

# Arias for Francesco Benucci

Mozart's First Figaro and Guglielmo

Edited by Dorothea Link

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# Introduction

"The buffo is particularly good. His name is Benucci."<sup>1</sup> With these words, penned a few days after the inauguration of the Italian opera buffa company in Vienna in 1783, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart sized up the singer who was to create Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* in 1786 and Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* in 1790 and to sing the first Viennese Leporello in *Don Giovanni* in 1788.<sup>2</sup> Mozart also wrote for him and Luisa Laschi Mombelli the duet "Per quelle tue manine" (K. 540b) for the Viennese production of *Don Giovanni*, the aria "Rivolgete a me lo sguardo" (K. 584) originally intended for *Così fan tutte*, and parts in a trio and quartet for the character Bocconio in the opera fragment *Lo sposo deluso*.

The present volume of arias for Francesco Benucci (ca. 1745–1824) was compiled to serve as the basis for generating a vocal profile for one of Mozart's most valued singers. It follows along the lines established in *Arias for Nancy Storace, Mozart's First Susanna*; the interested reader may wish to refer to some of the commentary there.<sup>3</sup> All twelve arias in this volume are based on contemporary scores, allowing today's singers to experience the kind of arrangements that eighteenth-century performers and opera lovers played and sang. Two arias date from Benucci's early career in Italy. The remaining ten represent some of his most distinguished roles in Vienna. Nine arias are known to have been composed for Benucci; the remaining three were sung by and probably composed for him. No. 7 involves chorus and no. 2 requires three brief interjections by a tenor. Orchestral scores exist for all arias and are identified in the critical notes.

A native of Livorno, Francesco Benucci began his career in that city in about 1768, the year for which we have the first record of his singing. We lose all trace of him between spring 1769 and autumn 1777, but from then on his career can be followed more or less season by season through the major opera houses in Italy. At Easter 1783 he was engaged for the court theater in Vienna, where he stayed, except for two short leaves of absence (one to Rome in 1783–84 and the other to London in 1789) until 1795, probably the end of carnival. By autumn of 1795 he was once again singing in Italy, returning to Livorno in 1797. He seemed to have stopped performing after 1800.

Benucci was the mainstay of the opera buffa company in Vienna, not just by virtue of being the *primo buffo*, but also by his tenure of twelve years there. His importance

to the company was registered right from the beginning, when Emperor Joseph made the continued existence of the company dependent on whether Benucci and Nancy Storace renewed their contracts. Five weeks after the inauguration of the opera buffa company, on 2 June 1783, Joseph sent a memorandum to his theater director, Count Franz Orsini Rosenberg: "Since it appears to me that the singer Benucci finds favor with the public, I would like you to try to convince him to stay until Easter and then for one year further; if he agrees to this in a new contract, and if Storace, who also is liked by the public, stays, then you can keep the best from among the rest of the troupe; if Benucci and Storace do not stay, then the others need not be kept on."<sup>4</sup>

Benucci agreed to stay but left temporarily in November for Rome, where he had been previously engaged to sing during carnival.<sup>5</sup> His enormous popularity with the Roman public was witnessed by Joseph, who was traveling in Italy. "Benucci had an astonishing success in Rome. . . . I think that I will send you a score of the opera in which Benucci sang and of which, in the meantime, I am sending you the libretto."<sup>6</sup>

In September 1786 Storace submitted her resignation in order to accept an offer from the King's Theatre in London.<sup>7</sup> Joseph wrote to Rosenberg: "As for Storace, if we cannot keep her here, which is what I would like, we will at least definitely have to engage her for the 1788 season, when she will return with Coltellini, but never to the detriment of Benucci, since that man is worth more than two Storaces."<sup>8</sup> That final remark was probably more an expression of irritation with Storace for leaving than a measured opinion, for the salary figures for that year reveal that Benucci was actually being paid less than Storace. Whereas Storace and Benucci had received identical salaries in 1784–85 and 1785–86, in 1786–87 Storace's salary went up from 4071 gulden to 4500 gulden, while Benucci's increased to only 4185 gulden. It is not clear why this difference came about, but it may have had to do with the appointment that year of the tenor Domenico Mombelli at 4500 gulden. That figure became the new ceiling, reached again by Storace's successors Celeste Coltellini and Laschi Mombelli in 1788–89 and probably also later by Adriana Ferrarese del Bene<sup>9</sup> and eventually by Benucci in 1793–94.<sup>10</sup>

In August of 1788, embroiled in a war with Turkey, Joseph decided to dissolve the opera buffa company. He returned to Vienna in December, stricken with his fatal

illness and weighed down with insurmountable problems of state. He was nonetheless sufficiently interested in Benucci's fate to recommend him to his brother Leopold in Florence.<sup>11</sup> In the end, Joseph was persuaded to retain the opera buffa, and Benucci was able to stay. Benucci meanwhile had obtained an engagement in London, for which he obtained a leave of absence of several months.<sup>12</sup>

As attested by many sources, Benucci was a superb actor as well as a fine singer. The *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung*, in 1793, describes Benucci at the peak of his career.

*Benucci*, one of the premier buffos in *opera buffa*, combines unaffected, excellent acting with an exceptionally round, beautiful, and full bass voice. He is as much a complete singer as a choice actor. He has a rare habit that few Italian singers share: *he never exaggerates*. Even when he brings his acting to the highest extremes, he maintains propriety and secure limits, which hold him back from absurd, vulgar comedy.<sup>13</sup> I liked him particularly in the opera *Il matrimonio segreto*. He acts and sings the role of the Count in a masterly fashion. I wouldn't have believed that, in spite of being a comedian, he nonetheless still manages to portray Axur by [Antonio] Salieri in a rather serious manner.<sup>14</sup>

More will be said below about the latter role, a most unusual one for Benucci, in connection with aria no. 11. Benucci's celebrated role of Conte Robinson in *Il matrimonio segreto* is not represented in this volume since his two solo numbers, a *cavatina con pertichini* and an *aria con pertichino*, involve extensive participation of other singers.<sup>15</sup>

Giambattista Casti describes Benucci in these terms: "... rich vocal timbre, most excellent singer: the most graceful buffo known to me, without vulgarity and poor taste, but with elegance and intelligence."<sup>16</sup> Benucci's dignified stage manner was also singled out by the anonymous writer of a pamphlet printed in 1790: "In the Italian [opera] company there is only Benucci—previously there was [also] Mandini—who knows how to elevate the plot with his acting and singing. If he had Fischer's voice, then he would be peerless."<sup>17</sup> Ludwig Fischer was the unforgettable bass who had sung in the court theater's singspiel company until its dissolution in 1783 and who created the role of Osmin in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.

Benucci's acting skills manifested themselves strikingly early on in his appointment in Vienna. Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais's play *Le Barbier de Séville* had been in the repertory of the spoken theater company seven years before Giovanni Paisiello's musical setting of it as *Il barbiere di Siviglia* was given its premiere on 13 August 1783. In the play Friedrich Ludwig Schröder, the foremost German actor of the time, played Bartolo, the same role that Benucci was to sing in the opera. Joseph wrote delightedly after the premiere: "Benucci . . . in certain moments copied Schröder almost to the hair."<sup>18</sup> Benucci could have observed Schröder only once, in a performance on 2 August 1783.

While Benucci was acclaimed on stage, he rarely gave concerts, even though benefit concerts could be ex-

tremely lucrative. He is known to have given only one for himself, in Lent 1785, although he was almost certainly entitled to one each year, the same as the *prima donna*.<sup>19</sup> Where stage action was involved, however, as in the pasticcio operas *L'ape musicale* (1789) and *L'ape musicale rinnuovata* (1791), assembled and mounted by the librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte in lieu of individual benefit concerts for the singers during those two Lenten seasons, his participation could be counted on.

In the spring of 1789 Benucci joined Nancy Storace in London, where she and her brother had procured an engagement for him at the King's Theatre.<sup>20</sup> Given his great popularity in Vienna and Rome, Benucci's lack of success with the public in London must have come as a complete surprise. The reason had less to do with Benucci than with Giovanni Morelli, who had established himself as a favorite with London audiences the previous year. The *Morning Post* greeted Benucci's debut as Conte Zeffiro in Giuseppe Gazzaniga's *La vendemmia*, a role he had already sung in 1778, with these comments: "Benucci, the new buffo, possesses a tolerable person, a very good voice, and considerable judgment. His voice is, however, not so good as Morelli's, nor has he so much humour as that performer, but Benucci is more of a gentleman, and is a better musician. It is, however, not proper to decide upon the merits of Benucci at first, particularly as his fame in Italy is very great."<sup>21</sup> Giovanni Andrea Gallini, the manager of the opera house, reported to Lord Cowper, Morelli's patron in Florence: "The taste at present here, runs more in favour of strong Base voices, than a finer or clearer sort. For instance, Benucci did not please much yet Morelli and Taschi [Tasca] succeeded."<sup>22</sup> When Charles Burney first heard Morelli, he found him to be better than Tasca: "Giovanni Morelli has a base voice of nearly the same force and compass as Tasca's, but infinitely more flexible and pleasing. He is likewise a good actor."<sup>23</sup> While Burney judged the entire singer, for London audiences, it seems, the possession of a big voice outweighed all other considerations. By a curious coincidence, we also have Joseph's comparison of the two singers, made when he was in Rome in 1784: "I found here a buffo who sings bass called Morelli, who has an excellent voice, much louder still than Benucci's; this talent is combined with that of a being a very good actor."<sup>24</sup>

The usual point of departure for discussions about Benucci's voice is the revealing detail Michael Kelly includes in his anecdote about Mozart rehearsing *Le nozze di Figaro*: "... and when Benucci came to the fine passage 'Cherubino, alla vittoria, alla gloria militar' which he gave out with Stentorian lungs, the effect was electricity itself."<sup>25</sup> The passage to which he is referring is marked by the upward leap from c' to e' (see example 1). Daniel Heartz calls attention to a similar moment in Guglielmo's second-act aria "Donne mie, la fate a tanti" at the words "[Mille volte il brando presi] per salvar il vostro onor," where the voice vaults upwards from c' to e' in measures 65–66, followed by an attack on e' in measure 67 (see example 2).<sup>26</sup> Benucci was given an even stronger version of this gesture in the "ringing triadic cadences . . . which repeatedly carried him to f#"<sup>27</sup> for the words "eroine di

costanza" in the aria "Rivolgete a lui lo sguardo," K. 584, which Mozart wrote for *Così fan tutte* but then discarded (see example 3).<sup>28</sup> Salieri, too, provided for Benucci's distinctive notes in the arias he wrote for him in *La grotta di Trofonio* and *Axur*, as will be shown below.

Julian Rushton's ground-breaking study of the relationship between individual voices, voice types, and compositional choices explores a largely overlooked aspect of character analysis in opera.<sup>29</sup> Part of his argument involves developing a methodology for analyzing singers' voices from the music written for them, and Benucci's voice figures prominently among those he examines. Rushton's main conclusion states that range, tessitura, and key can function rhetorically for a composer like Mozart. A singer like Benucci was capable of singing in both a higher and lower tessitura, corresponding to the baritone and bass ranges, which effectively gave the composer two voice types from which to choose. Mozart used a lower tessitura to characterize lower-class characters (Leporello) and to portray low spirits (Figaro, second section of his duet with Susanna "Se a caso madama") and a higher tessitura for the upper classes (Guglielmo) and high spirits (Figaro, first section of "Se a caso madama").<sup>30</sup>

Rushton goes on to observe that for artistic or practical reasons Mozart sometimes avoided exploiting the full potentialities of a singer's voice and instead wrote for a voice type. A good example exists in Masetto's "Ho capito," the one-octave range of which is not calculated to show off any particular singer's voice but rather is used as a means of characterization. I would suggest that far more arias in late-eighteenth-century operas were written for voice types than we tend to assume. Probably only first-rank singers had their arias tailored to their voices and even here one wonders whether some singers did not sometimes conform to a voice type. The *basso buffo* voice, with its emphasis on acting rather than singing, might be such a voice type, judging from the arias in the present volume. Paisiello's arias for Benucci

in *Il re Teodoro in Venezia*, for example, have less of an individualistic stamp (vocally, not compositionally) than Salieri's. Perhaps composers with international careers wrote more to formula than court composers like Salieri, who was more responsive to the circumstances of a specific commission and to singers with whom he worked on a more or less daily basis for years.

