

Year	Day	Theater	Title	Composer	Librettist (earlier use)	Subject; Patronage; Performance
1749	14. V.	S. Angelo	<i>L'Arcadia in Brenta</i>	Galuppi	Goldoni	<i>cicisbei</i> Satire on <i>villeggiatura</i> (and much else); well regarded for text and music
1749	14. V.	S. Cassiano	<i>Tra due litiganti il terzo gode</i>	Pescetti (Vicenza, 1746)	Lorenzi (Vicenza, 1746)	Comic work; no dedicatee
1749	14. V.	S. Samuele	<i>Leucippo</i>	Hasse (1747)	Pasquin (1747)	Arcadian; no dedicatee
1750	[6. V.]	S. Samuele	<i>Ineneo in Atene</i>	Terradellas	Stampiglia (1726)	Not performed. Season cancelled by Council of Ten.

## Consequences of the Spanish Succession for Venetian Music

The War of the Spanish Succession, fought between 1701 and 1714, changed the relationship between opera and other kinds of secular music in Venice. Opera throughout the seventeenth century sought to create illusions of power that were ever more pronounced. It was the opera of the last two decades of the century that left the greatest residue of reports attesting to the ingenuity of staging. Sets that bestowed amazing verisimilitude—be it with boats bobbing on real waters or archers stalking real game across the stage—instilled images of control over nature that suggested control over the storms and beasts of the political world. Machines that enabled gods to descend in regal majesty to Earth not only overwhelmed theatre audiences; they also suggested that witnesses were divinely favoured. Heroes were portrayed in the incisions of libretti as giants.

The chief opera season fell between the feast of St. Stephen (December 26) and the moveable feast of Shrove Tuesday, but there was also a great deal of theatrical activity from early October, when the *Maggior Consiglio* recessed, until the start of Advent, when it reconvened. This activity had consisted principally of comedies at the *Teatri di S. Salvatore* and *S. Samuele* until the later years of the seventeenth century, when the several houses built specially for opera decided to offer music dramas in the fall.

Autumn opera proved to be a significant success, although it never dislodged comedy. The audience for autumn opera was, however, a more haphazard one. The Venetian nobility had retreated to villas in the countryside, so they were rarely present either for autumn operas or for comedies. Instead it seems to have been the merchant class from Italy and elsewhere who populated audiences for these works. The non-Venetian Italian nobility were most likely to patronize Venetian opera in December and early January, when serious, sometimes tragic, dramas drawn from ancient history were the principal fare.

The works that were most lavish and whose patronage was most carefully cultivated were those given toward the end of the Carnival season. For south-bound visitors from German-speaking lands an appointment in Venice towards the end of Carnival had two virtues: it permitted one to remain on native soil until the Christmas period and, if desired, to pass on to Rome during Lent. The last two decades of the seventeenth century constitute the period during which the largest number of Venetian operas were dedicated to eminent German patrons.

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There could not have been a greater difference in the reception of Venetian opera among any two groups in Europe than that between the last of the Gonzaga dukes and the Austrian ambassadors posted to Venice in the first half of the eighteenth century. Ferdinand Carlo was such a phenomenally energetic presence in Venetian social life in the last quarter of the seventeenth century that one must question whether the genre of opera would have survived into

the eighteenth century without him. He was the designated patron of no fewer than 15 works staged in Venice between 1677 and 1704. This made him without question the single most active patron of opera over its first century (if not all time) in Venice. It was rare for more than two or three operas to be dedicated to one patron over the course of a lifetime.

Ferdinand showed no overwhelming preference for one theatre or one composer. The works dedicated to him ranged from Legrenzi's *Totila* at SS. Giovanni e Paolo in 1677 to Polani's *Vindice la pazzia della vendetta* at the lowly Teatro di San Fantin in 1707. This patronal descent, from an opulent work by a major composer to an obscure one by a minor figure, was reflected, to a degree, in the progress of Venetian opera itself. It was never the same after the exile and eventual death of the profligate Duke.

