

Claudio Monteverdi – Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda (1997)

Written by bluesever

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Marinella Pennicchi, soprano (Clorinda)

Giovanni Caccamo, tenor (Tancredi)

Furio Zanasi, baryton (testo)

Ensemble Elyma

Gabriel Garrido – director

'Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda' (SV 153) is an operatic scena for three voices by Claudio Monteverdi, although many dispute how the piece should be classified. The piece has a

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libretto drawn from Torquato Tasso's *La Gerusalemme Liberata* ("Jerusalem Delivered", Canto XII, 52-62, 64-68), a Romance set against the backdrop of the First Crusade.

'Il Combattimento' was first produced in 1624 but not printed until 1638, when it appeared with several other pieces in Monteverdi's eighth book of madrigals (written over a period of many years). In 'Il Combattimento' the orchestra and voices form two separate entities. The strings are divided into four independent parts instead of the usual five – an innovation that was not generally adopted by European composers until the eighteenth century.

'Il combattimento' contains one of the earliest known uses of pizzicato in baroque music, in which the players are instructed to set down their bows and use two fingers of their right hand to pluck the strings. It also contains one of the earliest uses of the string tremolo, in which a particular note is reiterated as a means of generating excitement. This latter device was so revolutionary that Monteverdi had considerable difficulty getting the players of his day to perform it correctly. These innovations, like the fourfold division of the strings, were not taken up by Monteverdi's contemporaries or immediate successors.

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