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Music of Pantomime Ballets in Spain (1787-1799)

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Abstract

The rise of pantomime ballet in Spain took place during the last decade of the 18th century at the Caños del Peral theatre in Madrid. This theatre and its dance company were directed by the Italian Domenico Rossi, trained at the theatre of San Carlo in Naples and at the court of Vienna under the tutelage of Gasparo Angiolini. In the National Library of Spain there is a valuable musical source entitled *Airs de Ballet*, which consists in a collection of music from choreographic works dating from the end of the 18th century, undoubtedly of Italian origin. This work contains different musical pieces, including parts of the ballet *Des Jeux Amoureux* and the ballet *La Caccia di Enrico IV*. The choreo-musical analysis of *Airs de ballet* and other musical scores located in Spain opens up new perspectives for the investigation of pantomime ballet in Spain and its relationship with the choreographic style in Italy.

L'ascesa del balletto pantomimico in Spagna avvenne nell'ultimo decennio del XVIII secolo al teatro Los Caños del Peral di Madrid. Questo teatro e la sua compagnia di danza erano diretti dall'italiano Domenico Rossi, formatosi al teatro San Carlo di Napoli e alla corte di Vienna sotto la guida di Gasparo Angiolini. Nella Biblioteca Nazionale di Spagna è conservata una importante fonte musicale intitolata *Airs de Ballet*, che consiste in una raccolta di musiche tratte da opere coreografiche risalenti alla fine del XVIII secolo, senza dubbio di origine italiana. Quest'opera contiene diversi brani musicali, tra cui parti del balletto *Des Jeux Amoureux* e del balletto *La Caccia di Enrico IV*. L'analisi coreo-musicale di *Airs de ballet* e di altre partiture musicali conservate in Spagna apre nuove prospettive per lo studio del balletto pantomimico in Spagna e del suo rapporto con lo stile coreografico italiano.

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*Annotated scores would seem to be symptomatic of an era
when greater value came to be attached to the expressive
possibilities of dance, mime, gesture and stage movement in general.*
Edward Nye¹

Introduction

The 18th century in Spain, and especially the last decades of it, was characterized by a large production of pantomime ballets in the main theatres of the Iberian Peninsula in cities such as Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Cádiz. Pantomime ballet in Spain experienced its period of greatest prosperity in the 1790s, due to the fact that, in 1787, an Italian theatre, opera and dance company was formed for the first time at the Teatro de los Caños del Peral in the city of Madrid.

This Madrid theatre not only hosted performances by renowned international dancers, but staged ballets from the European repertoire too. It was also a centre of in-vention for some of the era's most talented dance composers. The Teatro de los Caños del Peral was managed and organized in the image and likeness of Italian theatres, specifically the San Carlo Theatre in Naples².

Both the theatre and the dance company were directed until 1799 by the Italian Domenico Rossi. Born in Milan in 1746³, Rossi danced in Vienna (1762-1764) under the direction of Gasparo Angiolini⁴ and composed the second ballets according to the order of the theatrical evenings' program

1. Edward Nye, *Mime, Music and Drama on the Eighteenth-Century Stage. The Ballet d'Action*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2011, p. 207.

2. The similarity in the management of both theatres is mainly due to the renovation of the Teatro de los Caños del Peral in the 1780s under the orders of Charles IV to assimilate the model of the San Carlo theatre, built by his father, Charles III, in Naples in 1737, and where Charles IV had developed his cultural life until his arrival at the court in Madrid.

3. Archivo General de Palacio, Madrid: *Licencia para contraer matrimonio*, Caja nº 295, Expediente 24.

4. Claudia Celi – Andrea Toschi, *Signor Rossi's riddles: an annotated chronology of Domenico Rossi (ca. 1745-post 1821)*, in «Cairon: Revista de ciencias de la danza», n. 2, 1996, pp. 7-30; Lorenzo Tozzi, *Il balletto pantomimo del Settecento. Gaspare Angiolini*, Japadre, L'Aquila 1972; Lorenzo Tozzi (a cura di), *Memorie di prigionia di un coreografo democratico (1799-1801)*, Zecchini, Varese 2025.

in Naples between 1776 and 1782, where he rivaled Charles Le Picq⁵. While developing his career in Italy, Domenico Rossi traveled to Spain on certain occasions. He was a member of the dance company of the Reales Sitios de Madrid⁶ (1774-1775) after having spent two seasons in Barcelona, and was the dance master of the Dukes of Osuna, great patrons of artists such as Francisco de Goya, their court painter. Thanks to his career, Domenico Rossi was very well positioned at the Spanish court, which made him the ideal candidate to take charge of the Teatro de los Caños del Peral company after its inauguration⁷. The theatre was opened in 1787, when the Real Junta de Hospitales de Madrid⁸ was granted a license to use the theatre⁹, which had been closed since the masked balls held between 1767 and 1773 (fig. 1).

5. French dancer Charles Le Picq, who, according to Salvatore Bongiovanni, introduced action ballet and heroic-tragic dance theories to Naples, was the second husband of Domenico Rossi's wife Geltrude Ablescherin-Rossi (Gertrudis' surname is written in different ways in the sources: Alberzerim, Obleshevin) and he raised their son, the renowned architect Carlo Rossi. Salvatore Bongiovanni, *Gennaro Magri: Grotesque Dancer on the European Stage*, in Rebecca Harris-Warrick – Bruce Alan Brown (edited by), *The Grotesque Dancer on the Eighteenth-Century Stage*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison 2005, p. 46; Inés Turmo Moreno, *El ballet ilustrado en España (1787-1799). El teatro de los Caños del Peral en la circulación coreo-musical europea. El desertor francés: estudio teórico-práctico del repertorio ilustrado*, Ph.D., Universidad de Castilla-la Mancha, Ciudad Real 2025, p. 86.

6. The "Reales Sitios" are the architectural complex of the royal residences of the Spanish crown. In the second half of the 18th century, they included the Royal Site of El Buen Retiro, the Royal Site of San Lorenzo de El Escorial, the Royal Site of San Ildefonso, the Royal Site of El Pardo, and the Royal Palace of Madrid, among others.

7. For more information on Domenico Rossi's biography see: Inés Turmo Moreno, *El ballet ilustrado en España (1787-1799)*, cit., pp. 259-271.

8. The Real Junta de Hospitales was an association of nobles dedicated to humanitarian work. The «Diario de Madrid», a newspaper source from Madrid, said of it in 1788: «The truth is that the Board of Hospitales and its most worthy Elder Brother have sought to fill the fun completely, with no other purpose than the honest and decent one of entertaining the people [...]. In view of this, it is necessary to give thanks and encourage their zeal with attendance and acceptance, so that foreigners can see that the Hospitals of Madrid not only serve to cure ills and miseries, but also the bad impression that has been made of our culture». [«Lo cierto es que la junta de Hospitales, y su dignísimo Hermano Mayor han procurado llenar la diversión completamente, sin otro objeto que el honesto y decente de divertir al pueblo [...]. A vista de esto es preciso tributar gracias, y animar su celo con la concurrencia y aceptación, para que vean los extranjeros que los Hospitales de Madrid, no solo sirven de curar males y miserias, sino también del mal concepto que ha querido formar de nuestra cultura»]. «Diario de Madrid», 17/6/1788, p. 667.

9. Luis Pérez de Guzmán, *Algunas noticias desconocidas sobre el teatro de los Caños del Peral*, in «Revista de Archivos y Bibliotecas», n. 47, 1926, pp. 87-92.



Figure 1. *Baile en Máscara*. Luis Paret y Alcázar, 1767. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (P002875).

For most of the decade (1787-1799), the dance company at the Caños del Peral theatre was made up of Italian dancers, who were hired by Rossi himself for the different theatre seasons. The theatre's cast included renowned dancers such as Gennaro Magri (who died in Madrid¹⁰), Salvatore Viganò and María Medina (who met in that company), Teresa Monticini, who would be a teacher at La Scala in Milan years after being part of the Madrid company, Pasqual and Pedro Angiolini, Gaspar Ronzi, Cayetano Gioya and Ana Tantini¹¹ among many others.

The Spanish theatre maintained an Italian-style program by alternating ballets with the intervals of the opera or main drama, including a first ballet that was longer and more dramatic, a second one that was shorter and simpler¹², and sometimes a ballet analogous to the opera or third

10. Gennaro Magri, author of the *Trattato teorico pratico di Ballo*, died in Madrid in 1789 at the age of 52 after spending two seasons as a dancer at the Teatro de los Caños del Peral under the direction of Domenico Rossi. The Italian maestro appears in the Madrid lists of 1788 as a dancer in the *corps de ballet* and in 1789 in the category of «other dancers». Cf. Inés Turmo Moreno, *El ballet ilustrado en España (1787-1799)*, cit., p. 104.

11. The names are included in their Spanish transcription due to the fact that they themselves signed in that manner in the sources preserved in Spanish archives.