Rushton also emphasizes that range becomes meaningful only when considered together with tessitura. The three low male roles in *Don Giovanni* have historically been cast with great freedom—Giovanni as a tenor, baritone, and bass, for example—despite the fact that the intended voice types can be read from their music.<sup>31</sup> While all three roles can comfortably handle the range c to e', they vary significantly in their extension downwards. Masetto descends to G, Leporello (sung by Benucci) to F, and Giovanni only to c, once in an ensemble to B♭. In the present volume Benucci's arias fairly consistently go as high as e' or eb'; nos. 6, 7, and 10 go to f', and no. 2 goes to g'. Bottom notes lie between d and B♭, with arias nos. 4, 5, and 7 dropping as low as G.

In selecting the arias for this volume, I focused primarily on the roles known to have been created by Benucci (see the roles marked with an asterisk in the appendix to the introduction) and looked for arias that in some way constituted Benucci's best. I followed up comments made by Count Karl von Zinzendorf in his diaries as well as the annotations made by Salieri in the autographs to his operas. I took note of an opera's popularity, since Benucci's performance often directly contributed to it. The quality of the music counted for something. And I seized on an aria published in vocal score by Artaria (no. 12). The existence of this publication points to a big difference between choosing arias for Benucci and doing the same for Nancy Storace. So many of Storace's arias were sold in commercial arrangements that the existence of "favorite airs" became the main criterion for determining which arias best presented her singing. This was not the case for Benucci, for although we know that many of his arias were celebrated hits for him, very few were disseminated in commercial arrangements. Almost all the arias in vocal score that I found for him exist as parts of complete operas.

One explanation can perhaps be found in the music itself. Buffo arias tend to be long and sprawling and rely for their effect chiefly on comic delivery. Favorite numbers, however, tend to be lyrical and short. For her reception history of *Una cosa rara* by Vicente Martín y Soler, Christine Martin compiled a list of over 320 editions and manuscript copies of both the complete opera and numbers from it, in all scorings and arrangements.<sup>32</sup> She found that, except for the buffo-style duet "Un briccone senza core," neither the buffo numbers nor the seria arias were widely disseminated, confirming the claim I made in my dissertation that the public strongly favored "song-style" pieces for its own music-making.<sup>33</sup> To take two specific cases from Vienna, Artaria published seventeen numbers from the opera's approximate thirty but did not include either of Benucci's arias.<sup>34</sup> Johann Nepomuk Went arranged almost the entire opera for *Harmoniemusik*,

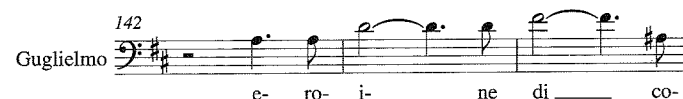
Example 1. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Non più andrai," from *Le nozze di Figaro*, measures 93–95



Example 2. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Donne mie, le fate a tanti," from *Così fan tutte*, measures 65–68



Example 3. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Rivolgete a lui lo sguardo," K. 584, for *Così fan tutte*, measures 142–44



finales and all, omitting only Benucci's two arias, two tenor buffo arias, one duet, and the septet.<sup>35</sup>

Another explanation for the small number of vocal editions of Benucci's arias may lie in the nature of the market. Zinzendorf's diaries indicate that domestic music-making among the aristocracy, at least in Vienna, was largely the preserve of women. Just how far this held true for the other classes is hard to say. Notably, some of the arias that make up this volume were found in editions in which the vocal part was transposed up an octave and notated in the soprano clefs C1 or G2, namely Taddeo's aria (no. 4) from *Il re Teodoro in Venezia* in a collection of arias published by Johann Michael Götz, Tita's aria (no. 10) from *Una cosa rara* in the Simrock vocal edition, Axur's aria (no. 11) from *Axur, re d'Ormus* in the Simrock and Rudolphus editions, and Rusticone's aria (no. 12) from *La cifra*, published by Artaria.

A few words need to be said about the sources of casting information. Benucci's roles in Italy are relatively easy to find where a libretto survives, but the same is not true for Vienna. Because the court opera followed a repertory system, the names of the singers were printed neither in the librettos nor on the theater posters. The casting information that does survive is sparse and often unreliable. The most trustworthy source is Zinzendorf, whose diaries record his almost nightly visits to the theater.<sup>36</sup> While he rarely gives complete cast lists, his testimony is sometimes all we have and at other times decisive in evaluating casting information from less reliable sources. Very problematic, for example, are the cast lists written at the end of the overture or on the back of the title page in scores, as are the cast lists penciled in next to the *Personaggi* in a number of librettos. We do not know who made the lists and for what purpose, and in several instances the lists cannot be taken at face value.<sup>37</sup> For example, the performance score (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, KT 182) of Sarti's *Le gelosie villane*, given its first Viennese performance on 17 September 1783, contains a cast list at the end of the *Introduzione*, with the heading "in Vienna," giving the following roles and singers: Marchese = Bugnetti poi Calvesi, Giannina = Storace, Olivetta = Lang, Sandrina = Teyber, Cecchio = Benucci, Narduccio = Kelly, Tognino = Busani, Mengone = Saal. This list cannot refer to the premiere, as Otto Michtner assumes, conveniently omitting the problematic phrase "poi Calvesi" (then Calvesi).<sup>38</sup> Since it gives in the roles of Marchese first Bugnetti, who left the company at Easter 1785, and then Calvesi, who joined the company at Easter 1785, the list must have been written sometime about Easter 1785 when the coming season was being planned. As it turned out, the opera was not performed in the 1785–86 season, indeed, not again until 1793, so Calvesi could never have sung in it with the singers listed in the cast. The other singers, however, could have sung in all of the opera's twenty-five performances in the 1783–84 and 1784–85 seasons, except for Benucci, who was away in Rome for the performances on 21, 24, and 26 November and 19 December 1783 as well as 19 January and 6 February 1784.

## The Arias and the Roles

Benucci began his career singing *buffo caricato* (character comic) roles, a type of buffo role that cultivates a humor based on antics and clowning.<sup>39</sup> The *buffo caricato* was developed most notably by the librettist Carlo Goldoni in collaboration with the composer Baldassare Galuppi and the singer Francesco Carattoli in the 1740s and 1750s. Although specific to this singer and certain others, the *buffo caricato* tradition became deeply ingrained in opera buffa generally and persisted in later comic opera through its aria types. Examples of the kinds of arias *caricati* typically sing include those that express opposing thoughts or that address two people alternately, catalog arias, and arias involving counting. Although not a definitive list in any sense, these three aria types account for a surprisingly large number of buffo arias. Among the present twelve arias for Benucci, seven fit one or more of the three types. The arias that address two people alternately are represented by nos. 1, 2, and 9. Catalogs are present in nos. 1, 3, 6, and 10. Counting occurs in no. 9. Nos. 1 and 9, it will be noticed, combine categories. No. 12 uses a voluminous quantity of words as a device to obscure meaning, in this way not dissimilar to the cumulative effect achieved by the piling up of words in the catalog aria.

The remaining five arias that do not fit the three categories have peculiarly Viennese histories. The words to these arias were composed by poets who were not primarily librettists. The first of these was Casti, who wrote the texts for four of the arias: two (nos. 4 and 5) in *Il re Teodoro in Venezia*, set to music by Paisiello, and two (nos. 7 and 8) in *La grotta di Trofonio* by Salieri. Casti was a political satirist who wrote in verse, a genre that allowed him either to hide or to underline his meaning through the use of allegory, literary references, and other poetic conventions. The two librettos were special projects for him, undertaken to please Joseph, from whom Casti may have hoped to receive an appointment as court poet, a position vacant since Metastasio's death in 1782.<sup>40</sup> Casti observed fewer Goldonian conventions than a professional librettist would have done. *La grotta di Trofonio*, in particular, is overtly literary; it is "unique in the repertory in having scholarly footnotes explaining the various classical references in the text."<sup>41</sup>

The other poet was Beaumarchais, a French playwright who, in an exceptional collaboration between a writer and a composer, wrote a venturesome libretto for Salieri in Paris.<sup>42</sup> *Tarare*, a predominantly serious drama written on the eve of the French Revolution, is heavily charged with political overtones. The story focuses on the figure of a king who, overwhelmed by his evil actions and the turn of events against him, succumbs to the inevitable by taking his own life. When Da Ponte and Salieri adapted the French opera for the opera buffa company in Vienna, they found that mere translation would not do and ended up rewriting the opera and retitling it *Axur, re d'Ormus*. Despite a large infusion of Italian features into the opera, it retained many of the dramatic and musical conventions of the French original. Beau-



marchais's earlier comedy *La Folle journée, ou Le Mariage de Figaro*, by comparison, had been relatively easy for Da Ponte to convert into the libretto *Le nozze di Figaro*, because Beaumarchais had consciously incorporated into his play many elements of the Italian *commedia dell'arte*.<sup>43</sup>

Buffo aria texts, such as those involving alternating conversations, catalogs, and counting, display standard poetic features that allow the composer to respond with corresponding musical features.<sup>44</sup> Buffo aria texts are lengthy and often involve a change of poetic meter, which translates musically into multi-sectional forms that have an overall acceleration to the end. Text tends to be set syllabically. The vocal line can be monotone or disjunct and often includes octave leaps for comic effect. What lyricism there is, is generally found in the orchestra in the form of short motifs that repeat throughout a section, but even these are more rhythmic than melodic. The melodic line of the vocal part is usually organized in two-measure phrases, each phrase containing one line of verse. The characteristic buffo patter is achieved by compressing the text setting of one line of verse from two measures to one, which can be further escalated by using shorter note values.<sup>45</sup> The present volume's seven arias with *caricato* buffo texts are written in this style. So are the two arias from *Il re Teodoro*, for despite the somewhat unorthodox libretto, Paisiello composed the two aria texts for the *primo buffo* as conventional buffo arias.

Salieri, by contrast, dealt with his somewhat unorthodox libretto by Casti with greater freedom, calling upon his experience with French opera. In this, he was preceded by Christoph Willibald Gluck, whose effective blend of French and Italian elements came to represent the official style of the Viennese court. His legacy, carried on by Salieri, can be seen in the more flexible formal structures, the prominent role accorded to the orchestra, and the expressive, wide-ranging harmonies that characterize Benucci's two arias in *La grotta di Trofonio*. Benucci's music in *Axur*, not surprisingly, also manifests French features: the aria included here, although composed in the heroic style, observes the brevity of a French air.

## The Selections

An asterisk indicates an aria written specifically for Benucci.

