

An Affective Guide to Ornamenting Handel's Opera Arias

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O Jennifer Farrell, 2019
Musical Examples or Eighteenth-Century Ornaments Appropriate for
Handel's Arias

The musical examples below are adapted from following sources:

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, ed. William J. Mitchell (London: Cassell and Company, 1951), 113, 127.

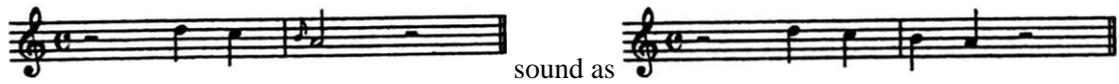
George Frideric Handel, *Rinaldo, and Rodelinda*, ed. Friedrich Chrysander, *The Works and 24*.
of George Frideric Handel 63 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1874 and 1876), 60

Johann David Heinichen, *Die vollkommene Cembellmeister*, ed. Ernest C. Hariss (Am Arbor, B.A.: Research Press, 1981), 274.

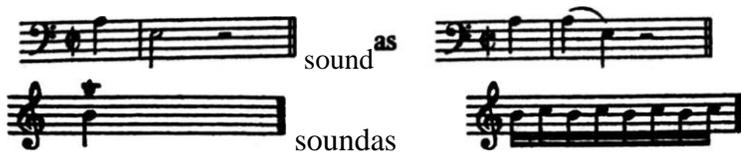
Fredrick Netmann, *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music: with Special Emphasis on J. S. Bach* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 181, 374, 376, 556.

Single Note Dissonances:

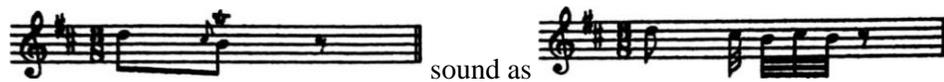
Appoggiatura:



Leaping Appoggiatura:

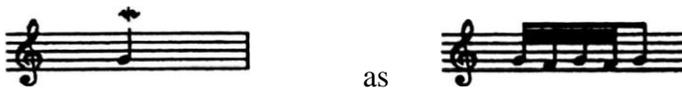


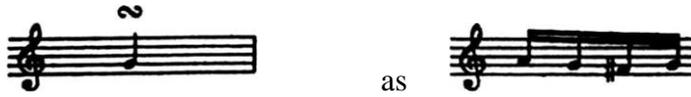
Appoggiatura-Trill Combination or Prepacked Trill:



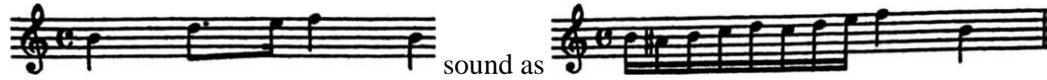
Fixed Ornament:

Mordent:



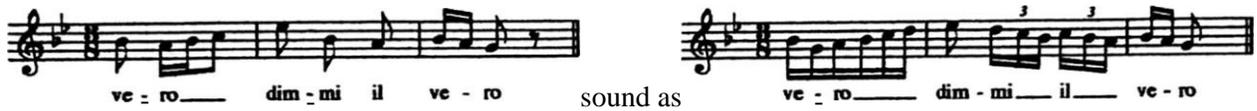


Groppo:



“Free” Ornaments:

Diminutions or Passaggi:



Cadenza:



An Affective Guide to Ornamenting Handel's Opera Arias- In Brief

In preparing ornamentation for the opera arias of George Frideric Handel, it is important to consider:

- That Handel preferred a modest approach to vocal embellishment.
- That musicians of the 18th century believed in the power of music to move the affections, or emotions, of their audience members.
- Consequently, that the musicians of the 18th century related specific elements of music, including ornaments, to specific affections. These associations are summarized in the following table.

<u>Category of Ornament</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Affective Purpose</u>
Single note dissonance	Appoggiatura	Sung at cadence points. Consists of the raising of the penultimate note by a tone where the voice drops a 2 nd or 3 rd to the tonic.	Arouses tenderness and melancholy.
Single note dissonance	Leaping Appoggiatura	Sung at cadence points. A repeat	Expresses something

		of the tonic where the voice drops a 4 ⁰ to the dominant.	sarcastic, obscure, audacious, or arrogant.
Single noted	Trill	Used mainly to decorate dominant harmony at cadences. Defined as a quick and unmeasured alternation between a main note and an upper auxiliary a tone or semitone above.	Principally to excite cheer and gaiety. In melancholy pieces it must be sung more slowly.
Fixed ornament	Mordent	An ornament performed a brief, trill-like alternation with a lower neighbor tone.	To excite cheer gaiety.
Fixed ornament	Tun	An ornament that decorates a main note with its upper lower neighbor tones. Usually performed on the beat	The affection it arouses depends on the speed at which it is performed. Expresses twisting and turning.
Free ornament	Passaggi or Diminutions	Passing notes of smaller durational values that fill in the gaps of an original melody. Considered an essential component of the singer's	Once again, the velocity at which are performed determines the affect they evoke.
Free ornament	In time Cadenza	Sung at points on the syllable preceding a trill. It should be sung in a single breath. and conclude with a trill over the dominant. It should borrow musical material from the aria proper.	A gay cadenza is formed by extended leaps, and Gills. A melancholy one consists of small intervals mingled with dissonances.
Free ornament	Out of time Cdenza	Sung at the repeat of the A-section of a da cap aria when the first word or words are completely unaccompanied.	Same as above.
Free ornament	Messa di voce	A swelling of the voice in a crescendo and decrescendo. It should be performed on sustained notes.	Is not associated with a specific affect, but is considered an essential component of the singer's