Ferdinand had other reasons to frequent Venice, for it was his company of comedians who played at the Teatro di San Samuele, a sometime opera house. It was typical for him to visit Venice in the autumn to attend the comedies, which often ran unopposed in October. *En route* during October, he often stopped in Rovigo to participate in the annual fair there. He then most probably returned to his "states" during Advent, when social life in Venice was more restrained. He faithfully returned for Carnival, often punctuating his sojourn with at least one quick trip back to Mantua. The spring months often brought him back to Venice once more to participate in the riding exercises that he seems, unlike most Venetians, to have so much cherished. All up, he could easily spend six months of the year in the lagoon.

How welcome he was personally is open to question. Intelligence reports are filled with notes on his comings and goings, and those of his father's natural son. On 5 November 1681 Giovanni Lando wrote that it was said that "il naturale del Duca è instabilissimo, et ha per sua familliare il fare tutto al oposto di quello che dice." This observation was conveyed by Conte Viallardi, the secretary of state.<sup>1</sup>

He was, nonetheless, very adept at involving himself in festivities of diverse sorts. Regattas and cavallary exercises were among his favorite non-theatrical occupations. In February 1679, a series of cavalry exercises involving him was planned. Sixteen riders were divided into four squadrons. The riders were armed with zagaglie, pistole, and sciabile. The exercises were to terminate with a ballet! This ballet was to involve "exquisite music" and superb costumes representing Indians, Moors, Turks, and Tartars. The Duke of Mantua was to lead one of these squadrons. Each squadron would be led by two trumpets and served by palafrenieri, leading costumed horses. Attendance at this event required tickets issued in advance.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I-Vas Inquisitori di Stato, Riferte de' Confidenti, Busta 611, Fasc. Gio. Lando (1681).

<sup>2</sup> I-MOas A, Busta 5270 (115), entry of 25 February 78 [M.V.].

It was the Duke's goal to attend all operas given in Venice [1679/10]. To make himself welcome he sometimes gave substantial gifts to performers. Ferdinando's enthusiasm for opera may have been based on his father's example, for Vincenzo Gonzaga was the dedicatee of the inaugural work at San Giovanni Grisostomo, Pallavicino's *Vespasiano* [1678\1]. Heroic music dramas, especially those of Legrenzi and Pallavicino, were at their height of popularity in the 1680s. Some examples for which Ferdinand was the patron were [1682/10, 1684/2, 1685/1]. The deaths of both composers (Pallavicino in 1688 and Legrenzi in 1690) led the Venetians to look outside their city for successors.<sup>3</sup> The chief heir to patronization at San Giovanni Grisostomo, Venice's most respected theatre, was to be Carlo Francesco Pollarolo, from Brescia.

Ferdinand took advantage of the wide range of works and venues that Venice offered. Unlike German patrons who wished always to be associated only with the august theatre of San Giovanni Grisostomo, he was perhaps lacking in discrimination of any kind. He was a patron to some of the most marginal ventures on the Venetian stage—those of the Teatri di Cannaregio and San Fantin. Fedeli's *Don Chisciot della Manzia*, given at the former in 1680, featured a text by the theatre's owner, Marco Morosini. The production of Pistocchi's *Gli amori fatali*, given at San Moisè during Carnival of 1682, was moved to the home of Gio. Maria Vidari when Lent arrived. Unlike most works staged in Venice, this was a puppet opera, and a comedy at that. When it was given in Venice in 1703, the anonymous *Le finezze d'amore* was dedicated to Sebastiano Brun, but it had enjoyed Ferdinand's patronage at the fair in Rovigo in 1698.

