# Point of departure:

# Sant’Angelo as a breeding ground for opera troupes in the early eighteenth century

(talk for Brno October 2017)

### Sant’Angelo

The venue from which we learn the most about the Madonises is the Teatro Sant’Angelo. Lodovico Madonis was a violinist at the the theater in the later 1710s. In 1717 he was the head of the second violins. He was also the financier of the theater’s production of Vivaldi’s *L’incoronazione di Dario*,[[1]](#footnote-1) which opened on 23 January. (It was the last Vivaldi opera to be given in Venice prior to the composer’s imminent move to the Mantuan court.) Although *L’incoronazione di Dario* was a carefully conceived work and an artistic success, it could not have opened under worse circumstances. It followed quickly on the heels of Fortunato Chelleri’s ill-fated *Penelope la casta* (28 December 1716).[[2]](#footnote-2) *Penelope*’s textual revival rekindled memories of a spectacular performance of Carlo Pallavicino’s setting at San Giovanni Grisostomo in 1685, which led to either the abduction or the escape (depending on which account one chooses) of the *prima donna* Margarita Salicola, who was lured to Dresden by the duke of Saxony.[[3]](#footnote-3) The journal of the nobleman who accompanied her on her two-month progress to the Saxon capital gives more the impression of a stately procession. In 1717 the value of Chelleri’s work lay in flattering the Saxon electoral prince xx by suggesting his prowess with ladies. Venetian operas were rife with such allusions.

Chelleri’s work of homage became the object of ridicule when two nights after the opening performance (28 December 1716) the composer was stabbed as he was helping the new *prima donna* (Anna Dotti) into her gondola.[[4]](#footnote-4) The production was soon lambasted in a lengthy satirical poem,[[5]](#footnote-5) and on January 5th the impresario Pietro Ramponi was required to return the *originali* (scores) to the composer. A week later Sant’Angelo revived its production of Vivaldi’s *Arsilda al ponte,* which had run in late October.[[6]](#footnote-6) Its scenery was provided by Bernardo Canal with other family members.[[7]](#footnote-7)

It is from an audit of nightly receipts for *L’incoronazione di Dario* (23 January 1717) that we learn of Lodovico’s involvement in financing that production.[[8]](#footnote-8) His position as head of the second violins is established by his own complaint of 25 February (more than a month after the opening) to the Council of Ten.[[9]](#footnote-9) Ramponi had been responsible for the accounts and for dispersals to performers, tailors, scenographers, and so forth.

Sant’Angelo remained under close supervision by the Council of Ten in 1717-18, when Antonio Madonis was listed in the violin section in the production of Albinoni’*s Cleomene* (22 January 1718). Normally the specific members of theatrical orchestras cannot be established, but affairs at Sant’Angelo had become so contentious that each night’s receipts were again audited. From them we have a full roster of musicians and others involved in the production. Francesco Ziani sat at the harpsichord, with two cellists, two viola players, and approximately eight violinists, plus an oboist (Domenico Maheanì). Both cellists (Giovanni Pattinatti and Carlo Bianchi), one violist (Meani), and one violinist (Paolo Sabadin) came from outside the Veneto (they were listed among the *forestieri*) and were provided with supplementary pay to cover travel expenses. We find among the most interesting details of the audit slips a nightly payment to Zuanne (Giovanni) Gallo for providing *balli* (and very probably the music for the dances) as well as a *combattimento* for each performance.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Sant’Angelo usually listed payments for flute players (who were not required in most works) separately because they were hired as a group independent of the orchestra. Four singers in *Cleomene* — Maria Giusti, Zanetta Scalfi, Lorenzo Baretta, and Antonio Denzio – elected Crescenzio to be the recorder during the audit period. Their complaints had begun with the prior work, Albinoni’s *Meleagro* (1717), which seems to have had a poor reception.

In 1718-19 the painter Sebastiano Riccio served as impresario for Sant’Angelo. In settling accounts at the end of the season, Ricci accused Gio. Battista and Lodovico Madonis of having collected monies in excess of what was owed (to Ricci) from Domenico Viola, who was responsible for receiving box rents. Viola was thus unable to present to Ricci the full sum the painter anticipated. Papers were promptly filed with the Tribunal for Foreigners (the Giudici de Forestier).[[11]](#footnote-11) The sum under dispute was 107 *lire*.

No member of the Madonis clan can be linked with Sant’Angelo between the spring of 1718 and the autumn of 1724, but they did return for the 1724-25 season and possible also for that of 1725-26. Where they were, and whether they were in one place or several, are questions that cannot currently be answered. The signal event in this six-year absence was the death of Lodovico *père* in Venice. He died on or shortly before 10 July 1723. His will is found in the files of the notary Francesco Maria Bonaldi,[[12]](#footnote-12) whose services were used by several Venetian instrumentalists, especially those associated with the Teatro Sant’Angelo. The reliance on Bonaldi suggests that it was Lodovico Madonis *pére* rather than *fils* who was cited in a dispute of 1714.[[13]](#footnote-13)

### The Denzio Troupe

### Back in Venice

We know from the libretti of other Italian productions that Denzio and most of this troupe returned to Sant’Angelo in the autumn. The twins signed the dedication of the libretto for Giovanni Zuccari’s setting of *Seleuco* (26 December 1724).[[14]](#footnote-14) Antonio Madonis was designated the impresario in one document. He was to collect box rents. Lodovico’s name appears in another document of the following day.[[15]](#footnote-15) He was the head of the second violins in the theater’s orchestra. *Seleuco* had the misfortune of opening on the same night as Albinoni’s popular setting of *Didone abbandonata* at San Cassiano, where Giovanni Carestini[[16]](#footnote-16) portrayed Antioco, with Giovanni Paita as Seleuco. Another member of the *Seleucco* cast and the other works of that year was the Florentine contralto Rosanna Mazzanti (*Stratonica*), who must have caught Antonio’s eye (or vice versa). The two were wed the following spring (15 May 1725).[[17]](#footnote-17)

