Introduction

The *Trio de M^r Charpentier* is an independent chamber *trio en rondeau* that I found in the Versailles Bibliothèque Muncipale in 1980 when I was studying the Versailles sources for the *comédies-ballets* of Molière, Lully, and Charpentier. It does not seem to have been associated with any of Charpentier's known stage works, and it is not listed in H. Wiley Hitchcock's *Les Œuvres de / The Works of / Marc-Antoine Charpentier: Catalogue raisonné* (Paris: Picard, 1982).

The source consists of three separate parts: *premier dessus* (G1), *second dessus* (C1) and *basse* (F4). The *dessus* (G1) part carries an incomplete key signature—the signature is missing the e♭. This omission has been interpreted as a copyist's error, as the *dessus* (C1) part carries canceling sharps on e" in mm. 14, 28, 29, and 30. Likewise viewed as an error is the repetition of the pickup notes b♭ - b♭ - e♭ found at the end of the last measure of the *basse* part, and which has not been reproduced in the present edition. The barring of the original has been retained in the present edition, even though it does not conform to modern practice.

There are no indications of instrumentation in the manuscript. It could be played by two violins and cello, two treble viols and bass viol, two flutes (*à bec* or *allemande*) and bassoon, or any such combination; the bass line could also be doubled by theorbo or harpsichord. The meter sign 3 designates a quick triple meter, such as 𝅗𝅥. = MM. 60.

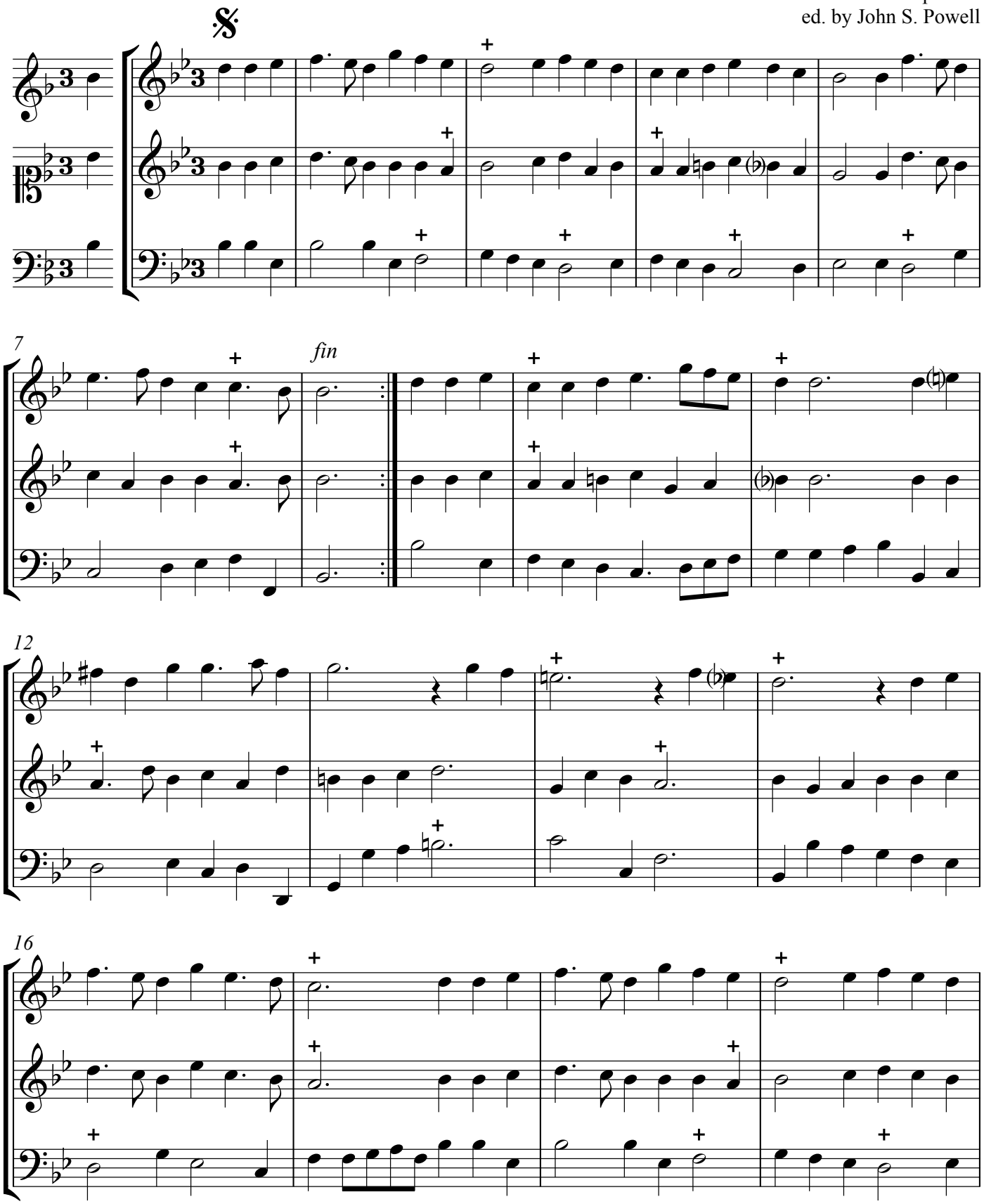
Comparison with Charpentier's stage works sheds light on the scheme of repetition for such rondeaux. On this point Charpentier is quite explicit, for in his autograph manuscripts he frequently specifies *Rondeau bis la premiere, seul la seconde, et bis la troisieme fois* ("Rondeau [i.e., refrain], twice at the beginning, once in the middle, and twice at the end"). In the case of the present trio repeat bars frame the first (and last) statement of the refrain, while the interior statement is written out. Consequently the formal scheme of the rondeau as performed should be: A-A-B-A-C-A-A.