As a patron Ferdinand also tolerated poorly received works by little-known composers in the more established theatres. Giannettini's *Temistocle in bando* "found little favour" at San Cassiano in 1682/3. Gabrielli's *Rodoaldo* "did not satisfy anyone" when it was given at San Moisè in 1685. (Some political bias might be suspected here, since both Gianettini and Gabrielli had ties to Modena.) A few works which, like *L'odio e l'amore*, won high marks for their performance also figured in the repertory. The colorful backdrops, ballets, and accomplished singing styles in Francesco Rossi's *La Corilda* (San Moisè, 1688) were noted. "Universal satisfaction" was produced by Boniventini's *Il gran Macedone* (San Cassiano, 1690). Everything was to be "beautiful" in the pastiche *Il Tirsi*<sup>4</sup> (San Salvatore, 1696), but it was noted that the work attracted few people.

Famous *castrati* were featured in many of the works that Ferdinand patronized, but he also developed a fondness for providing female singers with lifetime pensions in exchange for the privilege of determining where they could sing [Gigli-xx]. Since performance in Venice was always acceptable, this practice had no negative consequences for Venetian opera. Even the

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<sup>3</sup> As they had done before: Pallavicino was from Salò, and Legrenzi was from Bergamo.

<sup>4</sup> The composers included Lotti, Caldara, and Arisoti.

composers that Ferdinand engaged as *maestri* of his court, Marc'Antonio Ziani (1687-91) and Antonio Caldara (1699-1707), seem to have remained principally resident in Venice.

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When the war actually arrived and Ferdinand stayed home to guard his interests, it became necessary for his court to attempt to provide all the things to which he had grown accustomed in Venice. Somewhat before, in May 1700, two operas were given in Mantua on the occasion of the Cavalcade held by the cavalliers of the Order of the Blood on the 20th.<sup>5</sup> In January of 1702 it was reported that "the entertainment of comedies and other jollities continues, but alas . . . there is much penury."<sup>6</sup> Many days earlier the Duke's company of comedians had arrived in Venice and their show had opened at the Teatro di S. Samuele on 23 January, but the Duke remained at home.<sup>7</sup> Towards the end of Carnival balls were also held in Mantua, and on the last night the Duke provided a banquet for 70 persons and a great celebration "of the two Crowns."<sup>8</sup> The French and German troops, it was confidently reported, would soon be gone from Mantua.

When Prince Eugene of Savoy<sup>9</sup> took charge of the troops in the summer of 1702 courtly life took on the more mundane and regular functions practised in the Habsburg domains. The Duke visited King Philip V and Count Lorenzo Beretti, the ducal secretary, was knighted and given a generous pension. In Mantua itself, however, a plague raged, and the nobility evacuated the city as best they could.

Since the prophecy that the troops would soon be gone was not borne out, those who would have to pass through or near the duchy en route to Venice were loathe to make the trip. The war effectively retrained those in central and southern parts of the Italian peninsula to find their entertainments at home. The Duke of Modena was also stripped of his wealth, removing one more possible source of patronage from the Venetian milieu.

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<sup>5</sup> I-Vnm Cod It. VI-477 (=12121), entry of 22 May 1700.

<sup>6</sup> I-Vnm Cod. It. VI-478 (=12122), entry of 4 February 1702.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, entry of 28 January 1702.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, entry of 11 March 1702.

<sup>9</sup> Same person who led the Austria defeat of Turks in 1683??

From the point of view of Venetian culture the heir apparent of this turmoil was Prince Eugene. He arrived incognito in Venice on 29 December 1702 and eagerly attended the opera at San Giovanni Grisostomo two days later.<sup>10</sup>

This work can be identified as Pollarolo's *L'odio e l'amore*, which had opened on the 27th. The appearances of Cecchino, Nicolino, and Diamantina drew special notice (PV). The virtuosity of the singers, the majesty of the sets, and the splendor of the costumes were said to complement each other (PV).