### The Peruzzi troupe (splinter)

#### Breslau

Most of the singers stayed with Antonio Denzio, and this left the Peruzzi crew in need of a female lead. Peruzzi evidently attracted musicians who had the ability to engage an audience instantaneously. (This was a hallmark of performances by *comici*, in whose ranks the Peruzzi originated.) The participation of Antonio Madonis in the Peruzzi division is confirmed in back-handed ways. In the spring of 1726, he announced his intention to have his marriage to Mazzanti annulled.[[18]](#footnote-18) His motive (not stated in his petition but evident from subsequent actions) was to marry the singer Gerolama Valsecchi (born *c*. 1695).[[19]](#footnote-19)

As concertmaster of the Peruzzi troupe, Lodovico Madonis ostensibly traveled with the group to Breslau but his engagement there was of uncertain duration. Although Madonis is said to have resigned the post in April 1726,[[20]](#footnote-20) Antonio obviously remained in May. Officially, Lodovico was succeeded by Antonio Bioni (*c*. 1698-1739).[[21]](#footnote-21) Bioni’s *Armida al campo* was mounted for the wedding of Wilhelm Ferdinand, Earl of Burghaus, in June. Johann Mattheson must have been misinformed on two counts when he wrote, on 23 September 1726, that “M. Madonis has died, so now the orchestra consists only of local players."[[22]](#footnote-22) Daniel Gottlieb Treu (1695-1749), who had studied in Venice and had traveled with the Denzio troupe to Kuks in 1725, was responsible for four operas (who had numerous German and Italian pseudonyms) given in Breslau between 1725 and 1727. Madonis could arguably have played in two of them (*Astarto*, aut. 1725, and *Caio Martio Coriolano*, winter 1726) if he was not simultaneously engaged at Sant’Angelo. Bioni was the composer of numerous later operas in Breslau.[[23]](#footnote-23) Mattheson’s claim that the orchestra in Breslau’s Stadt Theater was reduced to local players is also in error. In September 1727 the peripatetic troupe leader Santo Burigotti recruited the young violin virtuoso Giovanni Verocai (*c*. 1703-1745)[[24]](#footnote-24) for the theater orchestra in Breslau, where the latter remained until May 1729. What is noteworthy about these musicians temporarily domiciled in Breslau is that all except Burigotti found their way, like Madonis, at the Russian court within the next few years.

Accounts are in conflict on the information given by J. J. Quantz on the musicians he countered in Italy. His opera references limit the winter of his visit to 1725-26. Like most travelers, Quantz mentions what he heard at the Teatro San Giovanni Grisostomo.[[25]](#footnote-25) Quantz was in Paris by August 1726 and remained there until March 1727. Whether he played any role in advertising Madonis’s skills in Paris is unknown. While in Venice, he heard Madonis play “in the [Sant’Angelo] opera orchestra”.[[26]](#footnote-26) Vivaldi was usually present for first performances of his own works, so Quantz could have met them at the same time. His encounter with Sammartini, on the other hand, may have occurred in Milan, while he was en route to Paris.

### Brussels

In 1727 Peruzzi signed on as the impresario of Brussels’ Théâtre de la Monnaie.[[27]](#footnote-27) Since its opening in 1700, the theater had concentrated on French repertory, but from 1715 to 1726 Brussels had hosted the exiled court of the Bavarian archduke Maximilian II Emmanuel. The archduke was serving as governor of the Southern Netherlands in the aftermath of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714).[[28]](#footnote-28) Although in his home court opera productions were entirely dependent on traveling companies able to sing in German, the court-in-exile in Brussels had a taste for French style in the manner of Lully. Max Emmanuel’s return to Munich thrust Brussels into cultural chaos. Peruzzi seized the opportunity to fill the vacuum.

The first work presented by the troupe (29 April 1727) was billed as “a translation of *Roland* by Lully.”[[29]](#footnote-29) In reality it was a revival of Bioni’s *Orlando furioso*. A surviving libretto[[30]](#footnote-30) dated May 1727 and signed by “Antonio Peruzzi” is printed in Italian and French. The Italian text preserves the aria-recitative structure, with brief descriptions of scenery and action. The French is rendered throughout in prose summaries. The duet of Angelica and Medoro in Sc. 14 (of Act Two?) provides a representative example (Table 1).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Italian verse | French paraphrase |
|  *Quella stella**Che Amor fa più bella**Per voi spenda di eterno seren’**E’ giammai nube infesta,**Molesta**Non ne addombri il lucente balen.* | *Que vôtre étoile embellie par l’amour, lui se pour vous d’une éternelle splendeur. Et que les trifles & importuns nuages, ne portent jamais d’ombre à une si belle lumière.* |

*Table 1. Duet for Angelica and Medoro, Act II, Sc. 14 in Antonio Bioni’s Orlando furioso (Brussels, 1727).*

Girolama Valsecchi was the troupe’s star singer in Brussels. Although role assignments are not indicated in the libretto, we know from other sources that others in the group were Antonio Pasi; Giuseppe and Andrea Galetti; Giuseppe da Mantova, Luigi Antinori, Anna Dotti, and Alessandro Veroni, all from Bologna; Giustina Eberard from Venice; and Margarita Staggi from Mantua. The singers were directed by Gio. Sebastiano Brillandi. Gioacchino Landi was in charge of the dances.