1. \*Domenico Cimarosa, "Lei comandi, signorina," aria in *Il pittore parigino*: Benucci created the role of Baron Cricca in Rome on 2 January 1781 and performed it again in Milan in 1782. Benucci sang this aria in Vienna at a private concert given by the British ambassador Sir Robert Keith on 1 July 1783.<sup>46</sup> He may very well have sung the role in Vienna when the opera was performed there on 18 May 1785, but no casting information survives to confirm this.<sup>47</sup>

Baron Cricca is a comic role that relies on the well-worn antics of the *commedia dell'arte*. For example, the Baron has a hole cut in his portrait so that he can spy on his rival Crotignac and his intended bride Eurilla. A would-be aristocrat from the country, his boorishness

keeps betraying him, as when he falls asleep while Eurilla reads to him from a play she has written. This aria fits into the alternating-conversations category, as Cricca speaks alternately to Crotignac and Eurilla. Musically the aria displays the full panoply of buffo features: the patter, repeated words ("no"), repeated phrases, repeated sections, and comic octave leaps. When Cricca addresses Eurilla, he assumes the style of the lover with more lyrical lines and self-conscious ornaments.<sup>48</sup>

2. \*Giuseppe Sarti, "La sposerò, signore," aria in *Fra i due litiganti il terzo gode*: Benucci created the role of Titta in Milan in 1782 and resumed it in Vienna in 1783. He sang this aria in both productions. An aria *con pertichino* involving three brief interjections by the Count, it contains a fair amount of dramatic action. Titta is promoting his marriage to Dorina with the Count, while in the background his rival Mingone is making threatening gestures. Titta repeatedly interrupts his conversation with the Count to chase Mingone away or to ask the Count to chase him away. The alternating conversations with their contrasting moods furnish the buffo with a superb opportunity to demonstrate his acting skills.

3. Giuseppe Sarti, "Quando saprai chi sono," substitute aria added to the 1783 production of his *Fra i due litiganti il terzo gode* in Vienna: Several weeks into the opera's production in Vienna, Benucci replaced the aria originally written for him "Dunque aspettate" with the present one. It seems to have made quite an effect, as Zinzendorf notes in his diary on 21 July 1783: "Benucci sang a huge aria in which he was the hired assassin, the dancer and the [male] soprano."<sup>49</sup> It is a type of catalog aria in which Titta gives a dramatic presentation of his employment history to the woman he is wooing. The aria begins with an address to her, is followed by a series of contrasting sections in which he describes his former occupations, and closes with an envoi directed at the women in the audience.

The aria contains an intriguing quotation from another Sarti aria, "Mia speranza io pur vorrei."<sup>50</sup> The latter, in the form of a *rondò*, occurs in Sarti's opera seria *Achille in Sciro*, which he wrote for Florence in the autumn of 1779. The castrato Luigi Marchesi, who created the title role, sang the *rondò* to great acclaim. He repeated his success during carnival of 1780 in Milan, where he inserted it into Joseph Myslivecek's opera seria *Armida*. The quotation from the *rondò* is substantial enough to be recognized by anyone with even a passing acquaintance with it. Sarti quotes two passages from the *rondò*, the first at measures 82–94 and the second at 95–104.<sup>51</sup> He sets up the quotation by having the *basso buffo* explain how he once went with a famous *musico* (castrato) as far as London and how he learned to sing, whereupon he gives a demonstration with the *rondò*. The *musico* could have been none other than Marchesi, who did eventually, in 1788, travel to London. One can imagine that Sarti composed the buffo aria in a city where the public had recently come to adore Marchesi in the *rondò* in order to provide his buffo, possibly Benucci, with an opportunity to imitate the famous castrato.<sup>52</sup> The joke would have been largely lost on the

Viennese audience of 1783 who had not yet heard Marchesi, but Benucci seems to have thought the aria was effective nonetheless. Perhaps he changed his voice in some way for the quoted passages.

4. \*Giovanni Paisiello, "Che ne dice tu, Taddeo," aria in *Il re Teodoro in Venezia*: This opera was commissioned from Paisiello as he passed through Vienna on his way from St. Petersburg to Naples. Casti, who happened to be in Vienna, was entrusted with the libretto. He produced a comic opera laced with biting political satire, the chief target of which was the king of Sweden, represented in the figure of King Teodoro. This was an important opera for Vienna, both because it is the only opera that Paisiello wrote for that city and because Casti created a distinctively serious brand of comic libretto that Da Ponte imitated and that eventually helped to define the peculiarly Viennese style of comic opera cultivated under Joseph II.

In this aria Taddeo, the innkeeper, considers whether Teodoro is indeed a king and finally decides that he is as much a king as the kings in a deck of cards. Paisiello sets the text as a typical buffo aria, with short melodic phrases repeated both verbatim and sequentially and with frequent repetition of words. He makes much of the exclamation "Who the devil is he?" in repeated passages of buffo patter.<sup>53</sup> Zinzendorf reports that at the premiere: "Benucci had to repeat his aria in scene 6."<sup>54</sup>

5. \*Giovanni Paisiello, "Per onor farsi ammazzare," aria in *Il re Teodoro in Venezia*: Caught up in Teodoro's visions of the future for him, Taddeo marvels that he, a mere innkeeper, could lead armies and die for honor, then reconciles himself to his fate as a general, and finally takes imaginary leave of his present life. Paisiello set the three topics of the text in three contrasting musical sections, freely repeating the second to provide a fourth, concluding section. The reiteration of the military affect permits a repeated vigorous cadence that peaks on a ringing e'.

6. \*Stephen Storace, "O che tempo depravato (alla Figaro Mongolfier Malbrug)," aria in *Gli sposi malcontenti*: The phrase "alla Figaro Mongolfier Malbrug" in the title of Lorenz Lausch's vocal score calls attention to the textual and musical references in the aria. When Rosmondo berates his son for his new wife's expenditures on clothes, he recites a list of the latest fashions, which include attire in the styles of Figaro, Mongolfier, and "Malbrucco" (spelling in the libretto). Figaro is the protagonist in Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais' plays *Le Barbier de Séville* (1773, performed 1775) and its sequel *La Folle journée, ou Le Mariage de Figaro* (1778, performed 1784). Joseph-Michel Mongolfier and his brother Etienne pioneered in balloon flight, launching a successful manned ascent in 1783. John Churchill, the first duke of Marlborough, led several victorious campaigns against the armies of Louis XIV, including the Battle of Blenheim in Bavaria in 1704. The name of the duke was kept alive in a popular song entitled "Malbroug s'en va-t-en guerre," also known in the English-speaking world as "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." The tune is quoted in full in the aria by Storace in measures 66–76 at the words "[She wants to] adorn herself in the style of Malbrucco, wants feathers on her head." The song was evidently

widely quoted. Beaumarchais incorporated it with new words into his play *La Folle journée*.<sup>55</sup> Paisiello has Madame Perlina sing two strophes of the song, in French, in the first-act finale of *La modista raggiratrice* (Naples, 1787).<sup>56</sup> Beethoven quotes the song to represent the French in "Wellington's Victory" of 1813.<sup>57</sup>

7. \*Antonio Salieri, "Spirti invisibili," aria in *La grotta di Trofonio*: In Trofonio, Benucci was taxed with creating a role somewhat out of the ordinary for him. A sorcerer in the garb of a philosopher,<sup>58</sup> Trofonio practices black magic; with it he conjures up demons and puts spells on his neighbors. He makes his first appearance in an imposing *scena* that follows in the tradition of supernatural scenes in serious opera. A sinister mood is created in the long opening ritornello by means of remote harmonies and striking orchestral effects.<sup>59</sup> In the descriptive notes appended to the autograph score, Salieri wrote: "The aria 'Spirti invisibili,' with chorus at the end, is purely magic; and it seems to me that the music has the right character. But for it to have effect the voice that sings it must be of great power, and dark [*tenebrosa*]."<sup>60</sup> Unusual though the aria is for Benucci, Salieri clearly had him in mind when he composed it. The vocal line throughout, but especially at the beginning, requires a steady, forceful delivery. The melody abounds with striding triads, shifts between high and low register, and sustained high notes. Benucci's trademark electrifying burst of sound is already called for in measures 26–29 in the leap from d' to f'. Salieri did not underestimate his singer; Zinzendorf reports "Benucci acquitted himself marvelously in the sorcerer's invocation."<sup>61</sup>

8. \*Antonio Salieri, "Questo magico abituro," aria in *La grotta di Trofonio*: This aria is the beginning of what would have been a large aria had it not been broken off by the arrival of the women.<sup>62</sup> Salieri wrote of this aria that it was "only a little energetic piece to break up the delicate things that surround it; it produces a nice chiaroscuro."<sup>63</sup> As in the previous aria, Salieri gave Benucci broad vocal lines with strong triadic motion and alternation between high and low registers. Benucci's signature trumpet-call figure can be seen in measures 21–22 in the ascending triad f#–a–d', where the top note is held and swelled. A few measures later, at measures 32–33, Benucci again vaults upward from b to e'. Since he did not have to sustain this intensive singing for long, Benucci could sing out full force. Zinzendorf noted the impression it made by adding "Scene 18" to his previous comment thus: "Benucci acquitted himself marvelously in the sorcerer's invocation. Scene 18." The present aria is found in scene 18 of act 2.

9. Giovanni Paisiello, "Quattro via quattro," aria in *Le gare generose*: As explained in the critical notes, this is a substitute aria replacing one that for twenty-two measures began the same way. The aria was apparently added to the opera in Vienna for Benucci, but it is not clear how Paisiello in Naples came to write it. Zinzendorf enjoyed the opera, noting once "lovely music by Paisiello" and another time "played marvellously," but he says nothing specifically about Benucci.<sup>64</sup> The aria is a typically energetic buffo aria, employing both counting and alternating conversations in its text and the standard buffo features in the music.

10. \*Vicente Martín y Soler, "Ah mal aya a quella mano," aria in *Una cosa rara*: This opera was tremendously popular in Vienna. Few operas contained as many numbers to become hits. Martín's facility for writing beautiful melodies accounted for much of the opera's popularity, but lyricism has little place in buffo arias. Whether he was dissatisfied with the two arias Martín had written for him or whether he simply wanted to sing something new to mark his reappearance in Vienna, when Benucci resumed the role of Tita after returning from London in 1789, he replaced his original arias with others.<sup>65</sup> In the present aria, one of the originals, an angry husband splutters with outrage in two languages and colorfully repetitive text. He ends with an envoi to all battered husbands in the audience. The music features breathless, short phrases and angry patter.<sup>66</sup>

11. \*Antonio Salieri, "Tu fa che intanto uniscasi," aria in *Axur, re d'Ormus*: From the sorcerer Trofonio to the despot Axur marks another step in Salieri's demands on Benucci, for not only is Axur a serious character but the opera, despite its comic features, is also serious in tone and plot.<sup>67</sup> Like the French original of which it is a reworking (see the discussion above), *Axur, re d'Ormus* is organized in large scene complexes with far fewer independent numbers than normally found in Italian opera. Axur does not have any large-scale arias, although he dominates the opera and participates in numerous ensembles and scene complexes. The present short aria, however, is representative of his music overall. As befitting a king, the piece is set as a march with trumpets and drums in the orchestra and dotted rhythms and triadic figures in the melody. Dramatic octave leaps at once characterize Axur and cater to Benucci's voice. His celebrated thrust to the top is provided for with the ascending line that climaxes on e' in measures 41–42.<sup>68</sup>

In his annotations to the autograph of the score, Salieri describes Axur as

a ferocious man, without scruples. He will be dressed *alla turca*, if desired. The costume must be splendid, but with a combination of colors that serves as much as possible to characterize a tyrant.<sup>69</sup>

The aria "Tu fa che intanto uniscasi" has majestic and proud gestures that suit the character who sings them. The passage with the piano dynamics in the orchestra to the words "Gli auguri informa, e poi," which should be sung in a secretive manner, constitutes the musical chiaroscuro of the piece and, it seems to me, effectively reinforces the political meaning of the text.<sup>70</sup>

12. \*Salieri, "L'anno mille settecento," aria in *La cifra*: In 1789 Salieri and Da Ponte expanded Salieri's intermezzo *La dama pastorella*, written for Rome in 1780, into the full-length opera *La cifra*. In returning to his earlier work Salieri re-subscribed to the conventions of opera buffa.<sup>71</sup> The text of this aria is impressively long and convoluted, made even more so by its free repetition in the last third of the aria. The aria gradually accelerates in rhythmic activity, ending in a great flourish of patter singing.<sup>72</sup> Although the surviving sources do not allow us to make an exact comparison between the intermezzo and the opera to see what was reused and what was newly composed, it is fairly certain that this aria was reused, for the text is in the libretto of *La dama pastorella* and the music is missing from the fragmentary autograph of the intermezzo, suggesting that Salieri transferred it to the opera.<sup>73</sup> Whether Salieri made any changes to the aria to accommodate Benucci is difficult to ascertain at the present time, although the clarion repeated E's in the cadential phrases seem to suggest so.

