoletano's immensely popular amorous verse printed in 1519 (e.g. https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k71258h).

A fashion for the Muses in interior decoration, particularly in spaces linked with reading and writing (even though the nine were almost always represented as musicians), swept Italy from the 1470s through the first few decades of the sixteenth century (Mottola-Molfino and Natale 1991; Shephard et al. 2020, 150-70). Raimondi's engraving of Raphael's *Parnassus* fresco in the papal apartment, as well as maiolica derived in turn from the engraving (e.g. https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/79759), brought the musical Muses within reach for purchasers unable to pay a famous painter to decorate their private spaces. In situ in the Vatican, these Muses' musicianship is located under the presiding figure of Poetry. According to contemporary poetics, they represent the harmony of heaven, one Muse assigned to each sphere, as a figuration of a divine truth that both inspires and is perceptible in true poetry (Greenfield 1981). Some authorities

were particularly keen to differentiate the metaphorical "music" of this true poetry from the literal music made by musicians (Shephard 2020, 699); but for most participants in Italian literary culture in this period the slippage between music and poetry that the Muses neatly represented was both a core principle of classicising aesthetics, and a practical reality in song culture.

Small bronze statues of music-making satyrs, some designed to function as lamps, candle-holders, inkwells and perfume burners, were coming into fashion in the early 1500s in parallel with printed images of the "satyr's family," showing a goat-legged father playing for his wife and son (e.g. https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.4157.html; Kaufmann 1984). It is in the midst of this vogue that Pietro Sambonetto used music-making satyrs to decorate the title page of a 1515 anthology of secular songs printed in Siena (Krakow, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Mus. ant. pract. S 120, title page)—an example of another novel product brought to market in Italy at the beginning of the sixteenth century, namely printed secular music. Piping shepherds, inhabitants of the same literary and mythological spheres as the satyrs, were also available in large numbers (e.g. https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.9179.html), in parallel with the print success of vernacular eclogues describing the imagined musicianship of Arcadian rustics—those of Antonio Tebaldeo, Jacopo Sannazaro and Serafino Aquilano, in particular, appeared in dozens of editions from the late 1490s to the 1520s (Shephard et al. 2020, 260-86). These eclogues pervasively thematise the ambiguous relationship between music and poetry; the music-making of shepherds and the response thereto of their landscape surroundings furnish both the ostensible subject-matter and the framing conceit.

This was also a period of expansion in the manufacture and domestic ownership of musical instruments, which turn up in greater numbers and with greater frequency in domestic inventories as the sixteenth century wears on (Dennis 2006). Production of Italy's most popular domestic instrument, the lute, was dominated from the late fifteenth century by the German Sconvelt, Maler, Unverdorben and Fraunhoffer families, their workshops based for the most part in Venice (Blackburn 2010; Blackburn 2015; Blackburn 2017). The scale of lute manufacture in the first decades of the sixteenth century is indicated by the inventory of the estate of lutemaker Andrea de Bassis, who died around 1536: in his shop in Venice were 97 finished lutes and a further 50 awaiting repair, plus 200 lute strings (Blackburn 2017, 282). Of course, lutes (and other musical instruments) could be in themselves luxury objects, and often hung from the very same shelves used to store and display books and collectables (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1895-0915-806).

In his *De Splendore*—printed in 1498 in Naples and again in Venice in 1501, and forming part of a series of treatises on virtue (Roick 2017)—Giovanni Pontano defined domestic "splendour" as a new category of praiseworthy expenditure, more affordable than public magnificence, and also more appropriate for those who lacked noble blood but, like Pontano himself, lived in circumstances that allowed them to aspire to courtly ideals (Welch 2002). For Pontano, an impression of splendour is created through the purchase and decorous display of luxury objects:

> We call furnishings all domestic objects, such as vases, plates, linen, divans and other objects of this type without which it would not be possible to live pleasantly. Although men acquire these things for use and comfort, it is the obligation of the splendid man to regard not only use and comfort but to acquire as many of these objects as possible in such a way that friends and the knowledgeable, when it is necessary, can easily avail themselves of them, and to have them of the most excellent quality, with some superiority that is due either to the artistry, or to the material, or to both (Welch 2002, 223).
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> Supelectilem vocamus omne domesticum instrumentum, ut vasa, lances, textilia, lectos et id genus coetera, sine quibus commode vivi non potest. Haec quanquam homines usus et commoditatis gratia sibi comparant, splendidorum tamen officium est non usum aut commoditatem solam respicere, sed ut ea tum multa domi habeant, quibus etiam, cum opus fuerit, amici notique commode uti possint, tum egregia cum aliqua etiam vel artificis, vel materiae, vel utriusque praestantia (Pontano 1999, 228).