Those wishing to perform this trio should contact me at john-powell@utulsa.edu, and I will be happy to send along the score and parts.

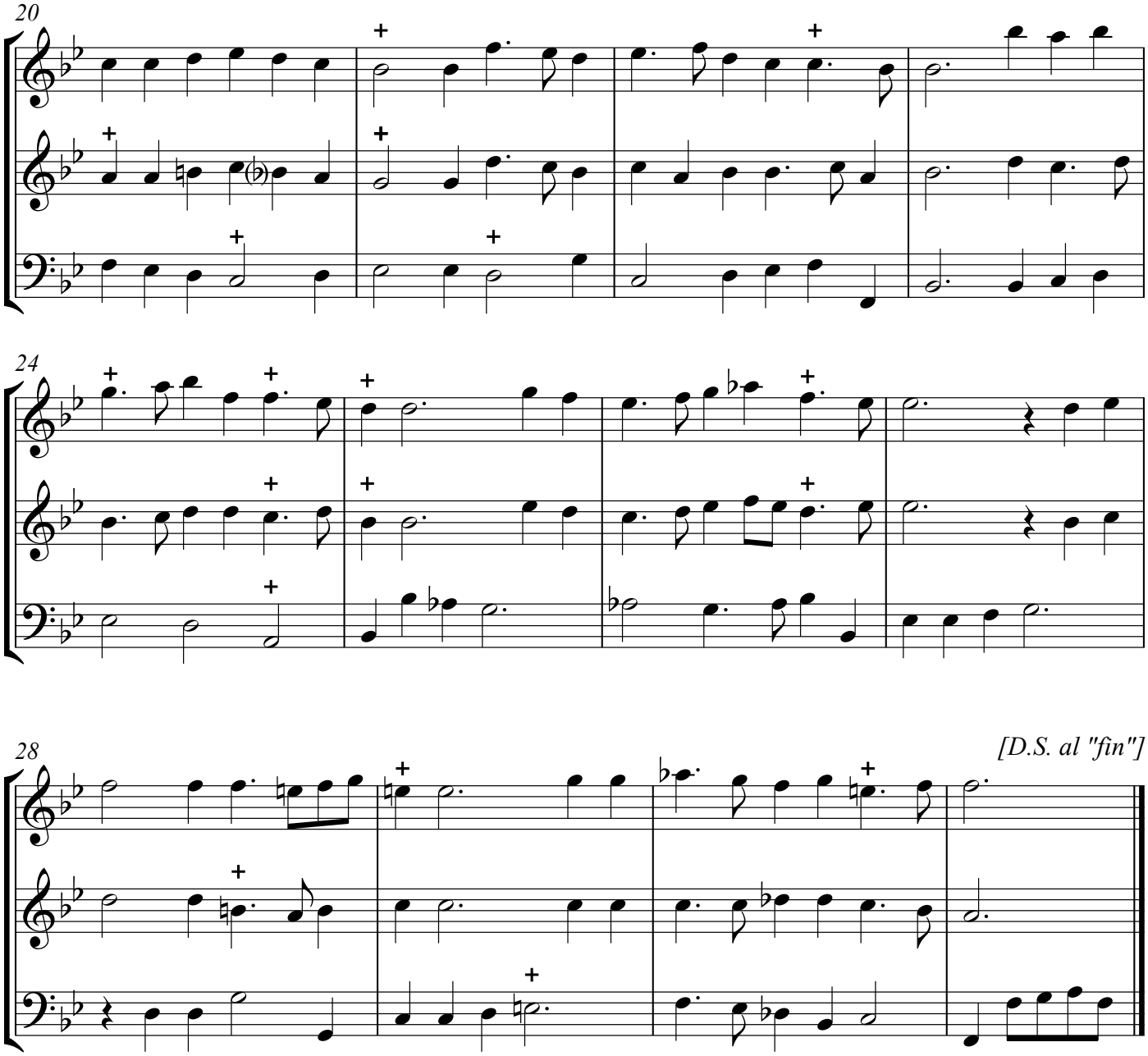
John S. Powell

Trio de Mr Charpentier

Marc-Antoine Charpentier
ed. by John S. Powell



Source: Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles, Ms. Mus. 139



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