## Appendix

The following sigla are used for sources in table 1:

Angermüller	Rudolph Angermüller. "Francesco Benucci: Mozarts erster Figaro und Guglielmo." <i>Mitteilungen der Internationalen Stiftung Mozarteum</i> 46 (1998): 4–18.
A-Wn	Vienna. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
Deutsch	Otto Erich Deutsch. <i>Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens</i> . Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1961.
Kelly	<i>Reminiscences of Michael Kelly</i> . Edited by Theodore Hook. 2 vols. London, 1826.
Link	Dorothea Link. <i>The National Court Theatre in Mozart's Vienna: Sources and Documents, 1783–1792</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

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*The Librettos of Mozart's Operas*. Vol. 2, *The Works for Munich and Vienna*. Edited by Ernest Warburton. New York: Garland, 1992.

Charles Beecher Hogan, ed. *The London Stage, 1600–1800: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments and Afterpieces . . . Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries*. Part 5, 1776–1800. 3 vols. Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968.

*Mozart's Thematic Catalogue: A Facsimile, British Library, Stefan Zweig MS 63*. Introduction and transcription by Albi Rosenthal and Alan Tyson. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990.

Pirani	Francesco Pirani. "L'opera buffa tra Roma e Vienna al tempo di Giuseppe II: Cantanti e Repertori." In <i>Mozart, Padova e "La betulia liberata,"</i> edited by Paolo Pinamonti, 407-17. Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1991.	University of Virginia Library Catalog VIRGO < <a href="http://www.lib.virginia.edu/">http://www.lib.virginia.edu/</a> >.
Rice	John Rice. "Emperor and Impresario: Leopold II and the Transformation of Musical Theater, 1790-1792" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1987).	Sartori Claudio Sartori. <i>I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origine al 1800</i> . 7 vols. Milan: Bertola and Locatelli, 1990-94.
RISM on-line	Répertoire International des Sources Musicales. RISM-U.S. Libretto Database. Internet access via RISM Online < <a href="http://www.rism.harvard.edu/rism">http://www.rism.harvard.edu/rism</a> > accessed 5 July 2002; now available through the	Siniscalchi Marina Maymone Siniscalchi. <i>L'ape musicale di Lorenzo Da Ponte</i> . Rome: Il Ventaglio, 1988.
		US-Wc Washington, D.C. Library of Congress. Music Division.
		WZ <i>Wiener Zeitung</i> .
		Zinzendorf Diary of Count Karl von Zinzendorf, partly transcribed in Link (see above).

TABLE 1  
Francesco Benucci's Roles

City	Year	Date	Composer: Title	Role <sup>1</sup>	References
Livorno	1768	spring spring	Baldassare Galuppi: <i>Il filosofo di campagna</i> Florian Gassmann: <i>Gli uccellatori</i>	Don Tritemio Toniolo	Sartori Sartori; composer from Angermüller, 4
Florence	1769	spring	Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi: <i>Il ratto della sposa</i>	Polidoro	Sartori
Bologna	1777	autumn	Pasquale Anfossi: <i>Il zotico incivilito</i>	Canziano	Sartori
	1778	carnival	Anfossi: <i>L'avaro</i> Giovanni Paisiello: <i>La frascatana</i> Giuseppe Amendola: <i>La schiava fedele</i> Giuseppe Gazzaniga: <i>La vendemmia</i> Anfossi: <i>L'americana in Olanda</i>	Orgasmo Don Fabrizio Nargum Conte Zeffiro *Mons. Naimur Quacquero *Frasconio	Sartori Sartori Sartori Sartori Sartori; RISM on-line
Genoa		summer	Giuseppe Sarti: <i>I contrattempi</i>		
Venice		autumn			
	1779	November carnival	Tommaso Traetta, completed by Gennaro Astarita: <i>Gli eroi de' Campi Elisi</i> Galuppi: <i>L'inimico delle donne</i> Astarita: <i>Il francese bizzarro</i> Sarti: <i>Le gelosie villane</i> Gazzaniga: <i>La vendemmia</i>	*Serse	Sartori
Milan		spring		Geminiano *Gasperone	Sartori Sartori
Monza		fiera di S. Giovanni <sup>2</sup>		Cecchino Conte Zeffiro	Sartori Sartori
Turin		autumn	Astarita: <i>Il francese bizzarro</i> Domenico Cimarosa: <i>L'italiana in Londra</i> Anfossi: <i>Il matrimonio per inganno</i> Sarti: <i>Il militare bizzarro</i>	Gasperone Don Polidoro Don Fabrizio Pulipodio	Sartori Sartori Sartori Sartori
Florence	1780	carnival	Paisiello: <i>La frascatana</i> Cimarosa: <i>L'italiana in Londra</i>	Fabrizio Polidoro	Sartori Sartori
Milan		autumn	Giacomo Rust: <i>Gli antiquari in Palmira</i>	*Fabrizio	Sartori; RISM on-line
Rome	1781	Jan. 2 carnival	Cimarosa: <i>Il pittore parigino</i> Giuseppe Giordani: <i>Gl'inganni scambievoli</i> Giuseppe Curci[o]: <i>I matrimoni per sorpresa</i> Giovanni Valentini: <i>Le nozze in contrasto</i> Cimarosa: <i>L'italiana in Londra</i>	*Barone Cricca *Gianfriso *Conte Vislingh Astolfo Don Polidoro	Sartori Sartori Sartori Sartori Sartori
Livorno		spring			
Florence		autumn			
Rome	1782	carnival	Cimarosa: <i>L'amor costante</i>	Marchese di Fiumesecco	Pirani, 410 n. 7
Monza		autumn	Angelo Tarchi: <i>Le avventure di Don Falloppio</i> Valentini, et al.: <i>Le sorelle rivali</i>	*Don Falloppio Geronimo	Sartori Sartori; RISM on-line
Milan		autumn Sept. 14	Cimarosa: <i>Il pittore parigino</i> Sarti: <i>Fra i due litiganti il terzo gode</i>	Barone Cricca *Titta	Sartori Sartori
Rome	1783	carnival	Cimarosa: <i>I due baroni di Rocca Azzurra</i> Tarchi: <i>Il guerriero immaginario</i>	*Don Demofonte *Don Pascozio Pascariello Blasio	Sartori Sartori
Vienna		Apr. 22	Antonio Salieri: <i>La scuola de' gelosi</i>		score A-Wn, KT 410

TABLE 1 continued  
Francesco Benucci's Roles

City	Year	Date	Composer: Title	Role <sup>1</sup>	References
Rome	1784	May 5	Cimarosa: <i>L'italiana in Londra</i>	role unknown	Zinzendorf (see Link, 205), says only that he sang <sup>3</sup>
		May 28	Sarti: <i>Fra i due litiganti</i>	Titta	A-Wn, Mus Hs 17888; Zinzendorf (see Link, 205–6)
		July 25	Cimarosa: <i>Il falegname</i>	Sozio	score A-Wn, KT 141
		Aug. 13	Paisiello: <i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Bartolo	Zinzendorf (see Link, 210)
		Sept. 17	Sarti: <i>Le gelosie villane</i>	Cecchino	score A-Wn, KT 182
		carnival	Cimarosa: <i>I matrimoni impensati</i>	Don Tolipano	Sartori
		—	P. A. Guglielmi, <i>Le vicende d'amore</i>	*Conte Caramella	Sartori <sup>4</sup>
			Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: <i>Lo sposo deluso</i> (incomplete)	*Bocconio	"Attori" in libretto (reproduced in LMO, 246)
			Felice Alessandri: <i>Il vecchio geloso</i>	Timoteo	libretto TB 641432-AM XII/9; WZ 1784, p. 1032
		Aug. 23	Paisiello: <i>Il re Teodoro in Venezia</i>	*Taddeo	libretto A-Wn, TB 641432-AM IX/7; Kelly, 1:240
Vienna	1784	Sept. 24	Cimarosa: <i>Giannina e Bernardone</i>	unknown role	theater poster for 20 September 1784 states only that Benucci sang (Link, 48)
	1785	Apr. 6	Paisiello: <i>La contadina di spirito</i> [Il matrimonio inaspettato]	Marchese Tulipano	score A-Wn, KT91
		Apr. 27	Vincenzo Righini: <i>L'incontro inaspettato</i>	*Barone Don Procolo	libretto A-Wn, TB 641432-AM VIII/9
		June 1	Stephen Storace: <i>Gli sposi malcontenti</i>	*Rosmondo	libretto A-Wn, TB 641432-AM XV/1
		Oct. 12	Salieri: <i>La grotta di Trofonio</i>	*Trofonio	Zinzendorf (see Link, 254–56)
	1786	Jan. 4	Vicente Martín y Soler: <i>Il burbero di buon cuore</i>	*?Ferramondo	Zinzendorf (see Link, 262) reports only that Benucci sang. Confirmation of his singing the role of Ferramondo comes only for the opera's revival on 9 November 1789; see Link, 345 n. 236.
		Feb. 7	Salieri: <i>Prima la musica, poi le parole</i>	*Maestro	Zinzendorf (see Link, 263–64); score A-Wn, Mus Hs 17814
		Mar. 26	Paisiello: <i>La serva padrona</i> , private performance at Prince Auersperg's	Uberto	Zinzendorf (see Link, 268)
		May 1	Mozart: <i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	*Figaro	libretto US-Wc (facsimile in LMO); MTC; Kelly 1:259
		June 4	Sarti: <i>Miserere</i>	Pierotto Bastiano	Zinzendorf (see Link, 274)
		Aug. 1	Sarti: <i>I finti eredi</i>		score A-Wn, KT 160
		Sept. 1	Paisiello: <i>Le gare generose</i>	*Tita	libretto A-Wn, TB 641432-AM XIII/3
		Nov. 17	Martín y Soler: <i>Una cosa rara</i>	*bass	score A-Wn, Mus Hs 17794
		Dec. 22, 23	Anton Teyber: <i>Gioas</i>		Deutsch, 246
London	1788	Jan. 8	Salieri: <i>Axur, re d'Ormus</i>	*Axur	libretto A-Wn, TB 641432-AM XVII/2
		May 7	Mozart: <i>Don Giovanni</i>	Leporello	MTC
	1789	Feb. 27	pasticcio: <i>L'ape musicale</i>	*Bonario	Sartori; facsimile of libretto in Siniscalchi
	1790	May 9	Gazzaniga: <i>La vendemmia</i>	Conte Zeffiro	Sartori
		May 28	Niccolò Piccinni: <i>La buona figliuola</i>	[role unknown]	<i>The Times</i> , 27 May 1789
		June 11	Paisiello: <i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Bartolo	LS
	1791	Dec. 11	Salieri: <i>La cifra</i>	*Rusticone	score A-Wn, Mus Hs 16514 (see the critical notes)
		Jan. 26	Mozart: <i>Così fan tutte</i>	*Guglielmo	MTC
	1791	May 24	P. A. Guglielmi: <i>La pastorella nobile</i>	Don Polidoro	The cast list in A-Wn, KT 338 gives Bussani in the role of Don Polidoro, but Artaria's selections from the opera, published as <i>Racolta d'Arie</i> No. 77, indicate that Don Polidoro was sung by Benucci; see Rice, 178 n. 36.
		Mar. 23	pasticcio: <i>L'ape musicale rinnovata</i>	Bonario	facsimile of libretto in Siniscalchi