12. While the first ballets were based on arguments typical of melodramas with heroic and tragic characteristics, the second ballets had simpler arguments more closely linked to pastoral stories. This was the case, for example, in the 1788

ballet. The company operated until 1799, when a Royal Order¹³ was proclaimed in Spain prohibiting foreign performances and actors, singers and dancers in any theatre. However, thanks to research carried out using press releases and documentation extracted from the Spanish National Library, it has been possible to determine that Domenico Rossi staged a total of 165 ballets of different genres, durations and characters in the period between 1787 and 1799. Unfortunately, only 45 of the 165 ballets have been preserved in dance programmes, either as individual books or within opera programmes. The identification of these 45 programmes¹⁴ allows us to position the Teatro de los Caños del Peral in the European choreo-musical circuit and consider it a fundamental centre for understanding the spread of the pantomime ballet genre to England, Portugal and even America¹⁵. However, the absence of sources related to the choreographic content of the ballets staged in Madrid makes it very difficult to determine the true nature of the performing genre. On the other hand, traditional Spanish historiography, which until now had dealt with so-called pre-Romantic ballet¹⁶, limited the Madrid stage tradition to French-style influences. The location of new sources (including the contracts of all the dancers and theatre agents, which are written in Italian) together with the revision of the documentation provided by researchers such as Tetyana Stepanova¹⁷, Emilio Cotarelo y Mori and Tetyana Stepanova¹⁸, Emilio Cotarelo y Mori¹⁹ and Xoan Manuel Carreira²⁰ allows us to point to the Italian-style performing tradition²¹.

season with the first heroic ballets such as *Medea y Jasón en la corte de Creonte* (April 29, 1788), *La victoria de Tamerlan sobre Bayaceto* (June 22, 1788) and *El Juicio de París* (December 9, 1788) contrasted with *El prado de Madrid* (May 30, 1788) and *Diversiones campestres* (November 12, 1788). This affected both the length of the musical scores and the decorations used in each of them. Cf. Inés Turmo Moreno, *El ballet ilustrado en España (1787-1799)*, cit., pp. 335-336.

13. Santos Díez González, *Plan de reforma de los teatros de Madrid aprobado en 1799*, Imprenta municipal ed., Madrid 1929.

14. Inés Turmo Moreno, *La publicación de Libros de "Bayle" en Madrid entre 1788 y 1799*, in *Actas VIII Congreso Nacional y V Internacional La Investigación en Danza*, Mahali, Valencia 2024, pp. 61-65.

15. The researchers who have worked most in this context are Teresita Campana for the cities of Córdoba and Buenos Aires and Maya Ramos Smith for the entire territory of New Spain. See: Teresita Campana, *Identidad y alteridad: el Códice de Trujillo, música y danzas del Virreinato del Perú del siglo XVIII*, in «Quodlibet», n. 78, 2022, pp. 95-127; Maya Ramos Smith, *El ballet en el virreinato de Nueva España durante la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII*, in «Quodlibet», n. 78, 2022, pp. 59-94.

16. In general terms, ballet in Spain in the last decades of the 18th century has commonly been referred to by historians as "pre-Romantic ballet". The existence of a style of stage dance that was different from the pantomime ballet of the last decades of the century and, at the same time, different from the romantic ballet of the 19th century, together with the exhaustive terminological research carried out in my doctoral thesis, has concluded that the ballet performed between 1787 and 1799 in Spain could be denominated "enlightened ballet". See Inés Turmo Moreno, *El ballet ilustrado en España (1787-1799)*, cit., pp. 58-63.

17. Tetyana Stepanova, *El ballet prerromántico en Madrid (1787-1833)*, Ph.D., Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2018.

18. *Ibidem*.

19. Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, *Orígenes y establecimiento de la ópera en España hasta 1800 (1917)*, editado por Emilio Casares Rodicio, Instituto Complutense de ciencias Musicales, Madrid 2004.

20. Xoan Manuel Carreira, *Recepcion del Ballet d'action en la Peninsula Iberica c. 1789-1800*, in «Revista Portuguesa de Musicologia», n. 1, 1991, pp. 211-226.

21. Following research into the choreographic technique used at the Teatro de los Caños del Peral, two periods and techniques have been identified: one Italian (1787-1799) and the other French (1798-1799). This information has been extracted from documentation on the professional dance school linked to the theatre's dance company and, more

Musical scores located in Spain

In search of new sources that could clarify the stylistic origin of the ballets performed at the Teatro de los Caños del Peral, five musical scores of as many ballets were located in different archives. These now join other ballets previously identified, such as the ballet by the Spanish composer Vicente Martín y Soler, *La Fuerza del Natural*²², composed before his time in Naples.

These ballets are *El desertor francés*, a pantomime ballet composed by Domenico Rossi and premiered in 1788; *El desertor*, a pantomime ballet composed by Jean Bercher Dauberval and staged by Juan Medina in 1790; *El Combidado de Piedra*, a pantomime ballet composed by Domenico Rossi in 1788; *La Caza de Enrique IV*, a heroic, comic and pantomime ballet by Domenico Rossi premiered in 1792 and *Los juegos amorosos*, a ballet by Domenico Rossi premiered in 1791, located in a set of works called *Airs de Ballet* kept in the Biblioteca Nacional de España.

The discovery of the first three sources in the Biblioteca Histórica Municipal of Madrid together with uncatalogued documentation in the Biblioteca Nacional de España²³ revealed the previously unknown fact that in 1795 the lead violin for dances, Josef Spontoni, was commissioned to copy the music for 98 ballets divided into 7 packages. The annotations²⁴ in the copies of the music of the three ballets located in the Biblioteca Histórica Municipal raise the possibility that these copies are the scores prepared by Spontoni in Spain²⁵.

This indicates the importance that theatre impresarios gave to the ballets performed and their music by copying them for archiving and preservation. In this context, there is a record of requests

specifically, from the request made in 1798 by the Marquis of Astorga (a Spanish nobleman in charge of the Madrid theatre management) to the theatre's new French dancer, Alejo Huard, to «establish the principles of French ballet», thus establishing a distinction between the ballet performed until that moment and the new ballet introduced by the arrival of French dancers. For more information, see Inés Turmo Moreno, *El ballet ilustrado en España (1787-1799)*, cit., p. 189.

22. Nieves Pascual León, *La fuerza del natural: un primer baile madrileño en la producción de Vicente Martín y Soler*, in «Ad Parnassum: A Journal of Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Instrumental Music», n. 20, April 2022, pp. 19-33.

23. *Relación de gastos, de sueldos de dependientes y músicos y funciones. Inventario. Solicitud de permiso para construir en el Teatro. Instancias de empresario y músicos del Teatro*, Biblioteca Nacional de España (hereafter abbreviated as BNE), Signatura: MSS 14053/1.

24. Among the various kinds of annotations found in musical scores, several distinct categories can be identified: those referring to stage action, to changes in scenery, to the duration of musical pieces in relation to what happens on stage, and to musical dynamics.

25. In the score of *El Desertor* preserved in the Biblioteca Histórica Municipal de Madrid, and more specifically in the title page that we located in the first folder of the MUS 600-5 source, the title «Nº14 Folleto de Baile/ El Desertor Francés» appears. Until now it had been considered that this inscription, especially the «nº 14» could be the result of the document being moved several times and catalogued in the historical institutions where it has been preserved. However, if we compare it with the lists relating to the packages of papers referring to the Caños del Peral theatre preserved in the BNE, it turns out that the ballet of *El Desertor Francés* is ballet number 14 of the fourth package. This information sheds new light on the survival of Spontoni's copies, as it is possible that many of the ballets intended for archiving are in different archives and libraries waiting to be located and catalogued.

from dancers for copies of musical fragments²⁶. It is possible that dancers requested copies of arias in which they had a leading role so that they could rehearse at home or with the violin in the theatre's rehearsal rooms. If this was indeed the case, the close relationship between the musical and the dancing company of the theatre is evident, so the musical scores would seem to be much more important for the dancers of the Spanish theatre than one might initially think. Furthermore, it is known that there was a two-way transmission or circulation of scores: many scores reached Los Caños from Portuguese and Italian theatres (via Barcelona or Valencia) and the Madrid theatre also exported scores to other theatres, as demonstrated in the accounts which record the sending of copies to Lisbon by the theatre copyist Vincenzo Penqui²⁷.

Unfortunately, the set of packages has not yet been located, and it is possible that in the course of several wars, relocations and the demolition of the theatre, they have not survived to the present day. It is likely, however, that some single score have survived, as is the case with the ones mentioned above.

The richness of musical sources

The absence of a choreographic score both in Spain and in the rest of the European theatres (with the exception of the manuscript of Auguste Ferrère located in the city of Valenciennes²⁸) gives greater importance to the presence of musical scores. Musical sources have become an indispensable element in the study of pantomime ballets, especially since some dancing masters composed the music for their own works. However, in Spanish scholarship they have not been regarded as such until now. As Stefania Onesti²⁹ points out, music is a fundamental element in the construction of dance, and more specifically, its relationship with choreography becomes essential in the construction of the dramaturgy of pantomime ballet. Most researchers who have carried out studies focusing on

26. BNE (Signatura: MSS 14058/8), *Escrituras de Baylarines por el año 1798 a 99*.

27. Ángel Manuel Olmos (editado por), *Papeles Barbieri: Teatro de los Caños del Peral*, Discantus More Hispano, Madrid 2017, p. 429.