The idea of staging “Italian” opera and comic intermezzi was a trial balloon in Brussels. Teresa Peruzzi, the wife of Gio. Maria and the mother of Antonio, was Belgian by birth, so a few of the participants had some sense of the local cultural climate. Among her credits, Teresa Peruzzi had recently performed at the Mantuan court and in Venice at San Cassiano. In Mantua she is likely to have encountered Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt (1671-1736), whose late wife, Marie Therese of [Croÿ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cro%C3%BF) (d. 1714), was also a native of Brussels. The Peruzzi troupe’s intermezzo specialists, Rosa Ungarelli and Antonio Ristorini, were nominally in the employ of Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt (Mantua’s governor) but they were broadly famous.[[31]](#footnote-31) According to a report quoted from *Le Mercure de France*, a number of French dancers were also presented.[[32]](#footnote-32)

In his study of the sixteen *drammi per musica* and five comic intermezzi that filled the Monnaie’s full repertory between 1727 and the winter of 1730, Forment has called attention to the significance of each work to the Austrian court. He sees the archduchess Maria Elisabeta as the main instigator of these performances. She eventually exerted her influence by preventing Peruzzi and Landi from being jailed because of their bankruptcies. Her broader efforts to meld Hapsburg and Belgian cultures failed.[[33]](#footnote-33)

The Madonises’ stay in Brussels must have exceeded the spring theaterical season. An inventory of musical works in the chapter library of Saint-Peter and St. Guido, Anderlecht (Brussels, reported in 1783) includes a *Credo solemnis* for four voices and six instruments by “Madonis” [no first name given] with two choirs *ad libitum* (with a total of ten parts).[[34]](#footnote-34) According to Nagel, Peruzzi sought permission in 1728 to give performances in Frankfurt with an orchestra consisting only of Italians, among whom Nagel lists “Mssrs. Madonis and son.”[[35]](#footnote-35) Messieurs Madonis would usually be taken to refer to Lodovico and Antonio, but the identity of a son is a mystery and appears to be erroneous. Lodovico (now 33) is not known to have married until 1742, but if he had been married earlier, it is unlikely that a son of that union would have been adequately trained by 1728 to play in a theater orchestra.[[36]](#footnote-36)

Peruzzi remained in Brussels until 1728 and was intermittently active there until 1730. He interleaved his affairs there with other efforts in Frankfurt and a return visit to Prague for the baptism of one of Antonio Denzio’s children in 1730.[[37]](#footnote-37) Sasha-Pegah has recently reported Peruzzi’s presence in Frankfurt in 1731-32.[[38]](#footnote-38) When he produced *Siface* there in May 1732, Valsecchi did not appear in the cast. It is unlikely, then, that any of the Madonises had direct dealings with Peruzzi after 1728, except perhaps incidentally in Prague. It is noteable that in the libretto for Vivaldi’s *La fida ninfa* (Verona 1732), Valsecchi Madonis was still in the service of the Archduccess Maria Elisabeta, the patroness of recent works at the Théâtre de la Monnaie and the governess of the Austrian Netherlands.[[39]](#footnote-39)

### Prague et al

While Lodovico was raising his profile in France, Antonio and Gerolama Valsecchi Madonis set off (possibly in Peruzzi’s company) for Prague. Gerolama made her Prague debut as Dafne in *Gl’amori delusi* at the Sporck Theater (Carnival 1730),[[40]](#footnote-40) then appeared in a *rifacimento* of Vivaldi’s *Farnace* (spring 1730), and a year later took the title role in *Alvilda regina de Goti* (a concoction consisting mainly of parody arias). She did not, however, participate in the intervening production of Vivaldi’s *Argippo* (autumn 1730) in Prague because her husband (Antonio Madonis) had filed a court petition against Antonio Denzio, who had not paid her for her previous appearances.[[41]](#footnote-41)

On 6 January 1732 she made a more important debut—in the inaugural work for the opulent Teatro Filarmonico in Verona. There, in Vivaldi’s *La fida ninfa*, in which she took the role of Elpina. The performances won high marks. Antonio Madonis’s inclusion in the orchestra for the inaugural season at the Teatro Filarmonico would have been an obvious asset to the theater, but the names of individual orcnhestra cannot be confirmed. In 1732 Valsecchi remained in Verona that winter to sing in GeminianoGiacomelli’s *Gianguir*, which immediately followed *La fida ninfa*.

During the winter of 1733 Valsecchi Madonis appeared in Ferrara in Albinoni’s *Arianna abbandonata a*nd Porta’s *Ulisse*.[[42]](#footnote-42) The first opened at the Teatro Bonacossi soon after Christmas, the latter on *c*. 1 February 1733[[43]](#footnote-43), with Gerolama as Penelope. By August she was in Munich,[[44]](#footnote-44) where she sang in *Narciso al fonte* by the Padua composer Giuseppe Antonio Paganelli (1710-1764), then the harpsichordist of A. M. Peruzzi’s troupe.[[45]](#footnote-45) He was, like the Madonises, ubiquitous, having also had works performed in Venice during the preceding winter.[[46]](#footnote-46)

Possibly through the intervention of a bass from Brussels named Jakob Seerieder (he followed Maria Elisabeta’s court back to Munich), Peruzzi was persuaded to bring his troupe to Augsburg for three months (autumn 1733). The group of eighteen who took up the offer included [Antonio] Madonis, who became the new orchestra director of Augsburg’s comedy house in 1733.[[47]](#footnote-47) Meanwhile, the Denzio troupe was making its way to Regensburg, where, in November 1733, Teresa Peruzzi achieved stunning successes in two productions for the ducal court of Fronobius Ferdinand von Fürstenberg-Messkirch (1664-1741).[[48]](#footnote-48) The troupe’s repertory also included pieces from Vivaldi’s *Argippo* recently given in Prague.