TABLE 1 continued  
Francesco Benucci's Roles

City	Year	Date	Composer: Title	Role <sup>1</sup>	References
	1792	Feb. 7	Cimarosa: <i>Il matrimonio segreto</i>	*Conte Robinson	score A-Wn, OA 207 before it was mutilated <sup>5</sup>
Milan	1795	autumn	Anfossi: <i>Gli artigiani</i>	Bernardo	Sartori; RISM on-line
		Oct. 10	Sarti: <i>Fra i due litiganti il terzo gode</i> Tarchi: <i>L'impostura poco dura</i>	Titta *Conte Caramella /Picariglio	RISM on-line Sartori; RISM on-line
Rome	1796	carnival	Silvestro Palma: <i>L'anello incantato</i>	Sosio	Sartori
			Cimarosa: <i>I nemici generosi</i>	*Grufo Papera	Sartori
Livorno	1797	carnival	Martín y Soler: <i>La capricciosa corretta</i>	Bonario	Sartori
			Salieri: <i>La scuola de' gelosi</i>	Blasio	Sartori
	1800	carnival	Sebastiano Nasolini: <i>Il medico de' bagni</i>	Dottore de' Bagni	RISM on-line
			Rinaldo Benucci: <i>Furberia e puntiglio</i>	Guglielmo	Sartori
			P. A. Guglielmi: <i>La pescatrice</i>	D. Alfonso	Sartori
			R. Benucci: <i>Le tre orfanelle</i>	Scoglio Orgasmo	Sartori

1. Asterisks indicate roles written specifically for Benucci.

2. The church calendar dedicates feast days to several saints named John. The most popular was St. John the Baptist, whose feast is celebrated on 24 June. That of St John the Evangelist is celebrated on 27 December. The other feast days for St. Johns fall on 31 January, 2 April, 16 May, and 11 June.

3. The cast given by Otto Michtner, *Das alte Burgtheater als Opernbühne von der Einführung des deutschen Singspiels (1778) bis zum Tod Kaiser Leopolds II. (1792)* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1970), 386 n. 13, is open to question. On the basis of examining the music, he decided that the *primo buffo* role Milord Arispinghe had to have been sung by Benucci. When Benucci had previously appeared in the opera (in Turin 1779 and Florence 1781), though, he had sung Polidoro, while Francesco Bussani had created the role of Arispinghe for the premiere in Rome in 1778. Singers did, however, sometimes sing more than one role in an opera over the course of their careers.

4. Joseph II reported hearing Benucci in this opera in Rome on 31 December 1783 and was so pleased with Benucci's performance that he had a copy of the score sent to Vienna. It is curious then that Benucci did not sing in the opera when it was performed there on 16 June 1784. Both the libretto (A-Wn, TB 641432-AM IX/10) and score (A-Wn, Mus Hs 17791) contain identical cast lists giving Stefano Mandini in the role of Conte Caramella.

5. The cast was presumably written on the missing half-page immediately before the second finale that has recently been torn out of the score. This act of vandalism occurred sometime after Rice examined the score for he still saw the cast list and transcribed it in "Emperor and Impresario," 183–84. He also corroborates some of the casting with information from other sources.

## Notes

1. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart to his father, 7 May 1783, in the translation from John Rice, *Antonio Salieri and Viennese Opera* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 341.

2. That Mozart may have had a Viennese production in mind when he wrote *Don Giovanni* for Prague has been frequently noted; see, for example, Julian Rushton, "Buffo Roles in Mozart's Vienna: Tessitura and Tonality as Signs of Characterization," in *Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna*, ed. Mary Hunter and James Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 407.

3. *Arias for Nancy Storace, Mozart's First Susanna*, ed. Dorothea Link, Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era, vol. 66 (Middleton, Wis.: A-R Editions, 2002). This may be an opportunity to make good an omission in that volume. Peter Branscombe has identified the "traditional Scottish melody" that underlies aria no. 11 as "The Yellow Hair'd Laddie" by Allan Ramsay, in *The Vocal Melodies of Scotland*, ed. Finlay Dun and John Thomson (Edinburgh: Paterson & Sons, n.d.), 98–99.

4. "Da Ich vernehme, daß der Sänger Benuci dem Publikum gefällt, so werden Sie trachten, denselben zu bereden, daß er sich bis Ostern, und dann noch weiters auf ein Jahr engagiere; läßt er sich dazu in einem neuen Kontrakt ein, und bleibet die

Storraci, die ebenfalls vielen Beifall findet, auch noch künftiges Theatral=jahr auf der Wiener Schaubühne, dann können Sie auch von den übrigen Subjecten der Truppe die besten beybehalten, bleibt aber Benuci und Storraci nicht, dann sind auch die übrigen nicht beyzubehalten." Rudolph Payer von Thurn, ed., *Joseph II. als Theaterdirektor: Ungedruckte Briefe und Aktenstücke aus den Kinderjahren des Burgtheaters* (Vienna: Leopold Heidrich, 1920), 32.

5. Benucci's final performance in Vienna was on 12 November 1783, and his first performance upon his return was on 7 May 1784 (*Wiener Zeitung*, 1784, p. 1032). The account books show that he was paid from 1 March to 30 November 1783 and then again as of 1 March 1784 (Dorothea Link, *The National Court Theatre in Mozart's Vienna: Sources and Documents 1783–1792* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998], 214 n. 24).

6. Joseph to Count Rosenberg, Caserta, 31 December 1783: "Benucci a un succès etonnant à Rome. . . Je crois que je pourrai vous envoyer un Spartito d'une piece dans la quelle Benucci a chanté et dont je vous envoie en attendant le livret. [Written in the margin: *Le vicende d'amore*]." Payer von Thurn, *Joseph II. als Theaterdirektor*, 38–39.

7. Her brother Stephen Storace had procured for her a contract with the King's Theatre, Haymarket. See Curtis Price,

"Mozart, the Storaces and Opera in London 1787–1790," in *Europa im Zeitalter Mozarts*, ed. Mortiz Csáky and Walter Pass (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1995), 210.

8. Joseph to Count Rosenberg, 29 September 1786: "Quant à la Storace, si on ne peut la conserver, ce que je desirerois, il faudroit au moins l'engager bien sûrement pour l'année 1788, ou elle reviendrait avec la Coltellini, mais jamais au detriment de Bennucci, puisque cet homme vaut plus que deux Storaces." Payer von Thurn, *Joseph II. als Theaterdirektor*, 70.

9. The account books for the two full years that she was in Vienna are missing. The 2700 gulden she received for the last six months of the 1788–89 theater year cannot be doubled to arrive at a full year's salary, for singers were paid proportionately more for a partial year than for a full year.

10. Bennucci may have received the increase in salary already the previous year, for which the account book is missing.

11. Joseph to Leopold, 18 December 1788: "Bennucci, whom you know and who has to leave here at the end of carnival owing to the closure of the opera buffa company, earnestly asked me to make you aware of the situation. In all fairness to him I have to avow that during his six years here his conduct has been entirely above reproach" (Bennucci que vous connaissez, partant d'ici à la fin de ce carnaval, tout l'opéra buffa cessant, m'a instamment prié de vous envoyer ce petit mémoire. Je lui dois la justice qu'il s'est pendant six ans parfaitement bien conduit ici). Alfred Ritter von Arneth, ed., *Joseph II und Leopold von Toscana: Ihr Briefwechsel von 1781 bis 1790*, 2 vols. (Vienna, 1872), 2:214.

This letter was followed by another on 15 January 1789: "I thank you for your favorable response to Bennucci; I have let him know, and I do not at all doubt that he accepts your graciousness with gratitude" (Je vous remercie de la réponse favorable que vous avez donnée pour Bennucci; je la lui a fait savoir, et je ne doute point qu'il accepte vos grâces avec reconnaissance). *Ibid.*, 2:219.

12. His final performance in Vienna was on 14 March 1789 in *L'ape musicale* (Link, *National Court Theatre*, 139), and his return performance was on 15 September 1789 in *Una cosa rara* (*ibid.*, 340).

13. The translation to this point is taken partly from Rice, *Salieri*, 341; and partly from Daniel Hertz, *Mozart's Operas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 243.

14. "Italienische Theatermusik in Wien," *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung*, 1793, pp. 138–39. The complete version of this usually partially quoted passage can be found in John Rice, "Emperor and Impresario: Leopold II and the Transformation of Viennese Musical Theater, 1790–1792" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1987), 442: "Bennucci, einer der ersten Buffon in der *Op. Buffa*, vereinigt mit seinem ungezwungenen vortrefflichen Spiel eine äußerst runde, schöne, volle Baßstimme. Er ist ein ebenso vollkommener Sänger als er ein trefflicher Schauspieler ist. Er hat die seltene, so löbliche Gewohnheit, die wenigen italien. Buffons eigen ist: daß er nichts übertreibt. Wenn er auch sein Spiel bis auf den äussersten Grad treibt, so behält er doch immer eine Anständigkeit und gewisse Schranken bei, die ihn von dem absurden Pöbelhaft-Komischen zurückhalten. Vorzüglich hat er mir gefallen in der Oper *il matrimonio segreto*. Die Rolle des Grafen spielt und singt er meisterhaft. Ich hätte nicht geglaubt, daß er Axur von Salieri, trotz dem, daß er ein Komiker ist, doch noch ziemlich ernsthaft spielt."

15. The 1870 Ricordi edition calls "Senza, senza cerimonia" a *cavatina con pertichini* and "Son lunatico, bilioso" an *aria con pertichino*, while the 1915 Universal edition calls the former a sextet and the latter a duet.

16. Giambattista Casti to Prince Joseph Kaunitz, Milan, 27 November 1782, as cited in Alessandra Campana, "Mozart's Italian Buffo Singers," *Early Music* 19 (1991), 583 n. 2: "... gran metallo di voce, buonissimo cantante: il più grazioso buffone che io conosca, ma senza bassezza e indecenza, ma con grazia e intelligenza." Pierpaolo Polzonetti, of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, cautions me that the first phrase "gran

metallo di voce" might also be translated as "great metallic voice," which carries an entirely different meaning.

17. "Bei der italienische Gesellschaft ist der einzige Bennucci, sonst war es Mandini, der durch Spiel und Gesang die Handlung zu erhaben weiß. Hätte er Fischers Stimme, dann wäre er ohne keines Gleichen." *Grundsätze zur Theaterkritik, über Einsicht, Sprache und Spiel in Menschenhaß und Reue* (Vienna, 1790; Vienna, Stadt- und Landesbibliothek, 5341 A).

18. Joseph to Count Rosenberg, 14 August 1783: "... surtout Bennucci qui dans des certains moments a copié et presque frisé Schröder." Payer von Thurn, *Joseph II. als Theaterdirektor*, 55.

19. Bennucci did, however, sometimes accept invitations from the nobility to sing at private concerts.

20. In London Bennucci sang in *La vendemmia*, 9 May, and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, 11 June 1789.

