

**IGOR PIRNAT POMYKALO**



**LIRE METHODS I**

**LIRA DA BRACCIO**

**ADDITION 2025**



**FONDAZIONE PIRNAT – POMYKALO BIRKFELD 2024**

IGOR PIRNAT POMÝKALO

AN ADDITION TO MY LIRE METHOD I,

LIRA DA BRACCIO SOPRANO

FONDAZIONE PIRNAT - POMÝKALO

BIRKFELD 2025

## AN ADDITION TO MY LIRE METHOD I, LIRA DA BRACCIO, 2025

Teaching the lira da braccio in practice in past two years and due to some reactions and questions, I decided to make an addition to my LIRE METHOD I, which will be available for free to all colleagues who already purchased it. The changes occur mostly in the first two levels, A. Beginners and B. Intermediate, where most examples are given in staff and tablature notation. For the third level, C. Advanced, I thought this was not necessary.

Some pieces in the B 2.4, CHOICE FROM MY OWN REPERTORY FOR SOPRANO LIRA, without tablature (same as most examples in the C.Advanced Level) are left in its original form, transposed a fifth higher with chords in capital letter added underneath, should give to you the possibility to remember the chords you already memorised working through the first two levels. As I have recommended, at least at the beginning, you should print several pages with basic or all chords I gave, to have them “at the hand” in the case of the necessity.

The “playability” of some chords will depend on the size of your instrument (the alto Liras made after few presumed originals or iconography could be particularly big) and of your hands i.e., fingers.

Sterling Scott Jones, in his book on the Lira da braccio<sup>1</sup> proposed version of tuning which has an interval of fourth (instead of fifth as found in MS Pesaro or by Lanfranco) between the highest two strings, following the Praetorius information. Even if the difference is not so significative (it is only the highest string where the tuning and fingering change) it affects the chords and melody flow. Some chords (using the highest three strings) are rather useful and easier to perform than similar ones from the MS Pesaro and some other must be changed if you have previously used this tuning.

As I have written, all information on Lira’s tuning are relatively late, some 40 to 70 years after this instrument experienced its most glorious days, in hands of most renown artists, humanists and musicians - in the case of Praetorius, even 150 years latter... But what we know for sure is that Lira developed directly from “*viola*” or late medieval version of Italian bowed instrument used to accompany one’s own singing or declamation. At least, medieval fiddle in one of its known tunings (given by Hieronymus de Moravia, in late 13<sup>th</sup> century...) used the interval of 4<sup>th</sup> between the first and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest strings. Also, at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Lira and lute have had the similar role in accompaniment of one’s own singing or declamation, some of the *cantori ad lyram* playing both instruments.

Therefore, this alternative tuning could be particularly useful for players of the medieval fiddle and gives also the possibility to choose for all others and particularly the beginners. For students who are accustomed on violin or viola tuning in fifths, this tuning will ask some time to feel completely comfortable.

Also, this tuning gives the greater possibility for using the vast lute repertory in reconstruction of (lost because improvised) Lira da braccio one.

In his book Jones gave an extensive collection of chords giving them in the first three positions, admitting that those in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> position are more academic than practical.

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<sup>1</sup> Sterling Scott Jones: *Lira da Braccio*, Indiana University Press, 1995.

I think, particularly at the end of its use, it is possible that some Lira da braccio virtuoso (who already played the early violin too) have been using the chords in higher positions, see as an example B. Marini's "*Capriccio*"<sup>2</sup>.