There is no further evidence of Ferdinand's presence in Venice until near the end of Carnival [8 March] in 1707, when Hessian troops were already en route to Mantua. The Duke was seen often on the Piazza San Marco, sometimes with a mask and sometimes without. He was enjoying good health, it was claimed, and was able to attend the ball at San Giovanni Grisostomo on the evening of Shrove Tuesday.<sup>11</sup>

In April it was reported that the Duke was now in Venice preparing a game of *Pallone* and soon he would be returning to Padua [where he was now officially in exile] to attend the fair of St. Anthony, which was celebrated in early June.<sup>12</sup> In October Charles Montagu, the special ambassador of the King of England, encountered the Duke at the fair of Rovigo and found him to be "lacking of any indisposition."<sup>13</sup> Believing the accuracy of this view, the Duke died in Padua on 5 July 1708. In November a memorial service was held in his honor under the auspices of the Duke of Lorraine at the church of San Francesco Grande in Padua, where his body originally lay in state.<sup>14</sup>

Less than a month later the Princess of Darmstadt, en route to meet her husband in Naples, arrived in Venice. Her stay, which included attendance at numerous comedies and operas, was hosted by the Austrian ambassador.<sup>15</sup> In 1710 the hereditary rights of the Duke of

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<sup>10</sup> I-Vnm Cod. It. VI-479 (12123), entry of 6 January 1702/3. This report notes, however, that he did not stay, as anticipated, with the Austrian ambassador but instead with Sig. Messa, an imperial commissioner.

<sup>11</sup> I-Vnm Cod. It. VI-483 (12127), entry of 12 March 1707.

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, entry of 30 April 1707.

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, entry of 22 October 1707.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, entry of 10 November 1708.

<sup>15</sup> *Op. cit.*, entry of 1 December 1708. It was during this same month that the King of Denmark came to Venice with a retinue of 130.

Mantua were still pending before the Council of 40 in Venice, and the matter was only resolved in July 1711.<sup>16</sup>

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The Austrian governor who arrived in Mantua in 1708 made a gesture of homage to his predecessor in becoming the patron of the anonymous *Edvige, regina d'Ungheria* in 1709, but his interest was apparently perfunctory, for the work was anonymous and he displayed no further interest in opera. Lateral descendants of the late Duke—Antonio Ferdinando, the Duke of Guastalla, and his son Giuseppe Maria—were the patrons of three Venetian operas over the next decade. These works were Gasparini's *Rodomonte* (1714), Porta's *La costanza combattuta* (1716), and Vivaldi's *L'incoronazione di Dario* (1717).

Most of the works mentioned up to this point do not survive. Their existence is known only from libretti. Vivaldi's *Dario* is a striking exception: it has been staged in recent years. This work is perfunctory in matters of characterization, but it is quite special in its instrumental coloration. It requires many of the unusual instruments—theorboes, *viole all'inglese*, etc.—otherwise known only from Vivaldi's oratorio *Giuditta triumphans*, which was given only a few months previously in recognition of the victory of Marshall Schulenburg at Corfù.<sup>17</sup>

Another notable feature of this group of "post-Ferdinand" works is that three of them were given at the Teatro di Sant'Angelo, a theatre that the Duke himself showed no favoritism to whatsoever. Sant'Angelo was a low-budget theatre whose affairs were ceaselessly in chaos. It was in notoriously poor physical condition. Its musicians shivered throughout productions, started hours late, and often had to get court orders for back pay. Its existence can never have been much beyond marginal. As the master of its small orchestra, Vivaldi brought credit to Sant'Angelo with his brilliant violin solos at intermissions. Many (including Benedetto Marcello in his satirical tract *Il teatro alla moda*) deemed them inappropriate, but they succeeded in bringing notice to the priest-turned composer.

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Thus it was that in the following year, 1718, Prince Philipp, Landgrave of Hesse, brought Vivaldi to his court in Mantua. That Vivaldi remained slightly over two years (through the start of 1720) owed to the death of the dowager empress, Eleonora Madalena Theresia of the Palatine. A compulsory period of mourning caused the suspension of all operatic activity. Prince Philipp

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<sup>16</sup> I-Vnm Cod. It. VI-486 (12130), entry of 1 February 1709 M.V., when two votes of four were cast for the Duke of Lorraine and the other two for the Casa Gonzaga, and entry of 1 August 1711, when the dispute seems finally to have been resolved.