The reassumption of Gio. Battista Madonis at San Marco on 8 March 1733 (just after the start of Lent)[[49]](#footnote-49) allows that he could have been traveling in 1732-1733 with Antonio and Gerolama. He had been gone for more than three years, the earlier of which may have been spent in Prague. Considering that his long-time colleague Gio. Battista Vivaldi had sought permission on 29 September 1729 join his son on travels to “Germania” (a locution taking in the entire German-speaking world), Madonis could have traveled with the Vivaldis.[[50]](#footnote-50) Gio. Battista Madonis could thus have performed in the Prague operas of 1730 and 1731 before continuing to Verona and Ferrara. It is obvious, though, that he lacked the same enthusiasm to go to Russia as Lodovico and Antonio possessed.

After the Augsburg visit, Gio. Maria Peruzzi returned to Prague, where he was not only fully reconciled with Antonio Denzio but was also persuaded to bail Denzio’s troupe out of debt.[[51]](#footnote-51) The two were living under the same roof when Peruzzi died, late in December 1735. Denzio lost his wife only weeks earlier. Yet his career and that of his progeny flourished for decades to come. He moved to new quarters close to Count Sporčk, who would remain a steadfast ally.[[52]](#footnote-52) Through Sporčk’s social networks, Denzio’s numerous children were guided by powerful godparents.[[53]](#footnote-53) His descendants prospered as musicians of diverse kinds in courts and palaces all over Germany and Austria through the time of Beethoven, primarily under the surname Danzi.

### Gerolama Valsecchi Madonis in Moravia (1737-1739)

Wolfgang Hannibal von Schrattenbach (1660-1738) came from a noble Styrian family.[[54]](#footnote-54) After studies at the German College in Rome, he was named bishop of Olomouc in 1711 and became a cardinal the following year. After serving as viceroy of Naples (1719-1721), he resumed his Moravian post, but now with a heightened taste for Italian culture. His passion for Italian string music led him to engage Carlo Tessarini as director his instrumental music (1734-1736).[[55]](#footnote-55) The composer accordingly dedicated his *Sei concerti* *La Stravaganza*, op. 4, to Schrattenbach in 1737. The bishop focused his interest in theatrical music on Brno, where he had his residence. At the Teatro alla Taverna, established in the guest house on the market square, revised works from Denzio’s waning efforts in Prague were presented under the direction of the Mingotti brothers, Angelo and Pietro. It was under Pietro’s direction that Valsecchi Madonis had her last public performances.

The first of these occurred in the autumn of 1737, when she sang as Ostilia in Matteo Lucchini’s *Teodorico*.[[56]](#footnote-56) The bishop’s death (22 July 1738[[57]](#footnote-57)) led to a rapid decline in cultural patronage throughout Moravia. Despite this, she performed there again during Carnival in 1739, when she took the lead role (*Zoe*) in Antonio Costantini’s *Costantino riconosciuta*.[[58]](#footnote-58) However, she was not named in the cast of the anonymous pastiche *Amore e fortuna* (summer 1739).[[59]](#footnote-59) The Mingottis, whose troupe(s) traveled endlessly, came and went. Alessandro Manfredi, the theater’s manager in 1738, produced not only *Teodorico* but also *Argene*, *Arsace*, and a lost *Candace* during Carnival 1738. Filippo Neri del Fantasia returned in the autumn of 1738, when he produced *Elisa*. In the winter of 1739 (Carnival) he presented *Penelope la casta* and *Zoe*. Valsecchi Madonis had principal roles in all these works.[[60]](#footnote-60) [[Zoe vs Zoe]]

### A brief Return to Venice

The Madonises resurfaced in the second half of 1739 in Venice. It appears that both Lodovico and Antonio were recruited to spend some time in their homeland to participate in entertainments for a large delegation of Germans accompanying the Electoral Prince of Saxony (Friedrich Christian, 1722-1763) as he made his regress from Naples, where his sister, Maria Amalia (1724-1760), was wed to Don Carlos Borbone (Charles III of Spain) in 1738. Although Saxons predominated in this group, their well-wishers included both Neapolitans and Prussians. They stayed in Venice for six months, arriving in December 1739 and not leaving until late May 1740. They filled their time with operas and sacred services; concerts and balls; oratorios, motets, and secular entertainments motets; diplomatic banquets and festive regattas until they were undoubtedly weary.[[61]](#footnote-61) It had been decades since Venice had extended such exuberant hospitality to visiting nobles from abroad.

One of the Madonis twins directed the orchestra at San Giovanni Grisostomo in 1739-40, but accounts vary as to which one it was, and libretti are mute on the subject. At San Giovanni Grisostomo, two of the operas were by Neapolitan composers — Gennaro d’Alessandro and Antonio Giai — and the third by the Saxon court’s noted Kapellmeister, Johann Adolf Hasse. Both were well acquainted with Neapolitan musicians in Russia, and either should have been easily able to accommodate their wishes in Venice. Antonio Madonis is the one who achieved rare distincton in a private concert he gave on the *viola d’amore.* This entertainment took place in Ca’ Pisani (the palace owned by the current doge, Alvise Pisani), with the electoral prince and his retinue were in attendance, on New Year’s Day.[[62]](#footnote-62)

The death of Giovanni Battista Madonis (Venice, 7 October 1740) fell three week before that of Anna Ioannovna. According to the death register at San Giacomo dall’Orio, he had been suffering from some kind of mental derangement since the summer of 1738. The register entry (where bare facts, devoid of comment, were the norm) reads:

8 October [1740]

*Signore Gio. Battista Madonis, aged 60, confined to bed in his home for 22 months by a hypochondriacal mania, was mainly afflicted by an elevated fever for* [the past] *12 days. Dr. Rimmolinari attended him last night at 1. His son will bury him with the Chapter* [of San Giacomo dall’Orio] *in attendance.*[[63]](#footnote-63)

An unanswered question is where the Madonises were during this autumn, which is discussed below. What is clear, though, is that paths of Lodovico and Antonio diverged again in and after 1740, in Antonio’s case because he did not remain long in Russia after his next arrival and in Lodovico’s case because he was soon married.