21. *The Morning Post*, 11 May 1789, quoted in *Mozart, die Dokumente seines Lebens: Addenda, Neue Folge*, ed. Cliff Eissen, Neue Mozart Ausgabe, ser. X/31, vol. 2 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1997), 160. Cited in Rudolph Angermüller, "Francesco Bennucci: Mozarts erster Figaro und Guglielmo," *Mitteilungen der Internationalen Stiftung Mozarteum* 46 (1998): 10–11.

22. Elizabeth Gibson, "Earl Cowper in Florence and His Correspondence with the Italian Opera in London," *Music and Letters* 68 (1987): 250, quoted in Curtis Price, Judith Milhous, and Robert D. Hume, *The King's Theatre, Haymarket, 1778–1791*, vol. 1 of *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 413–14. Luigi Tasca's career spans 1774 to 1791. He sang in London for the two seasons of 1784 and 1785.

23. Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, 4 vols. (1773–89), ed. Frank Mercer, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1957), 2:900, quoted in Price, Milhous, and Hume, *The King's Theatre*, 382.

24. Joseph to Count Rosenberg, 20 January 1784: "J'y ai trouvé un Buffon qui chante la Basse appelé Morelli, qui a une excellente voix et plus forte encore que celle de Bennucci, ce talent se trouve reuni avec celui d'être un très bon acteur." Payer von Thurn, *Joseph II. als Theaterdirektor*, 44.

25. *Reminiscences of Michael Kelly*, ed. Theodore Hook, 2 vols. (London, 1826), 1:259.

26. Daniel Hertz, "When Mozart Revises: The Case of Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*," in *Wolfgang Amadeè Mozart: Essays on His Life and His Music*, ed. Stanley Sadie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 360.

27. Bruce Alan Brown, W. A. Mozart, "*Così fan tutte*" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 157–58.

28. Hertz, "When Mozart Revises," 360. Hertz suggests that when Mozart wrote this tour de force of a buffo aria for Bennucci he still thought of him as the "living incarnation of Figaro." When Mozart later realized that the aria did not serve to portray a Neapolitan gentleman, he removed it from the opera.

29. Rushton, "Buffo Roles in Mozart's Vienna," 406–25.

30. *Ibid.*, 418.

31. *Ibid.*, 414.

32. Christine Martin, *Vicente Martín y Solers Oper "Una Cosa Rara": Geschichte eines Opernerfolgs im 18. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2001; Ph.D. diss., Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, 2000), 270.

33. Dorothea Link, "The Da Ponte Operas of Vicente Martín y Soler" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1991). My findings are summarized in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, s.v. "Martín y Soler, Vicente," and *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2d ed., s.v. "Martín y Soler, Vicente."

34. The numbering is thrown off when the publisher issues sections from the finales as individual numbers.

35. Martin, *Martín y Solers Oper*, 258 n. 104.

36. For a description of the diaries, see Link, *National Court Theatre*, 191–93.

37. For another example of a problematic cast list, see the critical notes to aria no. 12.

38. Otto Michter, *Das alte Burgtheater als Opernbühne von der Einführung des deutschen Singspiels (1778) bis zum Tod Kaiser Leopolds II. (1792)* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1970), 161. In a footnote, Michtner gives as the



source of his cast list "the libretto in the A-Wn [Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna]" without supplying a shelf number. I have been unable to locate this supposedly annotated libretto.

This might be the place to say a few words about Michtner. The book is an important work, which presents a vast amount of hitherto unknown material. As scholars working with it soon discover, however, the book is methodologically flawed. Footnotes are incorrect or missing entirely, so that often, especially in the case of casting information, it is impossible to know whether what is presented is a fact or an educated guess. In Michtner's defense it should be said that this book is a tremendous achievement for a retired music teacher without formal scholarly training. In the ten years that he worked on it, with the help of many librarians and archivists, he looked at almost every relevant source in Vienna. For this reason the book is extremely valuable and scholars will simply have to be prepared to check everything.

39. Rice, *Salieri*, 71–73, 341.

40. See Link, *National Court Theatre*, 211 n. 18, 215 n. 29.

41. Mary Hunter, *The Culture of Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna: A Poetics of Entertainment* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 268.

42. See Rice, *Salieri*, 386–400.

43. See Tim Carter, W. A. Mozart, "*Le nozze di Figaro*" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 35ff.

44. For discussions of the buffo aria, see Rice, *Salieri*, 73–81; and John Platoff, "The Buffa Aria in Mozart's Vienna," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 2 (1990): 103.

45. Platoff, *ibid.*, 104–5.

46. Zinzendorf, 1 July 1783, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 207.

47. Michtner, *Das alte Burgtheater*, 188, gives a partial cast list that shows Benucci as Cricca, but without any supporting evidence.

48. The aria can be heard on the compact disc recording of Domenico Cimarosa, *Il pittor parigino*, conducted by Tamás Pál, 1988, Hungaroton HCD 12972–73.

49. Zinzendorf, 21 July 1783: "Benucci chanta un grand aria ou il fut le Spadassin, le loureur et le Soprano." Link, *National Court Theatre*, 208.

50. I am grateful to John Rice for recognizing the quotation. See his detailed discussion of the *rondò* in his article "Sense, Sensibility, and Opera Seria: An Epistolary Debate," *Studi musicali* 15 (1986): 101–38.

51. Two of the musical examples from the *rondò* that Rice includes in his article correspond to the beginning of the two passages quoted in "Quando saprai chi sono." The complete *rondò* can be found in vocal score in *Les Gloires de l'Italie*, ed. F. A. Gevaert, 2 vols. (Paris, 1868), vol. 2, no. 54, pp. 172–80.

52. This would not be the first time a singer imitated Marchesi. Nancy Storace did so on several occasions. See *Arias for Nancy Storace*, xi.

53. This and the following aria can be heard on the compact disc recording of Giovanni Paisiello, *Il re Teodoro in Venezia*, conducted by Isaac Karabtschewsky, 1998, Mondo Musica MFON 20121.

54. Zinzendorf, 23 August 1784: "On fit repeter cet air celui de Benucci dans la 6.eme Scene." Link, *National Court Theatre*, 233.

55. See Bruce Alan Brown, "Beaumarchais, Mozart and the Vaudeville: Two Examples from *The Marriage of Figaro*," *Musical Times* 127 (1986): 263. Plays given by the Comédie Française often had short pieces of music added to them. In a personal communication Bruce Alan Brown suggested to me that the notoriously tall and extravagant hairdos worn by French women in the 1780s could easily have accommodated small, or even not-so-small, balloons and, of course, feathers.

56. Michael Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan Opera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 225.

57. My thanks to Bruce Alan Brown for reminding me of this quotation.

58. Zinzendorf, 12 October, 1785: "Benucci dressed as an old philosopher" (Benucci vétu en vieux Philosophe). Link, *National Court Theatre*, 255.

59. Rice shows in some detail how the orchestration, particularly the unusual tuning of the timpani a tritone apart, contributes to the portrayal of the demonic, in *Salieri*, 363–66. See also Hunter's discussion of Trofonio's music in *Culture of Opera Buffa*, 267–72.

60. Rice, *Salieri*, 363.

61. Zinzendorf, 12 October 1785: "Benucci s'acquitta a merveille de l'invocation du Sorcier." Link, *National Court Theatre*, 255.

62. Rice, *Salieri*, 369. A similar construction can be seen in Barbarina's interrupted aria in *Le nozze di Figaro*.

63. Rice, *Salieri*, 369.

64. Zinzendorf, 1 September 1786: "jolie musique de Paisiello"; and 6 September 1786: "Jouée a merveille." Link, *National Court Theatre*, 278.

65. Zinzendorf reported on 15 September 1789, the night of Benucci's return to the Viennese stage: "Una Cosa rara. Benucci made his debut and was greeted with prodigious applause. He sang two pretty arias new to the opera, one in praise of women, the other of horns" (Benucci y debuta et fut reçu avec des applaudissemens prodigieux. Il chanta deux jolis airs etrangers a l'opera l'un l'eloge des femmes, l'autre des cornes). Link, *National Court Theatre*, 340.

The performance score (Vienna, Österreichisches, KT 99) has substitutes for both of Tita's arias. "In quegli anni" was replaced by "Tutte mie care donne" by Joseph Weigl (§ Andantino), and "Ah mal aya" was replaced by "Allor ch'io da pazzo" (§ Andante grazioso). The latter's former identity is partly preserved in the markings on the page; it was no. 6 in the opera from which it was taken and it was sung by a character called Pompeo. Compound meter is unusual for Benucci, but it certainly fits into the opera, which abounds with pastoral numbers.

66. The aria can be heard on the compact disc recordings of Vicente Martín y Soler, *Una cosa rara*, conducted by Jordi Savall, 1991, Astrée Auvidis E 8760; and conducted by Giancarlo Andretta, 2000, Mondo Musica MFON 22250.

67. However, Rice, in *Salieri*, 415, points out how, by following the traditions of Italian comic opera, Da Ponte and Salieri make Axur more of a caricature of a tyrant than a genuinely evil tyrant like the French original. Hence, he would not describe Axur as a serious role.

68. The aria can be heard on the compact disc recording of Antonio Salieri, *Axur, re d'Ormus*, conducted by René Clemencic, 1996, Nuova Era 6852–54.

69. Rudolph Angermüller, *Antonio Salieri: Fatti e documenti* ([Verona]: Cassa di Risparmio di Verona, Vicenza e Belluno, 1985), 87; translation from Rice, *Salieri*, 415.

70. "L'aria—Tu fa che intanto uniscasi—ha il movimento maestoso e fiero che conviene al personaggio che la canta; e il piano d'orchestra che viene sotto li versi—Gli auguri informa, e poi—che vengono cantati in segreto e fanno anche chiaroscuro musicale al pezzo, mi pare secondar assai bene il senso politico di quel testo." Angermüller, *Salieri*, 85.

71. Rice, *Salieri*, 438–41.

72. See the detailed analysis of this aria in Platoff, "The Buffa Aria," 105–12.

73. Personal communication from John Rice.



# Texts and Translations

Texts have been taken from the scores and checked against the matching librettos. Spellings and punctuation have been modernized, for example, “perché, annoia” instead of “perchè, annoja.” Descriptions of the sources can be found in the critical report.

## 1. *Lei comandi, signorina*

Monsieur de Crotignac, a Parisian painter and adventurer, is intent on marrying the wealthy Eurilla. She is inclined to love him because of her passion for the arts, but she decides to marry Baron Cricca for the twenty thousand scudi that comes with the marriage. The Baron, impecunious, boorish, and not nearly as noble as he pretends, has deserted his former sweetheart Cintia to marry Eurilla. Cintia pursues the Baron for love of both him and the twenty thousand scudi. Through the machinations of the servant Broccardo, Eurilla eventually agrees to marry Crotignac and the Baron agrees to marry Cintia. In this aria the Baron promises Eurilla that after they are married she can continue to receive all the intellectuals and artists she wishes, except for the Parisian painter, whom he detests.

Lei comandi, signorina,  
tutto tutto io voglio fare,  
ma il pittor non ci ha da stare,  
il pittore signor, no.  
Se lei vuole in compagnia  
eruditi, letterati,  
cavalieri, e titolati:  
vengan pur, mi fanno onore,  
ma il pittore no, signore,  
il pittore signor, no.  
Al teatro, al festino  
non ci voglio il parigino,  
in campagna molto meno,  
al passeggio peggio, peggio.  
Ma cos'è? voi v'inquietate?  
monsù mio, perdonate,  
non vi posso sopportar.  
Cara sposina mia,  
con voi sarò felice.  
Se viene Berenice,  
con noi potrà ballar.  
Sbuffate, passeggiate,  
strepitate per dispetto:  
parigino maledetto,  
voglio farti disperar.