<sup>17</sup> Judith represented Venice and Holofernes the defeated Turks.

wrote on Vivaldi's behalf to the Imperial ambassador in Venice, Count Giovanni Battista Colloredo.<sup>18</sup> Vivaldi was extremely active as an opera composer during his stint in Mantua, and he was far less tied to Venice afterwards than he had been before. He had various discontinuous involvements in Rome between 1720 and 1724 and a growing list of patrons in Bohemia and other easterly climes. He had no documented relationship with the Austrian monarchy, although his first dramatic work, *xx*, had been given in Rovigo in 1708 and could, one supposes, have been attended by the governor.

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If there was a musical tradition that accrued to the Austrian embassy in Venice, it was one that, to an approximation followed Roman tastes and practices. Opera per se was eschewed. More tasteful secular vocal works, laudatory ones with four or five roles to mark the rites of passage of royalty, were the norm. Orchestras were definitely much larger in Rome, often numbering around 100 at the turn of the century. Venetian theatre orchestras were small, rarely surpassing 10 players.

These tastes were of course mediated through Charles VI (reigned 1711-1740), who was notoriously severe of attitude and discrete of taste, as compared with his amiable grandfather Leopold I (d. 1705), whose love of music and cultivation of Italian musicians was celebrated. This predilection for things Italian owed, in part, to the Gonzaga heritage. The Empress Eleonora Gonzaga had been an enormously important patroness of Italian opera and Italian instrumental music from her marriage (to Ferdinand III) in 1651 until her death in 1686.

The musical events that took place at Venetian embassies in the were sometimes described as serenatas. There is some possibility that the generic term "serenades" embraced performances that were instrumental only or which involved shorter instrumental and vocal pieces. In all events the ensemble of instruments that took part in festivities at both the Austrian and the French embassies grew steadily larger—and apparently more accomplished—over the first 30 years of the eighteenth century. There are several accounts of 50 and 60 players. Particularly notable is the almost frenetic competition between the two that developed in the mid-1720s.

Since vocal serenatas were almost always occasional pieces intended for performance only once, libretti were rarely printed and identifiable music is lacking for all but a few works. To some degree the embassy in Venice merely copied the practice of Vienna: serenatas for the name days of the reigning monarchs were an annual, if ephemeral, occurrence.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Michael Talbot, "Vivaldi and the Empire," *Informazioni e studi vivaldiani* 8 (1987), p. 35.

<sup>19</sup> Della Seta....



A pronounced cultivation of instrumental ensembles within embassies can be traced to the closing years of the seventeenth century. This first comes to notice with the arrival of the Count of Berka as Imperial ambassador in December 1696.<sup>20</sup> Almost simultaneously Baron Martini, the resident of the Duke of Wittenberg, arrived from Milan and took possession of the Palazzo Mocenigo near the Traghetto di S. Tomà. Baron Martini lost no time in cultivating musicians. Barely a month after his arrival (on 23 January 1697) he entertained at a luncheon at which a "famous singer" was given jewels and coins worth 1200 *doppie*.<sup>21</sup> For his public entry in May the Baron gave a far more sumptuous banquet in a large palazzo in Murano and sponsored the mock battle called a *Guerra de' Pugni* on a small bridge adjacent to the Campo San Barnaba. In the evening there was a ball in the garden of Giovanni Mocenigo on the Giudecca. This Venetian nobleman was about to go to Madrid as "governor". The garden was designed to simulate the legendary Arcadia. Sinfonias played by the most exquisite instruments issued from artificial grottos that were brightly lighted by candle.<sup>22</sup> Numerous such entertainments had been given over the preceding years, particularly in coincidence with visits Romans or others with interests in Rome, such as Prince Ottoboni.