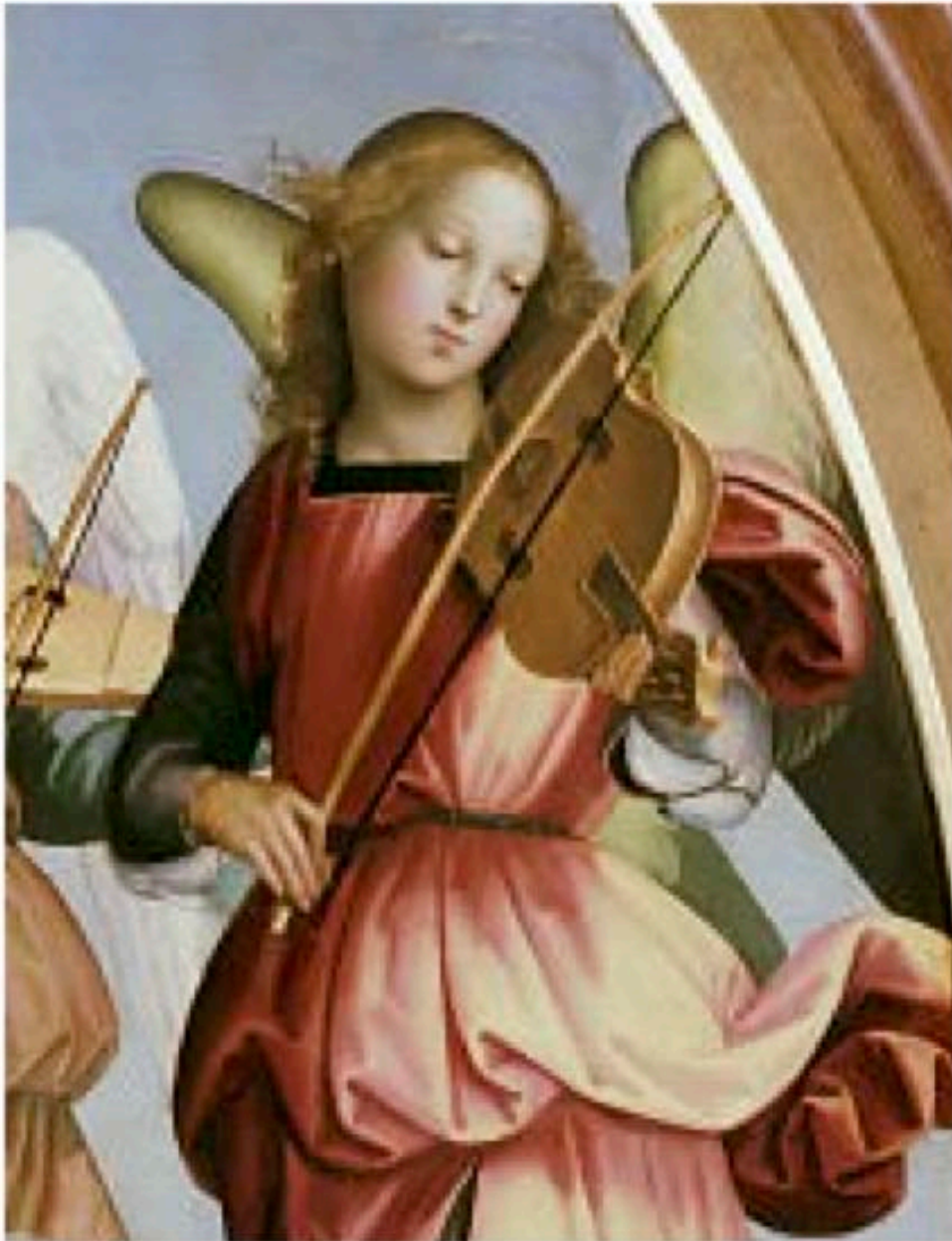
I decided not to add them but all of you interested can try to get hold of Jones excellent book (which exists in most libraries of conservatories or music universities and could still be purchased on Amazon or eBay) where there are also number of interesting music examples.

Igor Pirnat Pomykalo, Birkfeld, November-December 2025

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<sup>2</sup> Biaggio Marini (1594-1663): *Capriccio per sonare il violino con tre corde à modo di Lira*, Op.8, Venice 1626).