28. The manuscript by Auguste Frederick Joseph Ferrère, *Partition et Chorographie Ornée des figures et habillements des Balets donnée Par Auguste, Frederick, Joseph, Ferrere*, published in the city of Valenciennes in 1782, is a unique source for the study of the genre as the only choreographic source from the period. In their essay *Putting Together a Pantomime Ballet*, researchers Rebecca Harris-Warrick and Carol G. Marsh suggested that Ferrère's manuscript is compatible with Magri's *Trattato teorico pratico di Ballo* to understand the choreographic technique. Magri's unquestionable connection to the Spanish choreographic movement means that Ferrère's manuscript can also be used as a choreographic source for studying ballets premiered in Spain. Carol G. Marsh – Rebecca Harris-Warrick, *Putting Together a Pantomime Ballet*, in Rebecca Harris-Warrick – Bruce Alan Brown, *The Grotesque Dancer on the Eighteenth-Century Stage*, cit., pp. 231-278.

29. Stefania Onesti, *Danza e pantomima: modelli interpretativi e chiavi di lettura*, in «Danza e Ricerca. Laboratorio di studi, scritture, visioni», n. 6, 2015, p. 95.

eighteenth-century choreology agree with these conclusions. This is the case of Edward Nye³⁰, Arianna Beatrice Fabbriatore³¹, Rosa Caferio³², Elena Ruffin³³, and David Day³⁴. However, these statements are based not only on the choreo-musical analysis of the scores, but also on the in-depth study of the enlightened choreutic theorists and their opinions, which, even though they did not always agree on matters of theory, were unanimous on the importance of music for the development of ballet in this period. In this context, thanks to the scores located in Spain, it has been possible to carry out studies on different ballets premiered at the Teatro de los Caños del Peral in Madrid in the 1790s.

More specifically, the existence of choreographic annotations (in this case, those annotations related to the stage action) in some of these sources provides information not only about the musical work itself, but also about the stage action or even the cast that performed the ballet. The best example of the presence of choreographic annotations in Spanish scores is the source of the ballet *El Desertor*. This ballet was composed for the Teatro de los Caños del Peral by Juan Medina – based on the original version by Jean Dauberval – where it was performed ten times. On the other hand, the ballet *El desertor francés* choreographed by Domenico Rossi was performed eleven times in the same theatre. Both ballets had only been studied by Ignacio Sanjuán Astigarraga³⁵ until now. Of these two ballets, the most recognized is the tragicomic pantomime ballet *The Deserter* by Jean Dauberval, premiered in 1784 at the King's Theatre in London where he was dance master³⁶. It is possible, however, that the Spanish production of Dauberval's ballet was slightly different from the European productions due to the fact that it was Juan Medina who staged it for Madrid audiences, used to the predominant Italian choreographic technique rather than Dauberval's foreign style. Despite the fact that the score coincides with the versions of Dauberval's ballet and that Juan Medina was a proud pupil of Dauberval as can be seen in the introduction to the *libro de bayle*³⁷, the absence of a choreographic

30. Edward Nye, *Mime, Music and Drama on the Eighteenth-Century Stage. The Ballet d'Action*, cit.

31. Arianna Fabbriatore, *Elementi di drammaturgia: "Il Ballo della Didone" e la riforma razionale della danza di Gasparo Angiolini*, in «Rivista di letteratura teatrale», vol. VIII, 2015, pp. 42-60.

32. Rosa Caferio, *Ballo teatrale e musica coreutica*, in Francesco Cotticelli – Paologiovanni Maione (a cura di), *Storia della musica e dello spettacolo a Napoli. Il Settecento*, Turchini, Napoli 2009, vol. II, pp. 707-732.

33. Elena Ruffin – Giovanna Trentin (a cura di), *Balli teatrali a Venezia (1746-1859). Partiture di sei balli pantomimici di Brighenti, Angiolini e Viganò. Catalogo generale cronologico dei balli teatrali*, 2 voll., Ricordi, Milano 1994.

34. David A. Day, *The Annotated violin Répétiteur and Early Romantic Ballet at the Théâtre Royal de Bruxelles (1815-1830)*, Ph.D., University of New York, New York 2008.

35. Ignacio Sanjuán Astigarraga, *El desertor francés, versión de un baile pantomímico en Madrid (1788-1820)*, in Begoña Lolo – Adela Presas (edited by), *Cantos de guerra y Paz*, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid 2015, pp. 267-279.

36. See <https://eighteenthcenturyballet.com/le-deserteur-a-pantomime-ballet-1784/> (Accessed 29/9/2025).

37. «The destiny of man is a marvellous fabric of principles and consequences; what seems to be chance is a certainty written into the plan of his life. When I left my homeland in my early years, it was impossible to foresee that one day I could contribute to the recreation and honest enjoyment of my homeland with an activity that began as a hobby and ended up as a profession: I have had a penchant for dancing since I was very young; in order to perfect myself in this career I suffered the disappointments and setbacks consequent upon those who tread foreign lands without skills or protection I tried to follow in the footsteps of the most skilled teachers, and as the crowning glory of my labours I have had the satisfaction of having enlisted among the actors who make up the Italian Theatre of this Court: I confess myself indebted to the applause

record raises doubts about the possible choreographic modification to adapt the repertoire work to Madrid's taste³⁸.

The score of Dauberval's ballet has annotations relating to the choreography³⁹, both as part of the copy and as posterior handwritten annotations. The annotations in the first violin part, for example, include the following indications:

- Act 1: N° 2 («hasta que haya salido», copyist; «decoración», posterior handwritten), N° 15 («quando el Ynvalido haya salido», copyist; «mas vivo y después de spera», posterior handwritten), N° 16 («para un poco», copyist);
- Act 2: N° 2 («la mano a la frente», copyist);
- Act 3: N° 1 («cuando haya llegado Luisa», copyist; «Banda militar», posterior handwritten), N° 2 («*tambour on reprend* la marcha», copyist; «muta scena», posterior handwritten), N° 3 («hasta que Jolier haya partido», copyist;), N° 8 («hasta que Labuatier esta dentro», copyist;), N° 15 «hasta que le da las harmas a Cairon», posterior handwritten), N° 17 («cuando ellos

that this enlightened people has given me in excess of my short merit: my gratitude rises to the level of the honour with which the Most Excellent Count of la Roca, Elder Brother of the Royal Hospitals, and Lord Consiliarios have distinguished me by entrusting me with the direction of the Bayle that under the title of the Deserter I have prepared, a composition by the famous Master Mr. Dauberval, whose school I am proud to have been a disciple of: it will complete my satisfaction to please and to be pleasing, and I am assured that any oversights or defects that are noticed will not be treated with rigorous criticism, but rather will be concealed and excused, encouraging me to greater endeavors». [«El destino del hombre es un tejido maravilloso e principios y conseqüencias; lo que parece casualidad es una certeza anotada en el plan de su vida. Cuando abandoné el patrio suelo en mis primeros años era imposible prever que algún dia pudiera ser util al recreo y honesta diversion de mi patria con un exercicio que empezó por afición y paró en profesión: tuve desde mi tierna edad inclinación al baile; para perfeccionarme en esta carrera sufrí los disgustos y contratiempos consiguientes a los que pisan tierras extrañas sin facultades ni protección procuré seguir las huellas de los mas diestros profesores, y para corona de mis trabajos he tenido la satisfacción de haberme alistado entre los Actores que componen el Teatro Italiano de esta Corte: me confieso deudor a los aplausos que me ha franqueado con exceso a mi corto mérito este ilustrado Pueblo: sube de punto mi gratitud a vista del honor con que el Excelentísimo Señor Conde de la Roca, Hermano Mayor de los Reales Hospitales, y Señor Consiliarios me han distinguido fiándome la dirección del Bayle que bajo el título del Desertor tengo dispuesto, composición del célebre Maestro Mr. Dauberval, de cuya escuela me glorio discípulo: completará mi satisfacción agradar y com-placer, y me anticipo la seguridad de que los descuidos ó defectos que se noten no se tratarán con una rigurosa erítica, antes bien se disimularán y disculparán animándome a nuevos empeños»]. *El desertor: bayle pantomimo tragi-cómico, en tres actos, de la composición de Mr Dauberval, maestro de bayles de la Academia Real de Música, é inspector de la Escuela de Bayle de S.M. christianísima dispuesto por el señor Juan Medina, que se ha de executar en el Coliseo de los Caños del Peral de Madrid en este año del 1790, que à beneficio de los Reales Hospitales admistra la Rea Lunta de su gobierno*, en la Imprenta de Gonzalez, Madrid 1790, p. 1.

38. The Madrid public enjoyed a performing arts scene inherent to a major capital city, which developed its own musical and choreographic style recognized throughout Europe and the American viceroyalties. It is therefore not difficult to see why certain works might be adapted for Madrid audiences, as Gennaro Magri said: «Non solo il gusto della Nazzioni [sic] e l'un dall'altro diverso; ma quel delle Città stesse è discordante [...] Io ho veduto gire a terra in molte Parti que' stessi balli, che con la stessa Musica, ed il Vestiario medesimo, hanno fatto la sorpresa, in un Teatro di un'altra Città. La cagione delle diverse Città si è la differenza de' gusti, e quella de' Teatri si attribuisce alla struttura, ed alla grandezza de' medemi [sic], ove un eco differente non dà all'armonia l'istessa corrispondenza, se la Musica sarà stridente, in un piccolo Teatro sarà forse un mal sentire, ed in un grande non avrà più quell'aspro. Quell'aria di ballo, che avrà piaciuta [sic] in un Teatro grande, andando in un piccolo, offenderà l'orecchio». Gennaro Magri, *Trattato teorico pratico di Ballo*, Presso Vincenzo Orsino, Napoli 1779, pp. 138-139; Inés Turmo Moreno, *El ballet ilustrado en España (1787-1799)*, cit., p. 109.