A culture of collecting closely related to that he describes is well documented in practice, for example in the famous inventories of the Medici collections (Stapleford 2013) and that of Isabella d'Este (Ferrari 2001), and has often been connected with the culture of literary leisure and connoisseurship associated with the *studiolo* or private study (Thornton 1997). Pontano's "splendour" reminds us that this *collezionismo* was not confined to the study, or to the nobility, but could embrace all the furnishings of a well-to-do home, from those of the bedroom to those of the dining table. The acquisition of such collections was in itself an important exercise of one's social connections and networks; their display, handling and discussion a performance of elite knowledge and judgement in front of and in collaboration with a carefully selected audience. Musical objects, such as song settings, instruments, music books, or even musicians, circulated via precisely the same epistolary and in-person social networks, to the same ends (Shephard 2014, 72-3; Zanovello 2016).

It is against this backdrop that I want to discuss the syrinx. This instrument apparently played no practical role in urban families' music-making in Italy in the period: in customs records from Rome 1470-83 (Esch 1998), and domestic inventory data from Venice 1497-1599 (Vio and Toffolo 1987-88), recorders are seen sometimes, bagpipes occasionally, the syrinx never. Nonetheless, it was ubiquitous in the mail-order catalogue of music-themed luxury goods, appearing in all media in the hands of Pan and the satyrs, and also featuring as a motif in the types of grotesque and trophy ornament that were especially popular on maiolica. As a visual motif, the syrinx quickly acquired a reasonably consistent design, and one which was archeologically nonsensical. From the late fifteenth century at least, the standard Italian syrinx was actually a bundle of recorders (*flauti*) of different lengths, fipple and finger holes visible, usually 3-5 in number, held together in an approximate syrinx shape with straps of leather or ribbon. This arrangement is entirely different from a true syrinx—which the archeologically-minded Mantegna managed perfectly well to represent in his *Parnassus* of 1497 (Louvre, Paris)—and evidently forms a bridge to contemporary Italians' everyday

musical experience. Recorders of different sizes were owned in sets, and tended to be kept together in a bag: the artist Filippino Lippi owned "five good recorders in a bag" (5 zufoli buoni in uno sacchetto) in 1504, for instance (Zambrano and Nelson 2004, 627). The effect of the adapted Renaissance syrinx, paradoxically, is to increase its legibility to contemporary musicians whilst at the same time misrepresenting its musical functionality.

The Renaissance syrinx has suffered from the musicological tendency to find a single allegorical explanation for a whole class of musical images, and then cling to it tenaciously. The syrinx is, we are given to understand, the pipe rejected by Minerva and taken up by the base satyr Marsyas, whose contest with Apollo established a rigid dichotomy between virtuous strings played by Apollo and his Muses, and vice-ridden winds played by Pan and his satyrs (Winternitz 1959). But this interpretation falls flat when confronted with the visual culture of the period, in which on the one hand Pan and his satyrs can perfectly well play strings, as for example in Jacopo de' Barbari's satyr family engraving of c.1503-4 (https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.4157.html), and on the other hand virtuous Muses and even angels are routinely depicted playing winds, as in the many representations of Euterpe derived from a widely-circulated Ferrarese print (https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.51118.html).