Berke:

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Colloredo, who took up his post after the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht, which resolved the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713, had the opportunity to establish something of a new regime at the embassy in Venice.

He was described by an agent in Bologna in the following way in 1715:

Count Giovanni Battista Colloredo is a most gentle cavalier of the best inclination and a peace-loving temperament. He is not well versed in the understanding of ministerial affairs, in which he has no experience. His concept at Court is to be good man, but not a good minister.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> I-Vnm Cod It VI-473 (=12117), entry of 8 December 1696. His predecessor, Francesco della Torre, had died on 12 December 1695, after an illness of 15 months.

<sup>21</sup> I-Vnm Cod. It. VI-474 (12118), entry of 26 January 1696 M.V.

<sup>22</sup> Op. cit., entry of 25 May 1697.

<sup>23</sup> I-Vas Inquisitori di Stato, Riferte de' Confidenti, Busta 552, entry of 17 November 1715: "Il Co: Gio. Btta. Colloredo è un gentilissimo Cav:re di ottima inclinazione, e di pacifico genio. Non è molto versato nella cognizione degl'affari del

Overall, the practice of the embassy followed the practice of Vienna: the name days of the emperor and empress were observed with notable activities.<sup>24</sup> Signal affairs of State—and there were many in the first years of Colloredo's embassy—were also celebrated. The year 1716 stands out as one in which gala entertainments were particularly numerous. Among them we read of these:

3 May: Ambassador G. B. Colloredo arranged for the singing of a solemn mass and Te Deum with exquisite music in the church of the Padri Carmelitani Scalzi, under the triple burst of cannons in thanks for the birth of the Archduke. He had a lunch at his palace and dispersed wine and money in the area around San Stin. In the evening there was festivity both within and without the palace and in the *sala* there was a "armoniosa sinfonia d'ogni sorte di stromenti".<sup>25</sup>

4 May: Ambassador Colloredo, having just returned from *villeggiatura*, gave a feast for S. Carlo with symphonies and songs. (A)<sup>26</sup>

27 August: A cantata by Carlo Francesco Pollarolo was sung at behest of the ambassador in honor of the emperor and the victory of his armies in Hungary.<sup>27</sup>

4 November: A serenata was given for the name day of emperor by Ambassador Colloredo.<sup>28</sup>

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ministerio, in cui non è stato mai esercitato. Il di lui concetto alla Corte è di esser un buon sig:re, mà non buon Ministro."

<sup>24</sup> These have been well documented by Della Seta: xx.

<sup>25</sup> (A, Donado). This archduke did not survive. Charles's daughter Maria Theresa succeeded him in 1740.

<sup>26</sup> (A).

<sup>27</sup> [main victory was that of Pr. Eugene at Petrovaradin on 5 August] (MT/Benigna)

<sup>28</sup> (A; Alvisi/Donado)

We might expect that a celebration of major proportions would have taken place following the signing of the Peace of Passarawotiz (between Austria, Venice, and Turkey) on 12 September 1718. No documentation of such an event has thus far come to light.

The next well-noted entertainment given by the ambassador occurred following the weeing of his son Karl Ludwig to Eleonora Gonzaga. The wedding took place in Mantua in August 1721. The performance of a serenata on the Grand Canal in front of the ambassadorial residence was planned for Sept. 3.<sup>29</sup> This was Pollarolo's *Il pescatore disingannato*.<sup>30</sup> The concourse of persons of distinction who went to enjoy it was extraordinary. For its performance a "masterful machine was nobly illuminated."

Colloredo's Roman connections become clear when, early January 1723 his firstborn grandson with baptized in the chapter of the ambassadorial palace with Prince Camillo Borghese as his godfather.<sup>31</sup>

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Only a few weeks earlier, on 11 December 1722, a new French ambassador, Count de Gergy, arrived in Venice. For the balance of the decade, there seems to have been mounting competition in the presentation of gala evenings at the two embassies.