## A BEGINNERS LEVEL



## **LIRA METHOD I, Lira da braccio**

### **A BEGINNERS LEVEL:**

#### **Music Examples for Soprano Lira**

##### A 1 Beginners:

A 1.1 First Exercises:	p.1
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Exercises 2: no 23-32	p.4
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##### A 2 Beginners

A 2.1 Chord Exercises: major to minor Without and with using the highest E string	p.7, 8
A 2.2 Exercises with repertory Ingrata a-c	p.9 - 16

##### 3.Supporting Materials:

###### 3.1 S Lira Bank of Chords 1:

a.MS Pesaro (original), same by me with chords using the highest E string.	p.17
b.Chords used by me	p.18 - 20

###### 3.2 Homework:

###### Late 15<sup>th</sup> century Dances by:

1.D. da Piacenza: <i>Bel Reguardo</i> ,	p,21, 22
2.G. Ebreo: <i>Voltate in ça Rosina</i> ,	p.23, 24
3.G. Ebreo: <i>Spero</i> ,	p.25 - 27
4.G. Ebreo: <i>La Gelosia</i>	p.28, 29
5.D. da Piacenza <i>Pizochara</i> ,	p.30 - 32

###### 3.3 To make exercises: one empty page

p.33

## A 2

## Soprano Lira - Chord Exercises, A 2 Level

Tuning

1. Major - Minor Chords, without using the highest string E

1

1

G Gm C Cm D Dm A Am

0	1	$\flat 1$	2	2	3	3	$\sharp 2$	2
0	0	0	1	$\flat 1$	$\sharp 2$	2	1	1
0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
0	0	0	0	0	<i>T</i> 1	1 <i>T</i>	<i>T</i> 1	1 <i>T</i>
0					0	0		
0					0	0		

2.I - IV-I

11

E Em G C G C F C D G D

2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	1	3
2	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	$\sharp 2$	0	$\sharp 2$
1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
1	0	0	0	0	0		0	<i>T</i> 1	0	1 <i>T</i>
								0		0
								0		0

1/2 Pos.

3.I - V - I

22

22

G D G C G C D A D F C F

1	3	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	2	2	2
0	$\sharp 2$	0	1	0	1	$\sharp 2$	1	$\sharp 2$	2	1	2
0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1
0	1	0	0	0	0	<i>T</i> 1	<i>T</i> 1	<i>T</i> 1		0	
0						0		0			
0						0		0			

*T* = Thumb, *T*↑ = Thumb higher, small third

## A 3.2.5a Piacenza, Pizochara S or A Lira

3rd lower from original

[illegible]

4

3x 4x 5x

8



13

Musical notation for measure 13, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with a repeat sign at the end.

19

24

3x

28

S Lira

\* A Lira



**B SECOND LEVEL, INTERMEDIATE**



## **B SECOND LEVEL, INTERMEDIATE:**

Music Examples for Soprano Lira:	p.40
<u>B 1 Intermediate:</u>	p.43
B 1.1 Soprano Lira - Tuning and empty Staves & Tablature	p.43
B 1.2 Bank of Chords 2:	p.44
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b.My choice of S. Jones Chords, Lira da braccio Soprano	p.47 - 49
B 1.3 Chord Exercises:	p.50 - 52
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## **B 2.4 INTERMEDIATE LEVEL, CHOICE FROM MY OWN REPERTORY FOR SOPRANO LIRA<sup>1</sup>**

1a/b <sup>2</sup> Guglielmo Ebreo da Pesaro: dance "Spero"	p.54, 55
2a/b Domenico da Piacenza: dances "Giloxia" and "Pizzochara"	p.56 - 58
3a/b Anonimo (O. Thuz?), late 15th c.: "Dies est laetitiae"	p.59, 60
4a/b Franciscus Bossinensis: Ricercar and frottola "Haime per che mai privo"	p.61 - 65
5a/b F. Bossinensis: Ricercar and frottola "Se mai per maraveglia"	p.66 - 70
6a/b Serafino dall'Aquila: two Strambotti "Mentre uno acceso" and (as an Interlude) "Vivo sol di mirarti"	p.71 - 73
7.Joan Ambrosio Dalza: "Tastar de corde" 1, 2 and 3	p.74, 75
8a/b J.A.Dalza: Pavana, Piva and Saltarello <i>alla venetiana</i> II	p.76 - 79
10a/b Anonimo, Ms Pesaro: fragments for <i>Lira</i> "Romanesca" and "Passamezzo"	p.80 - 82
11.Anonimo, early 16th c.: Ten "Balli veneziani"	p.83 - 90