39. In the case of the score of Rossi's ballet, the only indications we find are those relating to the mutation of the decoration or to scenic elements such as the sound of a shot in the arrest of Dorimel or of the box (percussion) at the moment of execution.

sostienen [refiriéndose al valz]», copyist).

The existence of these choreographic annotations together with the conservation of the librettos allows us to link the eighteen musical numbers with the plot, as well as to determine the date of the musical source.

On the other hand, the musical scores also allow us to understand how music was the driving force behind the dramatic thread of the ballets. All the musical characteristics that international choreologists warn about the dramatic action of the musical composition can be found in the musical sources located in Spain. As the specialists point out, the music is a tool to support and emphasize the dramatic plot, ranging from moments of great tension to strident sounds related to the action of a character.

As an example of the importance of music for the dramatic plot, we can briefly analyze a piece from the ballet *El desertor francés* by Domenico Rossi, and more specifically the first number of the fifth act, which corresponds to the scene of Dorimel's execution. In it, the French regiment is formed, and they bring in Dorimel who, after having received his father's "blessing", is led to the place where he will be blindfolded for his execution. The character of Sanfrane orders the soldiers to leave the ranks for the execution of his son, who with the utmost fearlessness takes his place. The short duration of the piece (twenty musical bars) is composed in D minor⁴⁰, a key traditionally linked to a *grave* character⁴¹ with the agogic indication of *Allegretto*.

In the first violin part, the eighth-note silences of the first two bars and the constant repetition of each note – in groups of two – during the first eight bars with sixteenth-note values seem to simulate the convict's labored breathing. The D pedal sustained by the basses for most of the piece and the harmonic movement on the same pedal by the other voices with the inclusion of diminished seventh chords enhance the feeling of oppression, possibly intended by the composer.

This sustained agitation during the first fourteen bars of this brief piece leads to the arrival at the dominant (bar fifteen), from which point the same two-bar harmonic pattern (dominant-tonic) is repeated three times, leaving the last bar pending on the dominant, unresolved, giving way to «the box» as the source indicates, as an omen of the story's denouement. This music favors the dramatic action of the choreography, which could well consist of the plotline that Dorimel crawls to the

40. Marc-Antoine Charpentier, *Regles de Composition*, manuscript preserved at Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fr. nouv. acq. 6355, and now available online: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b525178077/f9.item> (Accessed 18/10/2025). See in particular folio 13r: «Energie des modes: D mineure, grave et devot».

41. Pablo Nassarre says: «[The first tone] also has the properties of lazy talk, sadness of the heart and heavy sleep [...] the effects of this planet [the second tone] are to move to tears of sadness, to instill sleep and laziness, and to excite the vice of the miserable». [«[El primer tono] también tiene las propiedades de charla pereza, la tristeza del corazón y el sueño pesado [...] los efectos de este planeta [el segundo tono] son mover a lágrimas de tristeza, infundir sueño, y pereza, y excitar al vicio de miserables»]. Pablo Nassarre, *Capítulo XVIII, De los efectos que causan los ocho tonos*, in Pablo Nassarre, *Escuela, música según la práctica moderna*, Tomo I, Herederos de Diego de Larumbe, Zaragoza 1724, p. 76.

place of his execution expressing the desolation and sadness he feels in his last seconds of life, finally blind-folding him and waiting for death to come when the drumbeat sounds⁴².

These examples demonstrate that musical sources constitute a unique choreological tool for the study of the genre. The lack of a large volume of musical scores for pantomime ballets has so far made impossible to compile an eighteenth-century repertoire big enough to analyse the repertoire as a whole. In addition to the musical content, the musical scores located in Spain may contain annotations that provide data related not only to the sound space of the work, but also to the context (e.g. the musicians and dancers who performed the work and the number of performances). Without the survival of these scores, this data would most likely remain unknown due to the lack of other documentary sources.

“Airs de Ballet”

Of the five musical scores located, the last two ballets recovered, *La Caza de Enrique IV* and *Los juegos amorosos*, are found, as already mentioned, in a collection of works called *Airs de Ballet* preserved in the Biblioteca Nacional de España. This work has different musical pieces including works such as the *Allemande* from «La Mandolinno», parts of the ballet *Des Jeux Amoureux*, a *Pas de Deux* from the ballet *La Guirlande* and several quadrilles «de Rolla» (the only indication of possible authorship). In the source, the pieces are divided as follows: the first four pieces do not have any information other than the beat and dynamics; number 5 is the so-called «Contradanza del Sr. Rolla»; 6 and 7 have no information; 8 is called *Allemande* «De la Mandolinno»; 9 is a *Pas de Deux* «air du ballet de la guirlande». From number 11 onwards the parts of *La Caza de Enrique IV* begin, which continues until number 17 (the last two pieces of the compilation, numbers 33 and 34, will also form part of *La Caza*) making a total of 9 complete numbers of this ballet. Number 18 will be the start of «des jeux amoureux», however the source will not identify the end of the compilation of this ballet, so we may find either 6 numbers or 15 numbers of it.

Some of these pieces allow us to approach the origin of the music of the ballets premiered in Spain, since the source was not copied in Madrid, unlike the other three ballets located, but is instead a musical compilation brought from abroad. This is confirmed by the presence of the J. Hessel watermark, dated in the 18th century by the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid⁴³. This Dutch-made watermark, dated around 1792, rarely appears in books in Spain. On the

42. The musical score can be found in the Appendix of this article.

43. See <https://www.acemiacolecciones.com/dibujos/inventario.php?id=P-2032> (Accessed 29/9/2025).

other hand, it seems to be an archive copy as it shows no signs of having been used by any musician. The only part that seems to have been used more, and which has some stains, is the part belonging to the second violin. This score could be the one used for the dance violin.

To locate the origin of this musical score, the titles that appear on it allow us to make some conjectures that cannot yet be proven. Before the beginning of the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* in *Airs de Ballet*, for example, there is mention of a dance entitled «Contradanzas de Rolla», which seems to link it to the violinist Alessandro Rolla, first violin and conductor of the La Scala Orchestra in Milan. The ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* was premiered for the first time in Milan in 1773 with choreography and music by Gasparo Angiolini⁴⁴ – according to epistolary sources, there was a version by Noverre based on Voltaire's texts, of which some costume designs by Louis René Bouquet have been preserved, although it was never premiered⁴⁵. Angiolini's version was based on the comic opera *Le Roi & Le Fermier* by Michel-Jean Sedaine with music by Monsigny⁴⁶. At the time of the premiere of this ballet in Milan, Alessandro Rolla was the theatre's first viola. Therefore, it is possible that the scores may have this origin due to the fact that the same manuscript contains parts of both the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* and the «Contradanza de Rolla».

Continuing with *La Caza de Enrique IV* as a common thread, the Spanish score could also be the version by Onorato Viganò premiered in Naples in 1775. This could have been taken to Spain by his son Salvatore when he joined the company in 1791, as it would not be until that year that the two ballets that appear in the musical source would be performed in *Los Caños del Peral*. In the version by Onorato Viganò staged in Rome in 1780, the renowned publisher Luigi Marescalchi appears as the music composer. This version of the ballet, which also appeared in Florence in 1789⁴⁷, has a slightly different storyline, including a variation in the characters with respect to the original comic opera. The plot of Viganò's ballet comes from Monsieur Collet's comedy entitled *La Partita a Caccia d'Enrico* performed in 1773.

On the other hand, there was another version of *La Caza de Enrique IV*, premiered at the theatre in the city of Lucca in 1790. This ballet, choreographed by Pietro Giudice, apparently featured music by the renowned Neapolitan maestro Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi. The Italian composer's

44. Gasparo Angiolini, *Avviso*, in *La Caccia d'Enrico IV. Ballo Eroico-comico Pantomimo inventato, e composto Dal sig. Gasparo Angiolini e Rappresentato sul Regio-Ducal Teatro di Milano. l'Estate dell'anno 1773*, Presso Gio. Batista Bianchi, Milano 1773.

45. Flavia Pappacena, *Un omaggio di Noverre a Voltaire: "Idée d'un ballet héroïque tiré de la Henriade"*, in «Studi (e testi) italiani», [numero monografico] *Teatro è Storia. Scritti in onore di Mara Fazio*, a cura di Sonia Bellavia, Marta Marchetti e Vincenzo De Santis, n. 41, 2018, pp. 97-106.

46. Angiolini's version was also staged in 1774 in Vienna, although the names were changed to adapt them to the language, the plot was maintained.

47. Onorato Viganò, *Primo Ballo Enrico IV. Ballo Semicomico Pantomimo, tratto dalla Commedia intitolata; La Partita a Caccia d'Enrico IV. di Monsieur Collé*, in *Fernando Cortes Conquistator del Messico. Drama per musica da rappresentarsi nel Regio Teatro di via della Pergola il Carnevale del 1789*, Stamperia Albizziniana da S.M. in Campo, Firenze 1789, p. 4.

daughter, Antonia Guglielmi, was a Neapolitan dancer in Domenico Rossi's company and appears as part of the corps de ballet of the Teatro de los Caños del Peral in 1789. In addition, many of this composer's works were staged in the Spanish theatre.