The multivalence of the syrinx is neatly conveyed by contrasting two successful print publications from either side of 1500. The stories of the similar contests of Apollo and Marsyas and Apollo and Pan (fig. X.1) in the 1497 vernacular edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, together with their woodcut illustrations, appear on the page alongside allegories explaining the moral meaning hiding behind the veil of the poetic fiction. Marsyas and Pan are both considered to be "sophists" (sofistichi), that is, those who think themselves expert but expound a bankrupt science, whilst Apollo represents "the wise" (gli savii) whose true science will expose their error. The pronouncements of the sophist Pan are said to be like the wind, which voices the reeds of his syrinx which are "vacant and empty" (vode e buse), thus the speech of the sophist reveals their ignorance. The persuasive quality of the "cithara" with which Apollo defeated Marsyas, on the other hand, represents the "true and resounding arguments" (veri argumenti resonanti) of the wise, founded in reason. Pan and his syrinx are discussed also in Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, first printed in 1502, but to quite different effect. Here the story of Pan and Syrinx becomes the origin myth for the whole venerable tradition of pastoral verse, his syrinx an heirloom passed down from one generation of poet-shepherds to the next. Of course, Sannazaro adopts this conceit as in itself a well-worn heirloom of the pastoral tradition, the device of the syrinx allowing him to construct an imagined lineage of poet-heros stretching from Theocritus and Virgil to the present day. Pan with his newly-fashioned syrinx becomes the archetype of the shepherd lamenting his unattainable love in rustic solitude; he bequeaths his instrument to a "shepherd of Syracuse" (Theocritus), who in turn leaves it to "Mantuan Tityrus" (Virgil); in the epilogue Sannazaro, in turn, hangs up his own "sampogna" (literally, bagpipe).

The easy switch here from syrinx to sampogna is entirely characteristic of the treatment of the instrument within pastoral verse: terms for simple or rustic wind instruments in Latin and Italian, including *tibia*, *fistula*, *flauto*, *cornamusa*, and *sampogna*, are used interchangeably, even when description of the instrument makes it clear that the author specifically intends the syrinx. In other words, the syrinx was considered equivalent to the recorder or bagpipe in much the same way that the cithara was treated as equivalent to the cetra or lute. Further, pastoral verse (both ancient and Renaissance) maintains a degree of interchangeability between piping and singing—it is often implied that shepherds are doing both at once, which is evidently impossible—such that piping becomes a metaphor for pastoral versification in itself, in much the same way that Orpheus' lyre-playing served as a metaphor for his persuasive eloquence.

As both Giovanni de' Bonsignori (the fourteenth-century translator of the 1497 *Metamorphoses*) and Sannazaro are at pains to point out, the syrinx is composed of reeds, wax, and wind, natural materials that root it in the rusticisty of the pastoral conceit. In the Syrinx story, indeed, the reeds sprout at the riverside and are then cut by Pan to form his instrument. In the final twist of Ovid's account of the contest of Apollo and Pan, it is the reeds (still growing in this case) voiced by the wind that publish news of King Midas' foolish judgement abroad. In Niccolò da Correggio's pastoral *Fabula de Cefalo* dating from 1487, Pan's own pipe is asserted to be "ancor fronduta" in the present day: Coridone declares to his shepherd-companions Tirsi, Damone and Alfesibeo that he will "sound the still-sprouting pipe / that Pan gave us upon Mount Acidalio" (la musa ancor fronduta sonaremo/ che ce diè Pan in sul monte Accidalio; Da Correggio 1969, 22). The intimate relationship between music-making and sprouting vegetation is key here; the conceit clearly leans into the power of the shepherd-musician Orpheus to move rocks and trees with his song, turning pastoral piping or song (whether literal or metaphorical) into an act that not only describes but generates the pastoral setting. In the fifth eclogue of Jacopo Fiorino da Boninsegni, printed in 1481 and again in 1494, Pan is said to sing on the slopes of Parnassus, "making the mountain bloom with his notes" (facendo di sue note el monte florido; *Bucoliche* 1494, sig. n[iii]r).

This pastoral alignment of piping, writing, and growing, suggests that irrepressible vegetal generation, such as one sees in contemporary grotesque ornament, could be identified with both pastoral sound and pastoral verse. Indeed, it configures the lineage of pastoral verse as a burst of vegetal ornament, erupting from Pan's syrinx, and twining through the years with irrepressible fantasy, just as vines and acanthus twined around contemporary elite interiors and the objects that lent them splendour. It is this entanglement with pastoral landscape that defines in broad terms the role of the syrinx in luxury goods at the beginning of the sixteenth century, one among a cluster of subjects and motifs that served to capture the pastoral-inflected environment and ideology of the villa within the urban domestic setting.