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<sup>1</sup> All pieces are transposed a 5th higher than the original version for Alto Lira, except for no. 7, 11 and 15 which remained unaltered.

<sup>2</sup> Letter *a* represents always chords alone and *b* the piece itself.

12a/ 13a Hans Newsiedler: Chords for "Gasenhawer" and "Ich gieng	p.91
12b H. Newsiedler: "Gasenhawer"	p.92, 93
13b H. Newsiedler: "Ich gieng"	p.94, 95
14a/b Orlando di Lasso: Four Villanelle: "Sto core mio", "S' io ve dico", "Ogni Giorno" and "Ecco la nymph' ebraica"	p.96 – 100
15a/b Anonimo, Naples: "Catalina"	p.101 - 105
16a/b Anonimo, Naples: villanella "Stanotte m'insonnava"	p.106 - 109
17a-c Ludwig Senfl: oda "Iam satis terris"	p.110 - 113

**B 2.4 INTERMEDIATE LEVEL,  
CHOICE FROM MY OWN REPERTORY FOR SOPRANO LIRA**



B 2.4.1a S Lira, Sterling Tuning: 1.Chords for G. Ebreo da Pesaro: dance "Spero"

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system shows a melody in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The melody begins with a first finger (1) on the G string. The bass line consists of a series of octaves (0) and a few notes. The second system shows the chord progression for the piece. The chords are G, Gm, Gm, C, C, Dm, and Am. The fretting for each chord is indicated by numbers 0-3 and accidentals (b) on the strings. The strings are numbered 1 to 5 from top to bottom. The fretting for G is 1 on string 1, 0 on strings 2-5. The fretting for Gm is b1 on string 1, 0 on strings 2-5. The fretting for C is 3 on string 1, 2 on string 2, 1 on string 3, 0 on strings 4-5. The fretting for Dm is 3 on string 1, 0 on string 2, T on string 3, T on string 4, 0 on string 5. The fretting for Am is 2 on string 1, 1 on string 2, T on string 3, 1 on string 4, 0 on string 5.

Chord	String 1	String 2	String 3	String 4	String 5
G	1	0	0	0	0
Gm	b1	0	0	0	0
Gm	b1	0	0	0	0
C	3	2	1	0	0
C	3	2	1	0	0
Dm	3	0	T	T	0
Am	2	1	T	1	0

B 2.4.1b Guglielmo Ebreo da Pesaro: "Spero"

1

G — C G — D — C Gm — C — G —

7

D Am G D G — D — G — D — G —

13

G — D — G — D Am G D G — G D G —

19

G — D \* G —

25

C — G — D \*

31

G — G — Am — G — D — G — D — G —

37

G — C D — Am G — D — G — G — D — G —

B 2.4.10a Anonimo, Ms Pesaro: Chords for fragments "Romanesca" and "Passamezzo" S

a. "Romanesca"                      b. "Passamezzo"

The image displays a musical score for two fragments, 'Romanesca' and 'Passamezzo'. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) showing the melody and accompaniment. The bottom staff shows the chord progression and fingerings for the right hand. The chords are labeled D, G, and A, and the fingerings are indicated by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 0 (open string).

Fragment	Chord	Fingering (Right Hand)
a. "Romanesca"	D	1, 2, 3, 4, 0
	G	1, 2, 3, 4, 0
	A	1, 2, 3, 4, 0
b. "Passamezzo"	D	1, 2, 3, 4, 0
	G	1, 2, 3, 4, 0
	A	1, 2, 3, 4, 0

B 2.4.10b "Romanesca", S Lira (original)

First system of musical notation (measures 1-6) and corresponding fretboard diagrams.