At your service, my lady,  
I will do everything;  
but the painter cannot stay,  
no, not the painter.  
If you want the company  
of scholars, men of letters,  
knights, and titled men,  
they may come, I shall be honored,  
but not the painter, no,  
no, not the painter.  
At the theater or at parties  
I don't want the Parisian;  
still less in the country,  
at the very worst taking walks.  
But what is it? Are you upset?  
My dear sir, forgive me,  
but I cannot bear you.  
My dear little bride,  
with you I will be happy.  
When Berenice comes to visit,  
she can dance with us.  
You may rant, pace about,  
and rage in anger:  
you damned Parisian,  
I want to drive you mad.

*Comment.* Line 11 is “Al teatro ed al festino” in the libretto.

## 2. *La sposerò, signore*

The Count wants to marry the Countess's maidservant Dorina to his manservant Titta, a match that the Countess interprets as a ploy to keep Dorina near himself. The Countess, for her part, wants to marry Dorina to Mingone. Dorina, meanwhile, wishes to marry Masotto and keeps putting off Mingone and Titta. Titta considers that if he loses Dorina, he will settle for Livietta, and in "Quando saprai chi sono" (no. 3) he tries to convince the latter that he is quite a catch. At the same time, in "La sposerò, signore," he is still pursuing a match with Dorina. Here he tries to settle his marriage to Dorina with the count, but his rival keeps interrupting him with threatening gestures.

La sposerò, signore,  
la prenderò di core,  
se voi la date a me.  
Ebben, che cosa c'è?

*a Mingone bravando*

Sì, sì, son cento doppie,  
e ognuna traboccante.  
Che schiuma di birbante!  
M'ammazza in verità.

*intimorito, al padrone*

Sgridategli, padrone.

*Il Conte:* Briccone, zitto là.

*Titta:* Dorina sarà mia,  
credessi dentro un brodo  
di prenderla stasera.  
Ha una gran brutta cera.

*al padrone, come sopra*

Padrone mio, cacciatelo;  
senz'altro me la farà.

*Il Conte:* Briccon, va via di qua.

*Titta:* Dorina mia carina,  
le nozze già apparcchio.  
Mi parla nell'orecchio,  
mi dice certe cose;  
al diavolo le spose,  
le doppie, i seccatori!  
Oh che infelici amori,  
che fiera crudeltà!

## 3. *Quando saprai chi sono*

See no. 2.

Quando saprai chi sono  
sì fiera non sarai,  
nè parlerai così.

Un servitor sì buono  
nel mondo non fu mai,  
nè trovai oggidì.

Ho servito un spadaccino,  
ch'ogni giorno col passetto  
perché ho forte e duro il petto  
mille botte mi tirò.

Una ricca ballerina  
poi mi ha preso per lacchè  
e il mio merto in anni tre  
cento scudi guadagnò.

Con un musico soprano  
fino in Londra sono andato  
e la musica ho imparato:  
non credete? or canterò.

I will marry her, sir,  
I will take her with all my heart,  
if you give her to me.  
Well then, what is it?

*to Mingone threateningly*

Yes, yes, a hundred doubloons,  
and all overflowing.  
What an arrant rogue!  
He will kill me in truth.

*frightened, to his lord*

Sir, reprimand him.

*Count:* Rascal, quiet there.

*Titta:* Dorina will be mine,  
even if I had to consume her  
in a broth tonight.  
What an ugly look he has.

*to his lord, as above*

My lord, chase him away;  
he is sure to hurt me.

*Count:* Rascal, get away from here.

*Titta:* My dear Dorina,  
I am already preparing the wedding.  
He is whispering into my ear,  
he is saying certain things;  
to the devil with wives,  
doubloons, and irksome people!  
Oh, what unhappy love,  
what terrible cruelty!

When you know who I am,  
you will not be so proud  
nor speak like that.

A servant so good  
was never seen on earth before  
nor is to be found today.

I have served a swordsman,  
who every day gave me  
a thousand blows with his rapier  
because I have a strong and hard chest.

Then a rich dancer  
took me on as a lackey,  
and my merits in three years  
earned me a hundred scudi.

With a soprano castrato  
as far as London I went,  
and I learned music:  
you don't believe me? Now I will sing.

Mia speranza, io pur vorrei  
 qui languire al caro pie'  
 e dar fine a mali miei  
 coronando la mia fe'.  
 Dite voi se in tanto affanno  
 io non merito pietà.  
 Ma questo è ancor pochissimo  
 per tanta abilità.  
 Sono un diluvio, un fulmine  
 di grazia e di beltà.  
 Voi, belle donne, ditelo  
 se questa è verità.

My hope, yet I would like  
 to languish here at your dear feet;  
 and put an end to my pains,  
 crowning my faith.  
 Say whether I don't deserve pity  
 in so much anguish.  
 But this is still too little  
 for so much ability.  
 I am a deluge, a thunderbolt  
 of grace and beauty.  
 You, beautiful ladies, say  
 if that is not true.

#### 4. *Che ne dici tu, Taddeo?*

Teodoro, a dispossessed king, moves into an inn in Venice, pretending to be wealthy and powerful. The inn's owner, Taddeo, is taken in by his claims and promises him his daughter in marriage. She, however, already has a lover, who makes some inquiries and exposes Teodoro's massive debts. Teodoro is hauled off to prison, where he languishes at opera's end. In this aria, Taddeo gradually wakes up to the fact that all is not as it seems with Teodoro.

Che ne dici tu, Taddeo?  
 È un birbante? è un conte? è un re?  
 Qual Berlich, qual Asmodeo  
 mi dirà chi diavol'è?  
 Egli è un re: se re non è,  
 perché mai chiamarlo re?  
 Qui v'è certo il suo perché.  
 Ma l'entrate non son troppe. . . .  
 Re di picche, o re di coppe.  
 Ma l'entrate non son ricche. . . .  
 Re di coppe, o re di picche.

What can you resolve about it, Taddeo?  
 Is he a rogue? Is he a count? Or is he a king?  
 What imp, what Asmodeus  
 can tell me who the devil he is?  
 He must be a king: if he is not a king,  
 why call him so?  
 There lies the mystery of a king.  
 But his revenues can't be much. . . .  
 King of spades, or king of clubs.  
 But his revenues are not rich. . . .  
 King of hearts, or king of diamonds.

*Source.* Translation from the libretto for the London production (Giovanni Battista Casti and Giovanni Paisiello, *Il re Teodoro in Venezia* [London, 1787]).

*Comment.* Line 3, Berlich and Asmodeo are alternative names in Italian for the devil.

#### 5. *Per onor farsi ammazzare*

Taddeo contemplates the future Teodoro holds out to him. When his daughter becomes queen, he will be made a general in Teodoro's army.

Per onor farsi ammazzare!  
 Ma Taddeo, che te ne pare!  
 Meglio è star nell'osteria,  
 meglio è fare il locandier.  
 Ma se il cielo ha decretato  
 questo mio generalato,  
 ricusar? Sì bassa idea  
 saria d'anima plebea,  
 troppo ignobile pensier.  
 Su dunque alla reggia,  
 sul trono la figlia  
 regina si veggia,  
 e veggasi il padre  
 di belliche squadre  
 Taddeo condottier.  
 Mia cara locanda,  
 cari ospiti, addio:  
 già pongo in obbligo  
 l'antico mestier.

To have oneself killed for honor!  
 But Taddeo, what do you make of that?  
 Better to stay at my inn,  
 better to be an innkeeper.  
 But if heaven has decreed that I be given  
 the office of general,  
 how can I refuse? Such a base idea  
 would occur to a low-class mind,  
 it would be too ignoble to contemplate.  
 Then off to the royal palace,  
 let the daughter take her place  
 on the throne as queen,  
 and may the father be seen  
 as Captain Taddeo  
 of warlike armies.  
 My dear hotel,  
 dear guests, goodbye:  
 already I am putting  
 my former occupation out of my mind.

Source. Translation from the libretto for the London production (Casti and Paisiello, *Il re Teodoro in Venezia*).

#### 6. *O che tempo depravato (alla Figaro Mongolfier Malbrug)*

Rosmondo is scolding his newly married son Casimiro about his wife's extravagance.

O che tempo depravato!  
A rovescio il tutto or va.  
Secol tanto illuminato  
sei pur pien di cecità!  
Figlio, figlio, tai disordini  
non vuò in casa mia veder, no.  
Qua la moglie, là il marito  
spende, spende allegramente,  
ma alla fin tutto è finito,  
tutto in fumo se n'andò.  
Cerca brama vuol tua moglie:  
vesti, nastri, frange, cuffie,  
che a me il dica, e non a te.  
Vuol marciar forse alla Figaro,  
o all'usanza Mongolfier;  
vuol ornarsi alla Malbrucco,  
vuol le piume sul tupè;  
il capello ama all'inglese,  
cuffie brama alla francese,  
che lo venga a dir a me.

Ah, what depraved times!  
Everything goes backwards.  
Such an enlightened century,  
you are full enough of blindness!  
Son, son, I don't want such  
disorder in my house.  
Here the wife, there the husband  
spend, spend cheerfully,  
but in the end all is finished,  
everything goes up in smoke.  
Your wife wants everything:  
clothes, ribbons, fringes, bonnets,  
let her tell that to me, and not to you.  
She wants to march like Figaro,  
or in the manner of Mongolfier;  
she wants to adorn herself in the style of Malbrucco,  
wants feathers on her head;  
she fancies her hat in the English fashion,  
she longs for bonnets in the French style,  
let her come and tell that to me.

Comment. Line 6 is "in mia casa già non vuò" in the libretto.

#### 7. *Spiriti invisibili*

The sorcerer Trofonio amuses himself by trying out his powers on the people in the vicinity. Here he creates havoc in the lives of two couples about to be married by exchanging the personalities of first the grooms and then the brides (who are sisters). When the brides' father begs him to desist from his experiments, Trofonio restores everyone's personalities, and all ends well. In this scene Trofonio makes his first appearance. He is standing in front of his cave and conjuring up spirits.

##### TROFONIO

Spiriti invisibili,  
ch'ite per l'aere  
di tuoni e folgori  
eccitator,  
e voi di rupi  
e d'antri cupi,  
voi del profondo  
centro del mondo  
al volgo incogniti  
abitator,  
restate meco  
in questo speco,  
d'effetti magici  
operator.  
Quindi gli elettrici  
effluvi esalino,  
che i nervi e i muscoli  
urtino e scuotano,  
e insinuandosi  
entro le cellule  
del molle cerebro  
sgombrin l'inerzia,

##### TROFONIO

Invisible spirits  
who fly through the air  
and produce  
thunder and lightning,  
and you of cliffs  
and deep caves,  
you inhabitants of the deep  
center of the earth,  
unknown  
to the populace,  
stay in this cave  
with me,  
a conjuror  
of magical effects.  
Thus the vapors  
of electric effluvia  
knock and shake  
the nerves and muscles,  
and creeping  
into the cells  
of the soft brain  
dispel laziness,

e vi risvegliano  
 moto e vigor.  
 O i sensi ignavi  
 offuschi e aggravati,  
 pesante e torpido  
 crasso vapor.  
 E a chi s'interna  
 nella caverna  
 trasmuti ed alteri  
 indole e umor.  
 Udite? o incantamenti  
 attendete più forti e più possenti?

#### CORO DI SPIRITI DENTRO LA GROTTA

Perché t'infocchi  
 con gridi rochi?  
 Perché ci evochi  
 da i stigi lochi,  
 gran ciurmator?