Around 1500 the syrinx became part of the repertory of trophies integrated into grotesque and candelabra ornament, especially on maiolica tableware (fig. X.2). In this context it rubs shoulders with

arms and armour, and with the more obviously military instrument of the drum, as well as elements such as acanthus, vine and cornucopiae, putti and strange beasts, masks, and jewels. Other musical instruments are also sometimes in evidence, especially the lute, but it is syrinx and drum that are by far the most common. The syrinx might seem an odd companion to military equipment, but what links them is the shared subtext of the triumph, a connection enabled by the tendency to blend the syrinx proper into the broader category of "pipe." Arms and armour abound as trophies in two panels of Andrea Mantegna's *Triumph of Caesar* (*Trophies and Bullion*; *The Corselet-Bearers*); and interleaved with them in the procession are three groups of musicians, bristling with wind instruments (*The Picture Bearers*; *The Vase-Bearers*; *Musicians*—all Royal Collection, London). Painted from 1484-92 in a series of nine canvases for the Ducal Palace in Mantua, probably for Marchese Francesco II Gonzaga, the *Triumph of Caesar* rapidly acquired considerable fame, some of the canvases circulating in printed copies engraved in the 1490s by Gian Marco Cavalli in collaboration with Mantegna under an exclusive contract (Landau 2021).

Cavalli's engraving of *The Corselet-Bearers* (https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/397067) includes, or perhaps invents, a classicising architectural frame for the canvas characterised by abundant foliage. Indeed, profusion, harnessed to rational organisation, characterises grotesque and trophy ornament just as it does Mantegna's *Triumph*: the cacophony represented by the forest of trumpets, and the cacophony of figures in diverse poses, manifest a variety that is brought to accord by the might of Caesar—and also, more directly, by the skill of the artist. Grotesque and trophy ornament, in turn, are also characterised by the proper arrangement of heterogenous profusion, according to the demands of symmetry, series, or some other regulatory principle rooted (at least, supposedly rooted) in geometry and arithmetic, as is clear in the portfolio of early sixteenth-century designs at the V&A attributed to the engraver Nicoletto da Modena (e.g. https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1025856/designs-7-in-1-sheet-design-modena-nicoletto-da/; cf Guest 2015, esp. 226-32).

Cacophony—that is, sonic profusion—is also highly characteristic of another triumph circulating in paint and in print in the early sixteenth century, one that in contrast is not properly regulated: that of Bacchus. A design for the *Indian Triumph of Bacchus* was prepared by Raphael for Duke Alfonso I of Ferrara in the 1510s and later painted by several artists (Shearman 1987), but this subject was unusual. Much more common were representations of the god in drunken celebration accompanied by satyrs and maenads, based on late antique Bacchic sarcophagi; inasmuch as this subject usually involved a festive procession centred upon the person of the god, it comes close to contemporary conventions of the "triumph," and often overlaps with them—as it clearly does in the early sixteenth-century *Ariadne at Naxos* by the Master of the Cassoni Campana (Musee de Petit Palais, Avignon) and Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* of 1523 (National Gallery, London), for example. Though satyrs attending Bacchus play curving horns more often than they do syrinx, Pan's instrument

is proper to this setting nonetheless. In Raimondi's sarcophagus-derived print of a *Bacchanal*, for example, a (morphologically correct) syrinx lies on the ground beneath a satyr-couple at the right of the composition who prepare to copulate before a herm (fig. X.3). The recorder-syrinx is played by a youth dancing with a maenad and a satyr in what is clearly an elite interior in a print of 1518 by Agostino Veneziano (fig. X.4).