For two years from the middle of 1724 there was a constant toing and froing of activities. Some of the most dazzling events were the following:

29 August 1724: The Imperial ambassador gave *fiesta di ballo* following by a serenata and *cena* at his palace, which was reciprocated on 2 September by the French ambassador de Gergy, who entertained 16 noble men and women with a "beautiful serenata". In the evening of the latter date there was a "bellissimo concerto di suoni".<sup>32</sup>

According to Donado, the Imp. Ambassador's event was on Monday (the 28th), when it honored the birth of the reigning empress[ Elisabeth Christine]. It consisted of a beautiful

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<sup>29</sup> (A)

<sup>30</sup> (MT, 38)

<sup>31</sup> A c. 1.1.1723.

<sup>32</sup> (Alvisi)

"concerto di canti e suoni", a grand dinner, and then a most beautiful "danza". Talbot has identified the musical work as Antonio Pollarolo's *I tre voti*.<sup>33</sup>

4 November 1724: For the feast of S. Carlo the Amb. Colloredo gave a bellissima serenata, dinner, and *ballo*. The guests included Marshall Schulemburg, who had successfully led the Venetian forces against the Turks at Corfù in 1716. Here Talbot has identified the serenatas as *Il nome glorioso in terra, santificato in cielo*.<sup>34</sup>

7 January 1725: The Ambassador Colloredo had a sumptuous *pranzo* for visiting Bavarians royalty. The next day Count de Gergy entertained them with a "concerto di musica composto de piu virtuosi sonatori," and Faustina Bordoni sang.

May 1725: Count de Gergy made his public entry. Almorò Pisani was elected Venetian ambassador to France in the same month. On 3-4 November 1726 he also had a public entry.

3 February 1724/5: Count Colloredo, the ambassador, gave a "sontuosissima cena" and a "nobilissima danza" for the prince and prince of Modena.

25 August 1725: The French ambassador gave a particularly great feast for S. Louis including a sumptuous serenata "a più voci di scelta musica." On the 28th the Austrian ambassador responded with a ball, serenata, and refreshments for the 36th birthday of the empress, Elisabeth Christine.

12 September 1725: Vivaldi's serenata *Gloria e Imeneo* given at French embassy for the wedding of Louis XV and Maria Leszcynska.

2 March 1726: For his official entry, Co. Colloredo had a palace "illuminato con concerti e sinfonie."

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<sup>33</sup> [score in A-Wn], music by A. Pollarolo, text by V. Cassani.

<sup>34</sup>, score in A-Wn.]

What is perhaps most interesting about this list of musical activities is that, with the arrival of Count de Gergy, Vivaldi and Albinoni can be so clearly identified with the French, with the Pollarolos, who lived near the Austrian embassy in the parish of San Simeon Grande, remain the favorites of the Austrians.

Once again, however, affairs in Mantua may have interleaved intentions that in Venice were kept carefully separated. In August of 1722 Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt went to the shores of Lake Garda at Salò to enjoy better air and cooler temperatures. During the three weeks during which he was in residence in the palazzo of the Marquis Martinengo, he was entertained with "great diversions on the lake, where the most beautiful serenatas were given in music with harmonies of suoni, and with a concourse of many nobles of those parts."<sup>35</sup> Certainly the composer mostly likely to have provided this music was Vivaldi.

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Overall, this preference for serenatas, cantatas, and sinfonias amounted to a complete rejection of opera. While there was an overall decline in all patronage of Venetian opera in the third and fourth decades of the eighteenth century, the complete absence of Austrian patrons following decades of devotion to Italian opera in both Vienna and Mantua is striking. Given that Austria's power in international politics was growing and that of Venice declining, this substitution of chaste music in restricted locales represents a complete redefinition of the cultural definition of opera. The Viennese exercised their power by cultivating images of refined taste.