#### TROFONIO

Se in quest'antro, talun per una porta  
 entri e per l'altra sorta,  
 il tristo in gaio e il gaio  
 in tristo umor converta,  
 e se all'antro poi torni e v'entri e n'esca  
 per l'opposto sentiero,  
 torni all'umor primiero.  
 Così prescrive e vuole  
 il poter di mie magiche parole.

#### CORO COME SOPRA

Qui stiam con irti  
 orecchi a udirvi;  
 Lemuri spirti  
 ad obbedirvi  
 attenti ognor.

*Comment.* Second statement by the chorus, line 3: In Roman mythology, Lemures are malignant spirits of those who met an untimely or violent death, or were not properly buried. They haunted Roman homes and frightened the inhabitants. Exorcism ceremonies were held on 9, 11, and 13 May, during the feast of the Lemures.

### 8. *Questo magico abituro*

Trofonio has just finished his experiment on the two grooms and is congratulating himself on his powers when the brides come along. He decides to try the experiment on them as well.

Questo magico abituro  
 a ogni secolo futuro  
 del potere di Trofonio  
 testimonio ognor sarà.  
 Treman gli astri erranti e fissi,  
 treman d'Erebo gli abissi.  
 Ma due giovani donne  
 appressarsi vegg'io.  
 Proviam come la mia virtù stupenda  
 anche sul sesso femminil si stenda.

### 9. *Quattro via quattro sedici*

A Neapolitan husband and wife, Bastiano and Gelinda, are sold by pirates to a Mister Dull of Boston. Unaware that they are married, Mr. Dull courts Gelinda, thereby

and there revive  
 motion and power.  
 Or the senses [are made] sluggish,  
 dim, and aggravated,  
 heavy and numbed,  
 [by] dense haze.  
 And for whomever enters  
 the cave,  
 there changes and alters  
 his temperament and humor.  
 Are you listening? Or are you  
 waiting for more powerful and stronger spells?

#### CHORUS OF SPIRITS INSIDE THE CAVE

Why are you fired up  
 with hoarse shouts?  
 Why are you calling us  
 from the Stygian realm,  
 great quack?

#### TROFONIO

If anyone enters this cave  
 by one entrance and leaves by the other,  
 the sad disposition will change to a happy one  
 and the happy to a sad one.  
 And if to the cave he returns  
 and enters and exits by the opposite path,  
 he returns to his original disposition.  
 Thus prescribes and demands  
 the power of my magical words.

#### CHORUS AS ABOVE

Here we,  
 Lemurian spirits,  
 stand listening carefully,  
 always ready  
 to obey you.

This enchanted dwelling  
 in centuries to come  
 will always testify to the power  
 of Trofonio.  
 The stars, [both] moving and fixed, tremble;  
 the abysses of Erebus quake.  
 But two young women  
 are approaching, I see.  
 Let us prove how my stupendous power  
 also extends to the female sex.

driving Bastiano wild with anger and jealousy. In this aria Bastiano is watching the two as he is making up the accounts.

Quattro via quattro sedici.  
Sedici, ahimè, che musica!  
Non falla . . . e come infocasi?  
Va ben . . . ma presto seccami . . .  
possa crepar di colica . . .  
più saldo già non sto.  
Badate al fatto vostro,  
m'arrabbio coll'inchostro  
ch'è nero, fisso e denso  
l'abbaco imbroglio.  
Se tre da nove togli  
mi par che restin sei,  
signor . . . signor . . . signore . . .  
rimetto il conto a lei,  
ch'è bello e fatto già.

*a Gelinda*

(Pettegola, ti scanno,  
ti squarto e ti flagello,  
faccio di te un macello,  
se seguiti a star qua.)  
Come, non ti capacità?  
Mi par che va benissimo,  
sta pur persuasissimo  
che in quanto alla numerica  
non avvi in tutta America  
chi scuola mi può dar.  
Mi pizzican le dita,  
vivo mangiar vorrei  
questo vecchiaccio e lei,  
ma non lo posso far.  
Quattro, cinque e sette  
fanno sedici, sedici, otto e tre  
fanno ventisette,  
ti capacità?

*Comments.* The final quatrain, irregular in meter, is not present in the libretto. The language cleverly presents a number of double entendres that refer to business, such as "fallire" (to go bankrupt) in line 3, "seccarsi" (to dry up) in line 4, and "saldo" (balance of an account) in line 6.

### 10. *Ah mal aya, a quella mano*

Tita and Ghita are a loving but hotheaded and squabbling couple. In this aria Tita gives vent to his humiliation and outrage after having been slapped by Ghita for suspecting her of being unfaithful to him.

*Ah mal aya, a quella mano!*  
Uno schiaffo ad un serrano,  
uno schiaffo ad un marito,  
uno schiaffo ad un mio par!  
*Por la vida de mi padre,*  
*por la vida de mi madre,*  
*y por vida de mí mismo,*  
*no lo quiero soportar.*  
Qua la cappa, qua la spada,  
l'archibuso, la pistola,  
me l'afferro per la gola.  
*Cuciliada, pugnada,*

Four times four makes sixteen.  
Sixteen, alas, what music!  
She does not give in . . . and yet she is excited?  
It goes well . . . but quickly bothers me . . .  
I may explode with anger . . .  
more certain, of course, I do not feel.  
Mind your own business,  
I am losing my temper over the ink,  
which is black, immovable, and thick;  
I am muddling the abacus.  
If I take three from nine  
it seems to me that there remain six,  
signor . . . signor . . . signore . . .  
I return to you the bill,  
which is good and indeed complete.

*to Gelinda*

(You busybody, I'll kill you,  
chop you in pieces and thrash you,  
make of you a slaughterhouse,  
if you continue to stay here.)  
How, you are not convinced?  
It seems to me to go splendidly,  
it remains completely persuasive  
that in matters numerical  
there is no one in all of America  
who can give me lessons.  
My fingers are tingling,  
I would like to eat alive  
that old fool and her,  
but I cannot do it.  
Four, five, and seven  
make sixteen; sixteen, eight, and three  
make twenty-seven.  
Are you convinced?

By the devil! By that hand!  
A slap for a mountaineer,  
a slap for a husband,  
a slap for a man like me!  
On my father's life,  
on my mother's life,  
on my own life,  
I will not put up with it.  
Here the cloak, here the sword,  
the arquebus, the pistol.  
I will seize her by the throat.  
Stabbing, fighting,

che stoccada, che macello!  
*Y por tierra a de tumber.*  
 Ma una femina a duello  
 come mai si può sfidar?  
 Ah perché non fu qualche altra  
 ch'io potea per vendicarmi  
 col baciarla e ribaciarla  
 da me sol giustizia farmi.  
 Ma la sposa non è cosa  
 che dia giusto nel baciar.  
 Ah demonio dell'*infierno*  
 come t'ho da castigar.  
 Maritati schiaffeggiati,  
 se qui a caso alcun ven' ha,  
 dite voi che lo sapete  
 se siam degni di pietà.

what a thrust! What a slaughter!  
 And it would bring her down!  
 But how can one challenge  
 a woman to a duel?  
 Ah, why was there not some other woman  
 with whom I could avenge myself  
 by kissing her over and over again,  
 and bring justice to myself.  
 But a wife is not a thing  
 to be set right by kissing.  
 Ah, infernal demon,  
 how can I punish you?  
 Battered husbands,  
 if there are any here,  
 tell me that you know  
 if we are worthy of pity.

*Comments.* Line 22, "giusto" is "gusto" in the libretto. Line 24, "t'ho" is "t'e" in the libretto. Da Ponte plays with mixing Italian and Spanish. He not only interpolates into the Italian text entire verses in Spanish (in italics), but misspells words similar in both languages; for example, the Italian "sopportar" instead of the Spanish "soportar," the Spanish "infierno" for the Italian "inferno," and the Italian-like spelling of "cuciliada" and "pugnalada" for the Spanish "cuchillada" and "puñalada."

*Other sources.* Lorenzo Da Ponte, *Libretti viennesi*, ed. Lorenzo Della Chà, 2 vols. (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo and Ugo Guanda Editore, 1999), 1:439–40; liner notes to compact disc recording of Vicente Martín y Soler, *Una cosa rara*, conducted by Jordi Savall, 1991, Astrée Auvidis E 8760; and Joseph LoSchiavo, ed. and trans., unpublished libretto used in the Vineyard Theatre's production of *Una cosa rara*, New York, 1986.

### 11. *Tu fa che intanto uniscasi*

Warned of potential opposition to his plan to replace the popular general Atar with another, King Axur instructs his advisor Arteneo to drum up public support for him.

Tu fa che intanto uniscasi  
 il popolo agitato  
 mostra che il cielo irato  
 è da' lamenti suoi,  
 gli auguri informa e poi,  
 con utile impostura,  
 di rinforzar procura  
 la nostra autorità.

You, meanwhile, call together  
 the agitated people.  
 Show that heaven is angered  
 by their laments.  
 Inform the augurs and then,  
 with effective deceit,  
 contrive to reinforce  
 our authority.

*Other sources.* Da Ponte, *Libretti viennesi*, 1:773.

### 12. *L'anno mille settecento*

Rusticone is a sly old peasant who tries to pass off Eurilla as his own daughter with the convoluted story below. He hides her past in the hope of marrying her himself. She eventually discovers that she is the lost daughter of a nobleman, whereupon she marries Milord Fidelino.

L'anno mille settecento  
 cinquantotto, o poco più,  
 forte al punto, state attento:  
 mi sposai con una giovane  
 fior di grazie e di virtù.  
 Tre figliuole il ciel me diè,  
 perché una e due fan tre;  
 e fan tre nel modo istesso,  
 una, un'altra, e un'altra appresso.  
 In vent'anni tre figliuole,

In the year one thousand seven hundred  
 and fifty eight, or about then,  
 here is the point, pay attention:  
 I married a young girl,  
 a flower of grace and virtue.  
 Heaven gave me three daughters,  
 because one and two make three;  
 they make three in the same way,  
 one, another, and then another.  
 In twenty years three daughters,

che per altro or son due sole,  
 perché l'altra più non c'è.  
 Non è poi la gran famiglia,  
 e si tratta che ogni figlia,  
 benché resti senza madre,  
 quando è figlia di buon padre,  
 bella o brutta, brutta o bella,  
 sempre è figlia, sempre è quella,  
 e si deve maritar.  
 Questo conto è così chiaro,  
 che l'intende anche un notaro,  
 lo so io, lo sanno tutti,  
 qui non v'è da dubitar.  
 (Gl'è l'ho fatta, son confusi,  
 son storditi, son delusi;  
 che piacere, che spassetto,  
 più non san cosa pensar.)

who are now, however, only two,  
 because the other is no more.  
 It is not a big family;  
 and the point is that each daughter,  
 although being without a mother,  
 when she is her father's daughter,  
 pretty or ugly, ugly or pretty,  
 she is still a daughter, still she is,  
 and she must be married.  
 This story is so clear  
 that even a notary could understand it;  
 I know it, everyone knows it,  
 and there's no reason to doubt.  
 (I've done it, they're confused,  
 they're stunned, they're deluded;  
 what pleasure, what amusement,  
 they no longer know what to think.)

*Source.* Translation from John Platoff, "The Buffa Aria in Mozart's Vienna,"  
*Cambridge Opera Journal* 2 (1990): 105–6.

*Comments.* Line 21 is "che lo vede anche . . ." in the libretto and in the music at subsequent restatements of the line. Line 23 is "E non v'è da replicar" in the libretto. Line 26 is "Che diletto, che spassetto" in the libretto. The score interpolates the phrase "Forte al punto" (Straight to the point) into the text before line 13 "Non è poi. . . ." From measure 82 the score freely repeats and recombines text; line 20 at that point appears as "via, che serva, il conto è chiaro" (go away, what use are you, the story is clear).