

# The use of the bassoon in Naples during the 17th and 18th centuries

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## Introduction

A new instrument arrives in Naples:  
**The Bassoon**

Foundation of a  
bassoon school

Neapolitan  
composers and the  
use of the bassoon

## Materials and methods

Archival research in  
four famous  
Neapolitan music  
schools



Identifying  
*woodwind makers*  
and *musicians* with  
marriage / birth /  
death / baptism  
*certificates* and  
*payment notes* from  
*musical institutions*  
and *bank archives*

A catalogue of  
Neapolitan *music*  
*with the bassoon*  
and analysis of  
repertoire

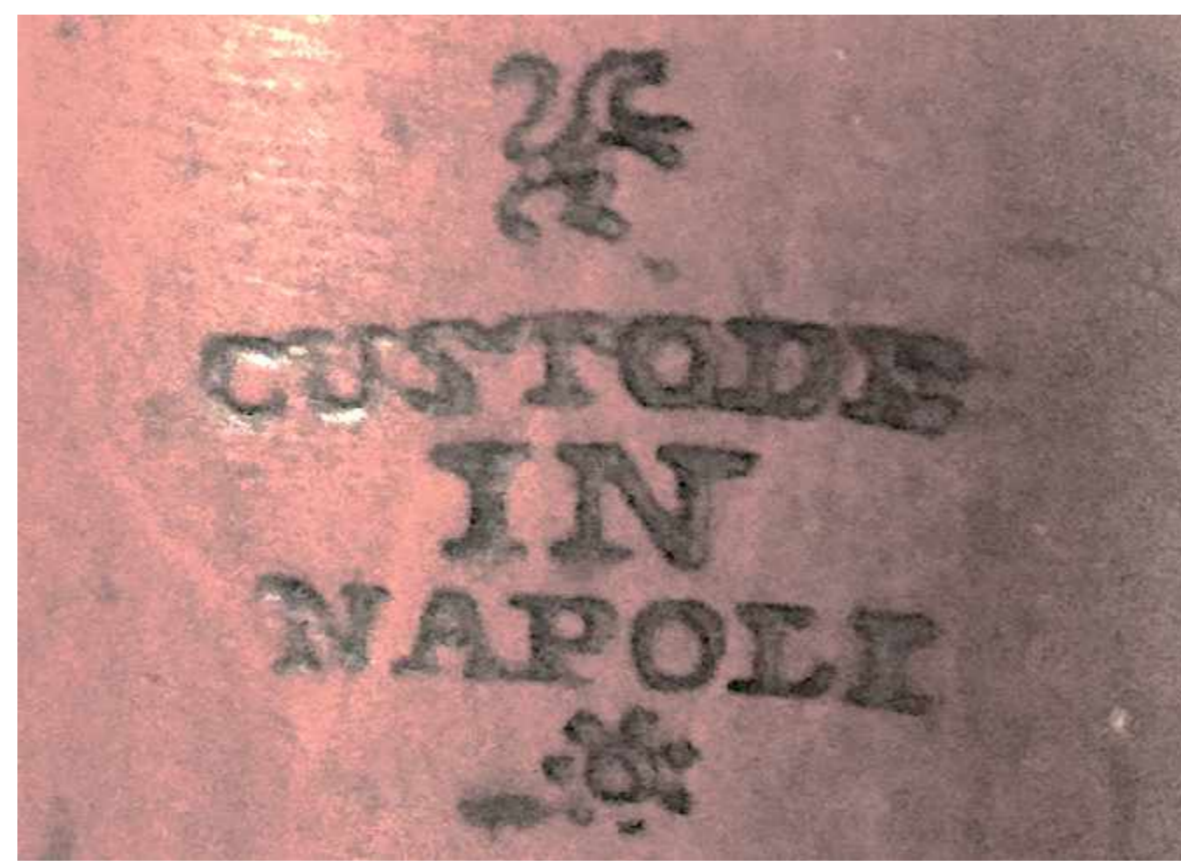
## Results

The royal bassoonist Don  
Giovanni Castelvì (1598 –1668)  
as the founder of the Neapolitan  
bassoon school

Hitherto unknown information  
about the activity of over **25**  
*bassoonists, bassoon teachers*  
and *woodwind makers* of the city

Evidence of bassoon usage,  
between 1680 and 1708, instead  
of organ in church during Lent -  
an **essential instrument** in the  
procession of the «Four Altars»

The oldest preserved Neapolitan  
bassoon known is an **octave**  
bassoon in four pieces by  
Cristofaro Custode (born  
ca.1768), compositions by  
Porpora, Perez, Anfossi,  
Cimarosa, for example, scored  
for *fagottino*



Neapolitan bassoon repertoire:  
**2 bassoon concerti, 2 sonatas,**  
chamber music and many  
virtuoso obligato parts in operas,  
oratorios and cantatas

## Conclusions

Neapolitan  
religious tradition  
involves the  
bassoon and has  
influences on  
performance  
practice.

Extraordinary use of  
the bassoon by  
Neapolitan  
composers must be  
profoundly  
researched and re-  
evaluated.

This research aims  
to provide a  
consistent picture  
of the rich  
Neapolitan wind  
instrument  
tradition,  
particularly for the  
bassoon, its music  
and use, providing  
further materials for  
research.

## Further information

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<https://www.historical-bassoon.ch>

<https://forschung.schola-cantorum-basiliensis.ch>



nw

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