Domenico Rossi had previously worked with Marescalchi's musical editions (such as the equestrian ballets of Aranjuez choreographed by Domenico Rossi in 1770)⁴⁸ (fig. 2). In addition, it is known that Marescalchi, established in Naples in 1785 as a music publisher, made a compilation of ballets by Onorato Viganò published in Rome. There is, therefore, the possibility that Viganò's ballet was musically composed by Pietro Guglielmi and edited by Marescalchi. This allows us to hypothesize whether *Airs de ballet* is one of the compilations of Viganò's ballets published by Marescalchi that reached Spain. However, due to the absence of specific information about the authorship in the numerous Spanish sources consulted, it is not possible for the moment to determine with certainty the origin of the ballet premiered in Spain.



Figure 2. *Las parejas reales*. Luis Paret y Alcázar (1770). Madrid, Museo del Prado (P001044).

48. María José Ruiz Mayordomo, *Las parejas reales. Un espectáculo asincrónico de música y equitación en el Real Sitio de Aranjuez*; *Crítica: Música Antigua Aranjuez recupera el "Juego de Pareja" para su 25 aniversario*, in «Codalarío», 2nd June 2018. Available in: [https://www.codalarío.com/critica/criticas-2018/critica-musica-antigua-aranjuez-recupera-el-juego-de-parejas-para-su-25.-aniversario_6981_75_21214_0_1_in.html#lightbox\[6981\]/1/](https://www.codalarío.com/critica/criticas-2018/critica-musica-antigua-aranjuez-recupera-el-juego-de-parejas-para-su-25.-aniversario_6981_75_21214_0_1_in.html#lightbox[6981]/1/) (Accessed 29/9/2025).

An interesting fact about the sources is that all the annotations are in French despite the fact that these are two ballets supposedly of Italian origin. If we look at the titles of the different volumes, we can see that each one is written differently, something that would not have happened if the copyist was of French or French-speaking origin. For example, on the ballet of *La Caza de Enrique IV*, in the second clarinet the name is «Aires de balet de la partie de chasse de hanrÿ quatre», in the first and second horn «Airs Choisie du ballet de la partir de chas D'hanri quatre», in the first violin there are two meanings «Balet de la partie de chase de hanri 4» and only «chasse», on the second violin «Choisie du balet de la partir de chas De 'hanri quatre» and finally on the bassoon or bass it is called «Partie de Chasse de haunri quatre».

Table 1. Variation of the name of the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* in the source *Airs de Ballet*. Compiled by the author.

| Variation of the ballet name on the different instruments of <i>Airs de Ballet</i> | |
|--|---|
| Secondo clarinetto | <i>Aires de balet de la partie de chasse de hanrÿ quatre</i> |
| Primo e secondo corno | <i>Airs Choisie du ballet de la partir de chas D'hanri quatre</i> |
| Primo violino | <i>Balet de la partie de chase de hanri 4</i> |
| | <i>Chasse</i> |
| Secondo violino | <i>Choisie du balet de la partir de chas De'hanri quatre</i> |
| Fagotto | <i>Partie de Chasse de haunri quatre</i> |

Due to the absence of more information about the musical numbers of the ballet *Des jeux amoureux* located in *Airs de Ballet* (since the exact number of them in the musical score is unknown), the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* is going to be analyzed in the following pages, both as an example of the choreographic repertoire staged in Spain and of the conception of musical scores as tools for the research and recreation of 18th-century pantomime ballets.

“La Caza de Enrique IV”

The ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* was performed thirteen times at the Teatro de los Caños del Peral. It was first performed on November 12, 1791, and for the last time on February 18, 1792. In hemerographic documents, it was described as a «heroic, comic and pantomime» ballet. As can be seen in the discourse developed for the identification of the *Airs de Ballet* source, the theme of *La Caza de Enrique IV* was a recurring one throughout the second half of the 18th century for various authors.

Table 2. Chronology of international premieres of the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV*. Compiled by the author.

| Chronology of international premieres | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------|--|
| 1773 | Milano – Teatro Regio Ducale | Angiolini | <i>La Caccia d'Enrico IV</i> |
| 1774 | Wien – [Burgtheater?] | Angiolini | <i>Le Roi et le Fermier</i> |
| 1775 | Napoli – Teatro di S. Carlo | Viganò | <i>La caccia d'Enrico IV (secondo ballo)</i> |
| 1780 | Roma – Teatro delle Dame | Viganò | <i>Ballo di Enrico IV (primo ballo)</i> |
| 1789 | Firenze – Regio Teatro di via della Pergola | Viganò | <i>La Parita a caccia d'Enrico IV (primo ballo)</i> |
| 1790 | Torino – Teatro Reale di Torino | Angiolini | <i>Il Re alla Caccia (secondo ballo)</i> |
| 1790 | Lucca – Pubblico Teatro di Lucca | Giudice | <i>La caccia d'Enrico IV (primo ballo)</i> |
| 1791 | Madrid – Teatro de los Caños del Peral | Rossi | <i>La Caza de Henrique IV/Enrique IV a la caza (primo ballo)</i> |

As can be seen from the chronological table of productions of the ballet of *La Caccia di Enrico IV*, the name varied throughout the different productions by different authors, as did its plot. It can be seen as *La Caccia di Enrico IV*, *La Partita a Caccia d'Enrico IV*, *Il ballo di Enrico IV*, *Il Re alla Caccia*, or in Spanish productions it appears as *La Caza de Henrique IV* or *Enrique IV a la caza*. This variation in the titles of the Spanish theatre in the same ballet program in Spain makes one wonder which of the Italian versions was performed in Spain or if a new version was performed.

Unfortunately, no libretto relating to the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* has been preserved in Spain. It is possible that they did not even exist, given that during the thirteen days that the ballet was performed⁴⁹, the «Diario de Madrid» (the main newspaper source for the study of Madrid's theatrical program between 1788 and 1799) did not mention the possibility of acquiring a libretto like it did for other productions⁵⁰. Thanks to new research into the life of Domenico Rossi, we know that he was not in Milan or Vienna for the premieres of Gasparo Angiolini's *La Caccia* (even though he was Angiolini's student and a dancer in his company), because at that time he was working with the Reales Sitios Company in Madrid⁵¹. However, it is possible that he was present at the premiere of Viganò's version in Naples, as there is no record of Rossi in 1775 in Spanish theatres, but there is evidence of his presence in Naples the following year. On the other hand, Onorato Viganò's son, Salvatore, who danced his father's *Ballo de Enrique IV* in Florence in 1789, was also a dancer at the Caños del Peral

49. The first day of performances was November 12, 1791 and the last day of performances was February 18, 1792.

50. The usual trend in the 1790s with regard to the publication of librettos was the pertinent advertisement in the «Diario de Madrid», where the possibility of purchasing these «libro de bayle» was indicated: «The explanation or news of the first ballet will be on sale at the Coliseum's own Accounting Office and Ticket Office. At six o'clock sharp». [«A explicacion ó noticia del primer bayle se hallarán de venta en la Conta-duria y Despacho de billetes del propio Coliseo. A las seis en punto»] («Diario de Madrid», 12/11/1788, p. 4).

51. See *Contrato Matrimonial de Domenico Rossi y Gertrudis Ablescerin*, Patrimonio Nacional, Archivo General Caja nº R.E. 295, Expediente nº 24.

during the 1790 season⁵².

With regard to the authorship or revision of the choreography or the plot, Rossi's non-participation in Angiolini's ballet does not mean that he was unaware of it. Moreover, over several decades and as shown in the chronological table of ballet premieres (Table 2), ballets with similar themes were performed in different countries and cities. Since the main productions were those of Gasparo Angiolini and Onorato Viganò, it has been decided to compare the plots of both works in order to determine which one could be the most adaptable to the score preserved in the Biblioteca Nacional de España.

The first argument to analyse is the ballet premiered by Gasparo Angiolini at the Real Teatro Ducal in Milan in 1773, a heroic-comic pantomime one. In the preface to the narration of the plot, Angiolini, while acknowledging the influence of the comic works *Le Roi & son Fermier* and *La Partie de Chasse de Henri IV* on his ballet, warns that his work only makes nods to the original comedies and does not copy them word for word. He recognizes in the new authors (Voltaire, Metastasio) what in antiquity were Homer, Herodotus, Ovidio, but he is in favour of recomposing and adapting the works to the art of pantomime without copying, a practice that damages the advancement of the art⁵³. The second of the arguments is the semi-comic pantomime ballet premiered by Onorato Viganò in Florence in 1789. Unlike Angiolini and despite Viganò's limitations of the gestures of the pantomime language, his intention was faithful to Monsieur Collé's comedy *La Parita a Caccia d'Enrico*⁵⁴.

Although in general terms the story seems similar in both ballets, it is true that there are several changes in the plots that undoubtedly affect the choreography. The protagonist Ágata/Giannina in Angiolini's version manages to free herself through her sharpness by deceiving the marquis's lackeys, representing her as a stronger character. On the other hand, also in this version Ricardo trusts his lover, unlike in Viganò's version where he considers Ágata a traitor who has given in to the marquis's advances.

Besides the plot issues, the two productions also differ mainly in the length of the ballets. While Angiolini's work has three acts, Viganò's has only five scenes. Following the musical score, it seems more logical to think that the ballet premiered at the court of Madrid is more related to Viganò's

52. «Diario de Madrid», 29/3/1789, p. 3.