Both the cacophony and the triumph of Bacchic sound are dramatised in several stories in the *Metamorphoses*, to fascinating effect. In book 3, King Pentheus is dismayed when the citizens of Thebes, "men and women, old and young, went to meet Bacchus singing and playing instruments" (glihomini e femine vechi e gioveni li andaro in contra cantando e sonando li instrumenti—as per the 1497 vernacular Metamorphoses: Ovid 1497, fol. XXIIIIv). In the rousing speech in which he berates his subjects, Pentheus indicates that it is the sound of the Bacchic throng arriving outside the city that has overcome their ethical defenses:

> O men who are born of serpents, and are dedicated to the god Mars, can these sounds and these cymbals cause you to be defeated by the beasts, you who had never been defeated in battle? And therefore I marvel at you old, who gave up the victory without a fight; and likewise you young who are my peers, among whom it is lawful to wear the helmet on the head and carry arms in the hand and not branches.
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> O homini che siete nati di serpente e sete dedicati a lo idio marte. Questi soni e questi cinbali porieno fare che le fere vengano voi che mai non fosti venti per bataglia. E percio me maraveglio di voi vechi che ve lasate vincere senza bataglia. E simelemente voi giovine che sete miei parechi: acui e licito di portare lelmo in capo e tener larme in mano e non le fronde (Ovid 1497, fol. XXIIIIv).

Ovid's Latin for this passage specifies a "curving pipe of horn" (aduncо tibia cornu). Bonsignori's Italian does not expand on the orchestration of Bacchus' victorious noise here; but at the opening of Book 4, where the theme of foolish Thebans rejecting Bacchus is extended through the story of the daughters of Minyas, the translation terms the wind instrument played by the god's celebrants a "zampogna" (Ovid 1497, fol. XXVIv). The moment of Bacchus' arrival and the sisters' undoing is marked by a striking multi-sensory incursion into their domestic space (cf Dennis 2008-9), even though the throng do not set foot inside:

> It appeared to them that all the bells, and all the instruments of the world were in that house, and the house began to smell of solemn odours; and because it was evening, they could not make anything out, but it seemed that the house was full of lamps, and full of wild beasts.
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> Ma cussi stando apparsi aloro che tute le campane: e tuti li instrumenti del mondo fossero in quella case e incomincio Odorare la asa di solemni odori: et perche era cusi da sera: non sepodea cussi le cose discernere: ma parea che la casa fusse piena di lampane: e piena di fere (Ovid 1497, fols. XXXr-v).

Oddly, here Bonsignori misses out a dimension of the assault considered by others so crucial that, in copies of Raffaele Regio's standard contemporary edition of the Latin *Metamorphoses*, it supplies the printed marginal annotation identifying the story: 'Telae in hederam et vites' (cloth into ivy and vines)—busy at spinning and weaving, the sisters' threads suddenly sprout vegetation. The abbreviation of the *Metamorphoses* considered in the period to be the work of Lactantius Placidus, which was printed four times in Italy in the 1470s and was sometimes included as a commentary in editions of Ovid's Latin, gives a complete summary:

> They are frightened by sudden voices of pipes and sound of drums; and moreover they noticed that their weaving and equipment had suddenly changed into shoots and vines, and saw their accustomed spot filled with wild animals and the darkness of night.
> Ex inproviso vocibus tibiarum et tympanorum sono exterrite sunt. At ut adverterunt telas instrumentaque sua in ederam ac vites repente mutata et locum assuetum feris repletum viderunt noctemque obscuram (Lactantius c.1477, fol. 8r).

The simultaneous incursion of piping and sprouting vegetation in this episode strongly recalls the sympathetic resonance of sound and landscape in the pastoral treatment of the syrinx. Elite Italian interiors around 1500 were indeed characterised by an incursion of irrepressible vegetation, present in architectural mouldings and reliefs such as that visible in the *Corselet-Bearers* print or those prepared by Antonio Lombardo for the apartment of Alfonso d'Este in Ferrara (https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/06.+sculpture/55956), in paint (see, for example, Raphael's decorations in the Loggia di Psiche of Villa Farnesina), in decorative objects such as our maiolica plates, and even on ceilings and floors (e.g. https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O88827/tile-durantino-francesco/). The invasion of satyric musicianship, and of vegetal ornament, into domestic space can be interpreted not only as a Bacchic invasion, but as a pastoral one, symbolising a new territory annexed to Pan's rustic kingdom, and identifying a new inheritor of the tradition of pastoral authorship emblematised by the sprouting syrinx.