The Venetians moved on by allowing their stages to promote images of pleasure that were accessible to an ever-widening, and ever less aristocratic, audience. Ballerinas in progressively more expensive costumes and *prime donne* with ever greater stipends stripped theatres of funds for lavish scenery, according to Goldoni. Most of the theatres that had operated in Ferdinand's time were closed or reorganized for other purposes by the middle of the eighteenth century. Censors began to condemn lascivious dances, boxes started to be sublet for covert gambling activities, and at the Teatro di xx the performances of acrobats were as well received as those of musicians. The theatrical subculture of c. 1760 is one that Ferdinand would probably have loved, had he lived 50 years longer. But it is one which the Austrians totally rejected.

Venetians returned this sentiment by rejecting Austrian opera after the fall of the Republic. Although the instrumental music of Haydn was well received in the nineteenth century, Venetian musical archives are devoid of the music of Mozart. The first performance of a Mozart opera in Venice was given at xx in the year xx.

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<sup>35</sup> I-Vas Avvisi, Busta 708, entry of 18 September 1722, by Alvisi.

Abstract:

## Consequences of the Spanish Succession for Venetian Music

The War of the Spanish Succession, fought between 1701 and 1714, changed the relationship between opera and other kinds of secular music in Venice. Opera throughout the seventeenth century sought to create illusions of power that were ever more pronounced. There could not have been a greater difference in the reception of Venetian opera among any two groups in Europe than that between the last of the Gonzaga dukes of the late seventeenth century and the Austrian ambassadors posted to Venice in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Ferdinand Carlo was such a phenomenally energetic presence in Venetian social life in the last quarter of the seventeenth century that one must question whether the genre of opera would have survived into the eighteenth century without him. He was the designated patron of no fewer than 15 works staged in Venice between 1677 and 1704. When the war actually arrived and Ferdinand stayed home to guard his interests, it became necessary for his court to attempt to provide all the things to which he had grown accustomed in Venice.

Giovanni Battista Colloredo, who took up his post as ambassador of Venice after the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht, which resolved the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713, had the opportunity to establish something of a new regime at the embassy in Venice. The musical tradition that accrued to the Austrian embassy in Venice in the 1720s was one that, to an approximation, followed Roman tastes and practices. Opera per se was eschewed. More tasteful secular vocal works, laudatory ones with four or five roles to mark the rites of passage of royalty, were the norm. Orchestras were definitely much larger in Rome, often numbering around 100 at the turn of the century. Venetian theatre orchestras were small, rarely surpassing 10 players.

Overall, this preference for serenatas, cantatas, and sinfonias amounted to a complete rejection of opera. While there was an overall decline in all patronage of Venetian opera in the third and fourth decades of the eighteenth century, the complete absence of Austrian patrons following decades of devotion to Italian opera in both Vienna and Mantua is striking.

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## Venice (1680-1740):

### Musical Expression in an Era of Political Decline

The Venetian Republic had enjoyed a century of undisputed power and a millennium of growth as the seventeenth century neared its end. Its endurance and stability greatly recommended its enlightened form of government, which consisted of a doge elected by his fellow executives, a legislative assembly consisting of all male nobles above the age of 21, and a judiciary subdivided into an intricate network of small chambers to oversee domestic, territorial, and foreign affairs.

Venice commanded holdings reaching from the edges of the Piedmont and the southern slopes of the Alps, across the plains north of the Adriatic, and down the eastern Adriatic coast into the Peloponnese. The arc formed by the modern-day cities Bergamo, Brescia, Verona, Vicenza, Padua, Treviso, Belluno, Udine, Trieste, Split and Dubrovnik fell within the bounds of the Most Serene Republic in 1680. Corfu and the smaller islands of the Ionian Sea also lay within its maritime provinces. "The Hinge of Europe", as William McNeill termed Venice in his history of the Republic,<sup>1</sup> was uniquely situated to bear witness to cultural diversity. Muslim and Christian,