53. «Autori agli altri sempre rispettabili dell'antichità, e se a mio piacere rivolgo il piano, e in altra guisa ricompongo le idee dei medesimi, ciò faccio per accomodarle all'arte Pantomima, e per sottrarmi, per quanto le mie deboli forze lo permettono, dalla numerosa turba dei Copisti, i quali dopo molta fatica nulla mai faranno per l'avanzamento [*sic*] dell'arte» (Gasparo Angiolini, *Avviso*, cit. The libretto has not page numbers).

54. «Il Compositore di questo Ballo, Onorato Viganò, è stato costretto per renderlo intelligibile, di rappresentare in un sol giorno tutto ciò che in quella si legge esser seguito nel corso di sei settimane; e di variare in parte qualche Episodio per meglio adattarla alla ristrettissima eloquenza e' gesti che compongono il linguaggio pantomimo; ma in tutto quello ch' è stato possibile ha voluto fedelmente tradurre la Composizione del suddetto Monsieur Collé». Onorato Viganò, *Primo Ballo Enrico IV*, cit., p. 4.

version. However, although the music may correspond to Viganò's version, it is possible that Rossi, aware of Angiolini's ballet, created a hybrid work by combining elements of both in the plot and developing his own adaptation. This hypothesis is supported by the «Diario de Madrid», which describes the ballet as «Heroic, Comic and Pantomime» — features associated with Angiolini's production.

The absence of a *libro de bayle* also makes it difficult to know which dancers performed the ballet in Madrid. In order to speculate about the list of dancers, it is interesting to analyse the type of characters necessary in some Italian precedents. For example, in the production by Viganò published in the libretto for the Florence production in 1789⁵⁵, the dancers were mainly from the Viganò family. Another example is the list of dancers by Gasparo Angiolini for the Torino production in 1790.

The relationship of characters according to the source would be as follows: Agatha and Richard (protagonist lovers) would be the *primi ballerini seri*, Henry IV, although he would also be a *ballerino serio*, it is possible that he was, together with Catherine — another character — *i primi ballerini seri fuori di concerto*, as they only dance solo with each other, the Marquis of Conchiny would be the *primo grottesco*, and the nobles would be grotesques while the peasants would be *medio-carattere* and *figuranti*.

Following this relationship and taking into account the cast present at the Caños del Peral theatre in 1791⁵⁶, the characters could have been represented by the following dancers: Cayetano Gioya or Pedro Angiolini (who could also have played Henry IV) and Camila Banti or Margarita Prada would be Richard and Agatha, Cayetano Guidetti would be the Marquis of Conchiny and Henry IV and Catherine could have been played by Pedro Agustini and Santina Espontoni.

Table 3. Possible Spanish cast of the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV*. Compiled by the author.

| Possible cast for <i>La Caza de Enrique IV</i> at the Los Caños del Peral theatre | | |
|---|---|--|
| Giannina | Camila Banti /Margarita Prada | Prima Bailarina Seria |
| Ricardo | Cayetano Gioya/Pedro Angiolini | Primer/Segundo Bailarín Serio |
| Enrique IV | Cayetano Gioya/Pedro Angiolini/ Pedro Agustini | Primo Bailarín Serio/ Primer bailarín fuera de concierto |
| Marques de Conchiny | Cayetano Guidetti | Primer Grottesco |
| Catalina | Santina Espontoni | Primera bailarina fuera de concierto |

55. *Ibidem*.

56. «Diario de Madrid», 23/4/1791, p. 3.

Orchestration of the score

As far as the musical score is concerned, the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* seems more complete than that of the *Juegos Amorosos*, although it is possible that some numbers are missing. *La Caza de Enrique IV* in *Airs de Ballet* comprises numbers 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 33 and 34. According to the different parts, the orchestra required a first flute, second flute, first clarinet, second clarinet, first horn, second horn, first violin, second violin, bassoon and bass (possibly made up of several instruments). However, these parts are distributed in five groups of parts divided into second clarinet, first horn, first violin, second violin and bassoon and bass. Each group is sewn separately; they are not bound together as a single volume, but they all seem to have been made by the same copyist. The nine musical numbers present the following instrumentation:

- No. 1 *Allegretto*: second flute, first violin, second violin, first horn, second horn, bassoon and bass.
- No. 2 *Andante*: second flute, first violin, second violin, first horn, second horn, bassoon and bass.
- No. 3 *Allegretto*: second clarinet, first violin, second violin, bassoon and bass.
- No. 4 *Andante*: second clarinet, first violin, second violin, bassoon and double bass.
- No. 5 *Allegretto*: second clarinet, first violin, second violin, first horn, second horn, bassoon and double bass.
- No. 6 *Rondo-Allegretto*: second clarinet, first violin, second violin, first horn, second horn, bassoon and double bass.
- No. 7 *Rondo*: second clarinet, first violin, second violin, first horn, second horn, bassoon and bass.
- No. 8 *Andantino*: second clarinet, first violin and second violin.
- No. 9 *Rondo-Allegretto*: second flute, first violin and second violin.

The source, as already mentioned, has numerous errors, in addition to the fact that the parts of some instruments have not been preserved. For example, having a «secondo» clarinet, allows us to determine the existence of a first clarinet for which the score has not been preserved. However, in many of the pieces, the part of the second clarinet becomes the second flute. This is a proof that we are dealing with an orchestra with a large number of instruments, which did not participate in all the movements (possibly because the same wind musicians were in charge of playing different instruments, a common practice for centuries in music chapels and other ensembles of musicians). On the other hand, some instrumental parts of certain numbers have not survived to the present day. This is the case of number 34 – which has the highest number of errors – where the bass part is not available, although as is evident, the piece would have an accompaniment.

Unfortunately, as mentioned previously, a dance program from the Madrid staging has not been located. However, if the musical source is compared with Italian libretto⁵⁷, a dance plan can be drawn up following the ballet's storyline (the words and phrases in italics are taken from the libretto and from the score):

- Scene one (*The Forest*): number 11 *Allegretto (ouverture)*
- Scene two (*The Courtyard*): numbers 13 *Allegretto* (variation of Giannina and pantomime); number 12 *Andante (pas de deux)* of Giannina and Riccardo, ending with the kidnapping of Giannina); number 14 *Andante* (pantomime with the Marquis).

In the background, the horn is heard, calling for the king's hunt.

- Scene three (*The Forest*): number 15 *Allegretto* (the villagers cut down trees; the women, dancing, persuade them to leave their work and have some fun); number 16 *Rondo-Allegretto* (arrival of Ricardo and Giannina, pantomime where they tell what happened).

The storm begins (storm sounds) and all the villagers flee into the forest. The members of the hunt and the lonely king, who seems lost, also pass by.

- Scene four (*village square*): number 17 *Rondo* (the villagers gather and the lost Enrique arrives without a horse. Miguel comes to his aid. Henry explains the situation to him through pantomime and begs him to give him asylum. Miguel finally lets himself be convinced and takes him with him to his house. As they disappear, the Marquis of Cochiny, the Duke of Bellefard and the Duke of Sully arrive, also lost).
- Scene five (*House of the Miller*): number 33 *Andantino* (the women do domestic chores, and Ricardo writes a letter explaining to the king what happened to the Marquis, Miguel arrives with Enrique and Catalina takes charge of feeding him and helping him through a *pas de deux*); number 34 *Rondo-Allegretto* (The Marquis of Cochiny enters with his followers to stay after having got lost, they recognize Enrique and in turn Ricardo and Agata recognize him, they give the letter to Enrique and tell him what happened. Enrique expels the Marquis and marries Ricardo and Giannina, giving rise to celebrations with a grand final ball).

The possibility of a choreographic recreation

According to this relationship between the musical numbers and the narrative parts, it is

57. Regarding Gasparo Angiolini's ballet *La Caccia d'Enrico IV*, we have consulted the *Avviso* for the staging at the Teatro Regio-Ducal in Milan in 1773. Regarding Onorato Viganò's *Primo ballo Enrico IV*, we have consulted the argument included in the libretto of *Fernando Cortes conquistador del Messico* published in Florence in 1789. See: Gasparo Angiolini, *Avviso*, cit.; Onorato Viganò, *Primo ballo Enrico IV*, cit.

possible to recreate⁵⁸ the ballets for which the musical score has been preserved, with the aim of rediscover the repertoire of the 18th century. To illustrate the use of scores as tools for researching and recreating Spanish pantomime ballets, we present number 13 of the musical score, which, together with number 11, corresponds to the first scene of the ballet. In this scene, the shepherdess Giannina dances happily until her lover Ricardo appears. She asks him to help her with her sheep, but he refuses in order to anger her. She becomes angry with him, but he eventually apologises and they end up dancing together. This scene features a solo choreographic segment (Giannina), a pantomime scene, and a *pas de deux*.

Basing the choreographic studies on the theoretical and practical sources of the choreutic movement, a method of choreographic recording is proposed based on the manuscript of Auguste Frederick Joseph Ferrère⁵⁹, the only choreographic source (meaning choreographic as the graphic recording of dance) of pantomime ballet from the second half of the 18th century. In his manuscript, Ferrère describes several choreographic pieces using music, movement in space, texts, pictorial representations of pantomime actions, and, of course, Beauchamp-Feuillet notation. Therefore, to record the choreography proposed as an example, Beauchamp-Feuillet notation has been used together with pictorial representations of the pantomime actions and narrative explanations to complement the notation.