Apart from the fact that Antonio is likely to have accompanied Gerolama to Brno for her numerous appearances (1737-1739), reports of his death in 1746 in St. Petersburg are simply wrong.[[64]](#footnote-64) However, the question of how much time Antonio spent in Russia after this 1740 return remains open.[[65]](#footnote-65) There is a report of Antonio passing through Pordenone in June 1747 with another “excellent” violinist named Angelo Colonna. The two were asked by an unnamed friend to participate in a celebration of the sanctification of a Florentine martyr, Catterina de Rizzi (1523-1590). For this recognition, a three-day observation was held in Pordenone’s Domenican convent.[[66]](#footnote-66) The presence of these “splendid” passing musicians was deemed to have made the ceremony “better than it might otherwise have been.”[[67]](#footnote-67) Beyond this, no later notice of Antonio Madonis has come to light.

### Other troupes spawned by Sant’Angelo

### Troupes spawned by San Samuele

1. Text by Adriano Morselli, dedicated to Antonio Ferdinando Gonzaga, the duke of Guastalla. The cast (including Annibale Pio, Anna Dotti, Anna Maria Fabri, and Rosa Mignatti) was predominantly from Bologna. The sets were by Bernardo Canale and his sons. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The work, on Matteo Noris’s text, was dedicated to the Genovese noblemen Domenico Grillo, a frequent patron of Venetian opera. The Bolognese Anna Dotti was cast as the heroine, with Annibale Pio Fabri as Gismondo. Sant’Angelo’s sets were created by Bernardo Canal and his sons. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This account is based on the one in E. Selfridge-Field, *A New Chronology of Venetian Opera and related Genres (1660-1760)*, Stanford University Press, 2007, pp. 332f. The account of the earlier Penelope is found in op. cit., pp. 167f. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. On the 31st the Council of Ten ordered the players to carry on without their *maestro*, but further performances cannot be confirmed. Despite his injuries, Chelleri was cited in a denunciation for issuing too many tickets. It normally fell to librettists to estimate libretto sales and to composers to estimate ticket sales. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Reproduced with commentary in Gastone Vio, “Una satira sul teatro veneziano di Sant'Angelo datata febbraio 1717,” Informazioni e studi vivaldiani: Bollettino annuale dell'Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi, 10, 103-130. (One satirical line in the anonymous verse maintained that that although the Red Priest [Vivaldi] was preparing a third opera for the season, no one “knew how he could pay for dinner”.) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Dotti and Ramponi had both made their Venetian debuts in *Arsilda*. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. On the production of *Arsilda* (1716/7), see *The New Chronology*, pp. 328f. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Details in I-Vas, Capi, Consiglio de Dieci, Notatorio, Filza 42 (1714-1718), Fasc. 1716, 30.I.1716 [M.V.]. Iseppo Angerelli. (Matters were not fully resolved until the following July 3rd.) Those pressing for the audit were creditors, musicians, and *ballarine.* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. I-Vas, Capi, Consiglio de Dieci, Filze xx. Adi 25 Febraro 1716 [m.v.] “Refferisco Io Antonio Fachi Fante de gl’Ill[ustrissi]mi et Ecc[ellentissi]mi Sig[nor]i Capi dell’Ecc[ellentissi]mo Con[sigli]o di X.i [Dieci] haver hoggi fatto l’infras[crit]to Cammandamento. D’Ordine de gl’Ill[usstrri]mi et Ecc[ellentssi]mi Sig[nor]i Capi dell’Ecc[ellentissi]mo Con[sigli]o di X.i [Dieci] si fà Commandamento a Voi D[omin]o Isepppo Angerelli come Cassier e depositario del soldo del Teatro di S. Angelo devvante da Palchi, o altra cosa, niuna eccetuatta, che di quello pervenirà nelle vostre mani di raggione del med[esim]o dobbiatte prima render sodisfatto interamente di tutto quello và Creditore D[omin]o Lodovico Madonis sono in d[ett]o Teatro il Violino Capo de Secondi nella terza recita necessò in loco di d[ett]o Francesco Venantio detto Bandiere, dovendo il rimanente resta impartitto [ripartitto] questo al Decretto di S.S.E.E. 12 Gennaro pass[at]o e ciò ex offitio.” [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Documentation in I-Vas, Sezione Notarile, Atti Francesco Biondi, Busta 1917, Fasc, 1717, dates of 22—29 Gennaro 1717 [M.V.]. Although reported in my *New Chronology* (pp. 338f), otherwise scarce nightly pay rates are useful points of reference here: Francesco Ziani, *lire* 12:8; Giovan Pettinati, *lire* 18; Carlo Bianchi, *lire* 12 plus lodging; Paolo Sabadin, first violinist, *lire* 20 plus lodging; Antonio Madonis, *lire* 8; Marco [Madonis?], *lire* 7:10; Giuseppe Rossi, Antonio Gabiato, Giacomo Urato, Antonio Ganasette, and Domenico Maheanì, *lire* 6:4 each; Gio. Batt. Recaldini *lire* 4:0, Antonio Meani *lire* 4:0. Gallo was paid *lire* 55:2; a hair-dresser, *lire* 4; two tailors, *lire* 3; sixteen stage hands and two pages, *lire* 7:8; prompters, *lire* 3:0; and Giorgio Creszentio and his ticket staff, *lire* 10:0. Bernardo Canal, who must have received an earlier down-payment, was now granted the balance of his payment for sets, for setting them up on opening night, and for adjusting them from night to night (*lire* 93:0 paid to him on opening night). The composer Tomaso Albinoni, listed as *maestro di musica*, received 50 *zecchini* on the first night (typically a composer received a total of 100 *zecchini* for an opera score) and 30 more for the first night performance. Domenico Magini was paid for tuning the instruments, and an anonymous priest who said mass for souls in Purgatory was given *lire* 1:10. On the 23rd (second performance) the four *forestieri* (Pettenati, Sabandin, Bianchi, Meani) were collectively paid *lire* 54:0. The Venetian musicians (probably eight, as above) received *lire* 77:12 collectively. Gallo and the priest were paid at the previous rate. Two hundred fourteen tickets (*bolletini*) were sold. These rates were largely unchanged for the third performance (25 January), but ticket sales declined from performance to performance. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Gianluca Stefani, *Sebastiano Ricci, impresario d’opera a Venezia nel primo Settecento* (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2015), p. 187. As a native of Belluno (ruled by Austria until 1866), Ricci was not recognized as a resident of the Venetian Republic. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Here I-Vas, Notarile, Atti, b. 1917, unnumbered folio. See Stefani, “Ricci,” p. 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Micky White provided an entry from 2 November 1714 entered in judicial books (I-Vas, Sindici e Giudici Estraordinari, B. 28, f. 28) concerning a dispute between a woman named Giovanna Vanussele, the wife of don Maffio Zanchi, and one “D. Lodovico Madonis”. The text reads, “Contr[at]to in off.o D. Lodovico Madonis, et p[er] nome della Sig[no]ra Giovanna Vanussele consorte de D. Maffio Zanchi inst[ant]e annotarsi, che creduto il soprad[ett]o Con.te annotato dall’ecc[ellen]te Donato Bonaldi, con il quale pretende aggravio perche nel contros[tat]to ordine sia stato espresso, che le intimatione e notitie siano a lui fatte correre come intervente di D. Maffio Zanchi, dice essersi ciò fatto stante che esso Bonaldi hà fatto, e fà nella p[rese]nte causa la figura d’interv[en]te, come con sta dagl’atti corsi, e come è solito di facersi altre cause ancora scrivendosi in off.o, ponendosi ad interdetto presentando scritture, è con far altri soliti degl’interven[en]ti, e maggiorm[en]te non essendovi stato nella p[rese]nte causa altro interv[en]to, p[er] detto Zanchi che la sua sola persona. Tuttavolta à quiete, e consola[io].ne di lui animo, dichiara con il p[rese]nte Cost.to non di sentire che la parola d’interv[en]to sia regolata in qual altro titolo che più paresse specioso, et honorufico al genio dello stesso S[igno]r Bonaldi, et siete et sine pregiud[uti]o.” Francesco Maria was a notary serving various interests in payment disputes at the Teatro Sant’Angelo (1715-16; see I-Vas, Sezione Notarile, Atti G. Bellam, B. 1917, entry of 3 Gennaio 1715 m.v.) and San Moisè (1716-17: cf. Capi, Consiglio de Dieci, Filza 42, entry of 30. I.1716 [=1717]). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. It seems improbable that the Madonises adapted its text (from Gasparini’s *Antioco* of 1705), since there is little evidence in their future lives of an interest in adapting or arranging. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Stefani, “Ricci”, p. 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. It was Carestini’s box (Pepian n. 20) that generated the document noting Antonio Madonis’s position as impresario on 24 February 1726 (reported in Stefani, p. 186). Domenico Viola received the rent. *Didone* was the first opera given in Venice that was based on a libretto by Pietro Metastasio. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The marriage contract is in I-Vas, Notarile Atti, notaio Gio. Garzoni Paulini, Reg. 3607, ff. 45, 60v. Mazzanti’s stage career had begun in 1710 in Gasparini’s *Tamerlano* (San Cassiano). In 1718 she had sung in the Porta *Ulisse* in Ferrara. Her subsequent appearances were in Munich (1722) and Genoa (1723) but most often in Venice. She usually sang San Cassiano, the Venetian theater preferred by Florentines. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Gastone Vio, “L’Arte de Sonadori e l'insegnamento della musica a Venezia”, *Recercare* 18 (2006). A notarial record tells us that “In data 8 maggio 1726, da Breslavia [Breslau], dava facoltà ad un legale di rappresentarlo nella causa per la dichiarazione di nullità del suo matrimonio celebrato con Rosanna Mazzanti il 15 maggio 1725. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. After her debut at Sant’Angelo in December 1714, Valsecchi subsequently appeared in Modena (1719), Turin (1721, 1722), and Verona (1723). She sang with the Peruzzi troupe in 1725 but returned to Venice to appear at San Cassiano as Teodolinda in Luigi Tavelli’s *Amore e Sdegno* (2 February 1726). Valsecchi may have been a conduit between San Cassiano and an anonymous satire on the theater’s production (1724) of Albinoni’s *Didone abbandonata*. The satire, *L’opera in commedia* (printed ostensibly in Amsterdam, n.d.; libretto in I-Mb, Raccolta Drammatica Corniani Algarotti No. 2850), dwells on pay disputes. San Cassiano’s from 1724 to 1726 was Giovanni Orsato. Replace with material from Reinhard’s book. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Mooser, I, 101. Another commentary mentioning Madonis in Breslau is that of Al. Choron e F. Fayolle, *Dictionaire historique des musicians, artistes et amateurs, mort o vivans,* v. 2 (Paris 1810-11), II, 2, where we read that “Madonis (Giovanni) was an excellent player of the violin, born in Venice. ... In 1726 he came to Breslau with an opera troupe as the director of its orchestra.” [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Bioni was a pupil of Giovanni Porta in Venice. Denzio had hired him in 1724 to script entertainments for Kuks. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Johann Mattheson, *Der musikalische Patriot* (Hamburg, 1728/facs. Zentral-antiquariat der DDR, Leipzig, xx), p. 348. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Varying accounts of connections between Bioni and Treu (who had myriad German and Italian pseudonyms) exist. I follow recently updated articles in *MGG Online* (Bioni, 1999; Treu, 2006). Both in Prague and in Breslau theatrical enterprises collapsed in 1734. Some of Bioni’s works had later lives in the Bohemian spa town of Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad) and in Brno (Brunn), Moravia. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Burigotti had recently been involved in opera productions in Bergamo (1723) and Mantua (1725). Pietro Denzio (the father of Antonio) succeeded Burigotti in Bergamo (1726). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. He mentioned Porpora’s *Siface* (26 December 1725). The San Giovanni Grisostomo singers Quantz names —“Nicolino” [Grimaldi], Giovanni Paita, and [Anna Maria Benti] Bulgarelli (“La Romanina”) — also sang in Vinci’s *Siroe* (2 February 1726). His brief mention of “Luigi” Madonis in a favorable comparison with his compatriot Antonio Vivaldi and the Milanese oboist Giuseppe Sammartini (1695-1750) appeared many years later in his Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen (1752). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The works are Sant’Angelo during the same winter were Antonio Pollarolo’s *Turia Lucrezia* (27 December 1725) plus Vivaldi’s *Cunegonda* (29 January 1726) and his *La fede tradita e vindicata* (16 February). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. When the *ancien régime* came to an end, only the Théâtre de la Monnaie survived. In fact it was there, following riots after a performance of Auber’s *La muette de Portici* (commonly called *Masaniello*) on 25 August 1830, that the first sparks that were to set off the revolution from which the modern state of Belgium was born were ignited. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Corresponding to most of modern Belgium. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Jacques Isnardon, *Le Théâtre de la Monnaie depuis la foundation jusqu’a nos jours* (Schott Frères, Brussels, 1890), p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Online at http://edocs.ub.uni-franfurt.de/volltexte/2009/11776/pdf/Orlando\_furioso\_921.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ungarelli and Ristorini (Mazzanti’s step-brother) were particularly adept at transferring Moliére’s comedies to the Italian intermezzo medium. Next in Brussels were the perennially popular *Serpilla e Bacocco* (*Il marito giocatore e la moglie bacchetone*), opening on 7 June and *Don Micco e Lesbina* (17 June). By local standards the intermezzi were received particularly well. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. See M. Frédéric Faber, *Histoire du Théâtre français en Belgique depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours d’après des documents inédits reposant aus archives générals du Royaume Acquisition* (Bruxelles: J. Olivier, and Paris: Maison Tresse, 1878), I, 107f. Faber did not understand gender implications of Italian names, for Ristorini is reportedly “Antonia” and Valsecchi Madonis “Gerolamo.” [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Bruno Forment, “Italian opera 'under the Belgian climate': The 1727–30 seasons at the Monnaie,” Journal of the Alamire Foundation, 4/2 (Oct 2012), 259-280. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Jean-Pietter Felix, “Un inventaire inédit des Cahiers de musique du chapitre de Saint-Pierre à Anderlecht (1783), » *Revue belge de Musicologie* / *Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Muziekwetenschap*, (1977), 162-163. Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3686194. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Nagel, Wilibald, "Deutsche Musiker des 18. Jahrhs. im Verkehre mit J. Fr. A. v. Uffenbach,“ *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 13/1 (1911), 69-106. Nagel (p. 71) explains that the troupe was to perform for six weeks between Easter [13 April in 1727] and the autumn. The agreement made with A. M. Peruzzi (writing from Brussels) on 16 June 1728 specified an all-Italian cast formed in Venice. It included the sopranos Rosa Ricci, Rosa Venturini, and Paolo Vida, the contralto Paola Marotti, the tenor Marieschi, the basses Gaetano Piretti and Michielli, and an orchestra (headed by Masotti) including the violinists “Madonis and son.” [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Stefani (“Ricci”, p. 188) lists Marco Madonis (third violin) in the Sant’Angelo in 1717-18. His place in the family tree is unknown. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Milada Jonášová, “I Denzio: tre generazioni di musicisti a Venezia e a Praga,” Hudební věda, 45(1-2) 57-114. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Rashid Sasha-Pegah, “An *Argippo* pasticcio,” Studi vivaldiani: Rivista annuale dell'Istituto Italiano***Antonio***Vivaldi della Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 11 (2011), 63-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The archduchess was a niece of the empress, Elisabeta Christina, and the daughter of Ludwig Harrach. Although Valsecchi Madonis is not named in any Brussels cast lists after 1727, operas continued to be performed under the governess’s patronage until 1735, when a reversion to spoken comedy and tragedy was made. See Edmund vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-Bas avant la XIXe siècle*. BrusselsL V.-A. van Trigt (1872), II, pp. 222-225. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Italian and German texts are given on facing pages of the libretto. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. It is from the records of this case that Daniel E. Freeman (*The Opera Theater of Count Franz Anton von Sporck*, Stuyvesant NY: Pendragon Press, 1992, p. 129 et passim) gleaned so much information on the Denzio troupe and their up-and-down relations (both as intermarried families and as performing troups) with the Peruzzi. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 333. The latter work (the dedication for which was signed on 31 January 1733 by xx) also included Filippo Galletti (Medone). “Girolama Madonis” sang as Penelope (cf. The Algarotti Corniani Raccolta Drammatica collection, Libretto 2513; online at http://www.urfm.braidense.it/cataloghi/searchrd.php). [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. The work had been staged in Padua in 1731-32. The libretto was dedicated on 30 January. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. A later petition indicates that Teresa Peruzzi had spent three months at the court of the Archduke of Bavaria in 1733. In April of that year Heinrich Casimir Purmann (Burmann), a comic actor in the thriving *Meistersinger* guild of Augsburg, decided to stage an opera. The extensive history of this production is reported in Wilibald Nägel, "Kleine Mitteilungen zur Musikgeschichte aus Ausburger Acten,“ *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft*, 2 (1908), 145-154. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. In Padua it was a pastoral cantata *a 4*, performed before the Academici Geniali and dedicated to the mayor, Daniele Dolfin. The libretto is in I-Mb. Racc. Dramm. 5538. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Paganelli had been active in Venice during the preceding winter. His *Caduta del Leone* (5 December 1732) at Sant’Angelo was succeeded by Galuppi’s *Argenide* (17 January 1733), which was followed by Paganelli’s *Tigrane* (2 February). The last merited “full applause” in part because of rave reviews for Teresa Peruzzi. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Friedrich A. Witz, *Versuch einer Geschichte der theatralischen Vorstellungen in Augsburg*, 1876, p. 30. The last evidence of the Peruzzi troupe’s activity there is dated 23 October 1734. See also Wilibald Nagel, Kleine Mitteilungen zur Musikgeschichte aus Ausburger Akten,” *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft*, 9/1 (Aut. 1907), pp. 145-154. Teresa Peruzzi appeared in *Il condannato innocente* (4 November) and *Filindo* *oder Musicalisches Schau=Spiel* (19 November). [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Saskia Woyke deserved the credit for calling my attention to Christoph Meixner, *Musiktheater in Regensburg im Zeitalter des Immerwährenden Reichstages* (Sinzig: Studio Verlag, 2008), which is vol. 3 of Detlef’s Altenburg’s series *Musik und Theater*. The materials reported come from the library of the dukes of Thurn und Taxis (Franz-Maria-Chirstinen-Stiftung). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. I-Vas, Procuratia de Supra, Chiesa, Actorum, Reg 153, f. 164v. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. His release from San Marco was confirmed on 6 October 1729. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. To no avail. Denzio’s enterprise in Prague barely survived during its two remianing years there. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Jonašová, “Denzio”, pp. 90-91. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. The ninth of Denzio’s ten children had as her godfather Johann Leopold Count of Paar (1683-1734).The count’s wife, Maria Theresia Starnberg, had been the dedicatee of the first opera, *Arrenione*, given in Sporck’s new theater, late in November 1726. The other children had similarly august patrons mainly from the Bohemian aristocracy. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Schrattenbach was an influential patron as well in other smaller venues in Silesia and Bohemia. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Tessarini (born in *c*. 1690 in Rimini) held a concurrent appointment (1733-1738) in Urbino but had been employed at San Marco, Venice, from 1720 to 1733 and undoubtedly knew all the Madonises. Gio. Mossi’s violin sonatas Op. 1 (1716) had earlier been dedicated to Schrattenbach. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Her appearance there loosely coincided with Paganellis return to Bavaria to serve as Duchess Wilhelmine’s master of chamber music. After a stint in Brunswick and Wolffenbuettel, Paganelli returned to Venice. He later died in Madrid. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Following Paola Besutti, Roberto Giuliani, and Gianandrea Polazzi, *Carlo Tessarini da Rimini: Violinista, compositore, editore nell’Europa del Settecento* (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2012), p. 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Costantini was a comico by training, and *Costantino riconosciuto* was a musical satire. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Some of the Brno librettos were printed by a woman, Maria Barbara Swoboda. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. See Jana Spáčilová, “Soloists in Opera Productions in Brno, Holešov, Kroměřiž, and Vyškov: Italian Opera Singers in Moravian Sources *c*. 1720-1740”, Part I, in *Musicians’ Mobilities and Music Migrations in Early Modern Europe* (Mainz Historical Cultural Sciences, 33), ed. Gesa zur Nieden and Berthold Over, (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2016), pp. 255-274. Spáčilová’s numerous new additions to the repertory of Moravian theaters come primarily from documents in family archives. Those concerning Madonis are found on pp. 269-274. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Many of these special events are described in detail in *Adria festosa*, a festival book of the season. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. The secretary commented on his own particular pleasure on hearing the *viola d’amore* played in concert at the Ca’ Pisani as well as the performance of Antonio Madonis on violin. While there is no prior mention of Antonio’s skill on this instrument, he could have acquired it years earlier in Bohemia or recently in Moravia, where such instruments were long made (and used). [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Parocchia di San Giacomo dall’Orio, Morti, Reg. 8 (1736-1742), f. 89v. 8 d.o [8bre], Il Sig. Gio. Batta. Madonis di anni 60 in c[irc]a confinato in letto mesi vinti due da una mania Ippocondriaca, fu sopratutto dà una elevata febbre continua di g[ior]ni 12. Medico il Rimmolimari hieri sera à un hora, lo farà sepelir suo figlio [con] Cap[ito]lo. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Mooser, *op. cit.*, I, 105, 225, quoting P. Arapof, *Annales du Thé­âtre russe* (in Russian; St. Petersbourg, 1861), pp. 64, 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Mooser, I, 176, affirms Antonio’s return of *c*. 1740 (together with those of Lodovico, the Dall’Oglios, and two other musicians I, 176), and he reaffirms it (I, 209) in a longer, more composite list of names of musicians who accrued over the next few years. He states a second time (I, 217) that Antonio died in 1746. It appears, however, that he left Russia and did not return. Nothing is known about his travel companion, Angelo Colonna, but he could have belonged to another family of musicians at the court. A Teresa Colonna was listed as a singer there in the late 1760s (Stählin, II, 166). One could allow for the possibility that the passing violinist in Pordenone was a like-named son of Antonio, but there is not a shred of evidence to support it. If Geraloma and Antonio had any children, their names, dates and places of birth are unknown. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. The Domenicans had moved to a new convent outside the city walls in 1728. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Giovan Battista Pomo, *Comentari Urbani (1728-1791)*, Prodenone: Grafiche Editoriali Artisiche Pordenonesi, 1990, pp. 128-129. The commemorative feast was subsequently held on 13 February. I am indebted to Loris Stella for calling my attention to this source. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)