The first system shows measures 1 through 6. The musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 7/4 time. The fretboard diagrams below each measure show fingerings (0-3) for the right hand and left hand. Measure 1 starts with a 7-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 2 has a 3-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 3 has a 4-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 4 has a 5-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 5 has a 6-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 6 has a 7-measure rest for the right hand.

Second system of musical notation (measures 7-12) and corresponding fretboard diagrams.

The second system shows measures 7 through 12. The musical notation continues in G major and 7/4 time. The fretboard diagrams show fingerings for the right hand and left hand. Measure 7 starts with a 7-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 8 has a 3-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 9 has a 4-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 10 has a 5-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 11 has a 6-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 12 has a 7-measure rest for the right hand.

Third system of musical notation (measures 13-18) and corresponding fretboard diagrams.

The third system shows measures 13 through 18. The musical notation continues in G major and 7/4 time. The fretboard diagrams show fingerings for the right hand and left hand. Measure 13 starts with a 7-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 14 has a 3-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 15 has a 4-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 16 has a 5-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 17 has a 6-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 18 has a 7-measure rest for the right hand.

Fourth system of musical notation (measures 19-24) and corresponding fretboard diagrams.

The fourth system shows measures 19 through 24. The musical notation continues in G major and 7/4 time. The fretboard diagrams show fingerings for the right hand and left hand. Measure 19 starts with a 7-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 20 has a 3-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 21 has a 4-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 22 has a 5-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 23 has a 6-measure rest for the right hand. Measure 24 has a 7-measure rest for the right hand.



B 2.4.12a/13a Hans Newsiedler: Chords for "Gasenhawer" and "Ich gieng" S

a."Gasenhawer"

b."Ich gieng"

7 # 7

D C F A 4 3 Am

# 2 0 0

3 2 1

4 2 2

3 # 2 1 1

B 2.4.13b H. Newsiedler: "Ich gieng", S

First system of musical notation. The treble and bass staves are in 3/4 time. The melody consists of eighth notes. The bass line consists of half notes. The system ends with a repeat sign.

Fingering and pizzicato notation for the first system. The treble staff has a 3-fingered chord (3, 0, 0) and a 2-fingered chord (2, 2, 2, 2, 2). The bass staff has a 0-fingered chord (0, 1, 2, 2, 2). The system ends with a repeat sign.

Second system of musical notation. The treble and bass staves are in 3/4 time. The melody consists of eighth notes. The bass line consists of half notes. The system ends with a repeat sign.

Fingering and pizzicato notation for the second system. The treble staff has a 5-fingered chord (5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4) and a 3-fingered chord (3, 3, 3, 3, 3). The bass staff has a 2-fingered chord (2, 2, 2, 2, 2) and a 0-fingered chord (0, 2, 2, 2, 2). The system ends with a repeat sign.

Third system of musical notation. The treble and bass staves are in 3/4 time. The melody consists of eighth notes. The bass line consists of half notes. The system ends with a repeat sign.

Fingering and pizzicato notation for the third system. The treble staff has a 9-fingered chord (9, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4) and a 3-fingered chord (3, 3, 3, 3, 3). The bass staff has a 2-fingered chord (2, 2, 2, 2, 2) and a 0-fingered chord (0, 2, 3, 2, 1, 0). The system ends with a repeat sign.

B 2.4.16a Anonimo, Naples: Chords for “Stanotte m’insonnava” S

## a.Intro

[illegible]

## b.Song

9

D/Dm Dm A4 3 Am Em G

0 2 3 2 3 3  
 0 0 1 2 2 2  
 0 0 1 1 1 0  
 T T  
 0 0 0  
 0 0 0

pizz. pizz. arco

B 2.4.17b Igor Pomykalo, Lira da braccio intro for Senfl, "Iam satis" S Lira

9

15

19

24

29

35

40

43

46

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