In this piece, notated using Beauchamp-Feuillet system⁶⁰ (in the style of Ferrère's manuscript) and with action scenes drawn, one can see danced parts and pantomimic actions, which favors the theoretical-practical recreation of the genre of pantomime ballet in Spain⁶¹.

The notation of these choreographies follows the formula of the traditional *Recueil de Danses* of the 17th and 18th centuries and similar new publications of the 21st century⁶² by leading contemporary choreographers specializing in historical dance. It includes six pages containing the choreography and pantomime of the piece. It begins with a solo by the female dancer, followed by a pantomime danced between the male protagonist and the female dancer, and ends with a short *pas de deux*. While the danced part is notated using Beauchamp-Feuillet notation, the pantomime part is recorded through

58. The term “recreate” has been used rather than “reconstruct” due to the absence of choreographic sources that would make reconstruction impossible. For more information on the difference between the terms “reconstruct” and “recreate” and their application in performance studies, see Inés Turmo Moreno, *El ballet ilustrado en España (1787-1799)*, cit., p. 44.

59. Auguste Frederick Joseph Ferrère, *Partition et Chorographie Ornée des figures et habillements des Balets*, cit., online: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10537042x.image> (Accessed 29/9/2025).

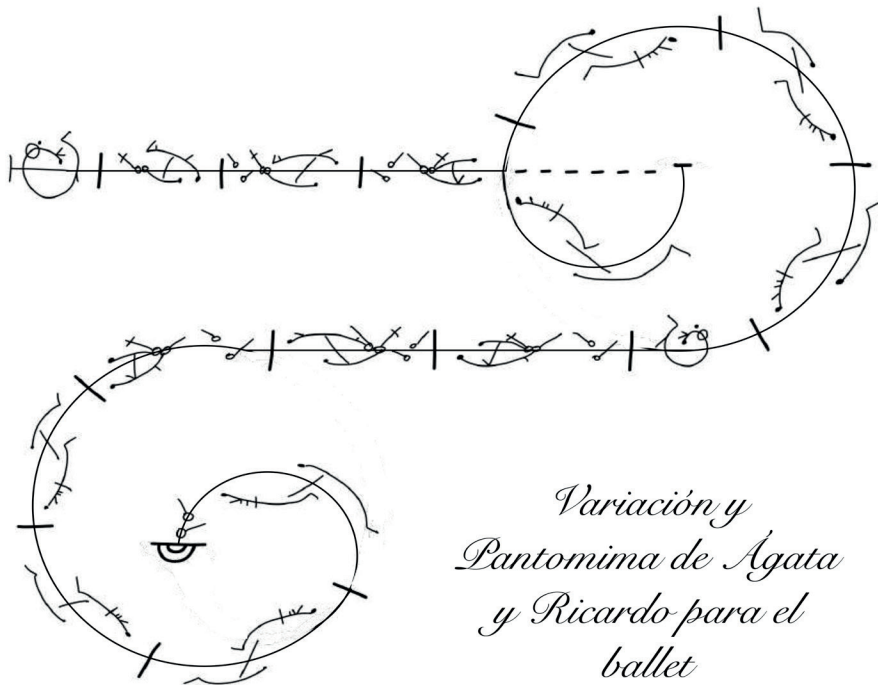
60. Raoul-Auger Feuillet, *Choregraphie ou L'art de décrire la danse, par caracteres, figures et signes démonstratifs, avec lesquels on apprend facilement de soy-même toutes sortes de danses. Ouvrage tres-utile aux maîtres à danser & à toutes les personnes qui s'appliquent à la danse. Par M. Feuillet, maître de danse. Seconde édition, augmentée*, Paris 1701, online: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1048479h> (Accessed 29/9/2025).

61. To watch the staged recreation of the complete first scene, please visit: <https://youtu.be/mJ1FEpJw8pQ> (Accessed 23/10/2025).

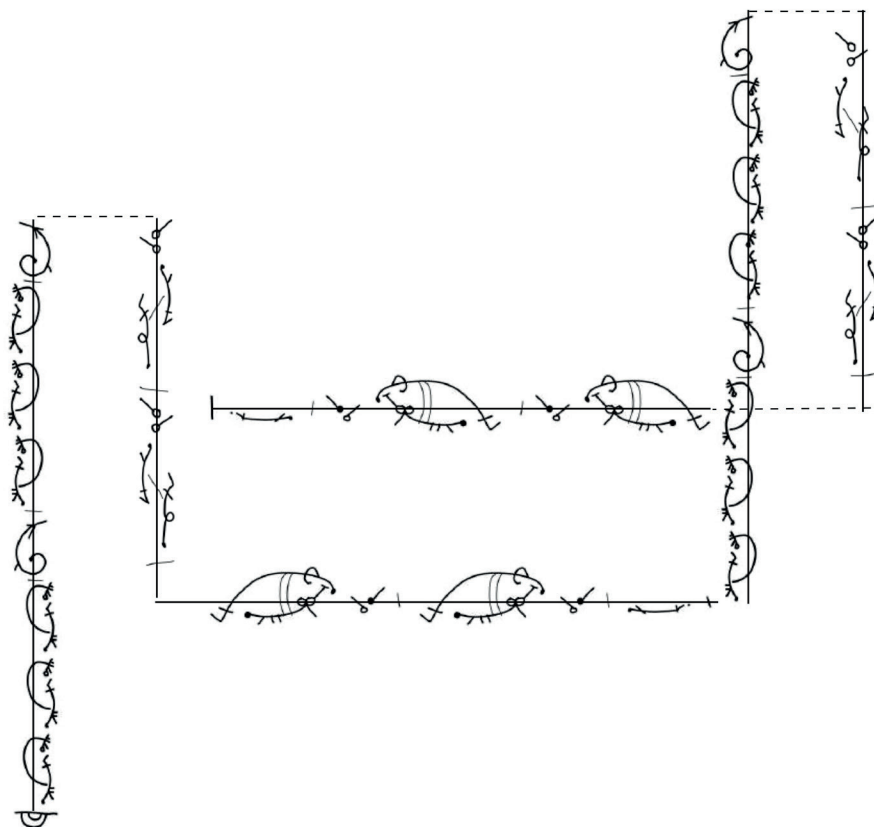
62. Mercurius Company project: Nouveau Recueil de Danses MMXXI or New Collection of Dance. See: <https://www.mercuriuscompany.com/ncd2021> (Accessed 29/9/2025).

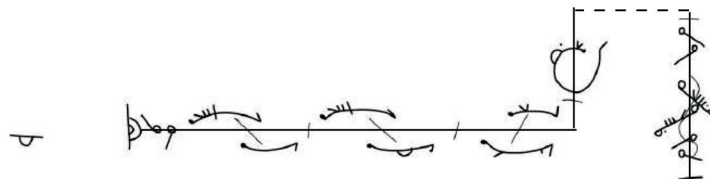
the inclusion of drawings and written descriptions, also identifying the moment when the actions are performed in relation to the musical score.

The choreography, like the music, has the following structure: AA, BB, CC, D, AA, BB. Parts A and B would be the danced sections, while parts C and D would include pantomime action. The only difference between the musical and choreographic structures is that in the repetition of theme C, the pantomime part is not repeated, and in the Dacapo alle fine (i.e., the repetition of AA, BB), it is not a solo but instead the two dancers dance together performing the same choreography.



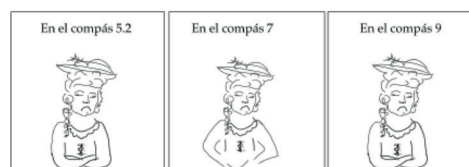
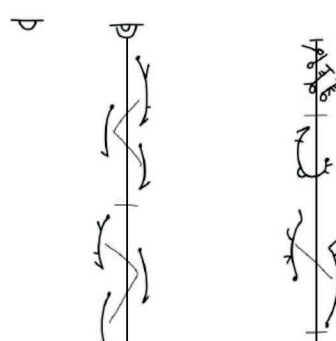
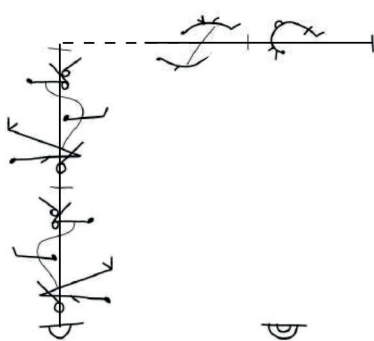
*Variación y
Pantomima de Agata
y Ricardo para el
ballet
La Caza de Enrique
IV*





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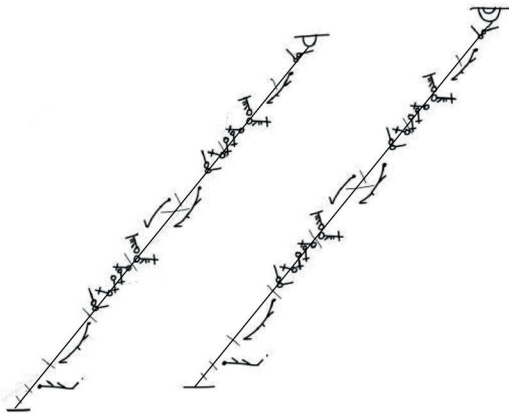
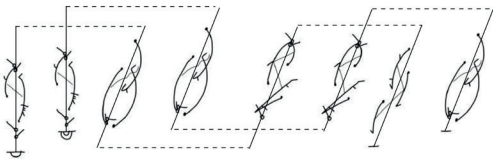