It is clear that unlike Caesar's sonic magnificence, which finds its proper regulation in relation to the celebration of his heroic virtue, Bacchus' sensory profusion is inherently generative and unregulated—indeed, its triumph comprises the bringing of disorder and excess. Viewed through the lens of *varietas*, the Bacchic image therefore places in the foreground the artist's skill in harnessing the cacophonous diversity of the god's revel to a harmonious composition. But there is a sense in which Bacchus' very generative excess constitutes its own organising principle. The figure of Pan and his syrinx is useful here, bridging between natural fecundity and rational order. In Niccolo Perotti's *Cornucopiae* (Perotti 1501, col. 1191-2), written in the 1470s as a commentary on Martial but in its printed form rapidly transformed into a kind of classicising encyclopedia with an enormous index (Pade 2014), Pan's very person, described from head to foot, is glossed as an embodiment of the relation of the earth to the heavens:

> Pan had horns in the likeness of the rays of the sun, and the horns of the moon; his face was smiling in imitation of the sky. On his chest he had an animal skin, starry in the image of the stars; his lower parts were shaggy in reference to the trees, shoots, and wild beasts; he had goats' feet, to show the solidity of the earth.
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> Habebat Pan cornua in radiorum solis similitudinem, et cornuum lunae; ridebat eius facies ad aetheris imitationem. In pectore nebridem habebat stellatam ad stellarum imaginem; pars inferior hispida erat propter arbores, virgas et feras; caprinos pedes habebat, ut ostenderet terrae soliditatem.

Pan's two sonic myths—those of Syrinx and Echo—are here both explained via his relation to the sun and the heavens. The syrinx is "a pipe of seven reeds in reference to the harmony of the heavens, in which there are sevenfold sounds" (fistulam septem calamorum propter coeli harmoniam, in qua sunt septiformes soni), whilst Echo "signifies the harmony of the heavens, which is dear to the Sun, the governor of all the spheres, [and which] cannot be apprehended by our senses" (significat harmoniam caeli, quae Soli amica est quasi spherarum omnium moderatori, nostris sensibus comprehendi non posse). Like Pan himself, Pan's still-sprouting pipe, whilst rooted in the earth and its vegetation, simultaneously embodies an understanding of the ordering of the heavens. Perotti's description of the syrinx--"seven unequal reeds joined together" (septem imparibus calamis simul coniunctis)—pithily emphasises the diversity and difference of the materials, and their unification as a single instrument, very like contemporary definitions of harmony (Shephard 2022); it is a physical instantiation of *concordia discors*.

Claire Guest has observed that when drawing on the repertory of the triumph, trophy ornament 'has the task of showing that something is celebrated' (Guest 2015, 514). In some cases on maiolica, the ornamented field is not in itself the subject but functions as a circular frame for a scene in the central roundel, often representing a modern or all'antica figure, as on a dish dated 1522 from the Gubbio workshop of celebrated ceramicist Giorgio Andreoli (fig. X.5; on such maiolica "portraits" see Ajmar and Thornton 1998). Alberti writes of rich framing elements as ornaments fitting to the dignity of a well-designed image in his *De pictura* / *Della pittura* composed in 1435:

> I say rightly that the other crafted ornaments joined to the painting, which are carved columns, bases, capitals and pediments, I will not censure even if they were of the purest and most solid gold. Indeed, further, a very perfect *istoria* merits ornaments of the most precious jewels.
>
> Dico bene che gli altri fabrili ornamenti giunti alla pittura, qual sono colunne scolpite, base, capitelli e frontispici, non li biasimerò se ben fussero d'oro purissimo e massiccio. Anzi più una ben perfetta storia merita ornamenti di gemme preziosissime (Alberti 1973, 88).

We can, then, read our trophies as ornamental frames celebrating the qualities of the image they encircle. But this is not the only layer of ornamentation present in these plates, for the plates are themselves ornaments fitting the dignity of the house they adorn. Pontano writes in *De splendore* that:

> We call objects ornamental if we acquire them not so much for use as for embellishment and polish such as seals, paintings, tapestries, divans, ivory seats, cloth woven with gems, cases and caskets variously painted in the Arabic manner, little vases of crystal and other things of this type with which the house is adorned according to one's circumstances and with which one decorates dressers and tables. The sight of these things brings prestige to the owner of the house, when they are seen by the many who frequent his house (Welch 2002, 224).
>
> Ornamenta autem vocamus ea, quae non tam ad usum comparata sunt, quam ad ornatum ac nitorem, ut sunt signa, tabulae pictae, aulea, fulcra, eburneae sellae, stragola gemmis intertexta, pixides et arculae ex Arabicis pigmentis, vascula e christallo et huius generis alia, quibus domus pro tempore ornatur et abaci mensaeque instruuntur; delectat autem eorum aspectus, ac domino pariunt auctoritatem, dum multi, ut ea videant, domos ipsas frequentant (Pontano 1999, 232).