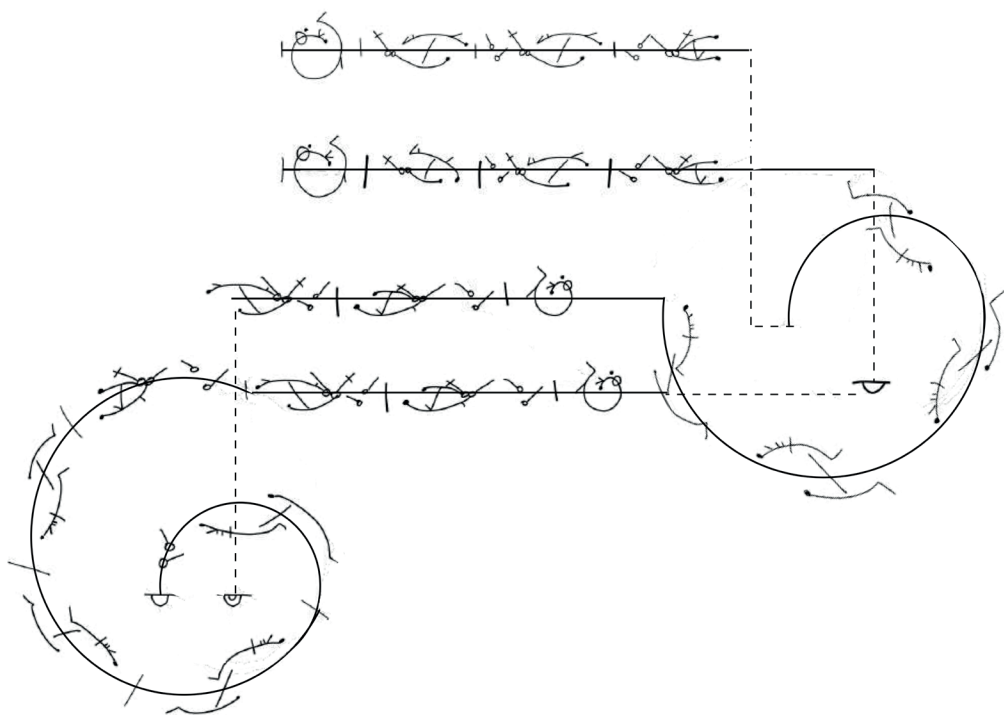


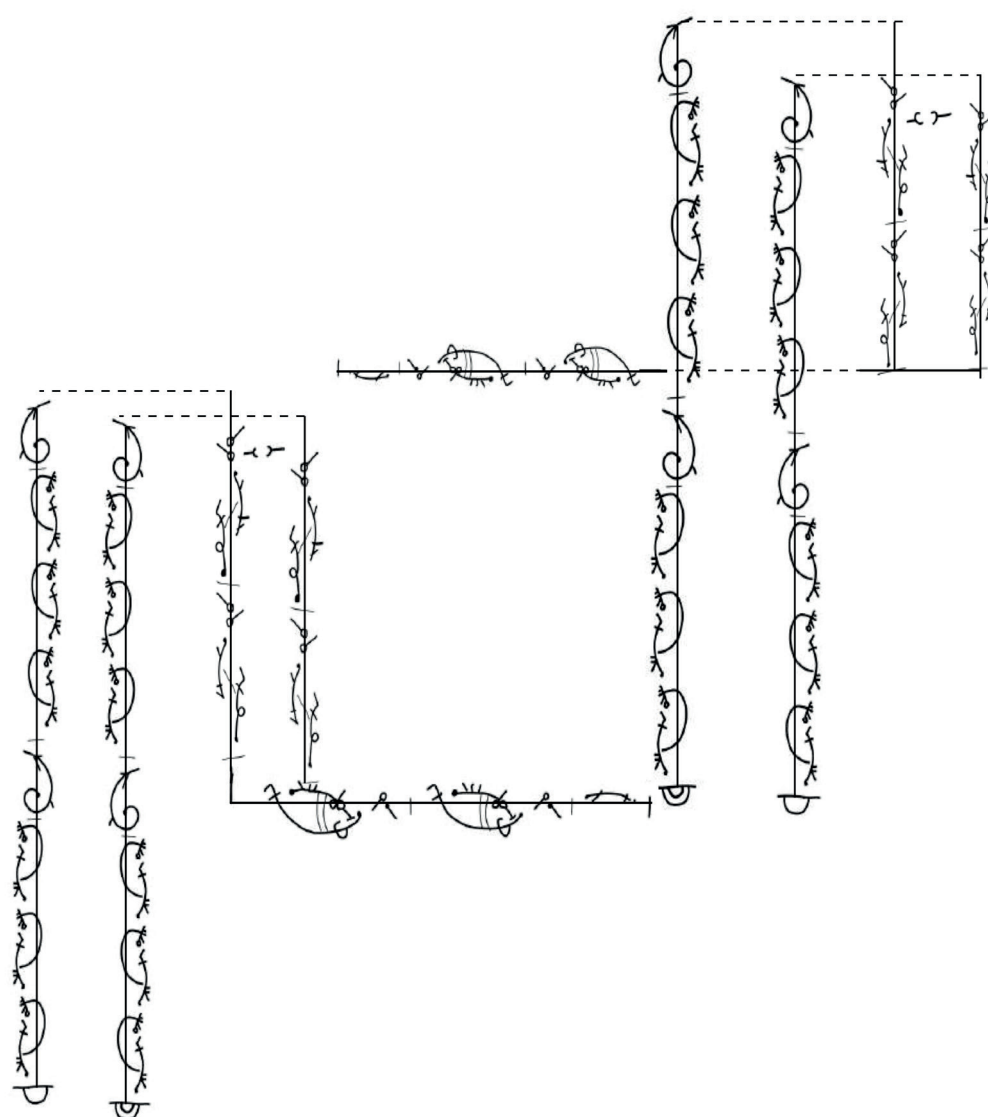
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Conclusions

Music is an essential element for the dramatic construction of pantomime ballet. For this reason, musical sources constitute a unique choreological tool for the study of the genre. Until now, the lack of a large volume of musical scores for stage dance has made it impossible to compile an eighteenth-century repertoire large enough to analyse the repertoire as a whole. More specifically, only a small percentage of the large volume of Spanish ballets has been located. The most recently located and analysed sources among these are *El desertor* (based on Jean Dauberval by Juan Medina), *El desertor francés*, *El Combidado de Piedra*, *La Caza de Enrique IV* and *Los juegos amorosos*, all by Domenico Rossi.

In this context, the location of one of the scores from the packages that the Duke of Artiaga requested from the lead violinist Josef Spontoni in 1795 (*El desertor francés*) opens up new perspectives for the discovery of new sources in the future. Similarly, the choreographic annotations preserved in these musical sources provide data not only relating to the musical context of the work, but also to the performance context (such as the musicians who performed the work, the dancers, the number of performances, etc.). In most cases, this data would remain unknown due to the absence of other documentary sources if it weren't for the survival of this score. These stage annotations are invaluable for historical recreation, as reconstructing ballets of musical classicism is impossible due to the absence of choreographic sources, with the exception of Auguste Ferrer's ballets.

Spanish musical sources have become an indispensable element for the knowledge of eighteenth-century ballets and thanks to them it has been possible to carry out studies on different ballets premiered at the Teatro de los Caños del Peral in Madrid in the 1790s. More specifically, the appearance of the compilation of musical parts of pantomime dances entitled *Airs de Ballet* and located in the Biblioteca Nacional de España has permitted the development of a preliminary study on the potential recreation of the ballet *La Caza de Enrique IV* staged by Domenico Rossi in Spain.

Without doubt, there are still many steps to be taken in the study of the music of pantomime ballets, especially in Spain. However, thanks to recent research, the nature of this genre and its repertoire is becoming increasingly well known. The scores that have been located allow us to distinguish the correspondence of the Spanish style of choreutic composition with international styles, thus confirming the participation of the Teatro de los Caños del Peral in the European choreo-musical circulation of ballet in the 18th century.

Appendix

To support the study of the dramatic capacity of the score, and more specifically of the example analysed in this essay from Domingo Rossi's ballet *El desertor francés*, an edition of the score of the first number of the fifth act is included as a complement.

Acto 5 - N° 1

Allegretto

The musical score is for Acto 5 - N° 1, Allegretto. It is a full orchestral score. The instruments listed are Oboe 1, Oboe 2, Trompa en Re 1, Trompa en Re 2, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Basso & Fagott. The music is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The first system shows the initial measures, and the second system continues the piece. The score is written for a full orchestra with woodwinds, brass, and strings.

El Desertor

Acto 5 - N° 1

11

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Tp. 1

Tp. 2

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Bs.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 11 through 15. The score is for a full orchestra. Measures 11-14 are marked with a repeat sign. In measure 15, the woodwinds and strings play a more active role, with the first violin and bassoon having melodic lines. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

16

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Tp. 1

Tp. 2

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Bs.

asta que
suena la caja

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 16 through 20. Measures 16-19 are marked with a repeat sign. In measure 20, the first violin has a melodic line, and the bassoon and strings provide accompaniment. The text 'asta que suena la caja' is written above the first violin staff in measure 20. The key signature remains one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.