Pontano is perfectly clear that not only are such ornaments fitting to the quality of the splendid man, in fact they confer quality upon him. Indeed, in *De re aedificatoria*, printed in 1485, Alberti notes that without fitting ornament even the business of august institutions would seem "insipid and awkward" (insipidum quid negocii et insulsum fore; Alberti 1485, sig. [mvii]r). As Guest has observed, here ornament takes on a theatrical quality, as the creation of a set or scene giving a particular character to the performances acted out within it (Guest 2015, esp. 194-9). Displayed on a credenza, or in some cases pierced and hung on the wall, both maiolica dishes themselves and the trophies they bear served both to celebrate and to construct the splendour of their owner.

Pellegrino Prisciani writes in his theatre treatise *Spectacula*, composed around 1500, that music-making satyrs "represent the sweetness and pleasure of the countryside and villas, the loves and lovers of shepherds" (representano la dolceza et piacere de le campagne et ville, li amori et inamoramenti de pastori; Prisciani 1991, 46). The satyr statuettes, some designed to double as inkwells, pen stands, candle holders and lamps, that enjoyed great popularity among the *literati* from about 1500 serve, according to this cue, to bring the environment and aesthetic of the villa and of pastoral verse into the urban study. In so doing, they serve not only as props or characters, but as markers of a particular spacialising practice that characterises pastoral. This function is clarified when a statuette such as Riccio's *Satyr and Satyress* of the 1510s is placed next to another contemporary product of pastoral *collezionismo*, the *Satyr Family* print by the Master of 1515 (https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O96343/satyr-and-satyress-statuette-riccio-andrea-andrea/ and fig. X.6). The engraving presents a strikingly similar and perhaps directly related figure group, but now the satyrs' implied setting is spelled out (replete with reeds); Riccio's bronze leaves it up to the owner's imagination—perhaps aided by other elements of their interior decor—to supply the appropriate landscape backdrop. The generative associations of the satyr, as attendant of Bacchus and associate of Pan, are central here: in its domestic setting the statue becomes the imaginative source of the sprouting vegetation which erupts from its cold bronze to invade the interior space of a study or

library, turning it (in the mind's eye at least) into a villa within the palazzo (cf Shephard 2014, 109-11).

In the case of ornamental desk equipment, it is clear that (in Alberti's terms) the business they serve to dignify is that of writing. Here we circle back to the pastoral alignment of piping, sprouting, and versifying, so neatly encapsulated in the syrinx as Arcadian heirloom. Some statuettes seem to play with this conceit quite directly. A satyr-inkwell attributed to Riccio (fig. X.7) has the syrinx, erect penis, and the opening of the urn (probably meant to contain ink) co-located in a horizontal band corresponding to the satyr's shaggy "lower parts." With the quill dipped, the parallel between pen, penis and pipe emerges with considerable clarity, generating a metaphor that is both haptic, visual, and imaginatively sonic. According to Perotti, this segment of Pan's anatomy signifies flora and fauna, and specifically trees, the component of the pastoral landscape which most paradigmatically serves to link writing, singing, and setting, by means of echo—Pan's love of whom represents his love of the harmony of the spheres, which in turn represents the divine truth latent in true poetry. This is an enabling symbolic circuit, in which the writer's masculine *virtù* is woven together with his poetic facility, his divine inspiration, and his imagined pastoral setting recreated within an urban study. Or, indeed, *her* imagined setting: the statuette has a partner, a satyress in identical pose, the syrinx replaced by a lyre, the erect penis by a prominently parted vulva (fig. X.8).

In sum, at the beginning of the sixteenth century the syrinx found a place amongst a constellation of objects and motifs—the acquisition and display of which both represented and constructed the qualities of their owner—that served to turn domestic spaces associated with literary leisure into Ovidian and pastoral landscapes recalling the villa (cf Henry 2021, 55-93). Found especially in grotesque and trophy ornament, classicising printed images, and objects associated with writing, as well as within the pages of books presenting and digesting myths and pastoral verse, the syrinx was a kind of musical pen, inscribing upon domestic spaces the enabling ideologies of pastoral versification. Associated with the fecund, earthly sexuality of Pan and the satyrs, and with the noisy disorder of Bacchus' train, the syrinx was both plant and instrument, linking sprouting vegetation with both pastoral writing and pastoral singing. Through the figure of Pan, the syrinx was recognised as the point of origin of pastoral verse, an heirloom passed between generations of poets and an instrument whose playing wholly encapsulated pastoral authorship, generating the words, songs, sounds, and even the vegetation of the pastoral setting. In joining seven unequal reeds, Pan harnessed the generative energy of the earth to the rational ordering of the heavens, allowing "low" pastoral to claim a share in the divine truth promised from "true" poetry in contemporary poetics.

If this characterisation seems to see the syrinx retreat from musical practice into the realm of poetic fantasy and metaphor, it remains essentially musical and sonic nevertheless. Commenting on vegetal ornament created by the sculptor Luca della Robbia to frame a Madonna, Giorgio Vasari emphasises its lifelike quality, praising the "festoon of fruits, and foliage of several kinds, so well made, that they seem natural, and not of painted terracotta" (festone di frutti, e foglie di varie sorti,

tanto ben fatte, che paiono naturali, e non di terra cotta dipinta; Vasari 1568, 1:265). His comment implicitly engages the famous contest of the ancient painters Zeuxis and Parrhasius, narrated by Pliny (*Natural History* 36.65): Zeuxis' painted grapes were so naturalistic that birds flew down to eat them, as they do in the Lombardo relief mentioned above. The sensory confusion between vision and taste or smell prompted by naturalistic vegetal ornament can be extended to ornaments that imply sound. Like Pliny's birds, the viewer is fooled into reaching out with their hearing to enjoy the airy tones of the satyr's pipe, and the presence of this aural provocation is a crucial measure of the artist's success. At the same time, the syrinx of pastoral verse and domestic ornament could come to inflect the meanings attached to the sounding practice of piping, in the same way that the poetic musicianship of Orpheus inflected the contemporary reception of actual plucking and bowing. Something of the force of this is evident in the *Boy with a Pipe* of c.1510-15 attributed to Titian (Royal Collection, Windsor Castle), and the two *Recorder Players* by Girolamo Savoldo dating from the 1520s (Pinacoteca Tosio Martinengo, Brescia; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles).

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Captions

Figure X.1: Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso), *Ovidio metamorphoseos vulgare*, ed. and trans. Giovanni de' Bonsignori (Venice: Lucantonio Giunta, 1497), fol. 93r. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 2 Inc.c.a. 3517 a, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00049624-0. Photograph © CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

Figure X.2: Giorgio Andreoli, *Plate*, 1515-20. Maiolica, 26.1 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photograph © CC0 1.0.

Figure X.3: Marcantonio Raimondi, *Bacchanal*, c.1510-13. Engraving, 14.5 × 50.7 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photograph © CC0 1.0.

Figure X.4: Agostino Veneziano, *Dance of Fauns and Bacchantes*, 1518. Engraving, 17.1 x 25.2 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photograph © CC0 1.0.

Figure X.5: Workshop of Giorgio Andreoli, *Dish*, 1522. Maiolica, 20.9 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photograph © CC0 1.0.

Figure X.6: Master of 1515, *Satyr's Family*, c.1510-15. Engraving, 20 x 11.8 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington. Photograph courtesy of the National Gallery of Art.

Figure X.7: Riccio (Andrea Briosco), *Satyr with Urn*, c.1510-20. Bronze, 23.8 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photograph © CC0 1.0.

Figure X.8: Riccio (Andrea Briosco), *Satyress with Urn*, c.1510-20. Bronze, 25.1 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photograph © CC0 1.0.

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